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THE BLOG



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Molly Ringwald: Flirting at the Café Carlyle

"I'm an actress," exclaims Molly Ringwald on opening night of her Café Carlyle cabaret act, as if we could forget. Playful, she suggested we forego formalities and all the clichés of lounge singers, and end her set of classics from the American songbook by pretending to walk offstage, to be followed by resounding claps and screams of "Encore." As she feigned surprise at being coaxed back for another song, she proclaimed, "I'm so touched." Thus flaunting cabaret tradition, Ringwald was a grown up version of the cheeky and vulnerable teens we remember and loved in John Hughes' "The Breakfast Club," "Pretty in Pink," and "Sixteen Candles."

Now the adult mother of three, she wears a slinky gown, her hair coyly covering one eye. She boldly cajoled the crowd to meet her in the Carlyle's coatroom to buy her 2013 CD, "Except Sometimes." She talked about her jazz musician dad, Bob Ringwald, who taught her about the music, "closer to the Dixieland Woody Allen performs on Monday nights with his band." But she adored Bessie Smith and thought she'd grow up to be a black singer like her. Introducing "Don't Explain," co-written by Billie Holliday, she asked the audience to guess who wrote the tune, and praised us for even knowing who Billie was. "I always know when I'm in New York," she laughed comparing this crowd favorably to those in the South.

Accompanied by a first-rate music director/ pianist Peter Smith, with Tony Jefferson on drums and Trevor Ware on bass, she danced suggestively as her set built slowly with "Sooner or Later," and "I Thought About You," but once she got to "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime," in Peter Smith's unusual arrangement, she was in full stride, her voice, rich and full on "I Feel Pretty," "It Never Entered My Mind" and "Mean to Me." With "Don't You Forget About Me," the nostalgic evening closed, assuring that forgetting her would never enter our minds.

A version of this post also appears on [Gossip Central](#).