



Hoboken to Hollywood



Photo by James W. Thompson

Yes, we can go back to the Big Band era and the wonderful songs of the 60's and imagine we are hearing the wonderful voice of Frank Sinatra! It is all pretend that we are part of an audience watching a live show being taped for television in the late 60's. It is all there, the 12-piece orchestra (Music Director Paul Litteral) under the direction of Nelson Riddle (Jeff Markgraff), TV cameras, applause signs on each side of the stage, microphones, a sound booth, a genuine-looking set-up for the occasion. There is much bustling about between director Dwight (Al Bernstein) and his assistant Andy (Pat Towne) who is given more than his fair share of responsibilities. He brings the humor to the production and a surprise as well. During the taping of the show, there are even commercial breaks by Announcer (Chandler Hill) and his Assistant Darlene (adorable Franci Montgomery).

But the biggest moments of the show are when the real star performs. Listed in the program only as "The Crooner," the suave and handsome Luca Ellis is the epitome of Frank Sinatra in his early years. Ellis has Sinatra's phrasing, his mannerisms, his style and even his personality. He can show you that he is the "boss." But he can also show his compassionate side as well. He brings back memories when he sings such songs as Old Black Magic, That's Life, Blue Moon, One for My Baby, Young at Heart and, perhaps, the two most memorable, New York, New York and I Did It My Way (among many others). It is like hearing and seeing "old blue eyes" himself.

Hoboken to Hollywood was written by Luca Ellis, Paul Litteral and Jeremy Aldridge, directed by Jeremy Aldridge, a tremendously talented threesome who are giving audiences a wonderfully entertainment production worthy of their accolades.

Hoboken to Hollywood is playing at the Edgemar Center for the Arts (on the main stage), 24379 Main Street, Santa Monica, CA, Fridays and Saturdays at 8 PM, Sundays at 3 PM, through December 12. For reservations, call (310) 392-7327, or for tickets online go to www.edgemarcenter.org.

-- Carol Kaufman Segal