



WMTC brings 'Crazy' to Woodstock

Rhonda Mix THE WOODSTOCK INDEPENDENT / OCTOBER 2012

The Woodstock Music Theatre Company will present the Broadway production of "Crazy for You," a musical WMTC also showcased back in 1996.

Based on the book by Ken Ludwig, with lyrics and music by George and Ira Gershwin, the original production opened at the Shubert Theatre, New York,

in February 1992 and won the 1992 Tony Award for Best Musical.

Barry Norton, director of WMTC's rendition, said he is excited to be working on this particular production. In a review in The New York Times, writer Frank Rich said the musical was "The American musical's classic blend of music, laughter, dancing, sentiment and showmanship with a freshness and confidence."

Norton first began working for WMTC as a set painter and directed "Patsy Cline" last fall.

He has loved watching the "Crazy for You" process all come together.

"[I enjoy] seeing my vision coming across the stage and [especially like] collaborating with everyone, including the set designers and costumers."

The plot behind "Crazy for You" revolves around main character Bobby Child, a well-to-do 1930s playboy who is in love with dancing. He rebels against the wishes of his mother and his soon-to-be-ex fiancée and travels to Nevada, where he meets the girl of his dreams. The musical is infused with catchy Gershwin numbers, including "I Got Rythm," "Biding My Time," "Embraceable You," and "They Can't Take That Away From Me."

Tap-dancing is a tremendous part of the production, and Norton cited training the cast in tap as one of the biggest hurdles for the group to overcome.

Joel Bennett ("Annie Get Your Gun" and "Guys & Dolls"), who stars as Bobby Child, agreed that tapping is a big challenge in this production.

"This show has so much dancing," he said.

"It's a dance show first and foremost. [But] the people I'm working with are incredible and talented – they make it very enjoyable."

Bennett has thrown himself into the show, practicing tap-dancing two to three hours per day. He has no previous experience tap-dancing.

Norton said the 21-member cast has been working very hard during rehearsals, and he believes they are a dedicated, multitalented team that works well together.

Rebecca Parvin, Arlington Heights, said she is more than happy to make the one-hour drive to Woodstock to take part in this production, especially because of George Gershwin's music.

"George Gershwin is one of the best American composers," she said.

"We [also] have an amazing director who really guides us."

This will be Parvin's first performance with WMTC, and she loves the "spunk" of the characters represented in "Crazy for You," particularly her character, Polly Baker.

Norton said he believes a ticket to the performance will not disappoint.

"I'm sure people will be walking out [of the show] and singing a tune," he said.

The show will run Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from Oct. 5 to Oct. 27, at the Woodstock Opera House, 121 Van Buren St.