

# SELECTIONS OF REVIEWS, SUE MATHYS

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## GYPSY (Rose)

To make *Gypsy* work, you have to have a great Mama Rose. Mathys creates a fascinating, offbeat Rose, far more attractive than the usual interpretation. You find it natural that those around her keep forgiving this sexy and charming creature for doing the most horrifying things. As Mathys' performance in the final monologue, "Rose's Turn" demonstrates, and as other characters say of her, this Rose can talk herself into believing her fantasies. Literally and figuratively, she's a dreamer, if a destructive one [...] Mathys sings the role with much care for phrasing and unprecedented tonal variety. Some Roses sound like trumpets, others saxophones. Mathys can sound like any instrument in the orchestra. (*Dallas Morning News, September 2011*)

Mathys' powerful voice, warm and silky when needed to charm or wheedle and bursting with iron-willed grit when life lets Mama Rose down, drives the show with gut-wrenching desperation. Defiantly courageous even facing abandonment, Mama Rose fills spacious Carpenter Hall's bare stage with her dynamic persona and superlative instrument, displaying every iota of the vocal talent and star quality that has earned her the highest of accolades, and standing ovations, on both sides of the Atlantic. (*Criticalrant.com, September 2011*)

Mathys is a force, bulldozing her way through Rose's iconic songs and relentlessly pushing her scenes with a focused, almost maniac, determination. Her single-mindedness regarding her daughter's careers (and her own livelihood) is scary in its intensity yet admirable for its consistency. She makes the mothers on "Toddlers & Tiaras" look like wimps. (*D Magazine, September 2011*)

Mathys' earnestness and tenacity as Rose lend a depth to the role that can easily be lost. It would be easy to play Rose as a monster, a one-dimensional megalomaniac. But, Mathys imbues her with a latent vulnerability, an unquestionable love for her children, and a healthy dose of delusion. The end result is an incredibly complex character who is actually able to retain some semblance of audience sympathy [...] Lyric Stage's production gives you an

opportunity to see this show like almost no one has ever seen it. The novelty combined with the high production value and powerful performances make *Gypsy* a must-see. (*TheaterJones.com, September 2011*)

Mathys proves herself a force, with a multilayered voice and fierce determination. In the final number, *Rose's Turn*, which is like the "To be or not to be" soliloquy of musical theatre, she captures all the internal anger and emotion that the musical has led up to. [...] Her Mama Rose is driven to the core, both frightening and magnetic. (*Fort Worth Star Telegram, September 2011*)

Mathys' voice is stunning throughout, but it really takes off when Rose emerges. Mathys' performance brings the entire theater to a standstill as you see Rose's heartbreak race across her face. Mathys earns her standing ovation with the simplest of turns just before the final curtain, begging one last glimmer of the spotlight with a split second look to the audience. (*The Daily Campus, September 2011*)

Sue Mathys, as Rose, is a powerhouse tucked into a small package. You can feel her bringing more bravado to each song until her formidable finish, when she shakes the rafters and makes your hair stand on end. Mathys makes the entire role her own, standing in no one's shadow, and its exhilarating. (*The Examiner, September 2011*)

Of course, the driving bullheaded energy of *Gypsy* is Mama Rose, the ultimate nightmare of stage mothers. The dynamic Sue Mathys subtly weaves Rose's Tyranny with warmth, without ever betraying her goals to make her daughters theatrical stars. The entire production captures the desperation of the 1930's Depression in its sets, costumes and choreography, but Mathys gently imbues it, and her role, with a genuine humanity essential to making Rose appealing and understandable, even while being monstrously driven and annoying. Vocally, Mathys clearly loves performing the classic songs of *Gypsy* and does so with impish charm and great flair. Her Garland-like gesturing punctuates her lyrics with spontaneity and emotional expression appropriate for the role, and her penultimate release in "Rose's Turn" is a shattering cry to the world and her fate. Two choices the actress makes, unique to this critics viewing experience, are her sobbing breakdown (brief and apt), and the look of longing she tosses back at her final exit. Excellent choices by both the director and performer. (*South Coast Today, July 2010*)

## **CABARET (Frl. Schneider)**

Fortunately, the show features a secondary love story that's absolutely irresistible - one of the most beautiful I've seen on a stage, ever - between

Landlady Fräulein Schneider and shopkeeper Herr Schulz. The accomplished actors inhabiting these roles (Sue Mathys and Bruce Sabath) are as good as musical theatre gets - their characters breaking our hearts, making us laugh, then breaking our hearts again. And their voices! Imposing and tender and everything in between. I really can't heap enough praise on this pair of deeply gifted performers. (*The Lowcountry Weekly, Coastal South Carolina, October 2009*)

## **TWO WORLDS, ONE VOICE - solo concert, recipient of an Agnes Moorehead Award 2009**

Sue Mathys is both a singer whose glorious voice fills a stage, and an actress whose in-depth interpretation of a song brings its character and meaning alive [...] it takes a powerhouse actress to play and sing the part of another, mad actress. Sue's closing numbers at Urban Stages - the Desmond character's "As If We Never Said Good-Bye" and "With One Look" - created a thrilling final. (*Cabaret Scenes*)

[...] Mathys has a powerful voice and actress' ability to mine the most of a lyric and an appealing, relaxed stage presence [...] I came away again with appreciation of Mathys as an outstanding artist in full command of her voice and her chosen material. (*Wolf Entertainment Guide*)

Piaf, Kurt Weill, the Broadway stage - singer and actress extraordinaire Sue Mathys does it all, casting a singular spell over the listener. (*Bistroawards*)

Seeräuberjenny, sung in German, had the impact and the confidence of the Piaf. Mathys spit, snapped and flashed to perfection. Two numbers from Sunset Boulevard sent shivers up my spine... (*Womanaroundtown.com*)

The Swiss singing actress displayed a powerfully versatile voice and jaw-dropping range at her concert at Urban Stages. A seasoned star in Europe, now living here, she was witty and lyrical in David Yazbek's "What Was A Woman To Do" (from *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*), performed the Brecht-Weill "Pirate Jenny" with devastating Teutonic savvy, made Sondheim classics seem new again, and electrifyingly sang both arias from *Sunset Boulevard* (a favourite role). Piaf is another role she's essayed, and she managed to both easily evoke that imperishable chanteuse and make this oft-heard material thrillingly her own. Casting directors, get a quick clue! (*Gay City News*)

## **CANDIDE (Old Lady)**

Sue Mathys guaranteed for a performance of star quality as the chaperone of Candide's unfaithful bride Cunegonde (*Thuner Tagblatt*)

## **SUNSET BOULEVARD (Norma Desmond)**

Sue Mathys presents not only eyes that speak volumes, but also a "speaking face" – One can't help believing Mathys' Norma when she insists: "I don't need words, my face speaks". She manages to maintain the distance between the ex-star and the young, penniless author. She imbues the role with a comedic vein, for instance, in the torturous massage (...) A fantastic Norma, this Mathys! (*Musicals, German Musical-Magazine*)

Sue Mathys is fully focused from the time she sets foot on the stage (...) She portrays Norma Desmond as the bitter, hard woman who knows what she wants and who reaches her goal, if need be with all the means available to her as a woman and even beyond that. This excess of strength and aggressiveness is reflected every moment of her convincing interpretation. As a vocalist she presents Norma with another voice than her predecessors, quite in keeping with the new concept of the role, and impressively so. Surprisingly, the great solo song is not "With One Look", but "As If We Never Said Good-Bye" in the second act, in which she succeeds in uniting a masterful vocal performance with intensity. With Sue Mathys, SUNSET BOULEVARD has found a new, magnificent Norma Desmond. (*Musical-Cocktail, Austrian Musical-Magazine*)

Sue Mathys set accents in the high-handed and vital aspects of the aging diva of the silent film era. Strong-voiced and with large, powerful gestures she carried the audience to standing ovations. Magnificent! (*Stadtzeitung Wiesbaden*)

## **PIAF (Edith Piaf)**

The lynchpin of the musical PIAF is its main protagonist. Sue Mathys brings intensity and humanity to her portrayal of Piaf that is simply amazing: There is on one hand her singing, sensitively in tune with the content of each individual song, imitating Piaf's "r" which sits deeply in the throat, and yet reflecting her own interpretation (...) And on the other hand there is Sue Mathys' own dramatic ability, which brings to life all facets of Edith Piaf's character: Her vulnerability, her ability to love, her love of life, her penetrating laughter, her self-doubts, disappointments and hope – in short the touching ups and downs of her feelings. In her portrayal, Sue Mathys gets rather

frighteningly close to the ideal embodiment of Piaf. (...) Sue Mathys has a full grip on the character - "Standing ovations" are indeed a very rare expression of approval from the somewhat laid back Lucerne public. (*Luzerner Zeitung, Urner Zeitung, Schwyzer Zeitung, Nidwaldner Zeitung, Zuger Zeitung*)

Sue Mathys thrilled the audience, culminating in standing ovations on the day of the premiere (as well as for the first repeat performance that we visited). She identifies with Edith Giovanna Gassion in an almost frightening manner (...). In doing so, Sue Mathys proves to be not only an excellent interpreter of songs who is able to reproduce true to life Piaf's timbre, diction and expression, but who, as an actress of high caliber, also expresses all facets of the chanteuse - above all her immense thirst for life despite all blows which fate dealt her. This expression of Piaf's thirst for life reaches its apex in the last of 20 Piaf-chansons: "Non, je ne regrette rien". (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*)

That one never feels bored during the performance at Lucerne's municipal theater, the Stadttheater, is due to some twenty legendary Piaf hits - and above all due to Sue Mathys. In diction and performance, in timbre and vocal quality she convincingly brings to life "The Sparrow of Paris", even more so, she is The Sparrow of Paris!

But she also gives a great physical performance. For almost three hours, Sue Mathys takes center stage, almost without interruption, staying constantly focused:

Sue Mathys fully meets these demands, with her charisma, stage presence, and voice. Last week, the premiere-audience thanked her for this with twenty minutes of standing ovations at the finale, and they were only satisfied after an encore of two Piaf hits. (*Sonntags-Zeitung*)

Sue Mathy's presence on the stage is breathtaking. She sings, laughs, screams, drinks, loves, and rages with unabated intensity. (*Freundin*)

The casting of the main role is a master coup. Sue Mathys creates more out of this part than the author wrote into it. She renders a frighteningly realistic Piaf. She is so intense and expressive, that one gets goose pimples again and again. In Lucerne's Stadttheater (municipal theater) the ravishing Mathys plays the role of Piaf in front of the ever-full house. And celebrates triumphs evening after evening. (*Züri-Tip*)

Sue Mathys proves to be indeed the ideal interpreter of the singer who became famous as "The Sparrow of Paris": Petite, delicate and fragile, but filled with incredible vitality and a strong booming voice she brings back to life the original woman - or at least the memory of the original - bringing her back to life is so to speak, a wonderful, selfless artistic feat. (*Aargauer*)

Tagblatt)

## **CABARET (Sally Bowles)**

Sue Mathys as Sally Bowles: This role demands as much skill as an actress as it does as a dancer and singer. Sue Mathys unites routine with conviction. Her voice is seductive and full of spirit and sentiment. (*Frankfurter Nachrichten*)

Sue Mathys' voice has vibrancy and that special something which turns great songs like "Cabaret" into irresistible breakthroughs. But whether acting, dancing or speaking – partly in German, partly in English – she endows the star of the third-class Kit-Kat-Club with an outstanding profile, disarming in her insouciance, riveting in her fiery temperament. (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*)

Sue Mathys as Club-Girl Sally Bowles thrilled the audience on opening night (...). With the vibrating power of her voice Sue Mathys lends the evening its emotional and musical highpoints. (*Luzerner Neue Nachrichten*)

Sue Mathys touches your heart – an authentic musical talent of international caliber. (*Der Bund*)

## **CD: SUE MATHYS SINGS BROADWAY AND PIAF, Live recording with the Luzerner Sinfonieorchester**

Swiss musical theater star Sue Mathys honored the audience at the Main Concert Hall of Lucerne's Cultural And Congress Center on New Year's Eve, 2003 [New Year's Day, 2004], by celebrating the premiere of her solo concert, "Sue Mathys Sings Broadway and Piaf". The Swiss record company Phonag has now released a live CD of this acclaimed concert in which the songstress is accompanied by the 70 member Lucerne Symphony Orchestra under the direction of the American conductor Jay Dias. Right from the very first set of selections from Jule Styne's musical, *Gypsy*, with its energetic "Overture" setting the pace and spilling over into the following "Some People", "Small World", and "Rose's Turn", one is overwhelmed by the sheer power and focus of interpretation. Mathys slips into the character of Rose with such immediacy and explosive energy that one believes this could be a cast album of the musical – and this she does with such strength and resolution of timbre (time and again reminding one of Patti LuPone), that it could only come from what would be expected of a true Broadway Diva. The dramatic shaping of "Rose's Monologue" leaves one so enthralled, that it's only until after the orchestra completely carries us away with the "Overture" to Leonard Bernstein's

Candide that finally one must take a deep breath. Following this is a set of Chansons made famous by Edith Piaf, for which Mathys has nurtured a special affinity ever since she played the title role in Pam Gems' play, Piaf – and it's easy to understand why her personal interpretation, so beloved by the audience, is rewarded by their thunderous applause. Continuing with Musicals: after a thrilling Funny Girl set, the audience is invited to share in the world premiere of the song, "How Do I Say I Love You?" from the new musical, Stella Dallas by Jay Dias and Clayton Stang – an effectively constructed and captivating ballad, stylistically reminiscent of Andrew Lloyd Webber's work on Sunset Boulevard, which brings us to the next set, and, for me, the climax of this recording. After her success as Norma Desmond in the German production of Sunset Boulevard in Niedernhausen [directed by Trevor Nunn, produced by Andrew Lloyd Webber's Really Useful Group], the Swiss native once again impressively provides us with a testimony of her qualities: in "As If We Never Said Goodbye" and "With One Look", she pulls out all the stops and convinces us anew of her international status, and shows a deep understanding of the character that's both electrifying and inspiring. With "La Vie En Rose" and "Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien" as encores, the audience is once again given what they so love to hear: two more Piaf Chansons, these being the most successful and iridescent of Piaf's career. And so, in this 76 minute impressive live recording, we are given a musical calling card – and it could not have been done any better. Hats off and congratulations to Switzerland for such Woman-Power! **Strong voice with lots of character. The Solo-CD Of The Month!** (*Musicals Magazine, German Monthly Periodical, "New CD Releases" – August, 2004*)

As Piaf, Sue Mathys was tops. She has ever since made an excellent name for herself as a Musical Theatre singer. Her latest CD unites her two passions: Piaf Chansons and Musical Theatre songs. From PIAF to FUNNY GIRL to STELLA DALLAS, she masters whatever is to be mastered in this genre. Wonderful also is the accompaniment: Lucerne's Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Jay Dias, presents itself with Sue Mathys from an altogether new and thoroughly convincing side. A good opportunity to dismantle prejudices against Musicals and Classical music. (*Luzerner Woche*)

## **LILA ROSEN (Lila Rosen)**

Sue Mathys, who can look back on numerous successes, is on stage for two hours in this solo show, holding the audience tightly in her grip. Her great stage presence is convincing. She masters ironic asides, as well as direct communication with her public. Her singing demonstrates a wide vocal spectrum of colors. (*Musicals Magazine*)

The five member orchestra, under the direction of Andy Herrmann, plays a jazzy mix all the way from Tango to Chanson. And boy, does Mathys show her skills: she sings with virtuosity, and with a quick tongue. (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung* )

The pillars upon which the musical is built are the strong vocals of the songstress and the saucy lyrics of the songs themselves ( Dirk Witthuhn). Not only with cheeky and provocative word play does Sue Mathys bombard her audience, but she also shows an extraordinary charisma, and a versatile acting talent. At times, tender, at times, soft; desperate, then demanding and loud, she also is sensuous and wildly determined to not let life get her down (...) These emotional roller coaster rides were able to captivate the audience, who, at the end, didn't allow the artist to leave the stage without an encore. (*Thurgauer Zeitung* )

[ The songs] are performed by Sue Mathys to the accompaniment of a multi-sided five-member live orchestra, with arrangements that always remind one of the highly dramatic quality of the scenes. Under Barbara Michel's direction, which is richly varied especially in the second act, Ms. Mathys acts with powerful vitality, with whimsical poses, and with flirtatious charm. (*Zürcher Oberländer* )

For two hours, Mathys is fully present from head to toe above all with her multi-layered-modulating voice: at times softly-melting, then bitterly-hard, then high-spirited, then expansive and strong. (*Aargauer Zeitung* )

Sue Mathys thrilled the audience not just with her fantastic voice, but the story itself of the strong but sensitive woman Lila Rosen also invited the audience to be amused and to reflect. This one-woman musical event was a very special and masterly structured performance. [...] She romanticized, suffered, laughed and railed on the stage – and the audience did so along with her. [...] The five-member band was also incorporated into the action of the play: wherever Lila Rosen went, she was followed by the looks of the five men. And at times there was a hot flirt - an electric bolt between two people - passion, perfectly staged. (*Linth Zeitung* )

## **HEIDI (Johanna Spyri)**

The absolute highlight of the evening is musical theatre mezzo soprano SUE MATHYS, who sang the role of Johanna Spyri at the World Premiere in Switzerland. With her full and nuanced-rich voice, she takes the listener through all the different levels of emotion. (*Der neue Merker Wien*)



Cheering and Applause for the German Premiere of HEIDI (...) Only one performer of the Swiss Original Musical Theatre Production joins the stage in Saxony-Anhalt: Sue Mathys, who was celebrated with shouts of Bravo. (*Westdeutsche Zeitung Nordrhein-Westfalen*)

With her strong voice, Sue Mathys has such a commanding stage presence that she seems to have the action on the stage under control at all times (...) the production is highly professional, and with London Westend's drawing cards, Stephen Keeling (Composer) and Shaun McKenna (Book/Lyrics), it has an international orientation from the start. (*Tages-Anzeiger*)

The world premiere of "Heidi" sent the audience of the opening night into rapture. The actors were rewarded with a standing ovation. (*Berner Zeitung*)

Johanna Spyri was impressively portrayed by Sue Mathys (...) It may be predicted that "Heidi – The Musical" will garner international successes. (*Die Südostschweiz/Liechtensteiner Vaterland*)

The colorful life of the Maienfeld girl unfolds itself for once embedded in the rather gray, often depressing daily life of her creator, Johanna Spyri- played with intensity by Sue Mathys - and for that very reason, it moved the audience, who thanked her with standing ovations. (*St. Galler Tagblatt*)

## **HEIDI AND JOHANNA (HEIDI PART 2, Johanna Spyri)**

Sue Mathys endows the character of Johanna Spyri with a great profile. With her vibrant, versatile voice she strikes the right tone in her tragic, as well as her happy moments. Beyond that her acting is powerfully expressive. Extraordinary and deeply moving her helplessness at the moment of her husband's death, her exchanges with her lover, and most expressive of all, her heartfelt desperation at discovering she's been betrayed by her best friend. You will need a large handkerchief. (*Zürisee-Zeitung*)

Starring as Johanna Spyri is the brilliant Actress and Singer Sue Mathys. A gripping performance, that presents the author of HEIDI as full of imagination, full of life, but also embittered and tortured by fate. (*Liechtensteiner Vaterland*)

The distinguished Sue Mathys continues to be world-class. (*Tages-Anzeiger Zürich*)

## **DREI BRÄUTE FÜR EIN HALLELUJA (Artemis)**

Sue Mathys is the quintessential diva. When Sue Mathys begins to sing – no matter whether as Johanna Spyri in HEIDI- The Musical in Walenstadt, or as the Bride in the Maag-Halle, sun, moon and stars and all the rainbows seems to rise simultaneously. God! Is she good! (*Tagesanzeiger Zürich*)

Femininity without competition! (...). Sue Mathys, who a decade ago performed a legendary "Piaf", has then and since then again and again performed roles where there has been no serious female competition on the stage. Here, however, whether standing or more often dancing, she generously shares the stage with Gardi Hutter and Sandra Studer (...) And Sue Mathys digs the Soul out of Sam Browns "Stop" (...) (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*)

Mathys is a performer through and through, who can truly depend on her voice. (...) With "I'm a woman, W.O.M.A.N" the evening comes to a rousing conclusion (...) The audience in the Theater Casino was riveted. (*Zuger Presse*)

DREI BRÄUTE FÜR EIN HALLELUJA is a musical show traversing a whole landscape of emotions and styles. A smooth revue around and about a hotel bed, with precisely choreographed movements, chorus passages and interspersed solo parts! Under Dominik Flaschka's direction, it was a brilliant, sparkling performance. (*Tagesanzeiger Zürich*)

## **NUNSENSE (Sister Robert Anne)**

Inspired to give their all, Susanne Peter, Dodo Hug, Sue Mathys, Gabriele Ramm and Sylvia Rudolf, albeit constrained in their movements by their nuns habits, sing, dance and act so masterfully that the evening becomes a pure pleasure, (...) Watching their mimicry and gestures, and listening to their vocal capers made the evening fun. (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*)

## **WEST SIDE STORY (Anita)**

The credit for the most beautiful performance goes to Sue Mathys, who lends Anita her unmistakable personality, her versatility as an actress and a voice of expressive vigor. With this interpretation, the highly talented artist seems to have achieved her breakthrough. (*Der Bund*)

Sue Mathys as the self-confident, coquettish Anita is riveting both as a dancer and a singer. Endowed with a great singing voice, she was in equal measure

exuberant, playful, resolute, and serious in this role. (*Luzerner Neue Nachrichten*)

Sue Mathys' Anita not only possesses a good measure of temperament, but also voice. When the Jets raped her, she internalized pain and rage in a subtle manner (*Luzerner Zeitung, Vaterland, Schwyzer Zeitung, Nidwaldner Volksblatt, Zuger Zeitung*)

Among the performers, above all Sue Mathys, who convinces as Anita in every respect, and Peter Grünenfelder's expressive Riff stand out (...) The great efforts of the Lucerne's municipal theater, the Stadttheater, were rewarded with an excellent performance. Musical Theatre enthusiasts – come to Lucerne! (*Musik & Theater*)