

University of South Alabama
Theatre **USA** **Newsletter**

The Department of Dramatic Arts ☺ PAC 1052 ☺ Mobile, Alabama 36688-0002

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Theatre USA

Proudly Presents

*Joe Masteroff, John Kander
and Fred Edd's*

Tony Award Winning Musical

CABARET

Wilkommen

*"Life is beautiful. The girls
are beautiful. Even the
orchestra is beautiful."*

The scene is a night club in Berlin, as the 1920's are drawing to a close. The Master of Ceremonies welcomes the audience to the show and assures them that, whatever their troubles, they will forget them at the Cabaret. His songs provide wry commentary throughout the show. On the train to Berlin we find Cliff, a

young American writer, and Ernst, a German who surprises Cliff by putting his briefcase among Cliff's luggage at the German border. History is in the process of being made. As the months pass, Cliff is getting nowhere with his novel-but enjoying life with Sally Bowles, a young English girl from the Kit Kat Klub. When Sally becomes pregnant Cliff is upset-then happy. Needing the money, Cliff accepts a job smuggling a briefcase into Germany. Finally realizing what is happening in Germany, Cliff decides to take Sally home to America. Berlin is not going to be any place to raise a family. But Sally refuses. She loves Berlin and her life there-Cabaret. In the end, we find Cliff on the train again, now leaving Berlin alone. On the train Cliff begins to write about Sally and the people of Berlin as, in his memory, they surround the compartment-singing, dancing, living on the

toboggan that led to the Third Reich. It has been a tumultuous and heartbreaking era.

CABARET played on Broadway for 1166 performances, first at the Broadhurst Theatre then the Imperial Theatre. It played for 336 performances in London at the Palace Theatre. It was revised for Broadway in 1987, and it is currently being revived in New York by the Roundabout Theatre Company at Studio 54.

At the 1966-67 Tony Awards, *CABARET* received 8 Tony Awards for Musical, Composer and Lyricist, Director, Choreographer, Scenic Design, Costume Design, Supporting or Featured Actor and Supporting or Featured Actress along with The Outer Critics Circle Award for Production and The New York Drama Critics Circle Award for Best Musical.

The current production at Studio 54 received 4 Tony Awards for Revival, Actor, Actress, and Featured Actor at the 1998- 99 Tony Awards along with the Drama Desk Awards for Outstanding Revival, Actor and Actress and 3 Outer Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Revival, Actor & Supporting Actress.

Musical numbers from *CABARET* include: Wilkommen, Cabaret, Don't Tell Mama, It Couldn't Please Me More, Two Ladies, Perfectly Marvelous, Tomorrow Belongs to Me, The Money Song, What Would You Do?, If You Could See Her, and Married.

Theatre USA is very proud to bring to you one of the great Musicals of the 20th Century. Performances: Thursday, April 24, Friday, April 25, Saturday, April 26, Monday, April 28 at 8:00 pm and Sunday, April 27, at 2:00pm.



Scenic Design for Cabaret by Lyle Miller

Artist Spotlight
Choreographer
Michelle Adams-Meeker

"5-6-7-8" That's a familiar sound these days if you walk down the hall outside the newly renovated Acting Lab/Studio Theatre in the Laidlaw Center. Along with the new floor, acoustic walls, and lighting system is a wall of mirrors making it the home for theatre dance classes and dance rehearsals. It's also slowly becoming a home away from home for Choreographer and Adjunct Faculty Michelle Adams-Meeker.



Michelle (centerfront) works with the Kit Kat Girls on the choreography for "Cabaret".

Dramatic Arts was fortunate enough to be on her mailing list when she started looking for job opportunities in the Mobile area. She now teaches classes in Theatre Dance for the department and choreographed *The Little Mermaid* last year.

The choreography for *Cabaret* marks a return to the style of one of her favorite choreographers, Bob Fosse. "I spent three years learning everything I could about Bob Fosse's dance style in preproduction workshops for *Fosse*, the hit Broadway musical. I was so fortunate. Now, when I teach I try to pass it on. *Cabaret* is the perfect vehicle for that."

Mrs. Adams-Meeker is a graduate of Houston's School for Performing & Visual Arts, and received Talent and Academic Scholarships to NYU's Tisch School of the Arts where she received their Outstanding Graduate Award. A veteran New York dancer, she performed with Debbie Allen for an ABC television special, danced with Ben Vereen in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, performed on the MTV Music Video Awards and was an original member of the Knicks City Dancers. She moved back to Mobile summer before last with her husband to raise their two children and to be closer to family. The Department of

From the Director
Matt Ames

When Christopher Isherwood, author of the *Berlin Stories* that John van Druten adapted to the play *I Am a Camera* and which later became *Cabaret*, went to Berlin in the late 1920s, World War Two and the horror of the Nazi's Final Solution still lie ahead. Germany was a Republic, with a ruling parliament and President. The Nazi party, although they had by now become the second largest party represented in the German legislative body, was only one of many political parties, including communism, that struggled for power in the German state. The economy of

the country, devastated by years of war and the restrictions and reparations called for by the Treaty of Versailles, as well as the 1929 stock market crash in the United States, was crippled. Millions were unemployed. But Berlin was alive with Germans and expatriates of all kinds who wished to escape the everyday of their lives in the clubs and cabarets that made up Berlin's nightlife. As Clifford Bradshaw, Isherwood's alter ego in *Cabaret*, tells Sally Bowles, he came to Berlin to find "something to write about," and there was plenty to write about in the Berlin of 1930 and 1931, when *Cabaret* takes place.

Our approach to *Cabaret* is

a simple one. The play depicts a time of tremendous political turmoil juxtaposed with a time of great performative creativity, as well as the personal journey of one artist in that period. My experience with productions of *Cabaret*, including the current Broadway and touring version, is that they have been insufficiently "political." Hitler coming to power in Germany in 1933 may be the single most important event in twentieth-century political history. While the story of *Cabaret* is the story of specific individuals, it is also very much the story of a time and a place. We want to show that the lives of the characters in *Cabaret* are not lived in a vacuum. They are just people

moving from one day to the next, dealing with relationships, bills to pay... all the things with which everyone throughout human history has had to concern themselves. We want, as a creative staff, to emphasize that the creative vitality and energy of late 1920s Berlin and the oncoming fascist oppression of the Nazis, for awhile, at least, coexisted. It seemed only a select few could, as Clifford Bradshaw does and Isherwood himself did, anticipate what was to come. Most upper-level Nazi Party members, much less the average German who was just looking for a way out of the poverty in which they were most likely entrenched, did not have any idea what the future

Ticket & Box Office Information

Phone (251) 460-6306

Tickets for Theatre USA Production of *Cabaret*

General Admission \$12.00

Students* \$ 8.00

The Box Office will be open starting Monday, April, 14 from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday thru Friday and one hour before each performance at the Laidlaw Performing Arts Center Box Office. Tickets are sold on a first come first served basis.

All seats reserved. All sales final. No refunds or exchanges.

* Student tickets available for all students with valid ID. One ticket per ID.

All show will start promptly at 8:00 pm (2:00 pm Sunday), late comers will be seated at the discretion of the management. Tickets should be purchased prior to 7:45 pm (1:45pm Sunday) to guarantee seating.

held for them and their nation when Hitler was named Chancellor in 1933.

There are a number of different versions of *Cabaret*. It's original 1967 version is perhaps the most traditional in its format: the most like a standard Broadway musical. Composer John Kander and Lyricist Fred Ebb made alterations to the show for its 1987 version, adding some musical numbers and dropping others. Bob Fosse's award winning film version kept Isherwood's alter ego an Englishman, but made Sally Bowles an American in order to accommodate Liza Minnelli, also removing all of the "character" numbers. Signature numbers like Joel Grey and Minnelli's "Money" came out of this version, as did the formidable "Maybe This Time," which would later be included in Sam Mendes' 1996 revival. With each new version, however, a further attempt is made to highlight the cultural background and political world that is behind the lives of Clifford, Sally, Fraulein Schneider, Herr Schulz, and the rest of Isherwood's richly drawn characters. We hope that audience members will find that our interpretation of the piece is a positive addition to the *Cabaret* canon.

The Cast For *CABARET*

Clifford Bradshaw
..... DAVID MIMS
Herr Schulz
..... ROBERT TUCKER
Sally Bowles
..... JENIFER BORNTRAGER
Fraulein Kost
..... MANDI ELLIOT
Fraulein Schneider
..... MARGARETTE JOYNER

Ernst Ludwig KATIE VICKERS
..... JONATHAN CONNER
Brown Shirts/SS Men
..... JARED PEREGOY
Master of Ceremonies
..... PAUL THOMAS
..... ROBERT WELLS, III
The Kit Kat Women
..... RODERICK AUST
..... CHRISTOPHER ISBELL
..... ANDREA CRUMB
..... CAMRYN DUFF
Saturday April 26
..... JAMIE LYNN BARBOUR
..... JAMIE ENGLEHART
..... ASHLEY VERNEUILLE
..... MELISSA CAMPBELL
..... NICHOLE TELHIARD
..... ALLIE PALMERO
..... DANIELLE NORWOOD
Sally Bowles
..... CAMRYN DUFF
Kit Kat Woman
..... JEAN PARKER
Fraulein Schneider
..... DANIELLE NORWOOD



Rebecca Britton's costume rendering for the Kit Kat Girls



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**Laidlaw Performing Arts Center
on the University of South Alabama Campus**