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Michael Giltz

Freelance writer and raconteur

Posted February 11, 2009 | 12:05 PM (EST)

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American Idol -- Hollywood Week Day Three Wins Night



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Idol won the night with a 13.5 rating, per **Marc Berman of Mediaweek**, though CBS's strong lineup led by *The Mentalist* was a very strong second. And fans of *Fringe* should expect a time-slot switch -- no show holding onto just 43% of *Idol's* audience can expect to stay in place forever. *Idol* hit 24.5 million viewers per **Hollywood Reporter**, down a tad from last week. *The Mentalist*, the biggest new hit drama since *Grey's Anatomy*, I think, hit 19.7 million viewers.

The most telling moment of Tuesday night's episode wasn't a performance or a backstage glimpse of drama (hey, Tatiana!). It was the voice-over from Ryan Seacrest when discussing Lenesha Young, a promising singer with a background of grinding poverty. Ryan said Lenesha stole America's heart not just with her singing...but with her story. Really? Because I wouldn't have liked Lenesha's solid performances less if I heard she had grown up in the Hamptons. And the less I hear about people's wrenching backgrounds and personal growth in the face of adversity the more I like it. But that's not *Idol*. Especially until we get to the final 12, the *Idol* episodes aren't edited to highlight the singing. They're edited to highlight the stories.

72 people began the day and were grouped into four rooms -- with three rooms going forward and one being sent home. Or as Ryan cruelly put it, sent back to "their everyday lives." It's almost impossible to judge them fairly because we virtually never saw a complete performance and more often than not it was a medley of different people forgetting their lyrics or doing well or whatever.

Adam Lambert -- sang Cher's "Believe." It could have been a bold choice but it definitely came across as cabaret to me. The way he sang it just made the song sound gay, in the bad sense of the word. Just strange.

Matt Giraud -- played piano and nailed "Georgia On My Mind." We even got a shot of the backup

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singers (who were just watching) nodding their heads and smiling throughout. I'd take a lot of comfort from that any day.

Jamar Rogers and Danny Gokey -- Jamar again seemed the weaker of the two though still improving. If only he would lose the giant wallet chain. Danny gave a nice raspy spin on "I Hope You Dance," apparently the first of MANY covers of that tune.

Anoop Desai, Jorje Nunez and Scott Macintyre -- a quick medley of all three, with Macintyre sounding flat and uninteresting to me, especially notable since he was supposed to be more comfortable than ever when sitting down to the piano to perform.

Kendall Beard, Stevie Wright and Lil Rounds -- another medley, with Lil Rounds sounding by far the best.

Kristin McNamara -- a so-so performance and more notable for her chat with Ryan when he said Nancy (the woman who got fed up with the uber-drama from Kristin and Nathaniel) wanted to apologize but was just teasing. Shouldn't Kristin apologize to Nancy?

Then loads of people we barely know led by one we know too well: Tatiana Del Toro, who is shown giving a terrible performance, a relief since it means she'll be going home. She's followed by Alexis Grace, Kenny Hoffpauer, Jasmine Murray and Nathaniel Marhsall, none of which stand out.

Joanna Pacitti -- friend of the producers who has already had her songs placed on numerous TV shows, etc. Pacitti had a record deal that went nowhere. Now she has a second chance and to prove how stressful Idol can be, she blows it completely by mumbling her lyrics. Followed by a montage of other train wreck performances by Casey Carlson, Stephen Fowler and Nick Mitchell aka Norman who jokes his way through another song. Is this Idol or Mad TV?

Anna Marie Boskovich -- the latest of many to trudge through "I Hope You Dance."

Ju'not Joyner -- who already has a cool spelling of his name to go with stardom, does a good take on "Hey There Delilah."

Kaylan Loyd -- Simon ended her song.

Kai Kalama -- lost his voice


Michael Sarver -- oil rigger who sounded so-so.

Now imagine being in the room with Tatiana. Even if you think being with her is a good sign because she's so annoying you might imagine she'll get through for another day (though the contestants won't know how much airtime she'd get for weeks), still...very annoying to sit with her in a corner, all alone, holding court with herself.

And why did we watch tonight? Did anything make sense? Of course not. Tatiana and Nick Mitchell got through. As did Joanna Pacitti who completely forgot her lyrics, the one unforgivable sin of Idol. Yes, it was done just to goose ratings -- there's certainly no vocal reason some of these people got through. But before we yell and scream, remember that it's meaningless. More people will be cut tomorrow and then the final 36 will be cut down to the final 12. THAT'S when it starts to matter who makes it and not a minute before. But still, Tatiana? Have the producers no shame?

Entertainment Weekly's Michael Slezak feels your pain.

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Please explain to me, "just made the song sound gay, in the bad sense of the word."

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Michael Giltz See Profile I'm a Fan of Michael Giltz permalink

"Gay" -- slang, for dumb, goofy awkward, uncool. I'm gay, as in you know, gay, myself. Adam Lambert's big criticism from the judges has been he's too Broadway, not code for gay as in homosexual (like they often mean) but too Broadway as in theatrical and broad -- fine for singing "The Impossible Dream" but a bit melodramatic for a pop singer. Singing a hit song by a diva like Cher is certainly no way to prove them wrong, unless you can somehow dramatically makeover the song and reveal some new hidden depths. That's what Adam said he would do, but in fact his version would have sounded fine on a dance floor or a piano bar. Hence my use of immature, schoolyard slang for "not good."

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stonelaw See Profile I'm a Fan of stonelaw permalink

Tatiana - excusing her voice, talent and personality, I think she's quite good.

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Very funny. She's good for the producers, maybe.

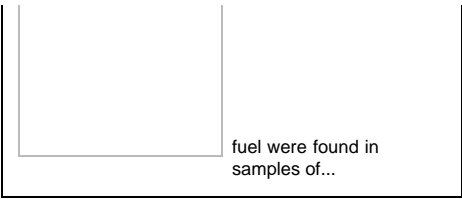
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