

Program: The No. 812 - KFOX
Film: JACQUES BREL IS...
Reviewer: Judy Odetta
Date of broadcast: April 30, 1967
Running time: 1 min. 45 sec.

Jacques Brel was born in Belgium in 1929 and died at the early age of 49. He was a handsome and popular poet and singer in Paris along the lines of Yves Montand, Edith Piaf and Charles Aznavour. His wonderful music was adapted for a Greenwich Village production almost 20 years ago called "Jacques Brel is Alive And Well And Living In Paris." Now we are lucky enough to have a production done right here in our own backyard at the Back Alley Theatre in Van Nuys. The production is called JACQUES BREL IS.

There are five stand up singers, three men and two women who belt out 24 songs about love and life and hope, about Amsterdam and Belgium, about death and sadness, about youth and old age, about sailors and shores. Some songs are sad and some are funny, some make you reflect and some make you stomp your feet, but all are wonderful.

Because the Back Alley Theatre is so intimate, all the seats bring you right up to the actors and the action and you become a part of the magic of live theater.

The performers are Michael Hawkins, Melissa Converse, Geraldine Joyce, Thom Keeling and Joseph Cardinale. Michael Hawkins deserves special mention because aside from being extremely handsome, he has a good voice and marvelous stage presence.

The performers are accompanied by a three piece band who actually are a detraction. They need great improvement in dynamics, creativity and humor and unfortunately often drown out the singers who aren't strong enough to handle the competition.

But ladies and gentlemen, the songs in JACQUES BREL IS are really impassioned and touching and uplifting and you will leave the theater applauding. On the Odetta meter, with four being best, JACQUES BREL IS rates a rousing and enjoyable three applaude.

This is your very favorite movie reviewer, Judy Odetta, thanking you for listening.