

## THEATER

### Hot lesbian action in StageQ's *Pulp*

[Katie Reiser](#) on Monday 03/10/2008 4:07 pm



Dana Pellebon as Vivian and Susan Carnell as Terry  
Credit: Alex Szele

Crushes, skeet shooting, drag performances, lesbian comedy and music abound in the StageQ production of *Pulp*. This musical satire of 1950s lesbian novels shows what happens when Terry Logan (Sue Carnell), a former pilot in the WACs, hotfoots it to Chicago in 1956 to work at a lesbian bar called the Well.

The production is most fun when director Tara Ayres' cast surrenders to the play's arch campiness, making lifted eyebrows, double entendres and puns work. But it gets a little dull during long stretches where it's played (pardon the expression) straight.

Carnell's Terry is a no-nonsense gal whose signature catchphrase is "I'm a lesbian, plain and simple. I don't make any bones about it." Carnell deftly tackles her monologues, addressing the audience directly in the overwrought prose of Sapphic pulp fiction. She has a tryst with the voluptuous Bing (Laura Spring, who has a bratty swagger) before setting her sights on her new boss.

Dana Pellebon's Vivian Blaine, the bar-owner and chanteuse, is indeed crush-worthy with her lovely face, long legs and glamour-puss costumes. In fact, most of Siobhan Edge's costume-design energy and budget seem to have been spent on her.

Most of the cast members are better actors than singers, so some of the musical numbers are a bit disappointing (even with able accompaniment on piano from Harris Lemberg). But there are engaging scenes, too, as when Carnell dances with sporting clays champ Winny (Mary-Elizabeth Pasquesi) and the Barbara Stanwyck-obsessed Pepper (Jennifer Jenkins).

Ultimately this *Pulp* was a little mushier than I'd hoped for, but by the show's end I had grown fond of the ladies at the Well and was pleased with how the various couplings were sorted out.

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