

LAS VEGAS SHOWCASE

Mark Tan
IN
LAS VEGAS



POPULAR ORGANIST AT LANDMARK



JACK LOREN, POPULAR LAS VEGAS ORGANIST, APPEARS NIGHTLY IN THE NIGHTHAWK LOUNGE OF THE LANDMARK HOTEL FROM 9 P.M. TO 3 A.M. LOREN'S MUSIC BRINGS PLEASURE TO THE HOTEL'S GUEST BOTH IN THE FORM OF FAVORITE OLD STANDARDS AND CONTEMPORARY HITS.


DATeline NEW YORK...BARRY ASHTON'S "CATCH A RISING STAR" opened last week at the Royal Box of the Americana Hotel. Polished, primed and presented for full stardom are four newcomers - MARA LYNN BROWN, DAPHNE DAVIS, CASHEARS and TRINA PARKS - with five big production numbers choreographed by STEVE MERRITT with that distinctive Ashton touch of opulence, glamour and lavish wardrobe. The vocal ensemble under the direction of JEREMY STEWART, with arrangements by Stewart, RUBY RASKIN & BERNIE LEWIS, is first rate featuring the voices, individually and collectively of MICHAEL HAWKINS, SHIRLEY SYPERT, MELINDA MORENO, TOD EDSALL, ROD BURTON, and LINDA PIESIK. The dancers are as talented as they are sparkling. Platinum blonde and legs-for-days RONNIE ROGICH (featured in numerous Las Vegas productions like "Flesh", "Love In", etc.) is ever delicious; SHEILA BLAIR (who played both innocent Sara Sweet and sexy Eve in Ashton's Union Plaza opus "Verve - It Started with Eve"); SANDI ORCUTT ("Love In"), DENISE WATSON, MELANIE CRONK, BRIDGET HOLLOMAN and males GENE MONTOYA & DAVID RODRIQUEZ are featured as the Steve Merritt Dancers. Highlight of the productions is BRADFORD CRAIG'S and ALAN SILVESTRI'S high campy put on of comebacks and nostalgic returns of longtime favorites. The number called "There's No More Room for Nostalgia" or "No, No, Not Again, Nanette" is a hilarious bit of special material featuring the singers and dancers in solo spots as THE ANDREW SISTERS, MARLENE DIETRICH (Sheila), GINGER ROGERS (Ronni), ESTHER WILLIAMS, BETTY GRABLE, DOROTHY LAMOUR, etc. Each of the quartet of new stars has his/her own specialty and each offers a tasty selection of their best. TRINA PARKS with Broadway ("Emperor Jones", "Her First Roman", etc.), tv specials and movies ("Diamonds Are Forever", "The Great White Hope") and numerous Vegas appearances behind her

built a solid showcase of singing and dancing around her mid-point showstopper "Cry Me A River". Australian impressionist DAPHNE DAVIS offers uncanny carbons of such infrequently 'done' stars as Gloria Swanson, Carmen Miranda, and her unique Liza Minnelli AND Joel Grey from Cabaret. CASHEARS scores a big hit with his own brand of sophisticated soul following in the footsteps of stars like Billy Daniels, Billy Eckstine and a touch of Dick Jensen to make his stint ultra-contemporary. Voluptuous MARA LYNN BROWN is the topper in the closing slot, and her special material is special indeed including "Who Needs the Band?", and a showstopping "Someone to Believe in Me"

which lyricizes just what "CATCH A RISING STAR" is all about - new talents, ready and deserving of just that one big break through. Ashton's revue is stylish, tasteful and, in view of the alarming decrease in nightclub business, could not have happened at a more opportune time. "Catch a Rising Star" will hopefully give birth to many more new faces type revues, and will set the precedent and pace for just how it should be done....

LAS VEGAS STRIP CHATTER...RIP TAYLOR closing a smash three weeks at the Sahara Casbar with a last night hurrah from showfolk like LORNA LUFT, conductor GENE PALUMBO, dancers SAL ANGELICA, JEFF PARKER, STEVE PRESTON, dancer-columnist SUZANNE VEGAS, LESLIE UGGAMS, etc. A few nights earlier, at Rip's/MARTY ALLEN/ and ROBERT GOULET's Hello & Goodbye party: BILL MILLER, LEONARD GRANT, THE ESTABLISHMENT, MITCH DEWOOD, DAVID LELAND, JACQUELINE DOUGUET, BILLY DARE, GLORIA LORING, BRECK WALL, JAN SUTTON, BETTY WALDRON, "Lost Horizons" (among others) producer ROSS HUNTER, & associate JACQUES MAPES, MANOLO TORRENTE & FREDDY MANJON and the company of "Latin Fire '73" (now at the Thunderbird), Union Plaza's "Cabaret" stars MARTY ROSS, RENEE LEE & RICHARD ARMBRUSTER, the Silver Slipper's "Wonderful World of Burlesque" cast including SHARON DALE, MARILYN ROBERTSON, MISS VELVET, HERBIE BARRIS, JIM HODGE & LISA & SALERNO, and a Happy Birthdaying RICHARD CUSKELLY (the young and brilliant young theater & movie critic from the L.A. Herald Examiner). Also Vegas Visitors: Australian hotel-restaurant heiress PAMI-LA WENDY CORNFORD, and Palm Springs-Palm Desert motel-hotel scion/socialite DON CORNBLYTHE.... FLORENCE HENDERSON returns for her second Strip engagement at the Sands, with DON ADAMS, opening Nov. 29....KAY STARR will star at the Fremont Fiesta Room opening Oct. 10.... TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT: THE OSMOND BROTHERS, THE GOLDDIGERS & GEORGE KIRBY at Caesars Palace PLUS The Osmonds' Salute to the Olympiad and their special guest MARK SPITZ, winner of a record breaking SEVEN gold medals in swimming competition and the greatest winner in Olympic history....

COMING ATTRACTIONS...St. Jude's Annual NITE OF STARS at Caesars Palace on Nov. 10.... NANCY SINATRA & ARTE JOHNSON at the Riviera Oct. 4-17....SERGIO MENDES & DIAHANN CARROLL replace ANN-MARGRET at the Hilton opening Oct. 3. Ann-Margret, now home from the hospital after her fall at the Sahara Tahoe Hotel, is recuperating but will be on the mend for several more weeks.




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