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Who threw a knife at Simon Cowell? New Orleans duo advances in 'America's Got Talent'

BY SUE STRACHAN | STAFF WRITER JUN 27, 2019 - 7:00 AM



Nick & Lindsay, from New Orleans, La., in "America's Got Talent" -- "Auditions 5"; which aired June 25.

Photo by: Trae Patton/NBC

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For many people, throwing a knife at Simon Cowell is the chance of a lifetime. Fortunately for aspiring showbiz stars, the acerbic TV talent judge escaped unharmed from "America's Got Talent" auditions, broadcast Tuesday night.

The contestant handling the "tactical throwing knife" was Lindsay, of New Orleans stage duo "Nick and Lindsay," known until recently in the Crescent City as the Guglielmo and Madame Daggars Sideshow Opera. (The act's name is changing after their appearance on "America's Got Talent.")

"It was wild!" said Lindsay, of being onstage with a large audience and four judges: Cowell, Howie Mandel, Gabrielle Union and Juliette Hough. Actor Terry Crews was emcee.

Originally from New York, Nick and Lindsay moved to New Orleans seven years ago. Nick planned to come alone, but a week before the move, a friend set him up on a date with Lindsay. Cupid struck hard, and after Nick

arrived on Lundi Gras 2012, he called Lindsay to tell her he missed her. A few weeks later, Lindsay came down for a visit and stayed.

“We lived together right away,” said Lindsay. “And we never looked back.” They are now married.

Nick is a full-time performer who sings opera — he is a tenor — and hosts circus arts and burlesque shows in New Orleans and regionally. Lindsay is an artist — her work was recently on view at the New Orleans restaurant Sui Generis — and a graphic designer. She helped with art work and makeup on shows Nick worked on, along with other gigs. Soon, the duo formed an act combining his skills as a singer and hers as a violinist, talents they acquired as children.

The scene on "America's Got Talent" started calmly enough: Nick, in a tuxedo, and Lindsay, in a lush green gown, came onstage and introduced themselves. Nick launched into “O Sole Mio,” while Lindsay started playing the violin.



Violin-playing, opera-singing, knife-throwing duo Nick & Lindsay of New Orleans audition for "America's Got Talent" on June 25. The couple moved on to the next round of the show. (Photo by Trae Patton/NBC)

Photo by Trae Patton/NBC

Less than a minute in, Cowell hit the red “X” button – indicating his displeasure. Undaunted, the couple moved to another part of the stage to a large, slanted wooden board – a surprise for the judges, Crews and the audience.

Then the knives came out, and with a flourish, Lindsay knocked them together to show they were real. And while Nick sang, Lindsay threw the blades at him.

Lindsay is a self-taught knife thrower, a skill she learned from a book. Working at circus arts shows with Nick in New Orleans, she realized

there weren't many women in the field. "In my spare time, I turned it into something serious," she said.

Once everyone at "American's Got Talent" was properly amazed and terrified, Lindsay lay down on an ottoman, slipped a knife between her toes and launched it at Nick. Still not done, she lit one end of a knife on fire, donned a blindfold and threw the flaming knife with her foot.

"I usually move my shoulder to the right," said Nick. But because they were on TV, Nick decided the act needed to look particularly good. "And I didn't move," he added.

"I felt like it was the best performance of our career," said Lindsay. "It was shorter than what we normally do, and to cram it into a short period of time was a challenge. We worked hard to get there."

The audience was impressed, and Mandel, Union and Hough easily gave the couple "yes" to the next round — the judges cuts. Cowell was still unmoved and then offered to change his mind if Lindsay threw a knife at him.

“To be honest,” said Lindsay. “It is already horrifying to be onstage with that many people. Throwing a knife at Simon Cowell ... I aimed very safely, but was terrified of the liability and possibly hurting him. I was very careful with him.”

To the delight, or disappointment, of the audience, Cowell was unharmed and gave the duo the go-head to the next round, which will take place in mid-July.

“We decided to put ourselves out on a limb,” said Nick. “We were doing shows around town, and thought, 'Why not do the big jump and see what people think?' ”

Simon Cowell better look sharp.

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