

Chicago play critique assignment

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**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The show takes place in Chicago, Illinois in the 1920s. It starts with Roxie Hart's cold-blooded murder of Fred Casely. Roxie convinces her husband Amos that the man was a burglar, but then the police inform him that she knew the man and Amos gives her up to the cops. She is sent to the Cook County Jail where she meets Velma Kelly, Mama, and other murders. Mama gets her talking to the best lawyer in town, Billy Flinn, and with help from Amos she is able to afford him and become the talk of the town.

This upsets Velma greatly as she becomes old news. Roxie has several press conferences which make her famous, at least in Chicago that is, and Velma is desperate to get back on top. She asks Roxie if she will play her sister's old part in her show and Roxie declines wanting no one but herself on stage. Then, a woman with a wealthy father kills her cheating husband and as she is about to become Chicago's new headliner, Roxie tells the press that she's pregnant and she's back on the front page.

As Roxie's court date approaches, she gets tips from Billy but it was the ideas she stole from Velma that really helped get her get acquitted. Right after she is found not guilty, the press immediately locks to another story and Roxie is left sad her short lived fame is over. The show ends with her teaming up with Velma in her sisters old spot. From an acting stand point, had no idea what watched after seeing this show I just know that it wasn't theatre and it wasn't acting. I felt as if a bunch of adults were running around stage playing dress up and make believe because they failed to portray the characters.

The actress Velma Kelly was not as bad as some of the others but she lacked depth and multiple dimensions. The lead Roxie Hart acted like a little bratty school girl which came across as if he had done no character work and got the part of Roxie that day. She had this obviously fake accent that was high, squeaky and more importantly unnecessary. The man playing Billy Hinn was decent just think he played the same lawyer type kind of a guy. If his character had to show any other side of himself that wasn't a money hungry lawyer don't believe he would have been able to do it.

Another problem the acting in this show had was overacting especially by the actresses in the Cell Block Tango number. The actresses with the first solo and last solo had this fake Hispanic accent which, when you have that along with over acting it just ruins the whole number. The acting as a whole was much like a bad middle school IJIL production. was confused and frustrated with the acting choices that were made and allowed. The set for this show was unappealing to look at, confusing, and didn't match the majority of the show.

First Of all, the show was set on a long and narrow stage which I believe was their first mistake however, even if the show was on a horizontal proscenium stage it would not have made their horrendous set any better. The set had these.... honesty I still don't know what they were, but they had these tan sheets draped over don't know what. thought it was going to reveal a piano or a bar but it didn't. All it was used for was an entrance in the first scene. Then, the sheets were never removed and I was left staring at this ugly tan blob the entire show.

They also left this broken piano looking thing in the left corner of the stage and it was never used. Never. Not once. The walls were also tan and worn down but it didn't match any of the scenes, not even the prison scene. I don't think have ever been that confused by a set. There were many props in this production and the large quantity of them were pretty useless. The over use of props took away from the show and it also damaged the authenticity because the props were cheap and childish as if they were all purchased from a .99 cent store. The court room scene had chairs lined up with cheap props on them and one of the actors sat in all the chairs putting on and taking off the outlandish props. The Cell Block Tango consisted of props that were handled very poorly by the actors. I think they were handled so poorly because the number didn't need props. Specifically, there was a target board with knives in it and when the actress turned around to stab the board it messed up the timing and threw part of the number off. I absolutely abhorred the props that they used because they hindered the performance so much I couldn't take it seriously. The music was provided by a live Orchestra who performed behind some curtains. I thought the live music sounded lovely it was probably the show's strongest aspect however, the sound effects timing was off. The gun shoots in the beginning and in the middle of the show was not in sync so that ruined the authenticity of the performance. If I were to describe the costumes for this show I would use two words, disappointing and sad.

This is Chicago they had such a huge range to get creative and dazzle the audience but the females just wore tan leotards with black garters and then when they needed to change they just threw something on over it. The men did the same thing just with tan wife beaters, tan slacks and black

suspenders. It came across as if they threw their costumes together at the last minute with a minimal budget. I was very frustrated with the on stage costume changes and unhappy with their overall look. The lighting was repetitive, unoriginal and uncreative in this show. They overused their red lights.

I understood them during the Cell Block Tango because it is a song about death. But, they just kept using them. They even used them for things that weren't even violence related. It came across as if that was their only light they had to work with so they just decided to use it until the bulb burnt out. Futhermore, this show was terrible it left me completely confused. It had an overall unprofessional feel to the show and just believe if your not going to take your role seriously then maybe you shouldn't be on stage. I was very disappointed by there great injustice they did to Chicago.