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Eric Alterman on April 14, 2015 - 1:25 PM ET

Lena Hall at the Café Carlyle

I never heard of Lena Hall before seeing her show at the Carlyle. (I never saw *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* and was only vaguely aware she had won a Tony for it.) But I've seen Buster Poindexter and Debbie Harry in the room of late and so I was almost prepared for the shock of hearing "Dazed and Confused" in the house that Bobby Short built. Ms. Hall was suffering from bronchitis, but proved more than game in putting her stamp on songs on classics like "Psycho Killer," "Can't Find My Way Home," and a wonderful "Maybe I'm Amazed." Backed up by a fine band led by Watt White on guitar, with John Deley on keyboards, Lee Nadel on bass and Brian Fishler on drums. The show also featured songs, mainly b-sides and deep cuts, by Jack White, Tori Amos, the Meat Puppets (by way of Nirvana) Queen, Elton John, David Bowie, Hozier, Erykah Badu and someone named Janelle Monae. Most, if not all, were marvelous. (And I'm so pleased to see this expansion of the Great American Songbook taking place at the Carlyle and look forward to more.) Her voice was husky and hungry, but also sweet in places and almost always powerful and deeply compelling. I left a convert in a big way. And there's not a nicer place than the Carlyle to leave that way... that is if you can handle the prices. She will be there through April 18.