

A musical based on the nearly 30 year old Robert Redford/Demi Moore/Woody Harrelson film *Indecent Proposal*? Who would conceive of such a thing, and why? People have been asking themselves this very question ever since Southwark Playhouse announced that [10 to 4 Productions](#) would be bringing this to their stage. But, to clarify, they claim they're basing this production on the original novel, by Jack Engelhard, and make no reference to the film. I have no photos for this entry, as photography was prohibited, even before the show. But there are some rehearsal shots over at [Southwark's website](#).

The stage is small but jam packed. There's a small thrust upstage, which holds the band, drums, baby grand piano, bass, guitar, rhythm guitar, vocalist and more. Under the stage is a roll-out holding a bed and a surface which doubles as a blackjack table in some scenes and a nightstand in others (depending on how far out the trundle is rolled). A few cabaret tables and chairs dot the remaining stage floor. Anna Kelsey (sets, costumes) and Hartley T A Kemp (lights) have done a lot with a little here. But the real charmer, from a technical standpoint, is Leigh Davies soundscape. This is fully dimensional, providing a realistic backdrop of casino sounds, thunderstorms, etc., throughout the evening.

Performances were roundly good in the preview performance. Lines were solid, as was delivery. Special kudos to Jacqui Dankworth for her portrayal of Annie Poole, the acerbic nightclub singer, friend of Jonny (Norman Bowman). Not only are her songs performed so well, but she has the best read on her character. Lizzy Connolly as Rebecca and Ako Mitchell as Larry Harris round out the principals. About the only problems I detected during this performance were audio-related, as the company and board operators are working through the issues related to live performance with amplified instruments, body mics, and all of that. One trusts these will get sorted prior to opening night.

I'll admit that I came to this fully prepared to hate it, but in all honesty, it was a good night of theatre. Well staged, well performed. The story still repulses, to a degree, but the smarm is dated. We're reminded of this pre-show, as the piped-in music is all hits from the 80s & 90s.

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