



Thousand Oaks Thousand Oaks

BWW Review: HOLLYWOOD REVISITED at Oxnard Civic Auditorium

September 26

<http://www.broadwayworld.com/thousand-oaks/article/BWW-Review-HOLLYWOOD-REVISITED-at-Oxnard-Civic-Auditorium-20160926>



You've seen them. Gaudy costumes worn by Hollywood and Broadway stars, preserved and on display in museums and galleries. It's a great way to witness first-hand the trappings of the pretend, magical worlds brought to us on celluloid, television, and the live stage. But when you see those famous outfits, hanging stiffly on mannequins, you get the sense something is missing. It's as if they were embalmed mummies from ancient Egypt, beautiful but lifeless. That's what makes a show like *Hollywood Revisited*, which played Sunday afternoon at the Oxnard Civic Auditorium, so valuable and different as a unique piece of show business entertainment.

Hollywood Revisited is the idea of Greg Schreiner, a devoted fan of Hollywood movies who is a passionate collector of vintage costumes from Hollywood productions. Instead of storing his priceless collection in boxes in his apartment, Schreiner chooses to share them, not by putting them on display, but by returning them to life. Part museum, part fashion show, and part vaudeville revue, *Hollywood Revisited* utilizes the talents of

three singers and Schreiner himself, a skilled pianist, in showcasing his collection of costumes, representing over 70 years of show business history.

Helping Schreiner in the show were singers Joshua Finkel (who just completed his run as Leo Frank in Panic! Productions' *Parade*), Jill Burke, and Elisa Surmont. During the show, the trio modeled some two dozen costumes, ranging in date from a slinky black-and-white

number worn by Mae West in the 1934 comedy *Belle of the Nineties*, to Minnie Driver's pink-and-white opera costume (with a hoop skirt that must have been eight feet wide) from the 2004 film version of *Phantom of the Opera*, in which Driver played the part of opera diva Carlotta.

In a talkback session during the show, Schreiner was asked what kinds of costumes draw his attention. "Affordable and glitzy" was his giggly reaction, perfectly describing most of the outfits put on display and into action during the show. Although prices have skyrocketed in the decades since Schreiner started collecting in the late '70s, he is still able to add to his collection from time to time. Finkel sported such items that ranged from Tony Curtis' immodest, barely there tunic from *Spartacus* (1960) (while singing "Lovely" from *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*) to the feathery, brightly colored bird costume worn by Donald O'Connor in 1985's *Alice in Wonderland*. Burke was radiant in a number of outfits, but the one that received the loudest ovation was Lena Horne's golden gown from *Stormy Weather* (1943), with Burke singing a shimmering version of the title song, a spine-tingling moment if there ever was one. Surmont wore a similarly opulent outfit worn by Diahann Carroll in an episode of *Dynasty* from the 1980s.

Finkel, Burke, and Surmont didn't just model Schreiner's collection, they brought them to life again, performing relevant songs either from the actual production they were worn in or appropriate for their respective eras. When Finkel came out in a Sandy Powell costume worn by Joseph Fiennes in the 1998 romantic comedy *Shakespeare in Love*, he performed Cole Porter's "Where Is the Life That Late I Led" from the Shakespeare-themed musical *Kiss Me, Kate*. For her turn as Broadway legend Gertrude Lawrence in *Star!* (1968), Surmont wore an Art Deco costume designed by Donald Brooks and worn by Julie Andrews, while singing "I Want to Be Bad" from the 1929 musical, *Follow Thru*.

Schreiner himself invoked the spirit of Liberace when he emerged from the wings dressed in a gold lamé gaucho costume worn by George Hamilton in *Zorro, The Gay Blade* (1981). His piano playing, which is as gaudy and florid as his costumes, also brought back memories of Liberace, the flamboyant star of many a Las Vegas show room. All that it needed was a chandelier on Schreiner's Baldwin grand piano. He performed two solos during the concert, the romantic themes from the motion pictures *Laura* (1944) and *An Affair to Remember* (1957).

Make no mistake about it. Schreiner is a serious collector, well versed in his obsession, and eager to share his knowledge of film and television history as well as his collection of some 450 vintage costumes. Many were ostentatious to the point of being vulgar, but it was the more elegant items that received the warmest applause, especially the show's grand finale, which featured Finkel and Burke as Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, dancing to the Gershwins' "Let's Face the Music and Dance" while wearing Astaire's white-tie-and-black-tailed tuxedo and Rogers' gold-beaded studded gown, as seen (in black and white!) in the 1936 film musical, *Follow the Fleet*.

We wish all collectors of vintage show business memorabilia could share their passion with as much care and love as Schreiner is sharing his. Somewhere in Hollywood's Valhalla, Fred

and Ginger are toasting Schreiner and his crew with two sparkling glasses of champagne.

Information about [Greg Schreiner](#)'s collection and live performances can be found at his website: www.hollywoodrevisited.com

© 2016 Copyright **Wisdom Digital Media**. All Rights reserved.