



*Alexandra Duvivier. Promotional image courtesy of Duvivier Media.*

## **Review: Magic From Paris to Chicago—Extraordinaire With Alexandra Duvivier at Rhapsody Theater**

The Rhapsody Theater in Rogers Park is perfect for a magical night. It is beautifully redesigned with intimate tables and Art Deco flair. In this space, Alexandra Duvivier is performing Extraordinaire, an evening of magic filled with humor and sleight of hand. When I think of magic, I think of the wonderfully campy '60s with rabbits being pulled from hats and sawing a woman in half.

Duvivier does magic in the old-school way but with élan, humor, and glamour. Also, no animals or people are being fake eviscerated. Relief. Instead, the audience is treated to 90 minutes of illusion, audience participation, and fun.

As the daughter of world-renowned magician Dominique Duvivier, she was not taught any tricks. Duvivier taught herself card tricks at a young age because she loved it and then her father helped her along the way. She has distinguished herself not only as a magician but as a hand model and the muse of several fashion designers. She swept onto the stage dressed in a beautiful black dress and red-soled Louboutin heels.

She is very funny and makes jokes about being French such as "How rude but that's okay I'm French". There was good-natured ribbing about how some Americans say Merci as "mursay" but I think that the audience surprised her with how good we were at some French pronunciation.

She selected several people from the audience as helpers for her tricks. Duvivier was flirty and a tad naughty with the men. Her banter was easy and even though I tried to keep my eyes on her hands, I could not figure out or see how she invisibly cut pieces of rope and then transformed them into one piece again. My favorite trick of the evening was with plastic hangers. Her audience participant made a Joan Crawford reference to wire hangers but Duvivier was not thrown off. His face was priceless as she connected and unconnected the hangers like the old Barrel of Monkeys game.

She gave away little tchotchkes during an audience quiz and to people who assisted her on the stage. Her props have a retro vibe such as a metal noisemaker and miniature versions of the props. I got a spinner toy for guessing a visual pun.

Extraordinaire is a great date night or an evening with friends. Duvivier flirted with everyone and told the men how lucky they were to have such smart women. The backdrops of the opalescent circles in blue and retro pink reminded me of a time when people took care in dressing to go out. Does anyone remember the "after five" or "cocktail" dress category? Duvivier changed into two beautiful outfits that would qualify then and now. It is a fun 90 minutes with a 15-minute intermission.

The Rhapsody originated as a vaudeville theater that opened in 1912. When I lived in Rogers Park, it was called Cobblers Mall but had only a shoe repair shop and a store that sold scuba diving equipment. It went through other names like Mayne Stage and then was reborn as Rhapsody, a venue for magic performances.

Alexandra Duvivier's Extraordinaire is playing through March 10. The Rhapsody Theater is located at 1328 Morse Avenue in Rogers Park. Several magic acts will appear throughout 2024. Live jazz plays in the bar area; there's table service offering small plates and fresh-baked cookies. For more information, visit [www.rhapsodytheater.com](http://www.rhapsodytheater.com).

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