

She explodes with energy

# Liza's dynamite at Raleigh House

By RUTH MILLER

Liza Minnelli came to town. There was an air of excitement in Southfield's Raleigh House last week as the crowd waited impatiently for the show to begin.

A hush as the orchestra began the overture, then the dramatic roll of drums and "Ladies and gentlemen, Liza Minnelli."

Onto the stage bounced this package of dynamite in a black sequined jump suit, belting out "Lucky Lady." For the next hour, the audience watched, mesmerized by this five-foot five-inch talent. She sang mellowly, stage center, "My Slap Has Sails," and then delivered a throaty "The Man I Love."

NEXT, INTO a zany melody of "Some People" and "I Had a Dream," as she bounced from one side of the stage to the other, her arms sweeping the audience with her. Now, a tete-a-tete with the audience. "The nicest thing anybody can give to anybody else is a part of them-

selves. For instance, if a painter was to give you one of his paintings, it would be special. Right? Well, I have two friends, Melissa Manchester and Carol Sabin, and recently they gave me that kind of a beautiful present. They gave me one of their songs. And I'd like to share my gift with you."

This was a slow plaintive number. "Come in from the Rain."

There were bows and handshakes with the audience from every side of the stage after every number. Next, Liza explained how she came to take over the ailing Chita Rivera's part of Roxie Hart for five weeks, 1 1/2 years ago, in the Broadway 1920-vintage musical "Chicago."

Liza gave a dramatic rendition while pacing across the stage. "A song that I just love. You might say this is Roxie's philosophy. I am my own best friend."

THEN to a torchy accompaniment. Liza glided across the stage through "Now." This led into a torrid dance routine choreographed by Ron Lewis. She paused just before going into

the dance. "To do this dance—oh, my nerves." She wriggled out of her chemise revealing a halter-top skintight jump suit on a neat, rather angular 112-pound figure.

Her dancing and the production was magnificent. Breathless, Liza took a few moments on stage to recoup, all the while laughing and joking with the audience in her unimpaired manner.

She took a towel and dried her face and rubbed her hair dry. Next, she removed her false eyelashes. Laughter and applause. "I don't know why I put them on in the first place. I do know why. Because I want to come out looking swell."

More applause. "I'll bet I know something you don't know. Did you know we were co-starring, you and me? It's true. I don't think any audience ever has any idea how terribly important they are to a performer."

"There is an old song which I love, and it just describes what I mean real well." She sat on a stool and wooed the audience with "You're the Cream in My Coffee."

By this time, Liza had the audience all wrapped up and they loved it. She asked for the house lights to be turned on, and when she saw the tremendous crowd, whooped out her favorite expression, "Oh, my nerves."

Before the lights were dimmed again, she said to everyone, "You look swell. You know my favorite songs are not necessarily songs. They are more like acting scenes."

Even though everyone seemed to prefer the old-time favorites, the audience hung on every word of a little half monologue recitation, half song about, "I, in My Chair at a Party." Next, a strong gutsy rendition of a new song, "The World Goes Round." After singing requests for "Mummy" and "My Funny Valentine," she strutted right into the grand finale. What else, "Cabaret," of course.

She almost had the audience singing and dancing with her out of their seats. She literally carried those light notes to the roof—and brought the house down.

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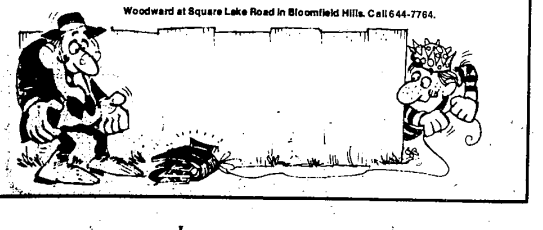
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