



DECEMBER 21, 2010

ADVERTISEMENT

Connect

FRONT PAGE	POLITICS	BUSINESS	MEDIA	ENTERTAINMENT	COMEDY	SPORTS	STYLE	WORLD	GREEN	FOOD	TRAVEL	TECH	
LIVING	HEALTH	DIVORCE	ARTS	BOOKS	RELIGION	IMPACT	EDUCATION	COLLEGE	NY	LA	CHICAGO	DENVER	BLOGS



Michael Giltz

Freelance writer and raconteur
Posted: February 24, 2010 03:40 AM

- BIO
- Get Email Alerts
- Become a Fan
- Bloggers' Index

Idol Season 9: Top 24 -- The Women

What's Your Reaction:



- Inspiring
- Funny
- Hot
- Scary
- Outrageous
- Amazing
- Weird
- Crazy

Read More: [Crystal Bowersox](#) , [Kara DioGuardi](#) , [Pop Music](#) , [Randy Jackson](#) , [Reality TV](#) , [Ryan Seacrest](#) , [Ellen DeGeneres](#) , [Simon Cowell](#) , [Entertainment News](#)

1

SHARE

3 views

retweet

Buzz

Get Entertainment Alerts

Email **Comments 6**

Now it gets fun. Most of us only sit through the auditions and Hollywood Week to get to the live performances on *American Idol*. But before the singing began, the show smartly dealt with Ellen sitting as far away from Simon as possible. They just showed a joke video where Simon was hitting on Ellen. On the other hand, he did look a little peevis, but that might just have been Simon. He also said this year belonged to the women. But so far it only belongs to one. (Hint: she plays the harmonica.)

PAIGE MILES -- Sang "All Right Now," the sole Top 10 hit by Free. Paige looked cute and it was smart to get Tina Turner-ish on a rock song. But this tune has a very minor range and her attempt at a big last note ended abruptly. By the end of the night, however, I agreed more with the judges who were kind. Kara made a silly ghetto comment with "You got a ridiculous voice, girl!" But Randy had the best insight into why the song was a boring choice for a solo act: the chorus is a big sing-along moment and just sounds weaker sung alone.

ASHLEY RODRIGUEZ -- Sang "Happy" the #31 hit (#2 in the UK) from Leona Lewis's second album. Maybe she was trying to butter up Simon, since Lewis is the biggest act to come out of his show *The X Factor*. Unfortunately, it was so-so, with a slow start and many rough patches.

JANELL WHEELER -- Sang "What About Love?," the iconic Top 10 hit by Heart. She looked cute but the song overwhelmed her. She was rough on the verses, very thin on the big notes and only sounded ok on the chorus because the backup singers carried her. Not one good passage.

LILLY SCOTT -- Sang the Beatles classic "Fixing A Hole" from *Sgt. Pepper*. (Sounds awesome in mono, by the way.) Great choice with a good arrangement that's right in her wheelhouse. The only problem was her singing. She was draggy and flat at times and her scatting sort of "ow ow ows" felt forced. The bridge where she got a little spirited and sang with more passion was the only bright spot. But as the judges say -- however, I like her vibe.

ADVERTISEMENT

SPONSORED BY

MOST POPULAR ON HUFFPOST ◀ 1 of 2 ▶

VIDEO & PHOTOS: Rare Lunar Eclipse On Winter Solstice

Like 13K

Stunning Eclipse Photos

Like 46K

Sarah Palin Jabs Michelle Obama's Anti-Obesity Campaign

Like 8K

Timothy Karr Obama FCC Caves on Net Neutrality -- Tuesday...

Like 18K

AI Franken The Most Important Free Speech Issue of Our Time

Like 17K

Why Kate May Or May Not Become 'Princess Catherine'

Like 65

PHOTOS: Heidi Montag's Plastic Surgery Scars: Bald Spots, Uneven Boobs, Lumpy Legs

Like 262

KATHELYN EPPERLY -- Sang the Beatles classic "Oh, Darling" from *Abbey Road*, which was a #15 hit for Robin Gibb from the godawful Bee Gees film thingy of *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*. I liked her choice but was annoyed the producers put two mid-tempo Beatles songs back to back. (That was before I realized there were three Beatles songs in a row. Still, they should have put other songs in between.) Lotta hair from Epperly and the leathery dress made her look too much like she was wearing a costume. But it was pretty good and straightforward.

HAELEY VAUGHN -- The third and final Beatles song, this one a huge smash and their US breakthrough "I Want To Hold Your Hand," which hit #1 for seven weeks here (not to mention the delightful movie by Robert Zemeckis, *I Wanna Hold Your Hand*. Rent it!) She started too high, which immediately got me worried and was flat at times and ran out of breath by the end of lines. But she's always had a little voice and the Jason Mraz vibe was fun. Fun is definitely the word. And sweet. But she needs to work better in her limited range; the cuteness won't be enough.

LACEY BROWN -- Sang Fleetwood Mac's "Landslide," perhaps my favorite song on my favorite album of theirs, the eponymous *Fleetwood Mac*. (It didn't chart until Smashing Pumpkins broke into the Top 40 for the first time with it in 1994, then Fleetwood did a live version that went to #51 in the 90s and finally the great Dixie Chicks took it to #7 in 2002 on their album *Home*, one of the best albums of the decade.) It's a quiet song, but not slow; in fact, it's surprisingly light on its feet. Lacey seemed to be trying to slow it down and seemed uncomfortable every step of the way. Boring. Ellen said, "I think you're better than that," continuing her trend of being honest but supportive, sort of a sane Paula Abdul when it comes to trying to be a cheerleader for them to do their best without her being mindless. Simon was right to call it indulgent.

MICHELLE DELAMOR -- Sang "Fallin'" by Alicia Keys, which shows a notable lack of imagination for someone who should be trying to stand out. Overdone for auditions, performed all the time until the judges and we are sick of it. Of all the songs that have ever charted on Billboard (the very broad category for the night), was that really the best song she could choose? Kara kept talking to Simon but they were all kinder than I expected. She was breathy and had an ok middle but was basically forgettable.

DID BENAMI -- Sang Ingrid Michaelson's Top 40 hit "The Way I Am." She looked very cute and immediately struck me as looking confident. A rough last note was a shame because I thought she was pretty good overall. In the race to be Adele or Duffy (or Madeleine Peyroux) I thought she outpaced Lilly Scott tonight.

SIOBHAN MAGNUS -- Sang "Wicked Game" by Chris Isaak. "I was so happy before the break when Ryan Seacrest announced she'd be singing Isaak. He has a catalog of terrific pop tunes that are immediately catchy a la Roy Orbison, which are perfect for mining on the show and yet not so familiar that they would seem obvious. Unfortunately, Siobhan chose the obvious tune, his only Top 40 hit and one that can be pretty draggy in unsafe hands. Siobhan had stood out for me so I'm bummed she went the dowdy, cocktail lounge route in her rendition, though she built a little steam on the emphatic bridge. But overall, too slow. Plus, the band sounded like it was in the next room (as it did on most tunes, obviously a choice by the producers). On the bright side, she had some cute friends in the audience.

CRYSTAL BOWERSOX -- Sang Alanis Morissette's #15 hit "Hand In My Pocket." Bowersox has been an early standout and now that increases by a factor of 10. She was an instant standout from the moment she began singing. Yes, Morissette is a singer-songwriter, but I don't think most think of her in the Dylan/folkie vein. Bowersox was her own woman (even during other people's songs when she seemed to just quietly watch from the balcony, rather than playing at cheering them on or clapping). And there was a harmonica break! Puts her way, way, way out front of the others in my book. The judges were more reserved when I would have given her a standing O right off the bat. Not a brilliant vocal or stunningly original arrangement but it felt fresh and genuine and real and I wished she could have kept singing.

KATIE STEVENS -- Sang "**Feelin' Good**" by (as Ryan Seacrest put it) Michael Buble. No one's ever hit the Hot 100 with it, but surely this number from the Anthony Newley/Leslie Bricusse musical *The Roar Of The Greasepaint* -- *The Smell Of The Crowd* still belongs to Nina Simone if anyone. The 17-year-old looked too dolled up, which made the whole number feel like play-acting to me, like a girl dressing up and singing along in her bedroom. I immediately wrote down that Simon would tell her to act her age...but Ellen beat him to it. Randy correctly pointed out that her big problem was oversinging notes and going sharp (is it my imagination or is he stepping it up this season?) and Simon nailed it by calling her performance "pageant-y."

At the end, as the end credits rolled and the music played, some of the girls danced along, as they will. But Crystal sort of jokingly/half-heartedly danced along for a moment...and then turned her back on the camera to focus on people in the audience. A big deal? Nope, the show was over and maybe as far as she knew they'd already cut away. But that casual ability to not feel pressured into soaking up every second of

John Boehner Strikes Back Against Sarah Palin

 301

PHOTOS: Rare Lunar Eclipse Seen From Around The World

 12K

DON'T MISS HUFFPOST BLOGGERS  1 of 5



Sinéad O'Connor
Some Burning Questions for the Pope



Billie Jean King
Repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell Is a Big Deal

HOT TRENDS

demi lovato heidi
montag sugery
scars miley cyrus lap
dance video sarah palin
michelle obama teen mom

People.com



Woman Airs Rehab Fight Allegations Against Lindsay Lohan
[READ MORE](#) ▶



Bus Fire Snuffs Out Kings of Leon Show in London
[READ MORE](#) ▶



Ryan Gosling and Michelle Williams (Coyle) Deny They're Dating
[READ MORE](#) ▶

More Celebrity News at People.com

PopEater



Ginnifer Goodwin: I've Been Dieting Since I Was 9



Eliza Dushku Helps Child Soldiers



50 Cent's Home Burglarized by Two Men

More Celebrity News at Popeater.com

face time speaks volumes to her confidence and sense of who she is. Bopping around on stage to the music wouldn't help her anyway, would it? If you haven't guessed, I'm a fan.

Impossible to say which two will go, so I'll just say that Bowersox is safe. It won't surprise me who else is eliminated. If social networking means anything (and at this early stage, your built-in fan base can keep you safe), it's worth pointing out that three women are in the bottom four when it comes to fans on Facebook and followers on Twitter: Haeley Vaughn, Michelle Delamor and Paige Miles (who also had the double whammy of going first).

Who was your favorite? Your least favorite? Any ideas which two will go home Thursday?

Thanks for reading. Visit Michael Giltz at his website and his daily blog. Download his podcast of celebrity interviews and his weekly music radio show at Popsurfing and enjoy the weekly pop culture podcast he co-hosts at Showbiz Sandbox. Both available for free on iTunes. Link to him on Netflix and gain access to thousands of ratings and reviews.

Follow Michael Giltz on Twitter: www.twitter.com/michaelgiltz

More in Entertainment...

Heidi Montag Reveals Plastic Surgery Scars: Bald...

Jud 'Fabio' Birza Wins 'Survivor: Nicaragua'

Ryan Reynolds Says Scarlett Johansson 'Treated Him...

'The Fighter' Star Amy Adams Talks Weight...

Comments

6

Pending Comments

0

[View FAQ](#)

Comments are closed for this entry

[View All](#)

[Recency](#) | [Popularity](#)

HUFFPOST SUPER USER

porsche996 03:41 AM on 2/25/2010
381 Fans



12 girls....3 contestants...this has got to be the fault of the judges...when you audition thousands and wind up inviting so many losers to Hollywood you gotta ask about your own criteria for choosing.. ..they really didn't get better than this?

Watched the guys tonight...same story...12 guys Maaaybe 3 contestants....waste of time this year...I predict ratings for this season will be all time low.

Nothing to see here....move along.

[Permalink](#) | [Share it](#)

wakupmagy 10:00 PM on 2/24/2010

8 Fans

Bring. Back. Paula.

[Permalink](#) | [Share it](#)

anonimost 09:51 PM on 2/24/2010

6 Fans

This first show is never a good judge of the singers. People are trying to feel their oats and some

TOP VIDEO PICKS

1 of 8



Lindsay Lohan in Battery Investigation



Bret Michaels Engaged



Tracy Morgan's Life-Saving Surgery

MOST DISCUSSED RIGHT NOW



PHOTOS: Heidi Montag's Plastic Surgery Scars: Bald Spots, Uneven Boobs, Lumpy Legs
519 Comments



Ryan Reynolds Says Scarlett Johansson 'Treated Him Badly': Report
334 Comments

[f](#) HOT ON FACEBOOK



Heidi Montag's 10 Plastic Surgery Procedures: Before & After PHOTOS
663 Comments



My Lunch With Jane Fonda
1 Comments

[t](#) HOT ON TWITTER



WATCH: Natalie Portman Strips Down In Trailer For Movie With James Franco
19 Comments



PHOTOS: Paris Hilton Dons Leather Bodysuit
154 Comments

HUFFPOST'S BIG NEWS PAGES



Careers



College Basketball



Foreclosures



Royalty



HIV/AIDS



Sarah Palin



Christmas



MSNBC



Civil Rights

are pushing so hard that it falls flat. Although it still surprises me how many try to sound like the artist they are singing - they just can't cut it. Being original is how they advance on the show - any fan knows that.

I think the bottom three mentioned are indeed the bottom three.

But I would never have the guts to do what these kids are doing, so kudos to them for getting up there and trying.

[Permalink](#) | [Share it](#)

DWHarper 07:48 PM on 2/24/2010

9 Fans

I also heard the hype that the girls had the talent this year and, besides Crystal, most were mediocre, if not awful.

[Permalink](#) | [Share it](#)

catcancook 05:02 PM on 2/24/2010



141 Fans

I have not been an Idol fan. I have only watched Season 8 after hearing the swirling rumors of how incredible Adam Lambert was as a singer. So, after hearing that Season 9 was suppose to have more talented singers I did tune in. I was left disappointed. I really didn't see any really talented singers last night. They were sweet and most of them mildly enjoyable but the hype was just that ..Hype. Granted, I do not drink the American Idol Kool-Aid so, I am probably more critical. I won't tune in again, it's too painful to watch these kids be confronted by Simon..even when or if he is right at times, he is still annoying to me.

[Permalink](#) | [Share it](#)

HUFFPOST BLOGGER

Michael Giltz 08:08 PM on 2/24/2010



59 Fans

Obviously the show isn't your cup of tea. But I will say that there's a steep learning curve. Performing with a professional band and an ear piece to hear your voice in front of a large audience is a huge leap -- something that most amateurs never do. Now do it in front of millions of people. Typically, we get to the Top 12 and four or five or six are so-so and you think, really? Are these the best singers they could find? It's not unusual especially on their first live performance to see many of them fail. But they practice and learn and get better. That's how they end up with one or two people who are actually good and can make the leap to a real career. And it's not Kool Aid. Grammy and Oscar winners and some of the top-selling artists of the decade come from the show. But at least you checked it out, which is better than dismissing it sight unseen. It's just a talent show, where as in all talent shows the dross far outweighs the gold.

[Permalink](#) | [Share it](#)

[MORE BIG NEWS PAGES »](#)

FOLLOW HUFFINGTON POST



SEARCH

FRONT PAGE	POLITICS	BUSINESS	MEDIA	ENTERTAINMENT	COMEDY	SPORTS	STYLE	WORLD	GREEN	FOOD	TRAVEL	TECH	
LIVING	HEALTH	DIVORCE	ARTS	BOOKS	RELIGION	IMPACT	EDUCATION	COLLEGE	NY	LA	CHICAGO	DENVER	BLOGS

[Advertise](#) | [Log In](#) | [Make HuffPost your Home Page](#) | [RSS](#) | [Careers](#) | [FAQ](#) | [Contact Us](#)

[User Agreement](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Comment Policy](#) | [About Us](#) | [Powered by Movable Type](#)

Copyright © 2010 TheHuffingtonPost.com, Inc. | "The Huffington Post" is a registered trademark of TheHuffingtonPost.com, Inc. All rights reserved.

