‘Cabaret’s’ realism makes for musical magic

By Curt Pfeffer

I have closely observed the rehearsals of the musicals that have been presented on campus the last two years, and if Creighton musical productions can be marked by any one characteristic, that characteristic would be diversity. Diversity both in the works they produce and in the talents that present those works.

This year’s production is the 1956 play “Cabaret.” The realistic setting of “Cabaret” is quite different from the dreamland world of last year’s “Once Upon a Mattress.”

“Cabaret’’s realism is quite complete. Audiences will be surprised by a complete night-club-like atmosphere as they will be seated at tables and served wine and cheese.

Cast members range from a high school sophomore on the orchestra drums to Creighton medical freshman Ken Haller.

When asked how hours of practice had affected his busy school schedule Haller replied, “I find it easier to concentrate and study when I am involved in something besides school.” Haller said his classmates seemed enthusiastic about his work in “Cabaret.”

The cast list also includes the Rev. Ted Bohr, S.J., Dental School chaplain, playing one of the leads opposite Suzanne Doty, secretary for the Fine Arts Department.

Campus ministry coordinator Trish Novicke works in props while some U/N/O students play in the orchestra.

In all there are more than 50 people involved and rehearsal breaks are a flurry of activity. In one corner hand and cast members start a jam session while in another dance and songs are practiced and improved.

With all inputs and diverse backgrounds, the show is quite successful.

The Little Theater with some built-in disadvantages, is well-utilized for this production. During the song “Tomorrow Belongs to Me,” for example, cast members join in the song from different positions throughout the theater.

“Cabaret” is directed by the Rev. Joseph A. Brown, S.J., assistant professor. Father Brown said “Cabaret” has better contact with the audience.

“The Little Theater can be made to look like a real cabaret, although only 100 people will be seated for each performance,” he said.

Father Brown also said that he was disappointed with “Once Upon a Mattress” because of the little audience contact possible in the Central High auditorium.

Lead parts are handled by Mike McCandless as the emcee; Kathy Morin as Sally Bowles and Jim Killon as Cliff.

Creighton musicals only come once a year and “Cabaret” holds all the magic that makes a musical enjoyable. Performances will be tonight through Sunday and April 29 through May 1. Tickets are $3 general admission and $2 with a C.U.I.D.

Photos by Mike May