

CABARETSCENES

Brownyn Rucker

Bronwyn's Speakeasy

Metropolitan Room
New York, NY



Cabaret can be an interesting assortment of performers and choices. This is one of those times when someone chooses to invite an audience to witness something off the beaten path.

Bronwyn Rucker is all about the history of the speakeasy era of the '20s and '30s, not impersonating Helen Morgan, Ruth Etting, Jane Green or Libby Holman and Billie Holiday. Her style is to connect and emote in a campy delivery. I wouldn't call her a singer of note as her voice slips here and there—from lower to higher soprano registers—and isn't always pleasing to the ear. But she is a passionate storyteller, prancing around the stage having a good time and manages to engage her appreciative audience.

The running patter and overview within and between these oldie but goodie songs ("Honey Bunch," "When the Red, Red Robin...", "Mean to Me," "Moanin' Low," "Tea for Two") sandwiched within a repeating "Manhattan" (Rodgers and Hart), receives additional emphasis by friend/collaborator Joe Franklin sitting ringside. He adds his voice to Rucker's act, relating historical titillating tidbits about the mobsters, murderers, corruption, alcoholics and druggies.

Directed by Jay Rogers, with Jerry Scott on piano and Saadi Zain on bass, this show may not appeal to everyone. You might want to knock three times, say "Joe sent me" and give some thought before entering.

Sandi Durell
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