Cabaret stresses music, stretches "thespian muscles"

By MYLES DAVIS and AGNES KNCHIO "I felt that musical theatre was simply not available at York in any

BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS

That was three years ago, when he

was still a first year student in

other form." So saying Kevin theatre, just fresh from a year's Fennessy decided to join Cabaret. experience in musical theatre, at the conservatory of his native Boston. Now, three years later, he is artistic director of the amateur group and is launching it on a brand new year's programme.

"Cabaret has always had some sort of music as part of it, but this year I would like to put on shows in which the music is an integral part of the production, not just a series of skits and songs, but real musical entertainment", he told Excalibur in an interview early this week.

"Our new musical director worked with Studio Lab Theatre over the summer, and has also worked with different groups, and knows a great variety of styles. We hope to expand into putting on original musicals from students at York, in addition to comedy skits and some serious drama."

"For the audience it's a great chance to see original work from into the Open End Coffee Shop in Vanier. Anything from a "Life at York" satirical revue to theatre-inthe-round and variety show fare will be tried. "For the composer, writer, actor, it's a chance to try out ideas, see your work performed and to work with other actors and writers, and generally stretch a thespian muscle or two and have a good time doing it".

If you sing, act, or do a little softshoe, bird calls or an imitation of Aunt Mamie eating spagetti, this seems to be your chance. Cabaret is looking for people, and everyone in the York community is invited to join in the antics.

They need new material as well. They want fresh, original material of the York homegrown type as much as possible. Whether it be bits, skits, or plays, they would like as much satire as they can get.

"Our group structure will be

students for the price of admission fairly loose, the material flexible, and the lively presentation should make the experience an enjoyable and fruitful one for both performers and audience," said Fennessy.

Their first production, to be presented on October 22 and 23, is based on the story Passionella by Jules Feiffer. It's the Cinderella story of Ella, the chimneysweep, who gets transformed by her fairy godfather into a well-stacked, glamorous movie star. From there on, it's a secret, but the music is by the same people who wrote Fiddler on the Roof (Bock and Harnick), so it should be good.

They will be performing regularly in the licenced Open End Coffee Shop on Wednesday and Thursday night at 9 and 10.30 p.m. Admission will be free. In the meantime, if you are interested in writing (and they do need those writers), or performing, please contact Kevin at 667-2247.



By EVAN LEIBOVITCH One of the first things you realize when you try it on a Friday night, is that the Riverboat is not cheap. There is a \$3.50 cover charge, and that's besides the cost of the drinks. The decor, imitating the inside of a ship is interesting, I suppose.

The night we went, it was fairly cramped: over 100 people were jammed into a basement room about 120 feet long, but barely wide enough in some spots for two tables and an aisle between them. The

stage is at one end of the room, and the tables at the other end are raised a few inches, so the people sitting there can see the stage. The lights are dim, but you could still see the person on the other side of your table. The impression is of being inside a submarine.

The place was packed over half an hour before the first set was to start. Girls in tight-fitting denims were constantly whizzling by, hurrying orders for the nonalcoholic drinks, at 75c. a shot. The

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cold drinks were served in large glasses, but the coffee and other hot drinks came in tiny glass cups. Strudel was the only solid food on the menu. We tried the "fresh" lemonade; my date insisted that even Kool-Aid made better stuff.

Pretty soon the lights went out, and Dan Hill took over. His first song, You Make Me Want To Be, established him among the CHUM listeners in the audience. From then on, things couldn't have gone smoother. Hill would use small anecdotes to introduce the subject of his singing, which ranged from Doris Day to riding the subway. His guitar playing was spirited, and his singing had a depth that recreated the experience of his songs. The lyrics were simple and easily understood. In fact, the only thing that distracted from his performance was the man in the back getting his jollies while playing around with the lighting system. Plans to ruin the show were foiled, though, by the best sound system I have ever heard in a club this size.

After Hill was finished, everyone was "asked to leave" to make room for another hundred people to hear the second set. On less crowded nights. I am told one can even stay for both sets.

With Dan Hill, I was greatly impressed. The Riverboat itself, however, would be more impressive to someone under 18. You cantry it at 922-6216.



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