



Sun
and weekly Herald

Thursday, February 20, 2003

sun-herald.com



Home | Sports | Business | Classifieds | Charlotte News | Englewood News | North Port News | DeSoto News | Venice News

2/19/2003

FST's Guitar Girls is upbeat show

"Guitar Girls," the latest offering at the Florida Studio Theatre Cabaret, is cabaret at its best.

I'm not the world's biggest fan of country music, but I really liked this show. The song fest that had us all clapping hands and stomping feet ranged from "Amazing Grace" and "If I Had a Hammer" to "Honky Tonk Angels," "House of the Rising Sun," "Nine to Five," "Down at the Twist and Shout" and the show's signature "Girls with Guitars" medley.

The music was written and/or originally performed by the likes of Kitty Wells, Joni Mitchell, Janis Joplin, Mary Chapin Carpenter, Dolly Parton and others of their ilk. In the hands of Mimi Bessette, Rhonda Coulet, Stewart Gregory, Emily Mikesell and Michael Sebastian, the show was one of FST's all-time bests in a long line of great musical offerings. This show is right up there with my favorite FST Cabaret offering, "Shakespeare's Greatest Hits," performed a couple of years ago. Like that one, this show will remain etched in my mind for a long time to come.

"Guitar Girls" music spans the years, showcasing the musical theme that developed during those years.

The show is good, and this cast makes a good thing better.

Bessette is a cute, little brunette with a voice like Parton's and great stage presence. Coulet looks quite a bit like Joni Mitchell and sings with a husky, smoky cabaret kind of voice. Gregory has a range that doesn't quit. He showed it off to good effect on "House of the Rising Sun" and "Kisses Sweeter than Wine." Mikesell is a triple threat or more. She sings like an angel, plays the guitar and fiddle with equal zest and looks like the girl next door, the good-looking one. Sebastian, the show's musical director, played a mean viola on "Both Sides Now" and "Honky Tonk Angels." On every other number, he did what he always does as the resident pianist -- he kept things moving.

The creative team behind the show includes director Dennis Courtney, costume designer Marcella Beckwith and FST Artistic Director Richard Hopkins who led the in-house development of the show.

"Guitar Girls" will be presented in the Goldstein Cabaret, 1241 N. Palm Ave., through March 22. Performances are Tuesday through Friday at 7:30 p.m., select Wednesdays at 6 and 9 p.m., select Fridays at 6 and 9 p.m., Saturdays at 6 and 9 p.m. and Sundays at 2 and 7:30 p.m.. Arrive about an hour early. Single tickets are \$20-\$22 and may be purchased at the FST box office in person or by calling 366-9000.

Continuing in the cabaret on Mondays, through March 17, is the FST Improv Troupe. All shows are at 8 p.m. There will be a cash bar, but no food service.

By Kim Cool

[Back to Your Results](#)



© 2003 All rights reserved.
Your Local Internet Service Provider
A division of Sun Coast Media Group Inc.
Publishers of the Sun Herald newspapers & Venice Gondolier newspapers.

Registration Home