

■ A20 Wednesday, March 23, 1994

Musical revue strikes solid gold

■ Review

Lois Belluk
STAFF REPORTER

Whatever you're doing right now, stop. Instead, hustle down to the Surrey Arts Centre and snag a couple of tickets for *Black & Gold 2*, an evening of music guaranteed to leave tunes swirling in your head for days.

This two-hour stint of black American hits, spanning the decades from Birdland to The Platters to Motown, runs at the Surrey Arts Centre Theatre until Saturday.

Simply put, the revue is solid gold. If you like old jazz standards, if you love well-tempered harmonies, if you are dazzled by the smooth moves of athletic modern dancers, reserve your seat — quick.

Straight 'n Up and Fly Right, *Smoke Gets In Your Eyes* and *Tears on My Pillow* are the musical equivalent of fine wine — becoming only better with time. And, from the Motown era, *Stop! In the Name of Love*, *Beat Me to the Punch* and *Chain of Fools* are so familiar, audience members find themselves humming, swaying and snapping fingers along in time.

But more than just nostalgia reigns supreme on a stage built of black and gold pipes and steps. A talented, mostly confident crew of singers and musicians justify their position on centre stage and clearly revel in their two-hour workday.

Stealing the show is Chanz Perry — a veritable Mr. Energy. He sings, he dances, he leaps tall stage structures in a single bound. Whether carrying off perfectly pitched vocals in the capella *In the Still of the Night* or jumping four feet into the air with his legs in a Cossack split, Perry's energy bursts forth in infectious joy.

Sibel Thrasher probably commands the most vocal power in the show. A popular Vancouver entertainer, Thrasher works in radio and TV commercials and was nominated for a Jessie Award along with her cast in *Ain't Misbehavin'*, her previous show at the Vancouver Arts Club.

Other vocalists, the graceful Topaze Hasfal-Schou and singer-actor Tom Pickett, make equally strong contributions to the show.

With just two days to the end of their Vancouver run and less than a week before bringing the show to Surrey, the show's one white singer fell ill. Her replacement, Lori Valteau, looked grim Friday night at the Arts Club in Vancouver, her concentration split between remembering lyrics and recalling choreography. Valteau hung on valiantly, this being just her second public performance of the show. But, she was visibly relieved at the end of each number. Valteau is clearly no amateur so the week's run in Surrey should have most wrinkles ironed out.

The musicians — musical director and keyboardist Jaye Krebs, guitarist Craig McGregor and percussionist Lou Hoover — are tight, cool and in close communication with the vocalists.

Grab your tickets and hang on tight. And after you've seen the show, savor the melodies of a great revue just a while longer.

Black & Gold 2 runs 8 p.m. nightly at the Surrey Arts Centre Theatre until Saturday, March 26. For tickets call 596-1515.

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to carry on its activities under the name of the Cloverdale Rodeo and Exhibition Association

DATED this twenty-third day of March, 1994 . . .
The Lower Fraser Valley Exhibition Association by
Ralph Cave — President

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