



Musical Moves

OKAY, so Delhi's still not the latest haven of theatre activity in the country (that spot is still hot in Mumbai), but we sure seem to be catching up. Musicals, till a couple of years ago, were restricted to one a year, at best, and if you got really lucky, some generous souls from Mumbai would condescend to treat Delhi to a visual extravaganza.

But now Delhiites can look forward to their own homegrown productions as a deluge of musicals hits the city. Just two weeks back, there was the St. Columba's production of *Oliver Twist* directed by Delhi Music Theatre's George Pulinkala.

Then, there's *The Chorus Line*, the first musical production presented by Delhi's only jazz and contemporary dance school, the Danceworx Performing Arts Academy, along with Vivek Mansukhani's *Scene Stealers*. Co-directed by choreographer Ashley Lobo

ON the Beat

With

DEEPTI KAPOOR

mission is more into "straight theatre," was literally goaded by Lobo to co-direct but in retrospect, he feels it's a great experience. "A musical involves a much larger canvas, you're working with many first-timers and the job is that much tougher because it has to be very slick and more direct." He also feels musicals command a larger audience be-

cause it's "guaranteed entertainment and there are so many more people involved."

Another unusual feature of *The Chorus Line* is that there are no defined sets; it relies more on lighting and choreography to bring out the stage setting. The play premieres next month at Kamani Auditorium, the favoured hall.

Of course, that's not all. Delhi theatre buffs can look forward to more entertainment in the form of DMT's adaptation of *Grease*, to be staged right after Lobo's musical. Though the legendary love story between Danny Zuko and



and Mansukhani, *The Chorus Line* promises to be a melting pot of sorts, combining the three forms of art — acting, singing and dancing.

The story, which revolves around the life and background of 16 dancers who get shortlisted for a Broadway musical combines not only the song and dance typical of a musical, but involves a degree of serious acting. "It's not a purely fun and entertainment musical. The acting is more incisive and there is a great deal of human emotion involved," explains Lobo of his first directorial venture.

For Mansukhani, who, by his own ad-

Sandra Dee doesn't get a new twist in DMT's version, the sweetness of it all is bound to create a song and dance for the audiences.

Rehearsals, naturally, have been on in full swing through the summer heat, as both groups put the final touches on their productions. Two musicals, both adapted from highly acclaimed Broadway originals, both by reputed (and rival) theatre companies, and both premiering within a week of each other. It sure looks like a great season ahead for (non-serious, we may add) theatre *wallahs* in the Capital.

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