

HAODS are spaced out in latest offering

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HAODS's Return To The Forbidden Planet, playing at The Kenton Theatre until Saturday, is great fun — two hours of pure escapism to a galaxy far, far away.

This rock ‘n’ roll musical takes Shakespeare's The Tempest as its starting point and fuses it with the Fifties kitsch sci-fi flick, Forbidden Planet (itself loosely based on The Tempest), in a camp comedic caper as we accompany the crew of US Starship Albatross to the planet D’Illyria and encounter marooned scientist Dr Prospero, his beautiful daughter Miranda and faithful Robot, Ariel.

Clad in inter-galactic gladrags — a shimmer-fest of silver and gold mini-dresses and hotpants — the Damage Control Crew, led by navigation officer, Chastity Gone, got the show off to a flying start with a Polarity Reversal Drill which had the entire audience up in arms (literally) raising the first of many laughs.

The cast delivered some stellar comedy moments with Joshua Young keeping the chuckles coming with his cartoonish, Popeye Captain Tempest, Phil Couch as a wonderfully camp Bosun Arras and Karen Hemingway showing great comedic timing as Ariel the Robot. It must be harder than she made it look to stay in character as a robot, especially when you're singing and dancing, and she gave a mesmerising performance of Who's Sorry Now.

The almost non-stop music is the backbone of Return To The Forbidden Planet and the band, under the direction of Ian Head, didn't disappoint as they treated us to hit after hit from the Fifties and

Sixties and the cast delivered some fine vocals too.

Johnpaul Maillard excelled as the love struck Cookie, with his voice meltingly smooth for Only the Lonely and packing a punch leading a belting rendition of Ain't Gonna Wash For A Week that really saw the cast hit their stride.

Claire Wallis, as the starship's science officer and wicked wife of Dr Prospero, showed a gutsy powerful voice for It's A Man's World but softly soulful for Go Now, while Lucy Potter's clear melodic tones, as Miranda, suited the wistful Teenager In Love perfectly.

It's camp, it's funny, it's energetic, it's packed with fab music and it's entertaining. And it's certainly a great way to forget planet reality for a couple of hours and have a damn good laugh instead.

Rebecca Hill