

You'll get a kick out of Cole Porter's music

The song and dance show "Cole," with its overwhelming array of hit songs by Cole Porter, fits the Meadow Brook Theatre stage like a glove.

The cast of eight wholesome young sophisticates performs the musical successes, the movies, his early career at Yale while in Paris.

There are four guys and four gals, and the women in particular excel, giving individual characterization to the numbers they do solo or in combination with other members of the troupe.

But all are assets to the show, which blends wit and nostalgia in its

Review

approach to the songs accompanied by artful choreography.

THE COSTUMING and staging back up the mood, and if Cole Porter's New York Smart Set seems a little quaint nowadays rather than truly jaded, well, who cares? It's still fun, even in the serious moments.

Where else can you see and hear musical numbers performed to "Night and Day," "I Get a Kick Out of You" and "Anything Goes" in succession?

And that's just the close of the first act.

The show follows a format with Act I devoted to the young composer, who took his piano to college, and follows him through his first Broadway flop, then as an expatriate in Paris and the international high life, to back in New York and on top on Broadway.

Meadow Brook Theatre-goers arrive to see the curtain up, revealing a good-looking, nightclub-like art deco set designed by Peter Hicks, who also did the lighting.

The band is on a raised stand to the back of center stage. Railings reminiscent of a 1920s theater lobby sweep forward, to give the performers props

for their numbers.

Across the back of the stage are three circular screens that fill with changing slides, photographic memories of Cole Porter throughout his life and different locales.

THE COSTUMES worn by the singer/dancers are all in black and white—always effective if well done, as it is here. In Act I, the men wear black tuxes, the women each in a different style of white dress with rhinestone trim.

Act II opens with a bartender, bar and bar stools awaiting the nightclub owner. A pianist also plays cocktail piano in the foreground.

Here the costumes reverse, men in

white dinner jackets and the women wearing drop-dead glamor black gowns. This is a setting for a dazzling segment of the show entitled "What Is This Thing Called Love?" that spotlights 16 romantic Cole Porter ballads.

Marianne Challis, Connie Colt, Nancy Grahn, Henry J. Jordan, Michele Mullen, Frank Root, Richard Walker and Kevin Wilson all have their chance to shine throughout the show.

John Sharpe directed and choreographed "Cole" with a fine, light touch, making the show go down like another Old-Fashioned—zingy and smooth.

"MAKE IT Another Old-Fashioned, Please" happens to be the name of one of the numbers in the "Love" sequence. It's an effective, love-gone-wrong tune sung with style by Marianne Challis.

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The Loving Cup—Marlene, Danny, Vinnie and Dale—are appearing through May 27 at the Voyager restaurant in the Pontiac Airport Terminal Building.

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