

Right royal romp

The Queen knows good music when she hears it...

8/10
SHOW: Knights Of Music
CAST: Carly Graeme, Shaun V, Tracy-Lee Oliver, Thokozani Nzima
DIRECTOR: Richard Loring
VENUE: The Lyric Theatre, Gold Reef City, until November 8

BRUCE DENNILL

WITH this new show being billed as a “tribute to musical legends”, it’s difficult – before you experience the production – to separate it from the many revue acts on in theatres everywhere.

But in this case, please ignore your preconceptions.

While it’s structurally not that different from many similar long-

running franchises, it’s produced and performed at a world-class level, and on leaving the theatre, you’ll be aware you’ve witnessed some special talents in action.

The concept explains its title: it’s a collection of wonderful standards written, produced or performed by individuals who have since been knighted for their efforts.

Short biographies of said individuals – Sir Paul McCartney, Sir Tim Rice, Sir Cliff Richard, and so on – are provided by a rather annoying narration sequence that is projected on a screen at the back of the stage from time to time.

This is the only shortcoming in an otherwise fabulous show.

Perhaps the piece’s most important strength is the ceaseless energy and intense passion with which the

music is performed.

The major impetus for this comes from the brilliant arrangements – take a bow musical supervisor and arranger Bryan Schimmel.

Experience *Music Of The Night* from *Phantom Of The Opera* as a flamenco stomper, or, in one of the show’s highlights, *Close Every Door* from *Joseph And The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* as a sultry, simmering lounge number. You won’t soon forget it.

Happily even the tunes that are less tweaked are phenomenal.

It’s tough to improve on the near-perfection that is *I Dreamed A Dream* from *Les Miserables*, especially when it’s delivered with the emotion, passion and precision that Carly Graeme (**pictured, left**) provides.



She and Tracey-Lee Oliver (**pictured, right**) are both magnetic, drawing both the eye for their gorgeous good looks and the ear and heart for their world-class singing.

Shaun V and Thokozani Nzima are equally effective, with the former gradually warming up his gravelly rock tones to the point where his feral howls in

some of the crescendos cause dogs in nearby suburbs to cower in fear.

Nzima has a rare clarity and warmth to his vocals that can also be dialled up when called upon.

Producers, label heads and casting agents – please keep these guys busy. We don’t want to lose them to supposedly greener pastures...

