**KERI ALONZO: GIRL SINGER**

**AT FORT SALEM CABARET**

SALEM, NY – Classically trained local musician, Keri Alonzo, debuts her new cabaret, *Keri Alonzo: Girl Singer,* Saturday, November 21, at 8 PM. The now-politically-incorrect label, “girl singer,” was the then-affectionate term applied to the women who sang with popular touring dance and big bands during the first half of the twentieth century. Icons such as Billie Holiday, Doris Day and Rosemary Clooney started their recording, movie, and celebrity careers by standing up and singing in front of bandleaders the likes of as Glenn Miller, Artie Shaw, Tommy Dorsey, and Duke Ellington.

Finding her love for music as a high schooler, moonlighting with the Stillwater Players in ingénue theater leads in *The Sound of Music, The King and I,* and *The Fantastiks*, Keri (then) Behan headed to Ithaca College for her Bachelors of Music degree. She was serious enough to pursue and earn a Masters’ Degree in Opera Performance at the prestigious Manhattan School of Music twelve years ago. Her 2003 performance there, in Thomas Pasatieri’s opera, *The Seagull,* drew the attention of the New York *Times*, which praised her “strong, lovely … sound,” and of *New York Magazine*’s classical music critic, Peter G. Davis, who was impressed with her “vocal authority.” The CD released by Albany Records with the Manhattan School cast remains the only recording of the opera.

After a short time in Manhattan, Keri returned to Mechanicville, married local fireman and fireworks guru Jeff Alonzo, helped raise his two boys, and then gave birth to their son, Andrew. Once Andrew was in kindergarten, she revived her singing career, performing her one-woman show last year at Fort Salem Theater and Panza’s Restaurant on Saratoga Lake, where lucky diners sometimes catch her sitting in for an evening of vocals.

Alonzo mourns in her opening number that she was born at least fifty years too late to even contemplate a career as a “girl singer,” although in her show she does salute several gals who, like herself, were also a little too young to sing with the swing bands, but were, nonetheless, heirs to the tradition: Karen Carpenter, Carly Simon, Barbra Streisand, and Donna Summer. Thus, her selections run the gamut from Patti Page’s “Tennessee Waltz” and Clooney’s “Tenderly” to Roberta Flack’s “Killing Me Softly” and Linda Ronstadt’s “Skylark.”

Keri Alonzo’s opening number invitation, “Sit back and remember. We’ll take some time and rhyme to warm a cool November,” aptly summarizes her cabaret evening. Doors open at 7:30 for dessert and coffee, included in the price of admission and catered by Norene and Fred’s of Salem; the music begins at 8 PM. Tickets are $25. Further information is available at fortsalemtheater.com or by calling the theater box office, at (518) 854-9200.