

REVIEWS (Translated from Danish and German)  
**ON THE SUNNY SIDE: An Outrageous Cabaret**

***Politiken, Copenhagen***

No matter how life is, it is in fact "on the sunny side of the street" during the intense one hour show featuring Paul Oertel. The show is funny, original, and timed with surprises. It is convincingly sung, danced and interpreted by Oertel with congenially harmonized and counterpointed support by the piano.

The basis of the show is familiar to most people. It consists of well known songs. Everyone can hum, dream, and choose those interpretations they love the most. It is just when we think we know them, that the cabaret strikes and creates not only its own vision, but also its own musicality, interpretation, performance, and dramatic universe. From those evergreens we thought we knew a theatre performance arises, which twists and turns roles and interpretations, plays with rhythms, and a few props so that they become new and exciting again. Out of every song emerges a new situation, a different character, an entirely different feeling.

It may be that not every fan wants to see *Ain't Misbehaving* as a strip tease. But it is interpreted and musically timed to the last trouser button. And Paul Oertel can sing! On the other hand I suspect practically everyone will love the "hangover" which characterizes *Stormy Weather*. And if some might still sit back with a puckered brow, they will have to surrender to the turning upside down of roles in *Do It Again*, or the adolescent-like insistence in *I Want to Be Happy*.

It is a meeting of two worlds, a nostalgic, old-fashioned past with one stroke turned into pure present. It is a joy. It is exactly this mixture of dancing, singing, and acting that challenges us and brings us new interpretations, one we did not believe existed.

\*\*\*\*

***Aarhus Stiftstidende, Aarhus, Denmark***

It was great to be in the company of Paul Oertel last night at Svalagangen's cabaret theatre. With his pleasant singing voice, but also with his charm and very spontaneous sense of humor, he guides his audience along a chain of well loved words and music, world hits you may call them, each and every one of the 17 songs, old wine, but well served and with a new, fresh taste.

It has resulted in a charmed hour. Paul Oertel is extremely professional in a way that you might call typically American. It means that he tackles the task unabashedly. His interpretations are handled so professionally that they are never experienced as mannered or affected. Without his personal charm, call it personality and skills, the program would not have the warmth and depth it has. The props are sparse, a white chair, a few changes of costume, some hints with the body and dance, but enough to provide variation without detracting from the essence of the program; all is tastefully and humorously presented.

\*\*\*\*

***Mittelbayerische Zeitung, Regensburg, Germany October 9, 2001***

**LOVE SONGS REVEALED BY A FEATHER BOA AND A LITTLE LAMB**

An unusual interpretation of American standards from the 30s & 40s

Two legs hanging over the back of a chair open lasciviously and offer a look at an all white moving “derriere.” This sight introduces erotic visions on the stage of the Thurmteater. In a Frank Sinatra-like outfit Paul Oertel brings to the eyes of the public, *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes*, in a voice both smooth and husky. This Friday he offered, accompanied by Peter Barbieri playing marvelously, an hour without intermission of “moonlight and love songs never out of date.”

He invented stories around the songs of the 30s and 40s of Cole Porter, George & Ira Gershwin, Jerome Kern, Irving Berlin and other creators of the great American song books thanks to the little perfected scenarios (directed and choreographed by Nancy Spanier, his wife) and the subtle use of cabaret techniques and dance theatre techniques. Certainly the title *On the Sunny Side* was only a bait for the public. *Ain't Misbehaving* was a parody of a strip tease which kept the public breathless right up until the end.

In George and Ira Gershwin's *Someone To Watch Over Me*, Oertel is lost and follows a little gray lamb, a marionette that he guides ever so tenderly. The happy ending with a final kiss is followed immediately by the sobs of a desperate lover who drowns his grief in a bottle of schnapps and tries to lessen his misery with *One For My Baby*. Oertel changes with the speed of lightning between the roles of men and women. Often he plays with only one prop to enchant the object of his love and desire. A feather boa hangs obstinately on a chair while he sings in a hopeful and caressing voice *Love Is Here To Stay*. For the final number, *What'll I Do?* the public showed its enthusiasm by applauding long after the curtain went down.

\*\*\*\*

***Mittwoch, Erlangen, Germany***

Using simple set pieces and playful, well chosen props, Oertel croons, cavorts, and gently camps his way through some 17 musical standards.