

BAY AREA REPORTER

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

PEOPLE AND PERSONALS



Nicholas, Glover and Wray Hit the Mark

Star Quality

by Sando Counts

It's refreshing to be able to write an unequivocal rave about something after witnessing too many theatrical experiences that are lame, flawed, or off-base. Nicholas, Glover and Wray's perfectly conceived and entirely satisfying cabaret show *We Couldn't Say Good-Bye* comes as a complete treat.

I'm also not one to get out of the city much (unless getting out involves a plane), so I was amazed how easy it was to slip out of town, over the bridge to Marin and right off the freeway to Joe LoCoco's Coconut Room for their show. And what a show. It's interesting to see a trio of artists ten years later, as my last encounter with Nicholas, Glover and Wray was in front of an adoring mob at a huge Galleria party at least that long ago. They were skinny, hard, and wore sharp military-style uniforms. The 1993 version is more comfortable, filled-in and looser, yet the trio is still the object of great audience affection.

High Style

Elegant, coifed, and in great voice, Julie Nicholas, Sheilah Glover, and Wil

low Wray hit the stage singing one of their signature Boswell Sisters tunes. Tight vocals and close harmonies are made even richer by the personality and humor they infuse in their music.

In the second tune, "Be Mine Tonight," their voices glow in warm woodwind tones. Watching them, I get the same feeling I get watching Kronos Quartet (although their music is distinctly different), where the sense of history and respect among the musicians enhances the music and the artistry.

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It's the kind of sound that evolves after years of singing together -- 15 years in this case. They're able to joke onstage and, in the Boswell tune "We Couldn't Say good-bye," laugh about their past fights and the several years "sabbatical" they took from performing and each other. During that time, Julie completed her master's in music, Sheilah released two CD's of original music, and Willow did commercials.

Singles Outting

Julie Nicholas belts out a wary and world weary "Never Make Your Move Too Soon" in her solo turn. Willow Wray puts just the right amount of squeak in her voice for her Connie Francis medley (complete with gold record corsage). And in a piece both funny (Frenchified En-

glish) and heartbreaking (an exquisite, breathy voice), Sheilah Glover's version of "These Foolish Things" is a highlight.

The McGuire Sisters' arrangement of "Blue Skies" modulates upward towards the roof, and "Stardust" circles out into space. Someone said, "They blend like a perfect Martini," and I can't put it any better.

The Coconut Room at Joe LoCoco's Ristorante at Drake's Landing features first-class cabaret acts like Nicholas, Glover & Wray and Sharon McNight. A good sound system and sight lines, excellent food plus a comfortable atmosphere make for a terrific evening. (Prix fixe dinner and show is \$35, show only is \$15.)

Great singers, accomplished comedienne; is there anything these women can't do? After years they're finally putting out a CD and music video. Their explanation: "We were waiting for the sound to be right."