



TONY-NOMINATED 'RAPTURE': (left to right) Lindsay Mendez, Sherie Rene Scott, Betsy Wolfe in *Everyday Rapture*. Photo: Carol Rosegg

Theater Review

Tony-nominated *Everyday Rapture* chronicles actress' journey from the Bible Belt to Broadway with music, wit, humor, & energy

Everyday Rapture

By Dick Scanlan and Sherie Rene Scott

Directed by Michael Mayer

American Airlines Theatre

227 West 42nd Street

(212-719-1300), www.roundabouttheatre.org

By David NouNou

What does a little girl growing up in Topeka, Kansas who considers herself a half Mennonite and has Jesus, Judy Garland, and Mr. Rodgers as friends and role models do when she grows up? Well, she moves to New York and becomes a Broadway star with her own show. In this case she is Sherie Rene Scott, who has originated three co-starring roles in Broadway's: *Aida*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* (for which she received a Tony nomination) and Ursula in *The Little Mermaid*, for which she should have received a supporting actress nomination.

Growing up for Ms. Scott must not have been easy due to the contradictions of her religion and her aspirations for show business. She encapsulates her life in two theories: "I am a speck of dust" and "The world is created for me." It's a matter of juxtaposing her religion vs. her aspirations. Glad to say that show business triumphed, because without the constrictions of a musical show, Ms. Scott displays a beautiful God-given voice. She has the talent and charisma to hold the attention of an audience. She regales us with her anecdotes, growing up believing the Rapture will come someday and that only the true believers will go to heaven. However, her personal belief is more realistic. Starring in Broadway shows, getting married, and having her son, she knows everyday can be heaven and a rapture.

Ms. Scott reflects back on her Kansas past with frustration, recalling the notorious fundamentalist Christian homophobe Reverend Fred Phelps, who pickets the funerals of people who have died of AIDS and holds up homophobic signs to ridicule the deceased and grieving family and friends. Ms. Scott embraces the songs of the more tolerant TV icon Mr. Rogers, himself an ordained Presbyterian pastor, who was known for kiddie songs that promoted education and tolerance. Ms. Scott sings some of Mr. Rogers' songs, including "I Like To Be Told."

In what is the best routine of the evening, she has a huge teenage fan (Eamon Foley) on the Internet and Youtube who lip-syncs to her songs but questions whether it is really Sherie Rene Scott the Broadway star responding to his e-mails. It is a hilarious moment to be savored, and it is best to be seen. Ms. Scott is backed by two excellent singers, Lindsay Mendez and Betsy Wolfe, and they sing everything

from Roberta Flack's "Killing Me Softly" to the Supremes' "Up the Ladder to the Roof."

Everyday Rapture is a last-minute replacement by the Roundabout Theatre, due to the cancellation of *Lips Together, Teeth Apart*. It appeared last year as an Off-Broadway show at the Second Stage Theatre. Due to its success, it has now moved to Broadway, and a welcome move it is. Although at times this show seems more suited as a cabaret act, Ms. Scott's boundless energy and charm both make it work for Broadway. She is funny, touching and entertaining, and these are all the ingredients needed for a Broadway star. It is no surprise that Ms. Scott just received a Tony nomination for Best Performance by a Leading Actress in a Musical, and a Tony nomination for *Everyday Rapture* for Best Book of a Musical with co-writer Dick Scanlan.

Published May 5, 2010

Reviewed at Second Night Press Performance on May 4, 2010

Broadway and Off-Broadway Listings

ORIGINAL MUSICALS



TONY NOMINEE SHERIE RENE SCOTT:
Starring in *Everyday Rapture* at the American
Airlines Theatre. Photo: Carol Rosegg



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