

New York, New York

Arts

Entertainment :: Music

May 29, 2014

Megan Hilty :: From 'SMASH' to the Café Carlyle

by Kevin Scott Hall



Broadway's **Megan Hilty**, star of NBC's "SMASH" and this year's "Sean Saves the World," will bring her considerable showbiz pipes to the elegant Café Carlyle for an engagement that runs through June 7.

Born and raised in Washington state, Hilty rose to prominence when she was hired to play Glinda in Broadway's "Wicked," from 2005 to 2006, and then in the first national tour. In 2008, she played Doralee (the Dolly Parton role) in Broadway's "9 to 5," for which she was nominated for Outer Critics Circle and Drama Desk awards. Hilty has also guest-starred on many television shows and had many voiceover roles in animated features. She released her first album, "It Happens All the Time," on Sony in 2013. EDGE recently contacted Hilty to



ask her about her career and her upcoming solo show at the Carlyle.

EDGE: It seems an unusual and brave thing these days to aspire to be a musical theater performer. Was your family encouraging to you in that pursuit?

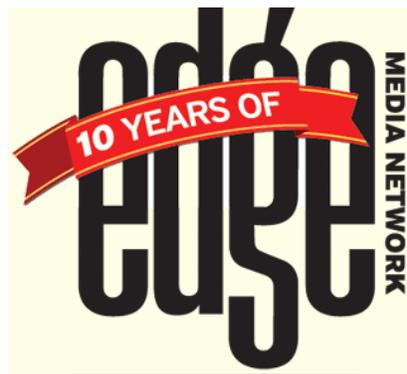
Megan Hilty: My family was very supportive. Me and my sisters were encouraged to do whatever we wanted and were never told that we couldn't do anything.

EDGE: Did you have an 'Aha' moment as a child when you saw a show or a performance and knew, 'That's what I want to do?'

Megan Hilty: I saw the touring company of 'Jekyll and Hyde' when I was little and I was so excited and moved by the performances, I remember thinking to myself 'that's what I want to do - I want to make people feel the way I feel right now.'

EDGE: Let's talk about 'SMASH.' It seems that everyone in the theater community in New York was hooked on it. Why do you think it never really caught on enough with people across the country to keep it running?

Megan Hilty: It's not my job to know why shows work or don't. My job is to show up every day and do the best I can. I believe 'SMASH' was something special that brought theater to a whole new audience and I am so proud to have been a part of that.



New York, New York

Arts

Entertainment :: Music

May 29, 2014

EDGE: Unlike Ivy (the role she played on 'SMASH'), you had a big break fairly early on. You were cast in 'Wicked' while a senior at Carnegie Mellon, right? Perhaps you were lucky enough not to have the starving actor years in New York. What have been your other struggles as a performer?

Megan Hilty: Actually, I took two years off before I went to Carnegie Mellon University to see if a life in the theater was what I really wanted to do. I supported myself doing community theater jobs at night and every odd day job you can imagine during the day.

EDGE: Do you have a routine or ritual that you follow before going on stage?

Megan Hilty: I do. There is something that I recite to myself before each performance. It's the only thing I'm superstitious about - I haven't even told my husband what it is!

EDGE: I read a Billboard interview with Idina Menzel recently where she talked about how difficult it was for her to cross over to pop recording success when she was trying to do so several years ago. Do you agree with her, or were you and Sony satisfied with how 'It Happens All the Time' performed?

Megan Hilty: When I recorded 'It Happens All The Time,' I wasn't trying to be Britney Spears or anything like that. I thought it was exciting and challenging to try something that I'd never done before. It was a deeply personal project and I was very happy with the outcome.

EDGE: This year you were in 'Sean Saves the World' on NBC. What's it like working in Hollywood as opposed to New York?

Megan Hilty: I love working and living in LA. I've gone back and forth between coasts for years now and I always look forward to working where the sun is always shining.

EDGE: You have done theater, concert work, television, voiceovers . . . Do you have a preference for the kind of work you do?

Megan Hilty: I just like to work. Period. I think it's very important to try new things and not get pegged as one type of performer so I will always try to be involved in a variety of different projects.

EDGE: You received raves for your Encores performance of 'Gentlemen Prefer Blondes.' Has there been talk of reviving that for Broadway? Would you come back to Broadway for the right role?

Megan Hilty: There has been talk of it. I'm dying to get back onstage - right now I'm focused on having my first baby but hopefully in the next year or so the right show will come along.

EDGE: How do you feel about performing at the intimate Carlyle? Can you give us a hint about some of the material you'll be doing?

Megan Hilty: I'm so excited to be performing at the Carlyle. It's a New York institution! The set will include songs from 'SMASH' and old standards. My husband is also in the band so I'll be getting him to sing with me as well.

Megan Hilty will appear Tuesdays through Saturdays at the Café Carlyle, 35 E. 76th Street, May 27-June 7. Please go to [for further information](#), or call 212-744-1600.