



JONATHAN WHITTON



Cabaret Exchange

“Raising the Bar on All Things Cabaret”

Think of a young Tommy Tune re-imagined by Picasso, and that might be your first impression of Jonathan Whitton, as it was mine. With an ease and surety that belies his angular gait, he steps up to the microphone and lets his gentle wit enchant an eager audience. Possessing a clear tenor voice and a well-enunciated, intelligent way with a lyric, he quickly ingratiates himself with a savvy New York sensibility and a good dollop of Southern charm, most notably in his interpretation of “Lazy Afternoon.” Simple, wry, almost seductive.

Skillfully accompanied on piano by Tamra Stephenson, he begins with “Watching The Show,” and works his way through a series of modern story-songs, the best of which are “Wicked Little Town,” from Hedwig and the Angry Inch, “He Never Did That Before,” from Songs From An Unmade Bed and Carole King’s “It’s Too Late.” And just when you start longing for a little more hummable melody, he fills the bill with a Sondheim medley of “Good Thing Going” and “Not a Day Goes By.” I kept hoping he’d complete the arc and show off his dancing skills with a simple soft shoe like “Once in Love with Amy.” Maybe next show.

Perfect Finite is a compact, well thought out and entertaining cabaret show that exhibits Jonathan Whitton’s slightly offbeat personality and considerable skills to their best advantage. It’s worth spending an hour at the Laurie Beechman to get to know him. You won’t regret it.

Jay Jeffries
Cabaret Exchange
August 19, 2007
www.cabaretexchange.com



Jonathan Whitton looks and speaks with a youthful, artless enthusiasm, but as the old song says, *You'd Be Surprised*. He sings with understanding and maturity, examining, as he promises, "the fine line between beauty and anguish." Pretty ambitious order, although "beauty and anguish" are somewhat tailor-made for a cabaret act. Whitton, however, gives you a lot more. From his first song, *Watching the Show* (Ross/Keenan), you lean in and listen. Whitton is a storyteller-plus. The "plus" being his flexible tenor voice, sturdy, confident, and well trained. He has an agenda and he delivers.

Whitton's song list at The Laurie Beechman Theatre comes from contemporary songwriters, with a couple of old timers like Stephen Sondheim with *Good Thing Going/Not a Day Goes By* and Carole King's *It's Too Late*. He delivers his selections with compelling forcefulness, moving from optimistic and naivety, to frustration, to bitterness, those places we have all visited. His selections include that Monet of theatre songs, *Lazy Afternoon* (Latouche/Moross), where he never loses focus on the impressionistic shadings. He relishes the bite in Sondheim's *Know Things Now* and mines the despair of living in this *Wicked Little Town* (Trask/Mitchell). He displays the span of a relationship in *Sweet Dreams* (Bucchino).

Songs From an Unmade Bed features lyrics by Mark Campbell with music by various composers, mostly reminiscences of love, lust, and loss. From this show, Whitton chooses his title song, the discovery of a lusty affair with *Perfect Finite* and the wry worrisome of *He Never Did That Before* - "...that's too advanced for Akron / Unless he met some Brazilian there."

In a series of love and loss songs, Whitton chooses to stand still, hands at his side, letting the voice interpret the song, although he brings in some body language with Jason Robert Brown's *I Can Do Better Than That*.

His patter is disarming and sharp, and his accompanist, Tamra Stephenson plays a robust piano supporting the strength of his songs. Delivering his finite agenda, Jonathan Whitton is a performer to watch and appreciate.

Elizabeth Ahlfors
Cabaret Scenes
August 3, 2007
www.cabaretszenes.com

TALKIN' BROADWAY

Dozens – if not scores - of young performers make their debut in cabaret every year. Most of them are talented to a degree. Most have a limited gift that, while intriguing, probably won't be enough to provide them with a future in the art form. Some are very talented but unpolished; these artists certainly need to be encouraged and supported. Then there is that exceptional debut in which a young person steps up to the microphone and simply owns the stage right from the start. We've seen it rarely; Julie Reyburn comes to mind. So does Scott Coulter.

We happily saw it again this summer when Jonathan Whitton began his show at the Laurie Beechman Theatre. A musical theater performer with considerable craft and skill at his disposal, this young and personable entertainer put together an act consisting of a winning combination of material that rested largely on contemporary musical theatre songs by the likes of William Finn, John Bucchino, and Jason Robert Brown.

In addition to his wise choice of material, there were three other reasons for his immediate success: 1) A lovely and reliable tenor voice, 2) Excellent acting chops: he knew what he was singing and why; he expressed his emotions not only in his singing but in his acting, 3) Whitton has an engaging and winning personality; he's likeable. That goes a long, long way in cabaret. And we think, in fact, that Jonathan Whitton will, indeed go a long, long way in cabaret.

Barbara & Scott Siegel
Talkin' Broadway
September 6, 2007
www.talkinbroadway.com

Jonathan Whitton

ADDITIONAL PRESS QUOTES

“Poised, handsome and bursting with charisma, Jonathan Whitton could easily pass for one of those Calvin Klein underwear models on billboards that looms over the madding crowds near Times Square (don't pretend you haven't seen them!) He's that lithe and that photogenic. An angular face with a ready grin, and a mop of Beatles' style hair, he is also smart. An alumnus of the British American Dramatic Academy with a B.S, from Skidmore, he also has a serious theater habit with an impressive roster of contemporary vehicles under his belt that he starred or took part in.

He is getting serious about cabaret... he might become a force on today's scene... There is also something oddly appealing about his demeanor with his mangle-mangle of goofy expressions and a contagious zest for anything theater-related. Mostly, he possesses a key ingredient for success and stardom that charisma I mentioned. Any performer, no matter how talented vocally or comedically, hasn't a prayer unless they can win an audience over with a wink and a smile. In that department, Whitton is a winner.”

John Hoglund
Cabaret Hotline - “After Dark”

“Jonathan Whitton exudes talent and taste. He understands that songs exist to be acted and, furthermore, that show tunes written for dramatic situations frequently offer the richest acting opportunities. Such understanding may spring from his training. Not every cabaret performer can claim to have studied voice with Simon McBurney's Complicite troupe as well as with top-flight British actors Henry Goodman, Diana Quick, and Ruthie Henshall and Ireland's Fiona Shaw. I'm impressed... The songs he chooses to act — usually by current masters — are sterling.”

David Finkle
Backstage Magazine

"Jonathan Whitton makes a delightful debut with his topnotch tenor voice and bright and boyish charm. His love of musical theater shines, along with his stellar sense of storytelling. To quote the title of his opening number, it's a joy 'Watching the Show' whenever Whitton sings.”

Wayman Wong
New York Daily News

"Lola may have been blessed with 'a little brains, a little talent,' but Jonathan Whitton has both of these assets in spades plus a lovely voice, an engaging personality that is offbeat and fresh, and informing his entire show, a distinctive artistic viewpoint.”

Roy Sander
Cabaret Columnist & Critic (formerly of Backstage)

JONATHAN WHITTON

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www.jonwhitton.com

EMC

Height: 5'11"

Vocal Range: Low B-Flat to High A

Hair: Dark Brown

Eyes: Chocolate Brown

NYC CREDITS

SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL	<i>Solo Cabaret</i>	The Laurie Beechman Theatre
THE STREET* [^]	<i>Hamilton</i>	Midtown Theatre Festival
* MITF Award Nominee: Outstanding Actor in a Musical		
PERFECT FINITE	<i>Solo Cabaret</i>	The Laurie Beechman Theatre
* 2008 Back Stage Bistro Award Winner – Outstanding Debut		
PROJECT 30	<i>Various Roles</i>	The Duplex, The Triad Another Urban Riff

REGIONAL EQUITY

THE LAST FIVE YEARS	<i>Jamie</i>	Channel Z Productions
THE MIRACLE WORKER	<i>James Keller</i>	Vermont Stage Company
LOST IN YONKERS	<i>Jay</i>	Flat Rock Playhouse
LOST IN YONKERS	<i>Jay</i>	Charlotte Repertory Theatre
FALSETTOS	<i>Jason</i>	Charlotte Repertory Theatre
THE COMEDY OF ERRORS	<i>Antipholus of Saratoga</i>	Saratoga Shakespeare
CABARET	<i>Master of Ceremonies</i>	Trustus Theater
HEDWIG & THE ANGRY INCH	<i>Hedwig /Tommy Gnosis</i>	Trustus Theater
THE TRANSPARENCY OF VAL (BY STEPHEN BELBER) [^]	<i>Rudi</i>	Trustus Theater
BEAST ON THE MOON (BY RICHARD KALINOSKI) [^]	<i>Vincent</i>	Trustus Theater

OTHER REGIONAL/EDUCATIONAL THEATRE

A NEW BRAIN	<i>Gordon Schwinn</i>	Skidmore College, NY
HOW I LEARNED TO DRIVE	<i>Male Greek Chorus</i>	Skidmore College, NY
THE SANTALAND DIARIES	<i>The Macy's Elf</i>	HMT, NY
PICASSO AT THE LAPIN AGILE	<i>Picasso</i>	HMT, NY
VISITING MR. GREEN	<i>Ross</i>	Curtain Call, NY
GREATER TUNA	<i>Various Roles</i>	Curtain Call, NY
SIMON SPEAKS	<i>Hank/Ensemble</i>	Edinburgh Festival, Scotland

TRAINING/EDUCATION

Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY
BS in Theatre

British American Dramatic Academy, London, UK
Concentration: Shakespeare in Performance

Voice: Andrew Wade; Acting: Joe Mydell, Ruthie Henshall, Complicite, Ian Woolridge, Nick Hutchinson, Diana Quick, Henry Goodman, Fiona Shaw; Awards: SCTA Award- Best Actor In SC (Midsummer Nights Dream); Free Times "Best Of" Awards- Best Theatre Production (Hedwig and the Angry Inch & Cabaret); Other: Member of the Manhattan Association of Cabarets and Clubs (MAC) and Cabaret West

[^] World Premiere