

'Crazy For You' is spring offering

**A View from the Cliff Review**

**BY CLIFF KASDEN**

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Well-crafted music and lyrics by George and Ira Gershwin provide a pleasant vehicle for the Marathon Little Theatre Group's spring production, "Crazy For You." The performers' sincerity is unmistakable at the Sunday matinee. Two more weekends of lighthearted entertainment are on stage at 245-37 60th Avenue in Douglaston (Marathon Jewish Community Center).

The story line is plucked from the 1930s' musical comedy genre. A nerdy rich kid disobeys his mother's plans for his career and his marriage. He flees to the bright lights of the theatre where he wins, loses and finally wins the girl of his dreams. In "Crazy For You," stand-out individual and group performances abound.

Scott Eckers as Bobby Child is a recent addition to the Queens community theatre family. His starry-eyed smile, excellent singing voice and unpretentious style may seem like a put-on. But several shows as leading man prove he has something that the audience really enjoys.

John-Alex Sakelos (Lank Hawkins) brandishes his unmistakable bright red cowboy boots and mischievous grin. Chris Robin (Bela Zangler) sports an intentionally laughable jet black toupee. Both clearly enjoy the farce.

The cowboy quartet (John Baratta, Richard Carlan, Kat Thompson, Sam Zuckerman) have performed together before. The result is comfortable to watch as evidenced by their song "Bidin' My Time." The guy's roll call is completed by Al Reno, Ephram Sachs and Steve Stromberg.

Not to be outdone, the ladies of Marathon include several very watchable performances. Melissa Cavaliere is Deadrock, Nevada's female postmaster, Polly. Her singing voice is excellent and is filled with genuine emotion, especially in her presentation of "Someone To Watch Over Me." Her stage presence successfully combines both vulnerability and confidence. Melissa shows clear consistency in her acting and tap dancing. Her younger sister, Julie, has joined the troupe this year. She is a lovely young lady and an outstanding dancer with numerous professional credits. Julie appears as one of the troupe's Follies Girls.

The Follies Girls are graced by familiar faces that have performed in countless local theatre productions. They bring a bit of bawdy wit, a touch of class, and a great deal of beauty to every show. Check out "I Can't Be Bothered Now" in Act I. The dancers include Sharon Cohen, Fran Geier, Sherry Markowitz and Geri Schwartz.

Supporting female roles include quality dancing by Tess played by Ashley Taylor, the deliciously dislikable fiancée Irene (Heather Bilczic) and the troupe's producer Sandi Plotkin as Bobby's overbearing but ever-loving mother, Lottie.

Director Dave Shapiro always brings a warm sense of family onstage and off. This show is no different. His talented brain trust includes Musical Director Rhea Arkin with her orchestra (Vicki Gleicher, Rich Shapiro, Larry Cardinale), choreographer Celina Garrison -Lutz, set designer Linda Cashman, costume designer Pauline Baratta and stage manager Tiffini Lerner.

Nods to Penny Willis, Sharri Mandel, Ellen Rosenberg and everyone attached to the production.



The Marathon Little Theatre Group's spring production of "Crazy For You" has two more weekends.

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For information, call 718-229-4644 or 718-428-1580. Surf to their website at [www.marathontheatergroup.com](http://www.marathontheatergroup.com)

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