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## Weekend Arts I

### A Little Bit Classical, a Little Bit Pop

The diluted highbrow music known as “classical crossover” is much more popular in Britain than in the United States, where a major promotional effort several years ago failed to establish the Welsh mezzo-soprano Katherine Jenkins as the female Andrea Bocelli. But if you don’t succeed, you can try again. And on Tuesday evening, Ms. Jenkins opened at Café Carlyle with her “Viva la Diva.”

STEPHEN HOLDEN

MUSIC REVIEW

What “classical crossover” denotes is the kind of quasi-operatic music, from whatever source, that used to be peddled on television ads for anthologies

#### Celebrating Andrew Lloyd Webber.

of great melodies. The salesmen tended to be suave older gentlemen with cultivated British accents. What they were really selling was “class.”

The crossover genre was given a lift in the 1980s by the rise of Andrew Lloyd Webber, whose

*Katherine Jenkins performs through Saturday at Café Carlyle, 35 East 76th Street, Manhattan; 212-744-1600, [thecafecarlyle.com](http://thecafecarlyle.com).*

ballads, consciously or not, echoed familiar classical themes. Ms. Jenkins sang three numbers with his imprimatur (“All I Ask of You,” “Music of the Night,” and “Pie Jesu” from the composer’s Requiem) reasonably well.

Ms. Jenkins, who is 35, beautiful and vocally well endowed is a direct artistic descendant of Mr. Webber’s most dedicated interpreter, Sarah Brightman. Gerard Steichen accompanied on piano. Although her voice has its voluptuous pockets, when it came to interpretation she was indifferent. The warning sign was the opening number, Leonard Cohen’s “Hallelujah,” sung without comprehension. This emotional



MICHELLE V. AGINS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

*Katherine Jenkins performing her classical crossover show, “Viva la Diva,” at Café Carlyle.*

and bitter song, like everything else she sung, was rendered with the formal decorum of recitals before the royal family.

Conspicuous misfires were two duets with Kyle Barisich, a one-time “Phantom of the Opera” with a coarse vocal texture and a wide, wobbly vibrato. David Baerwald’s ballad, “Come What May,” from the movie, “Moulin Rouge!” (“Seasons may change, winter to spring/ But I love you until the end of time”) wouldn’t pass muster in a Disney movie.

A pretty voice is not enough; feeling and a semblance of insight are required.