

I Only Have Eyes For You - Theatre Review

A review by Suzanne Birrell | Discover Hollywood



Corky Hale, singer and instrumentalist, has brought a labor of love to the Montalbon Theatre. Presenting *I Only Have Eyes For You - The Life and Lyrics of Al Dubin*, this new musical features lyrics by Al Dubin, music mostly by Harry Warren, book by Jerry Leichtling and Arlene Sarner, and musical direction by Gerald Sternbach. The production is brilliantly directed and infectious choreographed by Kay Cole. The Golden Age of Hollywood returns to the stage in this biographical song review; a polished jewel in old Hollywood style.

Al Dubin is one of the most prolific composers of the most enduring of The Americana Songbook. *I Only Have Eyes For You* is smart writing, memorable songs, and a bittersweet story of a real man who was tortured by a memory and battled his feelings of doubt.

The entire production from start to finish is impeccable. The acoustics of the Montalbon make this the perfect venue for this old Hollywood show. The costumes by Debra McGuire are exquisite. The dancing is impeccable with each dancer displaying their personality while all moving with the same precision and grace. Even the costumed set movers had style and panache - I expected them to be on the stage for the bow - we would have applauded them as well. The singing was absolutely glorious and the harmonies were phenomenal. The set design was simple and moved gracefully from scene to scene. Stage Manager Art Brickman is to be much applauded for the smooth run of an incredibly complex show.

The book by Jerry Leichtling and Arlene Sarner was brilliant in the way it moved from story to song. The direction by award winning director/choreographer Kay Cole was absolutely brilliant in the way each of the characters evolved thru the production, the way the story

unfolded thru the songs, the way the mini sets moved in and out, the use of the stage-Gosh, it is a great show.

The entire cast was spot on. It was one of those productions where you can't imagine anyone else playing the roles. Jared Gertner as Al Dubin has a wonderfully fluid voice and is light on his feet. Nicki Bohne is totally endearing Helen Dubin, Constantine Rousouli as Harry Warren, Kayla Parker as Ruby Keeler, Justin Wilcox as Al Jolson, Renee Marino as Carmen Miranda, Elijah Rock rocked as Cab Calloway (Left), Valeie Perri is Minna Dubin and delightfully more, and Robert Pieranunzi as Busby Berkeley. Featured in the ensemble (in alphabetical order) are: Julian De Guzman, Daniel May, Jeffrey Scott Parsons, Dominic Pierson, Kim Louise Taylor, Katherine Tokarz and Karl Warden, and Penny Wildman.

Do not miss *I Only Have Eyes For You*. It's a keeper. It's a fitting memorial to a composer who gave so much to music theatre. Al Dubin with Harry Warren composed the songs for 42 nd Street which is coming soon to Hollywood and that alone should inspire you to see this one. If I had the wherewithal, I would see this again and again. A great story, fabulous music, exquisite dancing, stellar performers, impeccable directing, in a perfectly tuned theatre- What's not to like?

I ONLY HAVE EYES FOR YOU -
The Life and Lyrics of Al Dubin

Montalban Theatre, 1615 Vine St. in Hollywood
through June 12, 2016.

Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday evenings at 8pm •
Saturdays at 2pm and 8pm, Sundays at 3pm