

"All I Care About" Is Corona del Mar's Chicago!
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Skidoo! With an alluring roll of the hip, the company of Corona Del Mar's "Chicago" stands pigeon toed, dripping in blood red downlight as they introduce the tragic story of Cook County's most famous murderesses. The life and lies of Roxie Hart as presented on the stage of a sultry nightclub paints not only a picture of passion, extravagance, and violence, but critiques the three-ring circus Lady Justice has become.

Bathed in the dim, smokey downlight of a lavish club, Velma (Jasmine Jenkins) and Company snap their splayed fingers and are met with deep-cutting shadows and dingy reds, purples, and golds. The cues designed by the CDM Lighting Team break the reality of the moment, and successfully add to the spectacle of the ensemble welcoming the audience into the show. They similarly set the tone for the remainder of the performance: the ruby red footlight casting dramatic shadows on the faces of the performers alludes to the murderous acts yet to be performed.

Cooing sweetly and softly from behind a vintage microphone, coy and seemingly demure Roxie's (Sabina Martin) voice is muffled but audible as she proclaims her love of her "Funny Honey". CDM's Audio Team's choice to use a voice effect on the centerstage mic is not only historically accurate--reminiscent of a dusty old microphone in a speakeasy--but also one complementary to the seductive, nasal voice of Martin herself.

Bouncing his knee, hand pressed to the back of Roxie sits Billy (Emmett Eilers), legendary Chicago trial lawyer as he promises a squawking gaggle of reporters that murderous Roxie and her beau "Both Reached for the Gun". Eilers' exaggerated facial expressions and feigned empathy are communicated clearly as he controls the movements of now marionette Roxie, stopping only to stand dramatically with widespread arms, proclaiming her actions are simply understandable.

Moving across the stage, fingers tipped to a bowler hat, Roxie (Sabina Martin) displays her newfound courage and confidence to the world in "My Baby and Me". Her strong vocals are not disrupted by the choreography of the song--choreographed by herself and Emily Hurwitz to reflect the classic Fosse movements and isolations--which she executes harmoniously with the ensemble behind her. Martin's clear diction and enunciation stays consistent throughout the number, despite her persisting nasal Chicago accent.

With a wild, extravagant display of talent, CDM's "Chicago": it's sure to "Razzle Dazzle" you!

