


17-27 September at 7.45

Glorious!

by Peter Quilter



Programme incorporating **Loft News**

£1 (free when mailed to members)

www.loft-theatre.co.uk

Loft
theatre company

Glorious!

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Company

Florence Foster Jenkins	Vicki Hollings
Cosme McMoon	Michael Barker
St Clair	John Fenner
Dorothy	Anne Houston
Maria	Wendy Morris
Mrs Verinder-Gedge	Elaine Freeborn

Director Steve Smith
Stage manager James Wolstenholme
Lighting Gary Atkinson
Sound James Ruffell
Properties Katie Ward, Amabel Thomson
Wardrobe Alex Waldram
Set construction Loft construction team
Press and publicity Helen Ashbourne
Front of House photographs Helen Ashbourne
Theatre technician Tim Elmore

The action takes place in New York in 1944.

Act I Scene 1 - Florence's apartment at the Hotel Seymour
Act I Scene 2 - The Melotone recording studio, 54th Street

Interval of 20 minutes

Act II Scene 1 - Ballroom of the Ritz Carlton Hotel
Act II Scene 2 - Cemetery gardens outside a church
Act II Scene 3 - The stage of Carnegie Hall
Act II Scene 4 - The stage of Carnegie Hall

Acknowledgements
 Vicki Steele and Sotina Stewart for prop making
 Norman Clarke of Interior Landscapes, Rugby

Please note: The performance on Thursday 18 September has been pre-sold to the charity Victim Support. No tickets for this performance are available for general sale.

Loft's new season off to a good start

COMEDY

Glorious! at the Loft Theatre Company, Leamington, until September 27.

GLITTERING costumes and flamboyance bring 1940s New York to the stage in this American production.

Artifice and the ridiculous are celebrated with great aplomb - although the story is, ironically, true.

Vicki Hollings takes on the role of terrible singer Florence Foster Jenkins with great gusto, managing to get the audience in stitches with her cringe-worthy warbles, screeches and total lack of grace. With the help of her boisterous, whisky-loving English boyfriend St Clair and loyal friend Dorothy, Florence manages to convince herself that she has more talent than Carmen.

This puts her new young pianist Cosme McMoon - whose excessive politeness, charm and wit are pulled off well by Michael Barker - in a rather difficult position. Highly theatrical stage setting, props and excellent acting all contribute to an entertaining show, although



certain scenes are a little too long-drawn out.

A special mention must go to Wendy Morris who plays grumpy Mexican maid Maria with hilarious facial expressions and physical movements. And the audience is met with a few surprises as well. A good start to the Loft's new season and well worth seeing.

Sundari Sankar

Funny and moving tale of self-belief and stardom

Glorious - Loft Theatre
Until September 27

Peter Quilter's affectionate and moving take on the story of Florence Foster Jenkins makes for a welcome and enjoyable evening of fun at the Loft.

Mrs Foster Jenkins' abject talent coupled with unshakable self-belief has always presented a mystery and her recordings are still brought out regularly. Did she know she was awful but not care, or did she genuinely believe herself up there with the best?

Her story is certainly a compelling one - not least at a time when our Saturday night TV screens are filled with the faces of those willing us to believe in their star quality as much as they do.

In the hands of the excellent Vicki Hollings, the singer has many facets. Part diva, part philanthropist, always human. Willing to think of others but vain enough to appear clad in angels' wings.

And there is rich comedy throughout. The two songs are a real treat, it takes real ability to sing that badly with conviction. And there are some touching scenes of domestic harmony with friends.

Michael Barker as the accompanist performs wonders at the keyboard - no mention in the programme for those really playing - and handles the deadpan humour surrounding his private life beautifully.

Elsewhere there are strong supporting performances throughout with Wendy Morris' absurdly terse maid Maria absolutely spot-on.

Director Steve Smith balances the comedy with the play's necessarily sombre ending and the whole makes for a glorious experience.

Matthew Salisbury

