



## Insight From Singer Jim Caruso

By Michael Musto



**Jim Caruso** hosts Cast Party, the long-running Monday night entertainment free-for-all at Birdland, but he's even better known for performing with the lusty legend known as **Liza Minnelli**.

In honor of Jim's swinging new CD *The Swing Set*, I asked him some probing show biz questions.

**Me:** Hi, Jim! Does it ever get boring working with Liza?

**Caruso:** "Liza...boring? Was Paris boring in the 20's? I traveled the globe with Liza for three years, singing and dancing as one of 'The Williams Brothers' in the show that eventually became 'Liza's At The Palace.' We did hundreds of concerts – from Dayton to Monaco – finally ending up on Broadway and winning a Tony. Every single night, as Liza was about to strut onto the stage, we'd hold hands listening to the crowd roar as her "New York, New York" entrance music kicked into gear. And every night, I'd scream 'Do it for Donny and Marie,' which was her godmother Kay Thompson's battle cry

before Liza's concerts. It made her laugh every night. Of course, I'm still desperate to be an Osmond Brother, so any opportunity I can impart their name is golden."

**Me:** What are some of the wackier things that have happened at Cast Party?

**Caruso:** "One couple brought their wedding party to see us. There they were, the bride and groom in all their finery, veils, tuxes, etc., watching chorus cuties belt out show tunes. (I worry for that marriage.) Acrobat/juggler/contortionist **Rudi Macaggi** bounded to the stage and sat on his own face. If I could do that I'd never leave the house. Venerated lyricist **Betty Comden** made one of her last appearances at Cast Party – asking if it would be OK to sing 'One Hundred Easy Ways To Lose A Man,' which she wrote with her partners Adolph Green and Leonard Bernstein almost 60 years before."

**Me:** Amazing! Congrats on *Swing Set*. Hot song choices, great guest stars. You're helping to bring class back!