Blu-ray: Burlesque Kicks Up a Storm

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Burlesque, great dance numbers, Aguilera and Cher can sing

HOLLYWOOD, CA (RPRN) 03/06/11 — “I could relate to Ali as a whole: having this dream, being denied, getting a chance, and getting people to take you seriously,” says *Burlesque* star Christina Aguilera. Ali, a small-town girl with a big voice, comes to Los Angeles looking for fame. Instead, she gets a job as a waitress at The Burlesque Lounge. Tess, played by Cher, is the club’s stubborn owner who isn’t ready to give anyone a break.

Ali learns the dance routines on her own and becomes friends with the bartender Jack, played by Cam Gigandet. Tess’ partner Sean, played by Stanley Tucci, gives Ali her break. Peter Gallagher plays Tess’ ex-husband and co-owner of the club. “This is my mother-in-law’s world,” says Gallagher. “She danced at Billy Rose’s Diamond Horseshoe and the Latin Quarter and at Radio City in the ballet corps. Half the houses I’ve worked with on Broadway were burlesque houses.”

Writer-director Steven Antin created a finger-snapping, eye-popping musical. “Burlesque only became associated with striptease in the United States in the early twentieth century, and that was inspired by the Moulin Rouge in the 1890s in Paris,” says Antin. “Previously, burlesque was defined by comedy shows with singing and dancing, storytelling and parodies. It was considered

risqué and funny and appealed to the mass culture. The risqué elements of Burlesque, though, never venture beyond a cheeky suggestion or a delicious double entendre. Burlesque is sometimes risqué, always sexy, but never sexual."

"Everything we do in this movie, like with original burlesque, is intended to be something enjoyable," says Antin. It's a big, friendly, bawdy, fun romp. Burlesque was entertainment for the masses in its original form, and it still is today in Burlesque."

Antin developed Burlesque at Sony Screen Gems for several years, writing the script, choosing songs for the soundtrack, designing musical numbers, and actually writing the lyrics to one of the film's major songs, *But I'm a Good Girl*. Having written live burlesque shows earlier in his career, making the film was a natural. Next for Antin is the feature film musical *Mash-Up*, in development at Walt Disney Studios.

Burlesque was produced by Donald De Line. Executive producers are Stacy Kolker Cramer and Risa Shapiro. Costumes by designer Michael Kaplan, music by Christophe Beck, music supervisor Buck Damon, editor Virginia Katz ACE, production designer Jon Gary Steele, director of photography Bojan Bazelli ASC and the choreographers are Denise Faye and Joey Pizzi.

While the songs are fantastic, the script is often weak. The dancing is great and so is the acting . Stanley Tucci's character is reminiscent of his role in *The Devil Wears Prada*,, a role he does very well. *Burlesque* is a feel good film has great singing and dancing and looks great on Blu-ray.

Burlesque won a Golden Globe for best original song *You Haven't seen the Last of Me* sung by Cher. written by Diane Warren. Extras include an audio commentary with writer-director Steven Antin. There's also a "Movie IQ" track with trivia. You can use the the bookmarks to e-mail yourself a playlist of your favorite songs from the movie. There's a six-and-a-half minute alternate opening sequence and a blooper reel. The Burlesque Jukebox is six uncut musical numbers, including a dancers-only version of "Something's Got a

Hold on Me" (minus Aguilera in terms of both presence and vocals).

The Blu-ray featurette section has five different programs: Burlesque is Back, The Performers: The Cast of Burlesque, Setting the Stage: Production Design & Photography, and Inside the Dressing Room: Creating the Burlesque Look/The Set List: The Music & Choreography. The extras are in HD, with the musical numbers in 5.1 audio. *Burlesque* includes a standard DVD version of the movie as a second disc.

Running time 1 hour & 56 minutes.

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