

## **THE WALL STREET JOURNAL**

**By Will Friedwald**

**Shana Farr**

### **The Players**

16 Gramercy Park South. (212) 475-6116

*Friday*

Her debut album is titled "Out of the Shadows," but there's nothing shadowy about this sunny blonde soprano from Missouri (the recipient of this year's Julie Wilson Award from the Mabel Mercer Foundation). Her voice is bright, strong and true, and the high-level accompaniment of pianist Jon Weber (Tedd Firth on Friday), clarinetist Dan Levinson and cellist Adam Fisher is marvelously subtle. The emphasis is on waltzes, and Ms. Farr is probably the most convincing younger American to sing Noël Coward (as on "Someday I'll Find You" and "I'll Follow My Secret Heart"). She knows well that  $\frac{3}{4}$  time is traditionally employed by songwriters as an indicator of youth and innocence. But she's not afraid of the darker moments, either, delivering Henry Mancini's melody to "Whistling Away the Dark" with a keen understanding of how Johnny Mercer's lyrics dramatize the deeper dilemma of avoiding and ultimately confronting one's personal demons.