

Elvis has Marquee ?All Shook Up? for next show



By Brock Weir

Elvis Presley's music ? okay, probably his hips more than anything ? left audiences all shook up when he burst onto the music scene in the 1950s, and now his music is leaving a whole new generation ?All Shook Up.?

Aurora's Marquee Theatrical Productions has spent the last few months immersed in all things ?Elvis? in the lead-up to their production of ?All Shook Up? next month, a musical based around 24 classic Elvis tracks.

Opening November 16 at the Newmarket Theatre, All Shook Up takes audiences back to the Midwestern United States in 1955 ?where loud music, public necking and tight pants are outlawed.? Loosely based on Shakespeare's Twelfth Night, the story follows Natalie, a mechanic, with ?dreams of hitting the open road for a more exciting life? until she meets the guitar-playing rebel Chad who lights an altogether different spark inside of her.

?The show is hilarious and I feel privileged to work with everyone in this cast because I have been blown away by the talent people bring to their characters ? and I love the music,? says actor Ellen Cotton. ?There is so much music in this show ? 27 separate numbers! ? and I can't even pick a favourite because there are so many.?

For many of the young company, this has been their first serious introduction to the hit maker's song book, leaving them wanting more. They are intrigued that the songs are not only toe-tappers today, but help anchor the storyline with themes that resonate with the current generation as well.

?There are a couple of plot lines where society is saying you shouldn't do that., or it is not right, and that is still relevant,? says Ellen. Adds fellow actor Sadie Harrison, ?It is really light-hearted and fun, but it counters all the hate you hear about in the news.?

Helping the actors bring the songs to life is conductor Dale Matshushige who, for the first time, is taking on the role of Music Director. Having already collaborated on previous Marquee productions ranging from Joseph & The Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat to The Little Mermaid, she is working with the cast on each and every song as well as the orchestra, which takes over their Industrial Parkway North rehearsal space at least once a week.

?It is a great, fun musical that we are totally enjoying and I am having a great time working with this cast,? says Dale. ?They are a great group of singers, they work hard, learn hard, learn quickly and whatever we do they take it back on their own, practice it and perfect it.?

While Dale admits she was not a particular fan of Elvis' music going in, All Shook Up has provided her plenty to work with. Can't Help Falling In Love is one song which strikes a particular chord with her, and audiences in turn won't be able to help falling in love with All Shook Up, she says.

?I recently saw a production of this in Grand Bend and found an all-round happy feeling,? she says, ?and that is what I am hoping our audiences will feel as well. There is a lot of laughter and even emotional tears. There are a lot of feelings evoked and that's what we're hoping to produce with these cast members. ?

Marquee Theatrical Productions' production of All Shook Up opens Thursday, November 16 at Newmarket Theatre, playing on

select days and times through November 26. For tickets, visit www.newtix.ca or call 905-953-5122. For more information on the show, visit marqueetp.com.