

Broadway Music in Orangeville to host TroyBoy Cabaret

Written By CONSTANCE SCRAFIELD

Broadway Music is opening its doors at 8:00 p.m. this Saturday for a TroyBoy Cabaret show on their stage in the store, in support of Celebrate Your Awesome.

Troy Caplan will head the entertainment at Broadway Music, along with his cast of Drag Queens and all the others. Even though Mr. Caplan produces Drag Shows in theatres and clubs with his entertainment business, TroyBoy Entertainment, he is not a drag queen himself but 'a male entertainer,' as he refers to himself. He is the 'Ringleader' of the show, centre of 'all the madness.'

He adds to the madness with his own acts, with his own impersonations.

Asked during a radio interview with 88.1 Erin Radio in March, 2016, to define a drag show, Troy said, 'It is men dressing as women and women dressing as men and entertaining you!'

Some years ago, while travelling with a friend of his who is a drag queen, he went to several shows and saw how well received drag is, in the cities, in Canada and the States. Six years ago, he decided to be entrepreneurial about it and started his own business, producing drag and burlesque shows called 'That's My Drag!'. Even though these shows tour the cities, he is happy to bring them to smaller towns, as he did to Erin.

He told morning host, Mat B, how thrilled he was to discover that a small town would be enthusiastic about a drag show, about being seeing a production like this that people would normally never see there.

In the course of setting up that show, they discovered a local talent of a male drag artist. Troy regarded the whole happy event as 'an honour.'

Michael Griffin, co-owner of Broadway Musical with Heather Katz, , told the Citizen, 'Saturday [July 6], the doors open at 8:00 p.m. for the show at 8:30 p.m. This is a licensed event, so, we cannot have people under 19.'

'The store is a small venue,' he said, as a bonus, 'so, we'll be up close to the performers.'

'Troy has been to Orangeville four times with his drag show, at Celebrate Your Awesome. His is one of the most successful drag troupes in Southern Ontario. He's been supporting Celebrate Your Awesome by donating the proceeds from his appearance at the Opera House.'

Asked how Broadway Music's evening of entertainment with TroyBoy came about, he said 'Jim Waddington, the Chairman of Celebrate your Awesome, suggested we get the store involved in Celebrate your Awesome. Historically, the store has put on a show but [this time], to continue giving Troy another venue in Orangeville and to direct some of the proceeds to Celebrate Your Awesome will be fun.'

Rather than strictly a drag show, Mr. Griffin said, 'Troy suggested instead of doing a drag show, he's got an old fashion cabaret show, with some drag, burlesque, comedy, singing and belly dancing. It sounded like a great opportunity to have a fun variety show at the store and give back to the community.'

Not only is the idea of such a show new to the store, the relationship with Troy is new as well. 'Literally, I met Troy from the idea that he perform at the store. Jim suggested him in the first place. I knew about Troy because I had been to the drag shows at the Opera House.'

"The thing is," Mr. Griffin began, "with the advent of RuPaul's Drag Race on TV, years ago, drag has become [one of] the hottest, most popular live performance genres, right across the world. This week, it was announced that a Canadian version of Drag Race is to be produced in Toronto. It's going to be fun, entertaining and it's being done since forever; with great Canadian drag performers, like Craig Russell. It's wonderful that it has been so accepted."

Continuing to talk a bit about drag itself: "It's an art form. Brooke Lynn Hytes, a Canadian drag queen, she was a member of a troupe of all men that performed traditional ballet. She demonstrated her ability as a dancer. It was just amazing to see how graceful she is."

Brooke Lynn Hytes won second place in the 11th Season of RuPaul's Drag Race and was the first Canadian to be on the show.

Certainly, drag has a long history with art.

"But go back even in popular television shows? Milton Berle did drag - or movies, like Some Like it Hot with Jack Lemmon and Tony Curtis, who both did drag," Mr. Griffin remarked. "I think there's been a lot drag racing for 11 years now in America. My mother was going to see Craig Russell in the 60's; it was general, wide acceptance and enjoyment, even then."

"Troy is all over with his show."

Mr. Griffin's point about the longevity of drag and its connection to art is well taken.

Men dressed as women for theatricals back as far as the ancient Greeks and, as women were not permitted to perform on stage in 16th Century England, all Shakespeare's women, heroines, nurses, lovers? all of them - were, of a necessity, played by men.

In the 19th and 20th Centuries, artists in Europe and the U.S. challenged sexual stereotyping with cross-dressing. Women dressed in men's clothing and pretended at facial hair to protest the kind of expectations placed upon their gender.

Outrageous and often very funny, drag and burlesque give the audience a wild ride.

"This show has something of everything," Mr. Griffin promised. "We're allowed 80 people in the store and we're hoping to have a sell-out."

Broadway Music is at 232 Broadway, where tickets are available or call 519-940-4810.