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BRIAN HARKIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Judy Collins began her fourth season at Café Carlyle on Tuesday.

A Pitch-Perfect Trip From Folk Days to 9/11

Her silver-blond hair cascading around a face whose wide blue eyes inspired Crosby, Stills and Nash's famous "Suite: Judy Blue Eyes," Judy Collins cut a resplendent figure on Tuesday evening at the Café Carlyle, where she began her fourth season. Ms. Collins turned 71 on Saturday, but you would never

know it from the unalloyed purity of her soprano. Her slightly unworldly voice is still an instrument that evokes angelic visions in an imaginary cathedral or a shaft of moonlight settling on a lake whose waters are barely quivering.

When Ms. Collins is at the top of her game, as she was on Tuesday, her voice is as steady as it is pure. In recent years her middle range has gained in substance, throwing her ethereal high notes into starker relief. With a voice as slender

Judy Collins performs through June 12 at Café Carlyle, 35 East 76th Street, Manhattan; (212) 744-1600; thecarlyle.com.

as it is precise, she can ill afford to be even a quarter-tone flat; as she took flight, she hit every note dead center. An a cappella rendition of "Danny Boy," was, in a word, perfect. "Who Knows Where the Time Goes?" had the same wistful rainbow arch as her 1968 recording.

Where Ms. Collins usually divides her shows into two sections, the first on guitar, the second on piano, Tuesday's program was mostly guitar based with her musical director Russell Walden filling in on keyboard. Only at the very end of the set, when she sat at the piano and played her expansive ballad, "The Blizzard," about a romantic encounter that heals a broken heart, did her semi-classical side fully emerge.

The opening number, "How Can I Keep From Singing?," the traditional Quaker hymn that Pete Seeger helped popularize and to which he added words, established the program's folk-pop emphasis. More than her earlier shows at the cafe, this one revealed the extent of Mr. Seeger's influence on her taste in songs as both a writer and interpreter.

Her post-9/11 song, "Kingdom Come," which describes a tribute to New York City firefighters at which she sang "Amazing Grace," is very much in the Seeger populist tradition of honoring everyday heroes in plain language. In its final verse she remembers a fireman at the event who introduced her to his wife, told her they liked her music, then pointed to a tattoo on the back of his neck signifying the number (343) of firefighters who died. As she performed the song, you were right beside them.

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