

September 22, 2015

Welcome Back

Altercation catches up on summer events and releases.

Alter-reviews:

I saw Brian Stokes Mitchell at the Café Carlyle recently, opening the season and making his debut there. The show, which runs through September 26, is called *Plays With Music*, and is a mixture of Broadway tunes, standards and some unexpected, rearranged gems. I wasn't familiar with Stokes' voice and it's so big the small room could hardly contain it. But his voice, while powerful, shows a lot a sensitivity based on the the material. The band, Teddy Firth on piano, Gary Hasse on bass and Mark McLean on drums were given room to move as Stokes ranged from a quiet "There's No Business Like Show Business" to an unusually moving "The Water is Wide." "Hello Young Lovers" was slow and sweet (and brave, given Sinatra's owning of that song, while "The Windmills of Our Mind" sounded profound, however briefly. Stokes is nothing if not a convincing, compelling entertainer and the crowd rose to its feet to give him a standing ovation for a performance that was more than satisfying to everyone in that small but utterly charming room. (I don't quite get why Louis Armstrong's "What a Wonderful World" is his favorite song. I think it's a total turkey, not even in Louis' top 100. I saw the setlist and I thought it was going to be Sam Cooke's "What a Wonderful World." Just a suggestion...)