



## REVIEW: SUTTON FOSTER Puts on Stunning Performance at the Sheldon Concert Hall Feb 4th

by Chris Gibson



Before "Broadway Baby" [Sutton Foster](#) even sang a note on the stage of the Sheldon Concert Hall this past Thursday (February 4, 2010), she was greeted with a rousing standing ovation that set the tone for a stellar performance for an audience clearly enraptured with her extraordinary talent. This occasion marked the kickoff of a tour put together to promote her latest CD *Wish*, and a number of songs from her sparkling new work were showcased as she completely captivated the crowd.

Once the audience settled down Foster quickly demonstrated the reason for their considerable affection by belting out numbers from some of her memorable roles on Broadway. Selections from *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (for which she won a Tony), *Little Women* and *The Drowsy Chaperone*, were met with a thunderous response. An early highlight had Foster suddenly whipping off a more reserved tan dress to reveal a racier purple one underneath, as she stopped the show with a dazzling run through "Show Off". This came after she'd retrieved an "Angel Card", from a goblet marked "Pimp", that had the single word "presence" embossed on it. Her performance the entirety of the night suggested nothing less.

Injecting a bit of "randomness and danger" into the evening, Foster decided to have her musical director, the exquisitely gifted pianist [Michael Rafter](#), put five song suggestions into a cup marked "Ho". An audience member then plucked out one of the bits of paper, allowing Foster to work her way through a song in a way that actually appeared spontaneous and unrehearsed. In this instance, we were treated to "Meadowlark" from *The Baker's Wife*.

Foster projected a warm and infectious enthusiasm throughout the night, and in the essence of a true cabaret performance, she seemed perfectly suited to each of her song selections, investing each of them with a quality that made them come alive not just as music, but as a representation of the actual character behind the song. This was particularly evident during a surprising run through "Sunshine On My Shoulders", which never seemed sappy or sentimental, just honest and, well, sunny.

After a breathtaking 90 minutes went by, along with so many standing ovations that I literally lost count, Foster allowed an audience member to pluck the final number from the "Ho" cup, and "Defying Gravity" from *Wicked* was given a serious workout.

On this evening, in the comfortable surroundings of the Sheldon Concert Hall, [Sutton Foster](#) proved that she's a major force to be reckoned with, not just on Broadway, but in the concert hall as well.