

***Swing!***

Savor the soaring voices, most steps found in the dance catalog plus some you've not seen, a kick-butt octet of musicians who sound like time travelers from the Big Band Era and a gross of carefully coordinated costumes paraded across a beautifully lit Art Deco set.

And indulge yourself in one of the most energetic and uniformly talented dance corps we've seen down here in many a year.

This will spoil South Florida audiences for years to come as to what a musical revue should be. You don't even have to like this kind of show or this music to be carried away by the enthusiasm and imagination.

Much of the success is due to musical director Paul Reekie ...and, even more so, to recent Miami transplant Kelly Shook ... whose choreography and direction is as imaginative and varied as can be conceived.

--Bill Hirshman, *Florida Theatre On-Stage*

Much of the credit for the production goes to director-choreographer Kelly Shook, the Pied Piper who lured lots of agile, young performers to South Florida and put them through their calisthenic paces.

And because tap is a specialty of Shook's, she has upped the show's tap quotient, most notably in the 11 o'clock number, "Bill's Bounce," a rhythmic blast of metal-to-stage that is just one of the evening's highlights.

--Hap Erstein, *The Palm Beach Post*

The Wick Theatre has jumped into its second season in grand fashion with a pumped-up production of *Swing!*, a musical tribute to the era of big-name jazz and high-stepping dance.

The show includes music and dance styles from early swing, West Coast, other jazz styles and even hip-hop, as shown in an all-guy version of "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy."

All those busy feet are the responsibility of Kelly Shook, choreographer and director.

--Dale King, *Palm Beach ArtsPaper*

So yes, "Swing!" is unapologetically nostalgic. What makes it special are the superbly limber, agile, athletic dancers male and female. The stage is set by the 1931 Duke Ellington classic "It Don't Mean a Thing" (If It Ain't Got That Swing), and the action continues non-stop for 24 numbers, with a brief intermission and another 11 numbers concluding with a big all-star finale.

In all there are an even dozen dancers with Lindsay Bell the captain under the overall direction of Kelly Shook. ... There are few things in life as happy and optimistic than music of the Big Band era. If you need a lift, here it is.

--Skip Sheffield



### ***Les Miserables***

The hardest thing for a reviewer to do is to monotonously lard up a review with superlatives, and yet here I am, faced with that unpleasant task.

We've waited a quarter of a century for the famed musical "Les Miserables" to arrive at the Little Theatre, and yet, based on Sunday's matinee performance, I have to say the long wait was worth it. Credit is due to director/choreographer Kelly Shook.... I never give standing ovations, but I did this time, and I wasn't alone.

--Dan Hagen, *The News-Progress*



Big things are happening at a little theater.

"Les Miserables" – a powerhouse performance filled to the brim with spectacular singing and mesmerizing special effects. "Les Miserables" offers a stunning cast with powerful voices, a compelling story and captivating effects that, for nearly three hours, makes a fictional world come to life.

--Bob Galuski, *Daily Eastern News*



### ***Seven Brides for Seven Brothers***

The Little Theatre ups the ante on practically all aspects of performance, from singing and dancing to humor and energy. "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers" is the first of two shows that will retain some carry-over, including director Kelly Shook and visiting actor Sean Zimmerman, both of whom will return for "The Pirates of Penzance." If the reaction they received on Wednesday afternoon was any indication, this is something that most of the audience in attendance for "Seven Brides" would be happy to know.

--Jim Vorel, *The Herald-Review*



This production, directed and choreographed by Kelly Shook, is equally kinetic, and may well turn out to be the Little's most engaging show of the summer.

The brothers stomp and spring their way through several numbers, dueling in dance, jumping over ax handles and, in Lacopo's case, performing one incredible back flip. The Olympic choreography is as masculine as this kind of thing gets.

--Dan Hagen, *The News-Progress*



### ***Pirates of Penzance***

I had never seen a production of “The Pirates of Penzance” I really enjoyed, until I grinned my way through the Little Theatre’s current show on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. The element that was missing in those productions is supplied in this one, and I think it’s the sagacious direction and choreography of Kelly Shook. The show is invested with bits of business — canny gestures, wry looks, funny dance moves — that keep the crowd laughing and engaged pretty much throughout.

--Dan Hagen, *The News-Progress*

There are dance numbers in this show, and it does take good advantage of the attractive, multi-level Caribbean set, but in the end, “The Pirates of Penzance” is a vocal musical first and foremost, and it excels in that field. A piece like “With catlike tread, upon our prey we steal” from the end of Act II easily stands as the most bombastic piece of song and dance in the summer season so far. Not bad for a 133-year-old musical about pirates.

--Jim Vorel, *The Herald-Review*

Gilbert and Sullivan and Kelly Shook contrasted genres of music, culture and dance. For a play that opened in New York City in 1879, this production brought fresh Caribbean Sea breezes to 21st century Central Illinois.

“Hush, Hush! Not a Word” in particular was neat, as they all wove in and around each other. Awesome choreography! It was foot-tappin’ awesome.

--Carolyn Stephens, *Journal Gazette/Times-Courier*



### ***Carousel***

Choreographer, Kelly L. Shook, took some big chances... and produced some lively and stylish dances. There are two ballets, each as important as any song in the score and her work in both was fine and sharp and clear and clean. Together Shook and director Saunders have put a fine edition of this show onto the circular stage at the Mac.

--*Berkshire Bright Focus*



***Swing!***

This show is pure fun, really: good songs, good dances and a great band. It's wonderful to have a show fully realized on every level at this venerable summer venue.

–*Berkshire Bright Focus*

While the cast has few stars, they do work very well together as an ensemble under the direction of Kelly L. Shook, who also choreographed. Shook keeps the joint jumping and also does an innovative job of flowing one number into the next. There are a minimum of furniture and props to be moved, and those seem to appear and disappear as if by magic.

–*Gail Sez*



***Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat***

The summer season is off to an electrifying start. This is a show that must be seen. It is fun, eclectic and energizing. Brilliantly directed and choreographed by Kelly Shook, it boasts a cast of twenty-somethings who are devoted to their promise of pure entertainment. This is a vibrant production, full of youthful energy that brought the audience spontaneously to its feet at the finale.

--*Schenectady Daily Gazette*

I just have four words of advice for you: Go, go, go, go! The Mac-Haydn press release boasts of this year's company's prodigious dance skills, and Shook puts them all on display in course of this show. Shook gives everyone who has a special move a chance to show off. Even with an intermission, all of Lloyd Webber's silly production numbers, and Shook's intrepid terpsichorean tricks, *Joseph...* still clocks in under 90 minutes. If you are one of those people who hates big, bright, bouncy, happy musicals, you won't like *Joseph...* but you probably figured that out a decade or so ago. For everyone else, buy a ticket, already!

–*Gail Sez*

Kelly Shook provides her large company with much to do much of the time. On a wet night in Chatham, the Mac-Haydn was definitely the place to be. I'd be willing to say that it would still have been good place to spend an hour and forty minutes had the weather been dry.

–*Berkshire Bright Focus*



***Anything Goes***

And here we have another vibrant colorful all-singing, all-dancing Mac-Haydn musical smash from Director/Choreographer Kelly L. Shook. When Shook gets the stage and aisles filled with rapidly tapping bodies clad in Halliday’s bright and sparkly costumes, it is an impressive, even bone rattling, affair as the whole house shakes to the beat. This really is fun for the whole family. It looks great, it sounds good, and it puts the “live” back into live theatre. You gotta go. –*Gail Sez*



Kelly Shook has delivered the show to the round stage in Chatham with 48 tapping feet in a ten minute first act finale and two more feet still to come in Act Two. She keeps the show moving and her actors in a constant state of flux that allows every occupant of every seat in this theater in the round to see and hear something. The show is a busy one with barely a breath taken between action points. –*Berkshire Bright Focus*



Mac-Haydn Theatre has another hit on its hands with its production of Cole Porter's "Anything Goes." The production at Mac-Haydn seems to plug up the gaping holes in the text with energy, talent and a sea of enthusiasm. The plot...gets a bit complicated at times, but director and choreographer Kelly Shook shepherds her uniformly gifted cast through the rocky shoals with skill and lots of humor. The ensemble tapping is superlative, and director/choreographer Shook manages to showcase the talents of each of her large cast. –*Schenectady Daily Gazette*



***Crazy For You***

I want to save a special paragraph to give kudos to director Deanna L. Dys and choreographer Kelly Shook. Dys has a long association with *Crazy For You*, on Broadway and on tour around the world, and she has obviously passed her love of this property on to the cast and crew at the Mac-Haydn. Shook, a Mac-Haydn veteran, knows exactly what can and cannot be done in the Mac-Haydn’s quirky space. The result is some of the most dazzling and innovative choreography I have seen on that stage. –*Chatham Courier*



***High Society***

The other thoroughly entertaining thing on the stage, and luckily they are on stage a lot, is the chorus, ably choreographed by Kelly Shook. They provide fabulous dancing scene changes and funny social commentary on the dreary proceedings of the plot. –*Gail Sez*



### *The Will Rogers Follies*

There is also some trademark Little Theatre dancing to be had in the “follies” portion of the program, which helps liven things up and keep the show moving along. There’s a particularly nice moment during Roger’s ill-fated run for President that features the entire cast in oversized boater hats made from tambourines, shaking and striking each other’s heads to the beat. For someone who passed away almost 80 years ago, it’s hard to deny the continuing impact of Rogers, the cowboy who “never met a man he didn’t like.” Shook, Zimmerman, and the Little Theatre have put on a loving show in his memory, heavy on nostalgia and cherished memories. The rope tricks are mostly for show, but the vaudeville fun is genuine.

--Jim Vorel, *The Herald-Review*



### *Phantom*

Choreography by Kelly Shook was perfectly appropriate.

--Berkshire Bright Focus



### *Beauty and the Beast*

Director Doug Hodge and choreographer Kelly L. Shook, have worked incredibly hard to fit this enormous show with all its special effects into the Mac. They succeed more often than the fail, and that is the opinion of Grown-up Gail. Six-year-old Gail would no doubt have been thrilled (and terrified) by the whole thing. *Be Our Guest* is the big tour-de-force production number, and it is astounding. I was serenaded by a singing champagne glass while the cutlery, the salt and pepper shakers and a quartet of table napkins cavorted on stage. What fun! --Gail Sez



***Barnum***

Kelly L. Shook also deserves several rounds of applause for dealing with the challenge of choreographing for a large ensemble on the handkerchief-sized stage. –Gail Sez

***State Fair***

Kelly Shook's choreography goes a long way towards bringing real sparkle to the lengthy book. When the whole cast kicks up their heels on *All I Owe I-o-way*, one of the few songs from that Oscar winning score, it is truly a sight to behold. –Gail Sez

