



## MY NIGHT AT TITANIQUE – A BROADWAY CROWD IN FULL LAUGH MODE

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Photo Credits Evan Zimmerman



### BEFORE THE SHOW

Stepping off Metro-North Railroad into that warm, sticky Manhattan air, I could already feel the day on me—the kind of humidity that hits before you’ve even made it a full block.

I walked over to Sardi’s to cool off before the show. For readers who haven’t been, Sardi’s is one of those old-school Theater District restaurants right next to Broadway. It’s best known for its walls covered in caricatures of actors and theater personalities—like a living scrapbook of Broadway history. It’s not about fine dining or modern flash; it’s about tradition, location, and being part of the theater routine for decades.

Inside, the air-conditioning hits right away, and that alone feels like a reset. I grabbed a water from the bar and mentioned to a host that I was there to review *Titanique*. He told me his wife had seen it and thought it was hilarious—a real “great getaway” kind of show.

A couple of steps away on 44th Street is the St. James Theatre, and the street outside was already building with energy. There was a full mix of theatergoers wearing everything from Gucci, Armani, and Jimmy Choo to denim jackets, T-shirts, and sneakers—all blending together in that shared pre-show anticipation.

At the entrance, I picked up my press tickets. A front-of-house staff member, Sarah, smiled and said, “You’ll love it. We need to laugh now and have fun.” At the merchandise counter, I was told T-shirts had been selling out nearly every performance.

Before the show, it helps to know what *Titanique* actually is. The idea was created by Tye Blue, Marla Mindelle, and Constantine Rousouli. It began as a small Off-Broadway production in 2022 at the Asylum Theatre. What started downtown quickly spread through word of mouth building a cult following before expanding to London’s West End and other international productions,

eventually landing on Broadway as a limited engagement.

At the St. James Theatre, *Titanique* arrives already carrying that long trail of cult success.

### SHOWTIME

The show retells *Titanic* through the imagined voice of Céline Dion, who insists she survived the disaster and is here to set the record straight. The result is a fast, camp-heavy musical comedy that blends drag energy, pop culture parody, and Céline Dion songs into a nonstop burst of theatrical chaos.



Marla Mindelle as Celino Dion

The staging is intentionally minimal. Rather than recreating the *Titanic* in detail, the set uses platforms, railings, and shifting pieces that suggest location rather than define it. Lighting and projections carry much of the atmosphere, especially in the ocean sequences and the deliberately comedic iceberg moment. The design keeps the focus on performance and timing rather than realism.

Direction by Tye Blue keeps everything moving at a fast, controlled pace, letting the comedy land without losing momentum. The show rarely pauses long enough to settle, instead pushing forward so each joke builds into the next.

The costumes and props lean fully into parody, mixing *Titanic*-era styling with camp exaggeration. Nothing is subtle

it’s all part of the heightened, playful tone.



Cast of *Titanique*

Marla Mindelle leads as Céline Dion, functioning as both narrator and ringmaster of the chaos. She doesn’t simply imitate Céline—she amplifies her into a theatrical force, balancing vocal power with sharp comedic instincts and guiding the audience through the madness with control and confidence, complete with a playful mock French-Canadian accent.

Constantine Rousouli plays Jack Dawson with a steady mix of sincerity and self-awareness, grounding the romance while reacting to the absurdity around him.

Melissa Barrera (known for *In the Heights*) brings Rose a contemporary pop-artist energy, adding a modern edge while staying fully committed to the comedy.

Jim Parsons (best known for *The Big Bang Theory*) delivers sharp, controlled comedy as Ruth Dewitt Bukater. A versatile comedic performer, he leans into heightened theatrical drag elements, letting the character slowly unravel as the chaos builds.

Deborah Cox (Grammy-nominated performer) commands the stage as Molly Brown, bringing powerhouse vocals and a strong, confident presence.

Frankie Grande (best known for *Big Brother*) thrives in multiple roles, including Victor Garber and Luigi

using rapid character shifts, physical comedy, and improvisational energy to keep the pacing sharp.

John Riddle's Cal is polished and deliberately arrogant, leaning into villainy with comic precision.

Layton Williams stands out for his versatility, playing both Iceberg and The Seaman with a stylized groove that fully embraces the production's chaos.



Cast of Titanic

Running about 100 minutes with no intermission, the show moves without pause, escalating rather than stopping for reflection. It plays with a comedy-club-like rhythm at times, not aiming for realism or traditional storytelling, but embracing parody as its driving force.

The Off-Broadway intimacy can feel stretched at times in a larger Broadway house, but the cast's commitment carries the production from start to finish.

As the audience filtered out of the St. James Theatre, the reaction matched the energy onstage. Comments came quickly in the lobby and onto the street:

"That was completely unhinged—in a good way," said Vicky from Brooklyn.

"I didn't expect to laugh that much," added Jason from the Upper East Side.

Amisha, visiting from India, summed it up simply: "I had to see it. It's ridiculous—but it really works."

In the end, Titanic succeeds in turning the Titanic story into something looser, louder, and intentionally ridiculous, carried entirely by its performers. The connection between cast and audience keeps the show afloat, feeding off each other's energy with the crowd laughing non-stop throughout.



L to R – Marla Mindelle, Constantine Rousouli, Melissa Berrera

## AFTER THE SHOW

After the show I stepped outside with a new theater friend as the crowd gathered at the stage door. It was her first Broadway play. Being disabled, it was nearly impossible for her to get close for autographs. People in front offered to pass her playbill along when the cast came out. It made its way forward and back signed.

Even outside, there was still a lot of laughter and people talking throughout the crowd about the show. It didn't feel like anyone really wanted the night to end.