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ENTERTAINMENT

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Alexa Ray Joel: Piano Girl at Café Carlyle

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"Do you want me at the piano," Alexa Ray Joel asks in a kitten voice several times during her set at the Café Carlyle. Eager to please, in her low cut dress and cascading curls, she sings her own compositions, with one or two exceptions she's tailored the lyrics to: "How Lovely to be a Woman," her favorite song Ann Margret sings in Bye Bye Birdie. Aside from her father, Billy Joel, Randy Newman is her favorite songwriter; Stevie Wonder is her favorite singer. Joel pays homage to all of them and covers Gypsy's "Let Me Entertain You," with a line about "My mom's too damned pretty."

Of course her famous family is the proverbial elephant in the room, and at the Carlyle on the opening night of this, her third time performing at this special supper club, Christie Brinkley held court with son Jack and other friends. Acknowledging both her parents, Joel handles this legacy, and sings original songs about her flaws: "I'm the female Woody Allen of the Carlyle." Dedicated to anyone who has lost that love, she sings, "What the hell is wrong with me?" Dreaming of having a little girl, Joel sings "Verona," an original composition. "Pretend you are in a saloon with Billie Holliday singing. I'm not that soulful." Accompanied by Carmine Giglio, backup vocals and piano, and Garo Yellin on bass, her "Whiter Shade of Pale" was inspiring. She's a lovely young woman with a penchant toward ballads, emerging yes, soulful, and revealing a graceful fragility in the Carlyle's intimate setting.

A version of this post also appears on [Gossip Central](#).