

Carolyn Lee Jones stars at Uptown Theater Cabaret

It was refreshing to hear Carolyn Lee Jones sing Johnny Mercer at the Uptown Theater Cabaret in Grand Prairie on Tuesday night. Unlike many entertainers who style themselves as vocalists (willingly or by default), Ms. Jones can actually sing.

In song after song, she showed a level of breath control that enabled her to stretch a phrase and play with the pitch, volume, and timbre long after many other singers would have simply moved on.

Working through over a dozen Johnny Mercer songs, she showed a pleasing breadth of musical talents. In "Blues in the Night," for example, she delivered the first part of the song in a suitably assertive style, using a voice that could have been heard across the four lanes of Main Street if the doors were open. The bridge (middle part) of the song, however, calls for a lyrical approach, which she delivered with impeccable sensitivity and nuance.

Ms. Jones was ably supported by pianist Brad Williams and bassist Jonathan Fisher. Mr. Williams was especially impressive with his solo on "I Remember You," where he created a concerto-like feeling by developing a simple phrase with dramatic intensity.

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