ROYAL

Presented by Prince Jaylin and Prince's Playhouse in association with The Copacabana Nightclub

Written by Price Jaylin; Directed by Anthony Logan Cole

The Copacabana Nightclub, 625 W 51st St New York, NY 10019

September 27, 2026 -December 20, 2026

Walking into Royal was an adventure that began before the show did. When I walked in, I was greeted as if I was walking into a nightclub, with a security guard at the door and someone at the front desk, and it immediately felt like I

was getting ready for a night out of fun. That is exactly what it turned out to be. As I went up the stairs, the lovely performers greeted me casually, setting a relaxed and welcoming tone. The room opened into a space with a bar, guests mingling, and seated tables, and I felt the great ambience from the moment I stepped inside.

The Copacabana is exactly what I imagine when I think of a nightclub, and the production leaned into that fully. Chris Verde's lighting and sound design gave the room a dark, smoky atmosphere, complete with a smoke machine and music with a DJ kind of vibe. With the bar open before the show, it felt like a night at the club, but with the energy of a theatrical performance. Under the direction and design of Anthony Logan Cole, Royal blended those two worlds in a way that felt natural to me.

But there is more to Royal than its nightclub atmosphere.

Once the music started, I watched a showcase of performers who each specialized in their own craft, and they made every spectacular acrobatic movement look so easy. I saw Jack'd Bat perform an acrobatic stunt on a rope while balancing on a chair, another performer swallow a balloon and make it reappear, and several performers dance on the rope and the pole. Even with one performer out sick on the night I attended, someone stepped into the role and the show went on just fine. Between the stunts, I found plenty of funny, interesting, and entertaining moments.

I noticed that the costumes were just as much a part of the show. Every performer started fully clothed and, as the performance went on, slowly removed their costume to reveal a more provocative look. At times, audience members around me were even prompted to take off parts of the performers' clothes. The colors and materials were bright and flashy, with a bit of cosplay mixed in: one performer appeared in a construction suit, while another did a fashion walk in a fashionista look.

To me, Royal is a mix of nightclub energy and adult entertainment, centered on the idea of sexual liberation and having fun. I also appreciated that it is a space open to everyone. Whether you are part of the LGBT community or not, I felt this was a show anyone could attend and be entertained by.

What stood out most to me was how safe the environment felt. Consent is something that has become prevalent in these kinds of spaces, and I saw that Royal takes it seriously. During the interactive moments, no performer did anything an audience member had not approved of. Peer pressure was not a thing in this setting; consent and safety were the number one priority. As a member of the press, I appreciated that Cole made sure I was protected and never pushed into anything I didn't want to do. He was considerate about making sure everyone had a great time and respected the space.

For me, that interactivity is what sets Royal apart. When the performers asked for volunteers, I watched one audience member step up and get brought on stage to perform alongside them. This is not one of those shows

where I just sat down and watched. I got the performances and the nightclub aesthetic, but I also got the opportunity to interact with the performers. Even the brief 15 minute intermission became part of the experience, as I got to sit down, mingle, and talk with some of the performers as they went around.

My night didn't end when the show did. The afterparty, curated by Prince Jaylin, was really social, with guests interacting and talking with the performers. One guest had even chosen Royal as the place to celebrate their birthday, which I think says a lot about the kind of night it offers. Overall, I found Royal to be a nice mix of an entertaining, interactive show with a hint of nightclub aesthetics and vibe.

If you would like to go out with friends, have fun, and interact with the performers, I would say Royal is definitely an interesting night out.

Click HERE for tickets.

Review by Nickson Frederick.

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