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In Review: Debbie Harry at Cafe Carlyle



The rock legend gets intimate.

BY GREG GARRY

Critics have called Debbie Harry punk's Marilyn Monroe, but after seeing her cabaret debut last night at the Café Carlyle, Marlene Dietrich may be a more apt comparison. (She's playing a [sold-out residency](#) that runs through April 4.)

It makes perfect sense that 40 years into her singing career, Harry would have a go with her quieter songs at this *very* intimate venue. Rather than raid the Sondheim songbook or do cliché jazz standards, she chose to dust off some of her very underrated solo album gems that she never gets to sing with Blondie, and a few nifty covers

“French Kissing in the USA” and “In Love with Love” sounded great. As did her 1990s Jazz Passenger numbers. She covered post-punk legends the Gun Club, whose lead singer Jeffrey Lee Pierce was once the president of the Blondie fan club. No Blondie songs were done, though I would have loved to hear “Fade Away and Radiate,” “I’m Always

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Touched by your Presence Dear” or my all-time favorite “Atomic” given the slow and smoky treatment.

For us children of the '70s, the first time many of us saw Debbie Harry was on the *Muppet Show* in 1980. So it was great that she ended the show with a cute Kermit cover. At 69, this NYC legend’s voice still sounds strong and clear, with a slight husky tone but still able to hit those high notes, and these shows should take full advantage of that. Hopefully this will inspire her to record an album of torch songs. Then she can be the punk rock Peggy Lee. Comparisons aside, there’s only one Debbie Harry.