**Singin’ in the Rain**

**Theatre Royal, Plymouth.**

**Act 2 notes.**

**Audio described Thursday 18th August 2022 at 2:30pm.**

Welcome back to the second half of the world famous musical, “Singin’ in the Rain “ . We hope you’ve dried out after the thunderous downpour that ended Act 1 !

I’m Wendy and I shall audio describe Act 2 for you.

There are no new characters or settings in Act 2 but the action progresses at break-neck speed, flitting quickly from venue to venue with simultaneous action, especially in the final scene.

Before the interval we left Kathy and Don falling in love after several false starts and misunderstandings. Meanwhile, Lina Lamont is convinced she is actually engaged to Don- she believes all the fabricated celebrity gossip about their onscreen relationship and has become even more of a diva ! She is already jealous of Kathy and her singing, dancing and acting talents and is still angry over the whole misplaced cream-cake-in-the- face incident at the party. Lina is fighting for her career and for Don and is plotting some mischief, aided and abetted by her friend, the much-married socialite, Zelda Zanders who we met briefly at the beginning of Act 1.

R.F. Simpson’s Monumental Pictures studio and its output are beginning to look very old fashioned now that the first “Talkie “ film of “The Jazz Singer “ has wowed the cinema-going fans and left them wanting more. The popular film industry will never be the same again- change is in the air. Cosmo, Don and Kathy have come up with a cunning plan to update and refresh the latest ” Lockwood and Lamont” offering- now they just have to convince R.F. that it’ll work and will also deal with the fundamental problem of Lina’s awful talking and singing voice.

Act 2 opens with a lively Entr’acte showcasing the fabulous 10 piece band (revealed playing behind the huge barn doors ) and the wonderfully versatile dancers. There is a new sense of urgency at the start of another busy day at Monumental Pictures- R.F. is already hard at work scanning reports at his modern, sleek semi-circular white desk which displays silver framed portraits of the studio’s stars. Eight secretaries dance around him, answering ornate white corded telephones and making calls. They are identically dressed in clacking heels and loose dresses with lacy white tops, a pastel tie and dark blue skirts. Six male assistants in beige Oxford bags, white open neck shirts and fair isle vests clutch clipboards and tap dance officiously around as Cosmo and the director, Roscoe Dexter, discuss modernising ideas with R.F.

We then cut to a secret evening recording session as Kathy sits on a high stool in front of a microphone and a small screen. She is simply dressed in a candy-striped loose cotton frock with red piping and is very relaxed and competent. A sound engineer wearing headphones works at a mobile recording desk as Cosmo and Don look on. Lina suddenly bursts in with her friend Zelda. Lina is dressed expensively in a chic royal blue coat dress, with an enormous white fur collar and matching cuffs. Her ally and friend Zelda, is wearing a bold black and white patterned wrap coat and matching tricorn- style hat.

Scene 3 takes place afterwards in Lina’s dressing room- simply denoted by an ornate, gilt mock-Georgian dressing table and chair on the left and a large metal clothes rail, full of costumes, on the right. Lina undresses and puts on a pale silky dressing gown over her shell pink satin underslip as Zelda leaves her to bemoan her lot.

Scene 4 is rather complex- we’re in R.F.’s office again with grumpy, negative director, Roscoe Dexter and the enthusiastic and positive Cosmo. They are brain-storming a new name for the latest “Lockwood and Lamont “ picture when R.F. demands that a tap dancing routine also be added to appease the fans ! Cosmo comes up with a brilliant idea for a modern “dream “ sequence to be added to the film- he then proceeds to enact it for his bosses- and us ! It comprises several lively and colourful dance routines-including tap ! A naive young dancer in a yellow checked vest, dark rimmed glasses, a pork pie hat and carrying a tiny yellow suitcase arrives on Broadway looking for work. The first routine is boldly lit in rainbow colours with the women dressed in similarly bright beaded satin flapper dresses - they pair with a male dancer in a suit of the same colour in a flurry of movement. Above the centre of the stage is an arc of brightly lit neon arrow-shaped signs of street and theatre names tempting him in- it is all high energy and very overpowering for him. Then there is a slinky, sensual Broadway routine- the lead female dancer shimmies in a glittering, figure-hugging short black dress, bright red lipstick and sharply bobbed straight black hair. Lots of gilt chairs are involved as she vamps and taunts the male dancers. This dream sequence continues with a balletic pas de deux as the young man finds his soulmate- she is dressed in a beautiful pale pink spangly long dress and chiffon scarf-it’s a very elegant contrast to the previous brash and louche dances. Finally the interlude ends with the young man joining in with a flamboyant “ Gotta dance “ tap routine as we switch back to an exhausted Cosmo and confused R.F. !

Scene 5 is very fast moving and complicated as the storyline is cleverly sketched in for us. It switches between several different venues, behind and in front of the stage and involves simultaneous action. It takes place several days later at the premiere for “ The Dancing Cavalier “, the first musical extravaganza to be filmed with sound- a lot is riding on its success. Four spotlit newspaper sellers wrapped up in overcoats and hats wave newspapers – they set the scene of general excitement for us. We move to R.F.’s office where they are assessing these early press reviews with Rod the company’s PR man. Lina bursts in and starts causing trouble- she feels she has the law and her contract on her side. She is dripping in diamonds for the premier and wearing a short, layered black beaded frock, an enormous mink stole and a glittery black headdress- every inch the starlet.

We switch to the outside of the Graumann movie theatre where Dora Bailey is recording her radio piece. We see a clip of the new film on a huge screen, with Kathy’s voice dubbed over Lina’s. Don, Cosmo, Rod and R.F.- all in immaculate evening dress arrive at the screening as cheering then heckling breaks out and the audience demand that Lina sings live for them- obviously a problem with her awful voice..... A complex sequence flitting between the wings backstage and in front of the curtain ensues, involving Lina and Kathy as the men respond quickly and improvise a way out of their predicament ! This all happens at break-neck speed and leads neatly to the grand finale. Here, all the cast wear black trousers, waistcoats and ties, white shirts and grey felt hats including the 3 leads who also wear huge yellow oilskin coats and sou’westers ! Everyone carries an umbrella that is silver on the outside and one bright colour on the inside . There is much twirling and dancing as we reach a joyous and decidedly damp ending !

The next audio described shows are F**isherman’s** **Friends** - on **Thursday 10th September at 2: 30pm.**

**The Color Purple**  on **Thursday 29th September at 7 :30pm.**

Further information can be found on the theatre’s website- go to **“Explore”** andthen **“Access “** . Alternatively, useful information and dates of shows are printed in the latest brochure or you can phone the theatre on **267222** or ask at the main ticket desk.