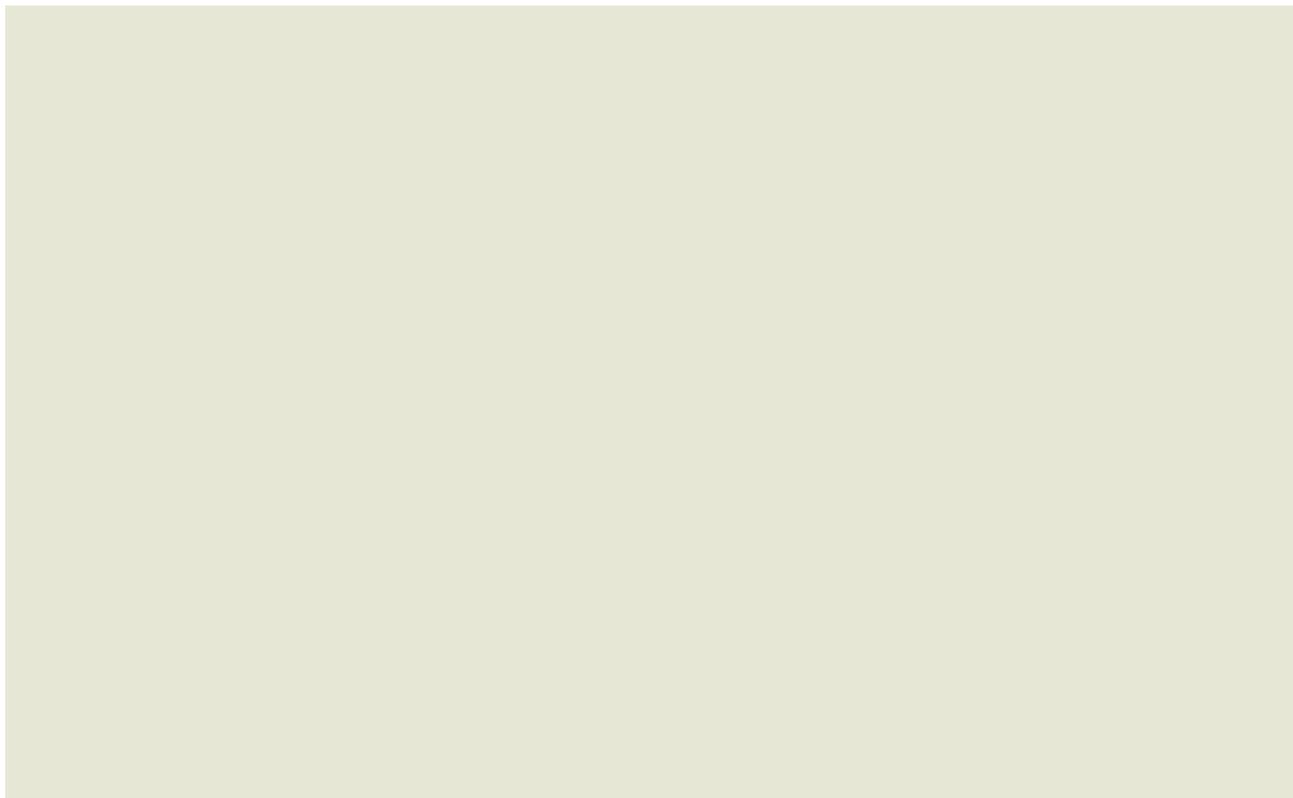




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## Ain't Misbehavin' ain't nuttin' short of spectacular



Written by John Watters



KATHLEEN A. FAHLE PHOTO

MASSACHUSETTS FATS – The music of Fats Waller is conveyed in all its aspects at Cape Playhouse in Dennis by, left to right, Robert H. Fowler, Jennifer Fouche, Tracey Conyer Lee, Joy Lynn Matthews-Jacobs, and D'Ambrose Boyd with Darius Frowner on the piano

### Cape Playhouse delivers Fats Waller's rousing repertoire

The Cape Playhouse, "America's Oldest Professional Summer Theater," was in its infant years when Harlem's composer jazzman Fats Waller was just taking off in his rise to become one of "America's first superstars." Eightysomething years later, the esteemed summer stage and the iconic jazz/ragtime/blues music of Waller's Harlem cross paths with *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *The Fats Waller Musical Show* and the results is nothing short of a soulful, exhilarating, energetic evening of Waller's music that make the old wooden theater in Dennis shimmy-shake from the foundation to the rafters.

In the quickest two hours you'll ever pass, the Richard Maltby, Jr., (*Baby*, *Miss Saigon*, *Starting Here*, *Starting Now* and *Big*) musical is filled with more than 30 songs from ballads to swing and blues to boogie, performed by a dazzling quintet of Broadway pros, and backed by a five- person onstage band led by musical director Darius Frowner. The show rolls down the tracks like a runaway A train to Harlem.

Maltby and co-creator Murray Horwitz deploy Waller's works as way to showcase the music of a number of musicians and songwriters of the golden age of New York's black nightclub era, when the stages of the Apollo Theater, The Lenox Lounge and The Cotton Club drew music fans from all over the city.

July 18, 2012  
Director/choreographer Jim Weaver has the talents of D'Ambrose Boyd, Jennifer Rouche, Robert H. Fowler, Lynn Matthews-Jacobs and Tracey Conyer Lee who sizzle every moment they are on stage both individually as an ensemble. They are simply perfect in the performances that quickly get the audiences' toes tapping and hands clapping.

Fouche and Boyd set the tone of the evening with one of Waller's best known tunes, "Honeysuckle Rose." When that's followed by Matthews-Jacobs' soulful serenade "Squeeze Me," you know you are in for a fabulous night of entertainment. Conyer Lee, who has a terrific aptitude for comedy, teams with Fowler for a fun rendition of "How Ya Baby." The entire company excels in a rousing rendition of "A Hand Full of Keys."

The second act highlights Boyd singing "Your Feet's Too Big" and "The Viper's Drag," but the absolute show-stopper comes when the ensemble blends beautifully in Waller's "Black and Blue."

Everything about the show is top-notch. The set designed by Russell Parkman, brought in intact from the Weston Playhouse Theater Company, is especially effective with its stylized artwork.

The Cape Playhouse touts itself as "Where Broadway Comes to Summer." This crackling musical review delivers on that promise.

*Ain't Misbehavin'* is playing Monday through Sundays at 8 p.m. and Tues. July 18 and 19 and 4 p.m. on Sat. July 14 at the Cape Playhouse, Rte. 6A, Dennis. For tickets and information call the Box Office at 508-385-3911 or go to [www.capeplayhouse.com](http://www.capeplayhouse.com)

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