'Guys and Dolls'

Gay Musical at Theater Inc.

By BARRY MOORE

Thresher Features Editor

Damon Runyon has come to Houston and Theater Inc. has scored a success with his “Guys and Dolls.” The musical comedy, with book by Abe Burrows and music by Frank Loesser, has been packing 'em in for three weeks at one of Houston’s outstanding full-time amateur theaters, located at 707 Chelsea.

Songs Live Anyhow

Despite the rather weak musical accompaniment of Paul Schmitt and his combo of three, the songs seem to live (to the credit of the performers). The costumes and manners of speech are dated but the humor definitely is not.

The role of the Salvation Army captain is in the competent hands of Marietta Marich and opposite her in the romantic lead is sometime pro-golfer and professional entertainer Don Estes — a very professional-type Sky Masterson.

Established Crap Game

The very likable master on New York’s oldest established permanent crap game—Nathan Detroit — is portrayed by Bob Marich who delivers his part with the real “youse guys”—Brooklyn accent. Suffering from the same affliction of the mouth is his comedy partner and permanent fiancée, Miss Adelaide, played by Lenore Freedman.

Comedy Support Good

Complete comedy support is lent by the underworld regulars —Nicely-Nicely Johnson, Harry the Horse, Big Jule of Chicago, and Benny Southstreet. Offering a ludicrous contrast to the legions of Hell are the well-disciplined numbers of the Salvation Army Soul-Saving Mission, who until the very last seem to be waging a losing battle in the hellpot of the world.

The production is carried delightfully from one major complication of plot to the next by a series of clever and humorous songs. The “Fugue for Tinhorns” is followed by “A Bushel and a Peck,” done in turn by a series of gamblers and Adelaide and the Hot Box Chorines. This latter is only surpassed in hilarity by “Take Back Your Mink,” done by Adelaide and the night club Debutantes.

Song Parallels?

Sarah offers “If I Were A Bell” as a slightly inebriated salvation gal, but her sins are absolved with the singing of “Sit Down, You’re Rockin’ the Boat” by the reformed crapshooters in the final act. The spectator can find, in short, all sorts of interesting parallels between songs, provided, of course, he’s interested in that sort of thing.

The entire production is cut out for those who seek amusement.

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ment free of lessons in moral decay or morality, and director David Davis has done an excellent job in getting together a good set of actor-dancer-singers to present the Runyon tale.

Week Night Caution

One word of caution: if you head out to Theater Inc. from Jones College on a week-night, you’ll only have eight minutes to make it back by 11:30!