

## Night Clubs Reviews Nevada Events and Reviews

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### **Mar 20, 2008 - The Sophisticated singer of words and music Mary Cleere Haran brings her magic to Reno**

By Jack Neal

The Cabaret Concert Series presented by Diane Dragone and Dennis Wigent of Silver Star Productions is batting .1000. Mary Cleere Haran, the marvelous night club singer of songs and interpreter of words, sang in Reno Saturday night (3/15/08) at the Peppermill Hotel Casino. She is one of the best on this exceptional series of nightclub concerts and adds even more prestige and luster to an already prestigious series.

More than just a superb interpreter of great American art songs, Haran is a consummate entertainer who makes an evening in the pleasure of her company more of an event, than a concert.

In a 90-minute set featuring nearly 20 songs, Haran touched all she sang with an inimitable magic that makes each lyric and melody a transport to romance, or fun (depending). Her patter, as enlightening as it's delightful, is reminiscent of the droll, witty stuff of Dorothy Parker legend.

Opening with the Gershwin brothers' "S'Wonderful" followed by their "Do It Again," Haran set a course for an evening of intimate words and elegant melody for which George and Ira Gershwin were such superb musical raconteurs and she such a superb interpreter.

With a fascinating spinning of tales swirling around the movie "Love Me Tonight" made back in 1932 and starring a gorgeous, green-eyed Jeanette MacDonald and a debonair Maurice Chevalier, Haran embraced Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart's "Isn't it Romantic" with a mesmerizing low hum of a sound and an intuitive sense of what romance is really about.

Rodgers and Hart's "Way Out West" from "Babes in Arms," circa 1939, is a breezy song on which Hart, a city dweller to the core, used his feathery wit and Haran her light touch for a droll walk in the freshness and fun of an urbanite's take on America's Wild West.

Commenting on the film "Words and Music" (1948), about Rodgers (played by Tom Drake) and Hart (played by Mickey Rooney) with Judy Garland playing Broadway star Marilyn Miller would have been a natural lead-in for Haran's Garland tribute. That wasn't to be. Singing, however, an exhilarating "On the Atchison, Topeka and the Santa Fe," Haran's Garland tribute needed nothing more than the explosive talents of Haran herself to sell what Garland sold every time she sang.

On the road to a haunting Isham Jones-Gus Kahn song, "It Had to be You," which ended the evening, Haran made evocative side trips to Jerome Kerns and Dorothy Fields's "This is a Fine Romance," and Irving Berlin's "Harlem on My Mind." Also on this evocative road, and not to be forgotten, was a mellow outing with the Jimmy McHugh-Dorothy Fields song, "I'm in the Mood for Love," originally sung in 1945 by Frances Langford in the Rita Hayworth starrer "Tonight and Every Night" (re-made in 2005 as "Mrs. Henderson Presents" starring Judi Dench).

Almost as much an encyclopedia of words and music as a solo event (with the superlative Rob Schwimmer on piano and the equally superlative Joey McKenna on acoustic bass), an evening with Mary Cleere Haran is far from being academic. It's a kaleidoscope of song and a soaring evening of show business with a consummate artist who's as grand at entertaining as she is at marinating her listeners in the delights of American popular art songs.

On April 19 (2008) Silver Star Productions will present Phillip Manuel singing the songs of Nat "King" Cole, 8 p.m., in the Tahoe Room at the Peppermill Hotel Casino, 2707 South Virginia Street, Reno, Nevada. For information call 775-851-1638 or email [diane@silverstarprod.com](mailto:diane@silverstarprod.com).

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