

When Girls Just Want to Have Fun

By Mike Ward, San Francisco Bay Times
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Local cabaret personality Linda Kosut continued her monthly Monday evening duets at The Razz Room on May 17 with *When Girls Just Want to Have Fun*, featuring Arnaldo! Drag Chanteuse (who previously tantalized with a mouthwatering amuse bouche-portioned appetizer at Kosut's well-planned birthday-bash, *When I'm 64!*). They met when each received 2008 Backstage Bistro Awards.

Arnaldo! serves a masterfully-prepared tasty banquet à la Eartha Kitt this time out, titled "C'est Si Bon!", a musical tribute to - not a cloning of - the legendary Kitt (sumptuous accompaniment by Bob Bruneau). Focus, preparation, and talent free-up Arnaldo! to dish-out a hearty, heart-felt portion of purrrfect Kitt cabaret in this 45-minute, six-languaged set.

From the opening "Sell Me" to the final (and touching) "Here's to Life" (replete with montaged-slideshow of Kitt's life), Arnaldo! - creating authentic cross-gender, genetically-born realness - knows well his muse. Highlights? All of it. Only one minor hiccup: in the clever updating of "Monotonous," the final verse "And, furthermore, Ike likes me" was subverted with "Elana Kagan is right for me." The song's conceit is about what people do for her, not who they are to her. A slight tweak of the lyric - perhaps replacing "Ike" for "Bush" - will solidify this entertaining renovation.

"C'mon a My House" in Japanese is a hoot. During the Spanish-sung "Angelito's Negros" (asking why no Black angels exist), Arnaldo!'s eyes well-up yet never spillover, prejudice mitigated by dignity as Arnaldo's understanding of discrimination informs this haunting piece. Arnaldo! smartly turns "I'm Still Here" into a hat-tipping homage by altering the pronoun from "I'm" to "She's." Given Kitt's ironically-timed untimely Christmas death, "Santa Baby" elicits an array of unexpected and richly-mulled sentiments...