

Tony Success Proves The Doubters Wrong

So they did it...in spite of the doubts about their ability to reproduce the 'Sound Of Frankie Valli' and the 'Juke-box musical' tag... they won four (our favourite number) Tony's at the annual awards on 11th June 2006.

As Campbell Robertson wrote the next day

"Despite the carping about jukebox musicals and a contest that seemed to gain heat by the minute, "Jersey Boys," the surprise hit about the Four Seasons as told through their songs, won the big prize - best musical - at last night's



Christian Hoff and John Lloyd Young happy with their awards, and above with Daniel Riechard (left) and J Robert Spencer



who "actually lived the story we told." "Many of you fought in the trenches with us this season fighting for your own dreams," Mr. David said to the audience. "We are most happy."
"....."

dio City Music Hall. "God bless Broadway!" an emotional Mr. Hoff said onstage.

So for "The Final Word" we cast around the network of rich and famous for comment.....without success ...so we turned to the tried and trusted for their comments.....We asked Charles Calello what he thought it was that helped secure the Tony awards and he told us.... "The success of the Jersey Boys, after seeing it 5 times, is the story. The book is compelling. They don't play a 4 Seasons song until 40 minutes into the show and by that time they have you. The "hits" only enhance the show but the story - - - that's the real hit. Of course, the music, being introduced to a new audience is being greatly accepted because the show is so good. You'll be interested to know that in the show they also relate as to why they never became bigger then they became in

Tony Awards, as well as three more, including best actor for John Lloyd Young and, in one of the night's several upsets, best featured actor for Christian Hoff.

"On behalf of the entire and most jubilant 'Jersey Boys' family, our profound thanks for this honor," said Michael David, president of Dodger Theatricals, a producer of the musical. Mr. David also thanked the three living members of the Four Seasons, onstage with him,

Mr. Hoff, who plays Tommy DeVito, a founding member of the Four Seasons, was the surprising victor for best featured actor in a musical, beating Jim Dale of "The Threepenny Opera," widely considered the favorite, as well as Danny Burstein of "Drowsy," Brandon Victor Dixon of "The Color Purple" and Manoel Feliciano of "Sweeney Todd." The upset seemed to catch Mr. Hoff by surprise as much as anyone else at the ceremony at Ra-

the sixties compared to other big pop acts, which I have previously commented on.”(See ‘Why I Always Argue With Charles Calello’)

Our well known former Times writer Charles Alexander sums up the excitement and interest of the fans. “ I have now seen **Jersey Boys 24 times (three times in California in 2004 and 21 times on Broadway).** I have vowed to see the show at least once every calendar month for as long as it plays. Need I say more about how much I like the play? I keep going back because I enjoy introducing it to friends who haven’t seen it yet, some of

whom have never been aware of the greatness of the 4 Seasons. All signs point to a very long run. Crowds seem to be more and more enthusiastic, and the crowds were wild to begin with. In the early months, there were sometimes a few empty seats. Now every seat is sold for every performance, and people line up hours in advance on the day of the show to get a limited number of standing-room spots. It’s not clear how many of the original cast members will stay with the show into its second year, but I have no fear about a decline in



the quality of the show. John Lloyd Young is fabulous, but he is not the only one who can play Frankie Valli. The world is full of young talent. I saw Dominic Nolfi in the Valli role and thought he was very good. And the other understudy, Michael Longeria, recently showed off a beautiful falsetto in the Broadway Under the Stars concert. My vow may bankrupt me, but I’ll love every minute at the August Wilson Theater.”

So...’ Jersey Boys’ is an unmitigated success in spite of all the doubters....and credit should rightly

go to the writers and actors as it has with these awards. Bob and Frankie have always been good at trying to re-invent themselves and the Four Seasons brand with varying degrees of success and for that they deserve great credit. In 1968 we had Genuine Imitation Life Gazette. In 1972 the Motown Sound of ‘Chameleon’ and in 1976 The ‘Who Loves You’ Four Seasons. Since that success though the attempts in 1984 with ‘Streetfighter’ and 1992 with ‘Hope and Glory’ have been disappointing... but what a finale to their careers by creating the legend that surely ‘Jersey Boys’ will become. The satisfaction that they must

have with this success is thoroughly deserved.

But for the final “Final Word” we turn to our esteemed webmaster at ‘Genuine Imitation Life Gazette’ ...the ‘officially’ unofficial Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons web site (our sister site at <http://www.genuine-imitation-life-gazette.com/>).

“The winning of four Tony’s, including the coveted “Best Musical” award proved that the excellence of the play, from the book, to the performers, to the stage setting, could not be overlooked, even with the stigma of “Jukebox Musical” hanging over it. I have seen Jersey Boys a good number of times and each visit is as enjoyable as the first. The cast, not only being consummate actors and singers, are also very nice people away from the stage, and this comes through while on stage. The audience reaction has been overwhelming, and I guess shocking to those used to what is considered normal Broadway behavior. I love the audience reaction to Jersey Boys, it brings forth an interaction that has to be witnessed and be part of to be understood.”

