

CINDY MARCHIONDA

Press



CINDY MARCHIONDA AT THE LAURIE BEECHMAN THEATER REVIEW BY JENA TESSE FOX APRIL 10, 2009

When she strode up to the microphone at the Laurie Beechman theatre for the final performance of her latest cabaret (for the time being), Cindy Marchionda immediately began to rock out to the fun rhythm of Neil Sedaka's "Love Will Keep Us Together." In a few seconds and a few movements, she set the mood for the entire evening: a casual and funky hour of pop, jazz, comedy and...well, fun.

Somewhat unusually for contemporary cabarets, most of the numbers were popular standards from several generations, turning the show (if not officially) into a retrospective of American popular music. From Johnny Mercer and Leiber & Stoller to the Beatles and the Indigo Girls, plenty of genres were represented, letting Marchionda demonstrate not only her vocal range, but her mastery of different musical styles as well.

Andy Gale's stage direction and Ray Fellman's music direction did much to keep the pace of the evening even throughout the different styles of music, and let jazz, rock and power ballads blend together smoothly. Likewise, her banter paints a portrait of the artist as a young woman, describing her struggles with her artistic career, her job at what she calls "Douche Bank" and family stories. Through it all, she maintains a strong sense of humor and a sharp (and knowing) wit, keeping the energy up and the mood bright. (Her apparently improvised chatter with backup singers Brandon Cutrell and Michael Sheridan was equally funny.)

From her sexy and playful "Long John Blues" (who knew dentistry could be so hot?) to the smooth and jazzy "Goody Goody" (by Tommy George and Johnny Mercer & Matt Malneck, respectively), Marchionda throws herself into the emotion of each song, bringing the audience along for the ride. It's difficult not to get caught up when a performer so clearly loves what she's singing: When she sang Randy Newman's "Short People," for example, Marchionda performed it with a wide, innocent and sweet smile (the punchline was her list of famous people under five feet tall, including Judy Garland and Bonnie Parker; the visual punchline is Marchionda's own 4'11" stature); she let Lieber & Stoller's "I've Got Them Feelin' Too Good Today Blues" be adorable and swingy, reveling in the early rock 'n' roll energy one rarely hears in cabaret venues.

Marchionda's song list featured only one true showtune—"If I Sing," from Maltby & Shire's *Closer Than Ever*, which was preceded by a poignant story about her father's battle with Alzheimer's. The moment was hauntingly beautiful, and coming towards the end of the evening, it offered a poignant emotional cap on the show. Again,

Marchionda wrapped herself in the emotion of the song and the moment, performing with powerful honesty. The following two songs—Jackson Browne's "Sky Blue and Black" and the Indigo Girls' "History of Us"—were equally gentle and emotional, and let the evening end on a quiet note rather than on a raucous one. It worked quite nicely, and after the energetic fun of the beginning and middle of the show, the final triptych offered emotional closure.

Cindy Marchionda will be back at the Beechman in the fall, and will hopefully sing many of these songs again.

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CINDY MARCHIONDA - "LIVE AT THE BEECHMAN" AN EX "SPIDER WOMAN" SPINS HER WEB IN CABARET ... BY JOHN HOGLUND SEPTEMBER 10, 2009

With a very clever song list and enough spunk and charisma to light up Times Square (which is down the block), Cindy Marchionda took over the stage at the Laurie Beechman like a tiny tornado, on her opening night of a four show, once-a-month run, through November. No surprise there; she didn't win all those musical theatre raves for nothing (among her accolades came some rave reviews for playing the role of Aurora in *Kiss Of The Spider Woman* out of town; the same role won a Tony for Chita Rivera on Broadway.) Here, directed by Andy Gale with musical director Ray Fellman at the piano leading the band, Marchionda ripped into some complex tunes by a vastly diverse mix of composers, and made them her own.

This spunky musical theatre gal is in the beginning stages of making her mark in the cabaret world. And from the looks of it, she's heading in the right direction. After a somewhat loud opening two numbers, she sensitively segued into Jamie Cullum's visceral "Photograph," "... just another story, caught up in another photograph I've found ... seems like another person."

Marchionda delivered this trenchant story song with sensitivity and heartfelt conviction. But again, the band was a bit loud, causing her to lose some of the intimacy she was going for.

Between songs, she told funny anecdotes including one about a wise music teacher who stopped her from singing "Losing My Mind," when she was very young, and a wordy tale about a dentist, that was humorous. Some of it was marred just a bit by her penchant for profanity (which, incidentally, is no longer raunchy-hip, but boring). Occasionally, this took away from some more serious moments she was going for, and, she took so long to get to the point in the graphic tale of a periodontist, causing a slight lull. Ultimately, it all led into a cute blues/comedy ditty, "Long John Blues" ("... he said he wouldn't hurt me but he filled my hole inside"). She continued with even more jabs about the dentist who is short and Jewish.

This sent into her into Randy Newman's tricky "Short People," which she handled well.

By the time she got around to The Beatles' "Got To Get You Into My Life," in medley with Smokey Robinson's "Oooh, Baby, Baby," she was flying and back in game. This medley became a serious highlight for her with another beautiful arrangement. She was so effective, that it was worth the price of admission alone just to hear this imaginative treatment. It also served to show what she is truly capable of, without some random cluttered patter. She let loose, and her emotionality and understanding of words was inherently effective. She also shined big time on a silly ditty called "I've Got Them Too Good Today Blues." Her set up for the heartfelt "If I Sing" (Maltby- Shire) was full of meaning even if just a bit graphic on the delicate subject of dementia, which is a personal issue in her family – and often for unsuspecting others.

A burlesque-style "Goody, Goody," arranged by Mark Janas, worked really well. Another Jamie Cullum song, "Mind Trick," wasn't quite as effective. Jackson Browne's folk/rock ballad, "Sky Blue and Black," was a hands down winner across the board, giving this petite-size pretty lady the finest moment in her show. An eighties love song, "History Of Us" by Indigo Girls, almost recalled a Jane Olivor style that worked to perfection.

Overall, this musical theatre lady with a history of spider webs, is off and running in cabaret. Some careful editing might help weed out the excess banter and shape her show into the perfect one she has the full potential for.

Cindy Marchionda is on the move. Watch out world.

She appears next on Saturday, Oct. 17 and Nov. 21 at 8pm.

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The New York Times

ON THE TOWN REVIEW BY ALVIN KLEIN
AUGUST 10, 2003, SUNDAY

“ . . . More contrast is evident in their pursuers: **CINDY MARCHIONDA**, fiercely funny as Hildy, the taxi driver, and Molly Sorohan seizing all colors of Claire, the daft, sex-crazed anthropologist. But everyone is in pursuit of Ivy, the elusive Miss Subways. Shevaun Cavanaugh Kast is a sweetheart in the role, making us understand why the chase is on.” . . .

VARIETY

A CHORUS LINE REVIEW BY MIKE GIULIANO
AUGUST 23, 1996, MONDAY

“ . . . Backed by the mirror-wall that makes their competitiveness, camaraderie and confessional speeches all the more visible to the audience, these wannabe chorus members include such go-getter types as Christina Marie Norrup as a bubbly Texan named Judy; Mark Evans as Mike, who lives up to his assertion that *I Can Do That*; and **CINDY MARCHIONDA** as the vivacious Puerto Rican dancer Diana Morales. . . ”

Newsday

ON THE TOWN REVIEW BY MICHAEL BRACKEN

“ . . . Still, there are some numbers that do a delightful job of pushing the plot along. These include “come *Up To My Place* by which cabdriver Hildy (**CINDY MARCHIONDA**) snares sailor Chip (Adam Wylie)...Both **MARCHIONDA** and Sorohan deliver impressive comic turns as the female halves of the secondary love stories. . . ”

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CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN REVIEW BY HEDY WEISS

“A tiny spitfire with a hint of Chita Rivera (the role's originator) and Liza Minnelli all rolled into one. She sings and dances with stunning, stellar force. She lights up the stage...”

Chicago Tribune

KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN REVIEW BY RICHARD CHRISTIANSEN

FEBRUARY 2, 1998

“... Their Spider Woman, in the role Chita Rivera played in New York and on tour, is CINDY MARCHIONDA, a slip of a girl with a fiery presence who is lavishly dressed in Aurora costumes by designer Jack Kirkby. . . .”

New York Blade
New York's Only Gay Owned & Operated LGBT Newspaper

ON THE TOWN REVIEW BY MICHAEL BRACKEN

SEPTEMBER 28, 2001

“... CINDY MARCHIONDA throws herself winningly into that Actors' Studio lament, *Nothing*. . . .”

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A CHORUS LINE REVIEW
SEPTEMBER 29, 2001

“ . . Just before the final cut, they all ponder what they would do if they couldn’t dance anymore, in the song that made the show a standard, *What I Did For Love*, sung with gusto by CINDY MARCHIONDA as Diana. . . ”

San Jose Mercury News

A CHORUS LINE REVIEW

“ . . CINDY MARCHIONDA gives the show its emotional core as the gutsy Morales setting fire to *Nothing* and *What I Did For Love* . . . ”



A CHORUS LINE REVIEW BY EVERETT EVANS

“ . . . All warmth and sincerity, CINDY MARCHIONDA sings beautifully in *Nothing* and *What I Did For Love* . . . ”



A CHORUS LINE REVIEW
SEPTEMBER 2001

"Deserving of her own special mention, CINDY MARCHIONDA embodies the best package of voice, dance and dramatic ability."