

## **REVIEW OF CAROL SLOANE JUNE 1 PERFORMANCE AT SCULLERS**

After being dazzled Thursday, May 31 by Roberta Gambarini with a superlative trio in Saratoga, my wife Uta and I were fortunate to enjoy the next evening, an even more renowned singer, our Carol Sloane at Scullers in Cambridge, MA. Again, there was yet another excellent band: Norman Simmons - piano, Paul Bollenback - guitar, Steve LaSpina - bass and Sheila Early - drums.

This was especially joyful occasion for us a number of reasons: Uta had never seen Carol live, I hadn't seen her since Jan, 2004 at the Vanguard (with our Patti Wicks on piano) and we were seated with dear friends, the irrepressibly delightful Marla of Songbirds and her illustrious, always lively mom, singer extraordinaire, Rebecca Parris. Additionally, I had been enjoying recently Carol's more than interesting blog, "Sloaneview", from her web site - <http://www.carolsloane.com/> - as well as her latest CD, "Dearest Duke", which has the graceful, but passionate elegance and swing one would expect from anything associated with these two.

Her appearance Friday night consisted of one two hour set without an intermission, rather than two shows, as advertised; and that was a welcome change, because the building momentum of her performance was such that no one in the packed house wanted it to end. Although she commented early in the set about the pollen of the season affecting her throat and needed to occasionally dab her eyes, she certainly made whatever adaptations were needed to ensure it didn't affect her intonation, energy or high spirits. She even remarked after just the second song that she hadn't expected to sing that loud until later in the set.

In addition to her own excellent vocalizing that those of us like myself, who have adored her work since her "time capsule-worthy" 1961 Columbia LP, "Out of the Blue", her wonderful interplay (musically and humorously) with her long-time cohort, Norman Simmons had a special charm. This was particularly true on their priceless medley of "The Glory of Love/Making Whoopee" that has become even better over the years. Similarly, another strong crowd-pleaser was a warm, loose swinging duet of "Do Nothing Til You Hear from Me", with Rebecca Parris, who was coaxed up to the stand by Carol and the knowledgeable crowd.

All four musicians were enormously supportive and invigorating to listen to. But I'd like to especially salute, first and foremost Norman Simmons whose versatility, sensitivity and overall musicianship was so indicative of why luminaries like Anita O'Day, Carmen McRae, Joe Williams, Dakota Staton, Ernestine Anderson and Carol Sloane have valued his accompaniment and arranging skills so highly. I would also highlight the playing of guitarist Paul Bollenback who Carol has used for a number of years. His latest solo CD, "The Brightness of Being", was one I enjoyed enough to place in my five favorite instrumental CD's of 2006.

Following is the song list, from my notes, which I'll ask Carol to please correct as needed:

- 1 - Sophisticated Lady / Yesterdays medley
- 2 - Getting Some Fun Out of Life
- 3 - Willow Weep for Me
- 4 - While We're Young
- 5 - Rocks in My Bed / I Ain't Got Nothing But the Blues

**6 - Glory of Love / Making Whoopee (duet with Norman Simmons)**

**7 - If You Should Want It (written by Norman Simmons)**

**8 - Cottontail**

**9 - Do Nothing Til You Hear from Me**

**10 - September Song**

**11 - Exactly Like You**

**12 - Our Love Is Here to Stay (with Ray Santisi on piano)**

**13 - Deep Purple**

**Tom Pierce.**