

ma (August 8, 2010 and earlier)—.22 Caliber Mouth by Lauren Robert – Industry Event Musical Review

.22 Caliber Mouth by Lauren Robert – Industry Event Theater Review

A MUSICAL TO WATCH OUT FOR



Theater Review
by Cindy Pierre
published July 3, 2010

.22 Caliber Mouth

This review is based upon an invitation-only event that took place in New York City on June 29 and 30; bigger plans are in the works.

CBGBs is dead. The music club rocked the Bowery with acts like Blondie, Talking Heads, and the Patti Smith Group for over 30 years before it was laid to rest by a rental dispute in 2006. The staged reading of *.22 Caliber Mouth*, a soulful rock musical by Lauren Robert, is exactly the kind of show with the right combination of solid performers that could have saved CBGBs, if all that was required was great music instead of gobs of cash.

Originally workshopped in 2003 and further developed at the Eugene O'Neill Musical Theater Conference, the engaging tale of two broken people in the 70s trying to find

wholeness together smolders and crackles with powerful, unpredictable vocals and nerve-slicing dialogue.

Lauren Robert, the smoky siren that authors the book, music and lyrics, plays Deanne, a hard-edged survivor of incest with a rapid tongue. Her world, typically populated by her friend Frankie (Patrick Richwood), a junkie without a home, and interrupted by her sister Ronnie (Rita Rehn), a neurotic that buries herself in work, turns topsy turvy when she meets Colin (Timothy Warnen), a rugged and mysterious man that confronts her and her sassy mouth at a bar. An uneasy but progressive attraction develops into a mutual hunger, best exploited in "Terrible Shipwrecks of Life", an ode to weathered storms.



.22 Caliber Mouth is the product of seasoned professionals. Although this concert version of the piece is abridged, Robert has retained enough material from the original to let each cast member shine in their own solos. Not content to horde the spotlight--which she very well can with her singing pipes--Robert puts each performer on a pedestal, and observes from a seated position with pride as the diversity of their styles meld into a magnificent

symphony. From the somberness of Frankie's "Anywhere Can Be Home" to Colin's spine-chilling "Turn Around and Look," nearly everything is superbly orchestrated. With the

Pg 2/2 Cont'd

exception of Carmel, a transvestite hooker played gracefully by T. Oliver Reid, each character also complements Deanne well with relationships that are the byproduct of her pain.

.22 *Caliber Mouth* may be forged out of hurt and anguish, but as a patron, you'll experience the opposite. Elation, elation, oh elation, may Robert hit us some more.

cindypierre @ stageandcinema.com