

HELLO, I'M EDGAR LOESSIN WITH LOESSIN AT LARGE. THERE'S AN APPROXIMATION OF THE BIG BAND SOUND AND A HARD WORKING CAST, BUT ZOOT SUIT, SUBTITLED A BIG BAND REVUE, JUST 'AIN'T GO THAT SWING.' THE REASONS ARE TWOFOLD; NUMBER ONE: IMAGINATION AND TALENT; NUMBER TWO; BUDGET. SAM LUTFIYYA AND DEAN REAGAN, THE CO-CONCEIVERS OF THE SHOW, HAAVE CREATED ONLY A PEDESTRIAN, UNINTERESTING ATTEMPT TO PAY HOMAGE TO THE GREEAT ERA OF SWING. STEPHEN LILLY'S BY-THE-BOOK CHOREOGRAPHY IS LIKE A LIFE SUPPORT SYSTEM, THAT PUMPS SOME ENERGY, SPASMODICALLY, INTO THE PIECE BUT CAN'T SAVE THE PATIENT. THREE BRILLIANT, HIGHLY SKILLED ACROBATIC DANCERS, TWINS KAREEM AND THYREEM BARNES AND JAMIE VENOM GURGOS ARE THROWN INTO THE MELEE, LIKE DASHES OF TOBASCO SAUCE, TO SPICE THINGS UP AT VARIOUS TIMES. HIGHLY TALENTED THOUGH THEY ARE, THEY SEEM OUT OF PLACE OR STYLISTICALLY WRONG A LOT OF THE TIME. THIS IS A NONPROFESSIONAL COMPANY. NEITHER THE CREATIEEE TEAM NOR THE PERFORMERS ARE MEMBERS OF THEATRICAL UNIONS, ACCORDING TO THE PROGRAM... I HASTEN TO ADD THAT THIS DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN A POOR SHOW. NEITHER DOES A LIMITED BUDGET. BUT, WHEN THE BUCKS ARE SMALL AND THE TALENT IS LIKEWISE, INSURMOOUNTABLE OBSTACLES OCCUR. AND, THEREBY HANGS THE TALE OF ZOOT SUIT. MARY FRANCES MILES IS COSTUME LDESIGNER THOUGH I SUSPECT MOST OF THE WARDROBE COME OFF SOME RUSTY RACK. AND, LET THE RECORD SHOW, THE MEN DO NOT WEAR ZOOT SUITS! I KNOW BECAUSE I OWNED ONE WITH DRAPE SHAPE, PISTOL POCKETS, AND ETC. FELIX COCHREN IS SCENIC DESIGNER. SOME OF THE SETS, ESPECIALLY THE OPENING ONE, LOOK AS IF THEY WERE PAINTED BY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS. THE SOUND IS CARNIVAL QUALITY, SHRILL AND DISTORTING. DAVID ALAN BUNN IS MUSICAL DIRECTOR OF THE ON STAGE BAND THAT IS MADE UP SO SOME FINE MUSICIANS. QUITE OFTEN I CLOSED MY EYES AND JUST LISTENED. IT ALL SEEMED BETTER THAT WAY. THIS IS EDGAR LOESSIN WITH LOESSIN AT LARGE AND I'LL SEE YOU AT THE NEXT OPENING.