

## 'All Night Strut' moves to Detroit



## Getting Around

By ETHEL SIMMONS

Ready to strut all night? First chance for metropolitan Detroiters to enjoy the original song and dance revue "The All Night Strut" in their own home town will be Wednesday when this hit show from Cleveland opens at the Music Hall Center.

The women behind the production, which ran nearly a year with 300 performances, are Fran Charnas, who directed, produced and created it.

Over lunch at a suburban restaurant, Ms. Charnas was enthusiastic about the show's history and its debut here. She lapsed into a stream of words, hands on her hips, as she spoke.

"The All Night Strut" will run for a month, through Aug. 1, at the Music Hall. It features a cast of four whom Ms. Charnas describes as "electric" in singing, dancing and recreating the mood of the 1930s and 40s.

THERE ARE a couple of songs from the 70s, according to Ms. Charnas, including "Ain't No Mountain High Enough" from 1969, but mostly the songs are from the 30s and 40s. "I like the style and elegance of that period," Ms. Charnas said. "I selected the music. We're using an tremendous variety of material and also showing off the talents of the performers."

Of the four performers she said, "They are high energy level. I think they're really electric. A lot of people who do this kind of music are kind of laid back, but they really come at you. They sweat."

I've had fun at nightclubs on the Cleveland Plaza where "The All Night Strut" first opened, and also seen "Jacques Breil" which preceded "Strut" at Cleveland's Playhouse Square cabaret theater. Unfor-

tunately, I didn't get to Cleveland last year, so missed seeing "All Night Strut," but plan to review it opening night at the Music Hall.

Cleveland is a lively theater town, with lots of good local productions and plenty of community support. "The All Night Strut" was voted by newspaper readers to be their favorite entertainment attraction for 1975.

Ms. Charnas said the proprietor of Peckle Ball's on the Cleveland Plaza is renovating part of town where the big shops come in, asked her to create a nostalgic show. Peckle Ball is known for improvisational theater.

A theater background as an actress and then director had led to Ms. Charnas being recommended for the job. She was excited about creating a show, picked the catchy name from a line: "We all congregate at an all night strut" from a Bessie Smith song.

"I KNOW most of the jazz and record buffs in Cleveland now," Ms. Charnas said. She did the choreography for the show, too, choosing costumes that are "a blend of the period. The whole show is a mood piece."

The two actresses and two actors appear in the first act dressed casually, with the guys in pan-knife suits. In the second act they dress up in "tails, long gowns, rhinestones and satin," she said.

The show is all black and white like the old movies, with touches of red. Every song is choreographed and backed by a three-piece rhythm of piano, bass and drums.

"It's an intimate, personal kind of show. The actors set up a rapport with the audience."

"The All Night Strut" also played Cleve-

land's State Theater before moving to the Playhouse Square in the lobby, where dinner can be served. State Theatre is still being renovated, she said, and is being turned into a restaurant.

Turning to Detroit's restoration venture, she said, "The Music Hall is a gorgeous theater. It's very art deco. Perfect for the show."

She said a set is being created for "The All Night Strut" at the Music Hall. There will be a double proscenium, and they're bringing in the boys which will be used overhead on the stage.

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