

Hollywood & Mine News from Tinseltown

“Carrie on” indeed

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The joy of “Sex and the City 2”, and it’s considerable, is simple: It’s funny. And fun.

While the first big screen spin off of HBO’s landmark six season series earned \$415 million worldwide at the box-office two years ago, it wasn’t exactly a movie I was eager to revisit. And when I heard that this sequel which opens Thursday, May 27th was just three minutes short of two and a half hours I wondered apprehensively what that would feel like.

Happily, Michael Patrick King, again the writer-director-producer, worried as well and in all the right ways. “My inspiration for the first movie was the girls reuniting,” King said at a packed press conference last Sunday appropriately enough in the shoe salon of Manhattan’s Bergdorf-Goodman (yes, it’s featured in the film and its windows display “Sex 2” fashions, props and jewelry). “The inspiration for this movie was the audience at the first movie. They would get dressed up and have cocktails before and I saw people taking pictures of themselves at the theater. And when I saw the love that was being thrown our way and we could do a sequel I wanted it to be a continuation of the party for the audience.”

He continued, “I also knew I wanted it to be completely different than the first movie. The one rule we have always tried to follow is: ‘Never repeat.’ Start it, break it. I mean it started off as four single girls and we married one of them off, I mean we defied the rules. I knew it had to be a different vibe. We started in an economic downturn. I’m not a banker and I want to make a movie. Like they did in the Great Depression I thought I would make a big extravagant vacation. (Which is why Sarah Jessica Parker’s Carrie and Chris Noth’s Big, now a married couple, watch that Depression era Oscar winning 1934 classic “It Happened One Night” with Clark Gable and Claudette Colbert as a salute to those comedies and romances that helped people forget their troubles.

FROM THE HERALD BLOGS

Super ‘Sugar Man’

1 day ago

Could this year’s Oscar race for Best Documentary Feature offer the best movie experience you’re likely to see? Better or...

Lee Marvin who?

5 days ago

I can’t help but wonder if anyone under the age of 40 even knows who Lee Marvin is. The gravelly voiced, gray haired Oscar...

January Gems?

1 week ago

January movies have been taking a beating for being really bad. Poor January! A month seen as the dumping ground for awful films that...

Good-bye Michael Winner

1 week ago

The British director Michael Winner who died this week at 77 after suffering horribly for years, first from a bad oyster and then an...

“Falling in love again” - DVD Gems

2 weeks ago

THE BLUE ANGEL, the landmark 1930 German film that launched Marlene Dietrich onto the world stage with the first of six films she made with...

And why the quartet goes on an all expenses paid luxury trip to the Middle East with Marrakesh standing in for Abu Dubai.) I think it was our job to give everybody the vacation maybe they can't afford now."

From its oh so glitzy over-the-top opening of a gay Connecticut wedding, complete with men's chorus, white swans and Liza Minnelli, "Sex 2" has a snappy exuberance and sprightly pacing that recalls the earliest days of the series, way back in the 20th century.

Another plus is how the series has allowed the "girls" – Sarah Jessica Parker's Carrie, Cynthia Nixon's Miranda, Kristen Davis' Charlotte and, thank heaven for big girls with outrageous DNA, Kim Cattrall's gloriously raunchy Samantha – to grow and age along with the years.

As the women end up in the Middle East where most of "Sex 2" is set, King transforms the Manhattan-centric quartet's adventures into some kind of hallucinogenic Bob Hope-Bing Crosby "Road" movie.

The billboards announce "Carrie on" with a shot of Parker solo. As I left the screening, beaming and relieved, I made a wish that Carrie and company will indeed carry on.

Heavenly

My idea of Heaven on Earth is to sit in a theater and hear music you love played with exquisite grace, unamplified. That happened off Broadway as The Anderson Twins, Pete and Will, presented a centennial celebration of Big Band clarinetist Artie Shaw called "Benny Goodman meets Artie Shaw. Who was King?" at the 59E59 theater.

Swing music, classic American Song Book standards, boogie woogie novelties played by Shaw, Goodman, Duke Ellington, Tommy Dorsey, Harry James and their bands -- there is something so intensely felt whenever I listen to what was, 70 some years ago now, the most popular music of its day. It evokes World War II and an idealistic vision of America as a beacon for freedom and liberty, black and white Hollywood movies, glorious musicianship. How thrilling to find a pair of identical 23 year old twins from Washington, D.C. (their parents were in the audience, visiting from Maryland) reviving this era with a first rate sextet and hear signature Shaw-Goodman tunes like "Nightmare," "Begin the Beguine," "Stardust," "Frenesi" and the nearly ten minute "Concerto for Clarinet".

"Who was King?" continues thru May 23rd, followed by a new Anderson Twins show May 25-30 with Daryl Sherman as vocalist in a tribute to the women who sang with the Big Bands. Sherman appeared in 1983 with Shaw and his band when he emerged from self-imposed retirement. I can't wait.

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