



APRIL 5, 2009



THE GOD WHO WASN'T THERE

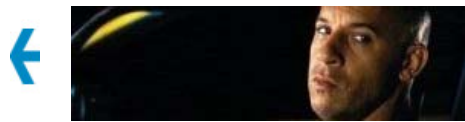
"Irreverently lays out the case that Jesus Christ never existed." -Newsweek



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American Idol Audition Finale

Posted February 6, 2008 | 11:59 PM (EST)

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A bit of a space filler, here -- a few very promising auditions, glimpses of Hollywood week (when contestants can play an instrument if they choose) and lots of padding. I've skipped most of the clearly bad auditions seen in part or full to concentrate on the 10 main auditions we watched, 6 of whom went through. That's 164 in all out of more than 100,000 auditions. Be very glad you're not a judge.

Amy Davis -- A quick backstory tells us Amy's mom has lots of kids, works two jobs and is (usually) single. They're "lower than lower-middle class" Amy says, a hilarious reflection of the tendency of Americans -- no matter how rich or poor they might be -- to see themselves as middle class. The voice-over tells us this audition means more to Amy because "winning American Idol could change her family's life." Duh. Change that to "will change" and "any family's life" and you'd be more accurate. Amy sings "Blue Bayou" in a terrific voice. Wonderful and very sexy. Definitely one to watch.

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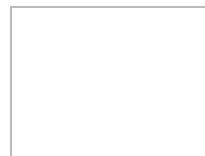
Tiffany McCampbell -- a classic example of Idol making fun of a contestant, the sort of routine that's hard to defend (she's not rude or in-your-face, just clueless). Lots of heavenly choirs and church organ music also mock her faith. Mind you, Tiffany is nuts when she insists that the Holy Spirit told her to

audition. No it didn't. The Holy Spirit never tells anyone to enter a reality TV contest. Still, the overall feeling of this segment is mean.

Cory & Chris Lane -- twin brothers who look like they wanna be Abercrombie & Fitch models with a dumb rap that one brother keeps forgetting the lyrics to again and again. Ickily, they've both dated the same girl...

Ashley Lewis -- who dated one brother and then the other. Sweetly, they stand outside the audition room and confess she's not good enough. Her little dog Panda is cute, however and Simon's eyes light up naughtily when he says he's keeping the dog and Ashley replies, "As long as you put me through to Hollywood, you can have whatever you want." It's a good reminder that one of the

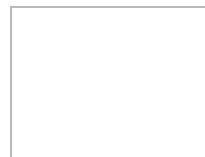
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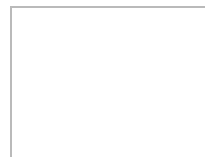
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show's big appeals is sexiness.

Cardin Lee McKinney -- a good-looking girl who does a very nice rendition of the Dreamgirls song One Night Only. Yes, it's from a Broadway show but it's basically a pop song. She sails through thanks to Randy and Paula but Simon rather bizarrely says no. McKinney was easily good enough.

JoAnne Borgello -- a plus-size model, JoAnne has confidence and looks great. She did an excellent version of Celine Dion's "I Love You" and sailed through but again Simon wrongly said no. JoAnne has a great personality and unlike say Ruben Studdard, she's plus-size but not fat and has great style and presence.

Alehsa Stelzl -- a mildly clueless gal who sings Celine Dion's "Surrender" and delivers that word so strangely it seems to have about eight syllables. And she holds her final note or run a really, really long time. Randy and Paula insist she has a nice "tone" and is in the vein of Dolly Parton. Huh? Simon mocks them repeatedly and they send her out to learn a Dolly Parton song (she doesn't know any) and is soon on YouTube watching Dolly and Kenny Rogers perform "Islands in the Stream." She comes back in and sings the chorus and does this weird thing with her teeth. Yes, she is in fact much better suited to this style than belting out Celine, but she's not actually good. They put her through anyway and the funny kicker is that when she's gone Simon says, "I hate to admit it, but you were right." Actually, they weren't. She'll never get past Hollywood.

Another montage of people not making it. Why don't they continue to use the They Might Be Giants song "No!" It was an inspired choice.

Joshua Moreland -- definitely dresses like a pop star and delivers a bad original. Ok until he decides to hit some high notes at the end. But really, worse have gone through. He just needs to learn what his range is and stay there.

Chikezie Eze -- a repeat offender, Eze had auditioned last season and didn't make it. He sings "All The Woman I Need" by Luther Vandross and I'm not sure why he didn't get through last time. Confident, restrained, very good -- my only reservation is that he sticks in lots of little runs. No idea why Simon says no.

Danny Noriega -- another repeat offender and these auditions make me nervous. You hate to encourage the people who don't have talent and Danny is just a kid in high school. He's also presumably a theater major, which doesn't bode well. He says he's gonna sing "Proud Mary" and Randy laughs and says, "Of course!" Frankly, his voice is decent but it seemed more like a lip synch act. None of them told Danny to calm down on all the mannered "performing" and just stand there and sing. But he gets through despite being so young and in many ways awkward. He'll kill on Broadway night if he gets past Hollywood.

So that's it. We've seen plenty of people get the nod, but not necessarily the one person who is going to pop out and make it to the final 12 and win it all. Was Simon off tonight or what? McKinney and Borgello seemed like obvious thumbs up to me. Did you have a favorite from the final batch?

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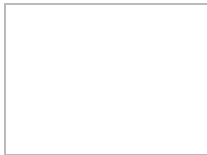
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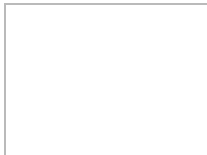
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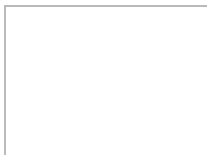
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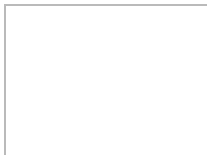
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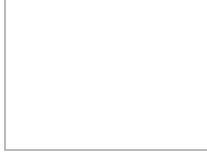
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one thing we tend to forget: idol doesn't show us all of the "good" singers, which is a shame. we have to play catch-up once they get to hollywood and they are spotlighted.

=====

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I loved the twins.  
Did they sing? Rap?  
Hardly remember....

Just loved the twins.

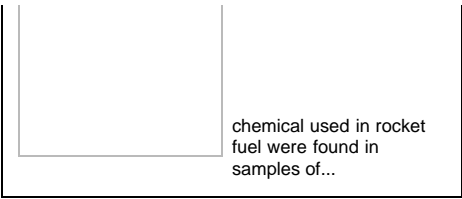
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