

ET CETERA



Clive Rowe and Sharon D Clarke in Blues in the Night picture: MATT HUMPHREY

This Lady can sure sing the Blues

BLUES IN THE NIGHT

KILN THEATRE

★★★★☆

Susie McKenna directed a well-received showcase of Sheldon Epps' musical revue at Hackney Empire in 2014.

Now, she's back with a full run, giving jubilant voice to this celebration of jazz greats like Bessie Smith, Duke Ellington, Johnny Mercer and Harold Arlen.

In a rundown hotel in 1938 Chicago, the female occupants are "on the edge": let down by men, mourning their lost money and status, or dreaming of former vaudevillian glory.

So, they sing the blues, individually and – in a nice moment of solidarity – together.

Once again starring in this show while fresh from an Olivier Award win, the mighty Sharon D Clarke is like Bessie Smith reincarnated, whether relishing a song's carnal innuendo, triumphing in the battle of the sexes, or stopping the show with the cathartic wail of "Wasted Life Blues" when her 'Lady' gives into despair.

Debbie Kurup brings furious bitterness, slinky moves and impressive scatting to her sophisticate fallen on hard times, while Gemma Sutton's ingenue begins sweetly hopeful, but disillusionment soon colours her voice. Experience might be painful, but it makes for rich, soulful blues.

Marianka Swain enjoys a 1930s musical revue of blues and jazz and a blissful pairing of Clive Rowe and Sharon D Clarke

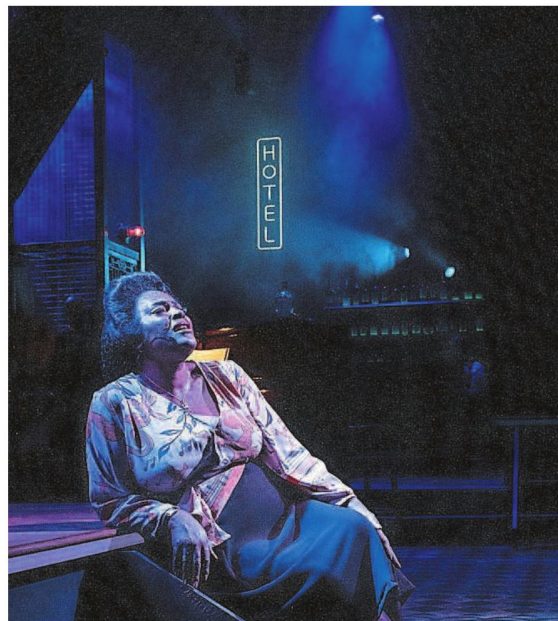
Clive Rowe's Man represents all the evils of his sex, but he also has an irresistible twinkle in his eye – and knockout top notes.

His sparring with Clarke is a highlight. Choreographer Frank Thompson adds some slick moves, including a male duet for backing dancers Aston New and Joseph Poulton.

There's also fabulous tasselled kimonos from

Lotte Collett, Neil Austin's moody lighting, an evocative Robert Jones set transporting us to the smoky basement gin joint, and creative orchestrations from Mark Dickman, who leads the dynamic onstage band.

It might lack dramatic heft, but this sultry revue is musical bliss. "I ain't getting older, I'm getting better!" proclaims Clarke's Lady – and ain't that the truth?



Sharon D Clarke as the Lady in Blues in the Night picture: MATT HUMPHREY

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Obituaries

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St. Jude and St. Anthony for prayers answered. JAS

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Ave Guselli



Known in Highgate Village as Mrs. G, sadly passed away on Saturday 13th July aged 89.

She lived and worked in Highgate for many years and ran Mr G's with her husband John, Mr. G, daughter Liliana and son John.

Mr. G passed away in 1985 but Mrs. G continued running the restaurant until 1996.

She leaves behind her children Sandra, Liliana and John, grandchildren and great grandchildren and will be greatly missed by all.

The funeral mass will be held at St. Joseph's RC Church in Highgate on 9th August at 11am.

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