

Westcoast Troupe bubbles up some Harlem 'Sugar'

By Jay Handelman , Herald-Tribune / Thursday, April 10, 2014

The Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe is bringing an eventful season to a close by celebrating the glory days of the Harlem Renaissance with the Broadway musical “Bubbling Brown Sugar.”

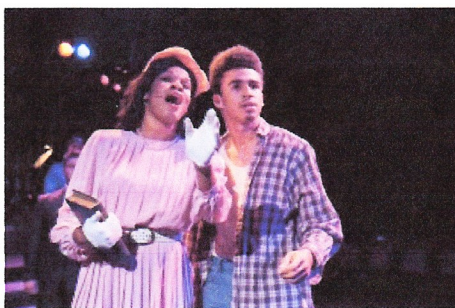
Director Harry Bryce describes the show as “an iconic work of African-American theater; one of the first successful musicals on Broadway with a primarily African-American cast.”

Conceived by actress Rosetta LaNoire, “Bubbling Brown Sugar” features songs by such writers as Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Cab Calloway, Fats Waller and Eubie Blake, among others. The hit songs include “Sweet Georgia Brown,” “Honeysuckle Rose,” “Stormy Monday Blues,” “Sophisticated Lady,” “I Got It Bad” and “God Bless the Child.”



From left, Earley Dean, Ariel Blue, Tsadok Porter and Horace Smith are part of the large cast of the Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe production of “Bubbling Brown Sugar.” DON DALY PHOTO/PROVIDED BY WBTT

A group of actors familiar to WBTT audiences leads the cast, including Ariel Blue, Earley Dean, Chris Eisenberg, choreographer Donald Frison, Tsadok Porter, Horace Smith and Alyssa White. They are joined by several actors new to the troupe, including Danae DeShazer, Nerlynn Etienne, Wellington Fordham, Derric Gobourne Jr., Lawrence Mazza, Adrienne Pitts and Kristen Wilson.



Alyssa White, left, and Chris Eisenberg in a scene from Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe’s “Bubbling Brown Sugar.” DON DALY PHOTO

LaTerry Butler, a musician who played in the show’s national tour, is the musical director. The production features sets by Michael Newton-Brown, lighting by Michael Pasquini and costumes by Dee White.

“Bubbling Brown Sugar” opens Friday and continues through May 11 at the Westcoast theater, 1646 10th Way, Sarasota. Tickets are \$29.50. For more information; 366-1505; wbttstrq.org



JAY
HANDELMAN