



ENTERTAINMENT *MUSIC*

By James Reaney, The London Free Press
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Broadway shares ‘moments of tears, moments of joy’

Broadway has it all, two top jazz voices, a London-raised piano ace and undeniably the best and biggest hair in Canadian music since pop metalmen Harem Scarem. Add the three Toronto women’s command of pop, Broadway and jazz hits and zany senses of humour and you have some of Broadway’s essence. Some of it.

Broadway knows it’s hard to put it all in mere words.

“This is the kind of show that people have to experience. To try to describe it is sometimes difficult,” Toronto jazz singer Heather Bambrick, one-third of Broadway, said this week on the phone from Toronto.

The good friends know their way around everything from jazz titan Sonny Rollins’ *Oleo* — complete with exhilarating scatting — to Van Morrison’s *Moondance* shining alongside *Moon River* and other lunar hits to a Burt Bacharach-Hal David medley that just keeps growing. All this is produced with three voices, as Leah is adding more of her pipes to harmonies.

Leah has done most of the arrangements. Michels and Bambrick also arrange. All three write, too, and at some point Broadway’s women will have their own words and music to go with the Henry Mancini, Cole Porter and Richard Rodgers gems from the great American song book. Their Bacharach medley has been a fan favourite, Bambrick said. A more recent medley from Porter’s *Anything Goes* has been a hit, too. That medley used to send its own “anything goes” zingers in the direction of a Toronto municipal figure Leah carefully didn’t name in the phone interview, but the likely target’s identity is easy to guess. Those zingers have been dropped because Broadway feels the target is not fair game anymore. Leah used that decision as an example of how the trio is aware there are moments when the joking might get in the way of the music.

Fans love the interplay, in music and humour. “We’ve never done a show where people haven’t walked out of there absolutely thrilled with it and laughing,” Bambrick said.

Toronto fans are telling London-region friends about the Aeolian show and how hot and happy the Broadway rhythm can be. Bambrick summed up the support from those fans as told to friends: “‘If you’re in the London area you have to see the show. We’ve gone to see it. The music is fantastic. We laughed our butts off. . . . Do go.’”

Bambrick and Leah are putting more focus on Broadway in 2015. All three are determined to make it their biggest year yet. Aeolian Hall is one of those on Broadway’s list. It will be the latest classy venue for the trio, who have also been heard at such stops as the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre Series (in the Canadian Opera Company’s Four Seasons Centre), the TD Toronto Jazz Festival and the Stratford Summer Music Festival.

Still untapped as a sponsorship stream is all that fine, fine hair. Bambrick and Leah made it clear that the terrific voices of Broadway would be all ears should a hair-care megacorp make a pitch.

The merry mane tossing at the prospect just about shook the phone.