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MUSIC

Rumer Willis to Channel Etta James During Intimate Carlyle Performance

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It's been quite the year for Rumer Willis, who is taking full advantage of New York City following her win on *Dancing With the Stars*.

After taking home the mirror ball trophy, the 27-year-old actress has been expanding her musical theater side with a stint as Roxy Hart in *Chicago on Broadway* and filmed *Hello Again*, a screen adaptation of a musical about missed connections.

"It seemed like a such a cool and different project," Willis tells EOnline about her interest in the movie, which was shot earlier this year in NYC and co-stars Audra McDonald, Martha Plimpton and T.R. Knight.

Now, Willis is performing a limited engagement from April 5 to 9 at the Carlyle Café at the Carlyle Hotel. A New York institution, it's the same place where Woody Allen performs with the Eddy Davis New Orleans Jazz Band, and where Michael C. Hall and Tony winner Lena Hall recently paid tribute to Radiohead. Broadway stars Chita Rivera and Megan Hilty have sets soon after Willis makes her debut on the intimate cabaret stage.

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“It is just one of those spots you hear about and I'm just so excited to be able to play there,” she says of adding her name to the long list of legends who’ve come before her. “In a certain way, you're getting to have a conversation with the audience. I think that intimate settings like that, where people are really coming to listen to the music, is incredible. There aren't many spots like that anymore.”

The venue is also known for its elbow-rubbing atmosphere. And while she didn’t make any promises, Willis teased that her parents, Bruce Willis and Demi Moore, will likely be in the crowd for one of her performances.

Known for her sultry vocals, which Willis has put on display with a nearly two-year residency at The Sayer’s Club in Los Angeles, she will bring a jazzy vibe to her set in New York.

“It's different from what's out now and I think it's really important to kind of pay homage and really show where your inspiration and creativity comes from as a singer,” Willis says, admitting “At Last” by Etta James to be one of her favorite songs of all time.

While Willis says she won’t tackle that particular classic (“I almost feel like it's a disservice for anyone to try to do that one”), she does promise to sing a few James covers.