

Musical cabaret overview and analysis theatre essay



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I choose the musical Cabaret as it is a very powerful story, set in 1931 Berlin as the Nazis were rising to power; it focuses on different controversial issues of its time period. A number of issues are explored throughout the unfolding story of the cabaret such as sexual freedom, politics and anti-semitism

I feel audiences will be attracted to this Musical because of its powerful lyrics and storyline, in particular, the two love stories: Cliff Bradshaw and Sally Bowles; Fraulein Schneider and Herr Schultz, and the way the different characters are portrayed in the musical.

2. Text: What are the ideas the playwright/ librettist is trying to express?
What is the relevance of the musical to contemporary Australian audiences?

The romantic love stories of two couples and the impact society has on their relationships: the story of a young English cabaret performer Sally Bowles and her relationship with the young American writer Cliff Bradshaw; and the other story of a German boarding house owner Fraulein Schneider and her elderly suitor Herr Schultz, a Jewish fruit vendor. Both relationships are doomed to failure.

The musical is very relevant to contemporary Australian audiences

Audience will want to see this production, not only does it have excellent music but it portrays some very strong controversial issue of the time period. These issues are still present in our time. It is also important that we as Australians are reminded of the historical past and what we can learn to fight intolerance.

3. Costume, Sets and Props: What requirements are there in each of these areas?

Costume

Emcee wearing a long black leather coat and boots, eyes highlighted with blue eye shadow, lips coloured blood red, bowtie attached to parachute harness

Each cabaret girl to portray a distinct personality need to sing, dance, act and play musical instrument, they do not have to look spectacular, look like scanky low class girls. Cabaret girls wear scant lacy undergarments with holes and ladders in the stockings. The figures onstage look ghoulis.

Sally Bowles various – refer to photograph images below:

Ernst Ludwig dressed in trench coat in Act 1, Scene 2, and brown suite, etc.

Cliff Bradshaw dressed in woollen suit and vest + tie.

Herr Schultz -see photograph images below

Fraulein Schneider -see photograph images below

Fraulein Kost -see photograph images below

Sets

Act 1 Scene 1: Cabaret Scene – Broken light bulbs surrounding stage – see model.

Act 1 Scene 2: Train Carriage – Front of stage

Act 1 Scene 3: Fraulein Schneider Boarding House – Backdrop of 3 doors – with light fixture dropped from ceiling, see model.

Act 1 Scene 4: Cabaret Scene – Kit Kat Klub – full stage

Act 1 Scene 5: Cabaret Scene – Kit Kat Klub near spiral staircase – Sally’s dressing room

Act 1 Scene 6: Cliff’s room -backdrop of 3 doors – left side of stage

Act 1 Scene 7: Cabaret Scene – full stage again, focus on kit kat klub

Act 1 Scene 8: Living Room of Fraulein Schneider’s boarding house – right side of stage

Act 1 Scene 9: Front of Stage

Act 1 Scene 10: Cliff’s room -backdrop of 3 doors – left side of stage

Act 1 Scene 11: Living Room of Fraulein Schneider’s boarding house – right side of stage

Act 1 Scene 12: The Fruit Shop – window suspended

Act 2 Scene 1: Cabaret Scene

Act 2 Scene 2: The Fruit Shop

Act 2 Scene 3: Front of Stage

Act 2 Scene 4: Cliff's room -backdrop of 3 doors – left side of stage

Act 2 Scene 5: Cabaret Scene – Kit Kat Klub

Act 2 Scene 6: Cliff's room -backdrop of 3 doors – left side of stage

Act 2 Scene 7: Railway Station / Cabaret Scene

Props

Optional – 6 tables with telephones in cabaret scene

Train carriage bench seat or 3 chairs

Brown suitcase x 2

Black briefcase

Typewriter and case

Newspaper

Table or large trunk and 2 chairs

Optional – dressing table, mirror to one side near stage left spiral staircase
front of stage

Suitcase (Sally) + 3 more

Sally wearing fur coat

6 chairs. Girls dance on them for cabaret scene

Brown paper bag containing pineapple

Small wind-up gramophone

Table and 2 chairs

Bottle of Gin + 2 glass

Large gift-wrapped package

Envelope with money

Box containing fruit bowl

Suitcase (Schultz)

4. Briefly outline how lighting and sound will contribute to your production. Prepare a list of the sound and light effects you would like and indicate when they occur in the production.

Lighting Design –

A single normal house bayonet light hanging down in the centre of stage, this would be used for a symbolism of inside a room and the lighting which would normally illuminate the room.

For this musical, the lighting design will have to be very carefully planned, in terms of position such as, angles and thrust distance. As well as fixture selection taking into consideration the physical characteristics such as beam size, wattage, luminosity, fixture type, etc.

To light this stage effectively the stage will be broken up into a grid and each part of the stage will be illuminated

I would like to use intelligent fixtures with conventional fixtures. The intelligent fixtures would be great for scenes like the Kit Kat Club as this scene depends on colours and shadows to give the audience the right illusion of a seedy night club. Also, the beam of an intelligent fixture is quite sharp and doesn't really produce much spill on stage so it would be fantastic for solo spots.

I would incorporate the use of follow spots, as I would like to keep the show in its traditional form and in keeping with the historical context. Follow spots are good for things like the Emcee as he moves around the stage.

For the cabaret scenes, use of deep blues, purples and pinks colours silhouetting the Kit Kat Club girls on stage. Lightings surrounding the stage and suspended window, door arches (e. g. I have included photos from previous shows I have designed to illustrate my ideas - see at the end of this report), and the second stage level floor will be bordered with festoon lights. These lights can then be chased. I want to portray a very dingy, run down club where some of the globes will be broken or missing, at the same time as the girls on stage will look sexy, as well as giving the set a very seedy appearance.

There are three main different sets common in this production: train scene, inside Fraulein Schneider's boarding house, and inside the Kit Kat Klub. Each one of these different sets has a different appearance where the lighting is

used to highlight and mark the difference to the set. For the train scenes, the <https://assignbuster.com/musical-cabaret-overview-and-analysis-theatre-essay/>

lighting on stage will be focused mainly in front of the proscenium line with the rest of the stage in darkness. The colours used for this particular scene will consist of open white, fixtures will not be at full intensity as I want to achieve a dull Tuscan amber appearance. Lighting in the train carriage is not really bright and the majority of the light source will be coming from windows letting in the outside light from outside lights.

The second set scene is inside Fraulein Schneider's boarding house - the lighting will be very much the same as in the first scene inside the train carriage. However, more of the stage will be lit, up to the back walls revealing three doors. Top level of the set remains in darkness as it is for the cabaret scenes for the Kit Kat Klub. There will be at least 3 hot spots for the boarding house scene where both Cliff and Fraulein Schneider move in most of the scenes. These hot spots will be located along the front proscenium line along the edge of the stage, and 3 lighting hotspots along in front of each door. Colours used will remain dim; most of the light on stage will look like its coming from the one hanging lighting batten as a light fixture which is incorporated into the set. The lighting will aim to show an old run-down boarding house where maintenance has been neglected.

The final set is inside the Kit Kat Klub, the entire stage will be washed in purples, pinks, reds, blues and a bit of white thrusters to illuminate faces. The scene is set in a seedy and dirty-looking night club. For the lighting of this scene I want the lighting to cast a silhouette effect on the girls dancing for the cabaret numbers. As the music changes and different scenes are set in different parts of the Kit Kat Klub the lighting changes with the mood. The

majority of the lighting for these scenes will be coming from sources side, <https://assignbuster.com/musical-cabaret-overview-and-analysis-theatre-essay/>

top, and behind of stage. The lighting creates a powerful perspective illustrating the emotions portrayed on stage. An effect only seen when we are inside the Kit Kat Klub is the festoon lights surrounding the edges of the stage and the suspended mirror in the backdrop of the set. When inside the Kit Kat Klub these lights are just on still, but when during song numbers these lights will be chasing forward, the classic Broadway lighting effect.

Main actors will be lit with use of the follow spot, the rest will remain in silhouette.

Sound Design –

All the music for the songs would be performed live by the band/orchestra which I intend to incorporate into the production by having them seen by the audience and positioned in acting blocked areas – framed upstairs in the suspended picture frame.

Various sound effects will be used to help portray to the audience realism. For Act 1 Scene 2 Cliff is on a train to Berlin – a screeching sound effect of a steam train travelling is used as background sound as if they are actually in a train carriage. To mark the opening of scene 2, a train whistle sound effect is used. Another effect used is of a crashing symbol to mark the change of scene. A sound effect used for act one scene 9, is of a voice of a young boy singing beautifully and the sound of a steam train in the background. Another sound effect is of a window shattering to mark the end of Act 2 scene 2.

5. Characters and actors: what kind of people are the characters of the musical? In what kind of world do they exist? If you had complete freedom of choice, what actors would you cast in your production?

Emcee

Sally Bowles

Cliff Bradshaw

Fraulein Schneider

Herr Schultz

Fraulein Kost

Ernst Ludwig is a member of the Nazi Party and befriends Cliff

Cabaret Girls

Cabaret Boys are homosexual and work at the Kit Kat Klub

6. How many production crew/ staff are required to stage this production (during the season – ignore pre-production)? Draw up a running crew list, with a description of what each person will be responsible for.

Title

Quantity

Description of responsibility

S7tage manager

1

Production week

ensure all set building, lighting equipment, props, costumes, furniture and equipment ready.

Do cue sheets, prop settings and running order

Prepare assistant stage managers running plot

Do lighting and sound synopsis

Organise time fro technical rehearsal and dress rehearsal

At technical rehearsal, make all final checks and discuss all effects with Director

Time cues and calls in prompt book

Finalize all elements of prompt book

Attend dress rehearsal and note any problems.

First night and performance run

- Check everything

- Remain calm

- Reset play after performances

- Give calls and check all actors and crew present
- Liaise with front of house staff
- Note any alterations or repairs necessary.

Lighting Designer

1

Rehearsal: Go through the musical scene-by-scene with the Director to plan precise lighting details.

Work out presets and cues and help stage manager to mark the prompt book

Buy or hire equipment as needed

Work out a lighting synopsis with the stage manager

Production week: Rig and focus lighting fixtures

Attend technical rehearsal and test lighting and solve problems

Make final adjustments and prepare controls

Lighting Operator

1

Program lighting cues as discussed during rehearsals with stage manager and director.

Attend technical and dress rehearsals.

Fix any problems with lighting designer.

Assist with lighting designer with making final adjustments.

Makes sure has all cues written in script

Operate the lighting console for the session

Sound Engineer/ operator

2

Attend Production meetings and rehearsals

Research, planning and purchasing sound effects recordings, equipment, supplies

Met with Director

Hire and rig sound equipment

Sound plot, mark in script with Director

Attend final dress and technical rehearsals

Operate the sound console for the session

Orchestra

8 - 12

Rehearsal all music parts from the score with all members of the orchestra

Conductor meets with director, stage manager and sound engineer to discuss cues for lead in and out. Organise the running of the show

Attend all shows of the session,

Stage Hands

4-6

Assist the stage manager.

Move props and set pieces around the stage for each scene change.

Organise the actors and escort and cues actors to when to come onto stage and off.

Director

1

Is to organise and meet with every department to ensure that everyone is ready for the upcoming session week leading up to the opening night

Polish final rehearsals.

Make sure all problems have been solved before show commences.

Attend light and sound plotting sessions

Attend all rehearsal leading up to the show discuss notes.

Set Designer

2

Attend Dress And Technical Rehearsals

Make minor alterations

Load in the set and help with the construction

Supervise the Set Builders.

Organise props

Make notes of any problems in the last rehearsals leading up to opening night

Make sure all props and sets have been finished been built and ready to be put in place on stage

Transport set from work shop to theatre venue

Costume Designer

And makeup artist

6

Check all costumes are finished

Make sure any last minute orders have arrived ready in time for opening night, eg wigs

Attend all rehearsals leading up to show opening

Have all actors in costume for the dress rehearsals

Check make up, and add suggestions to individual makeup artist, check how all actors look on stage.

Administration

10-12

Organise the box office

Sell tickets

Work in FOH; sales, bar, ushering

Organise and arrange FOH displays,

Print Programs

Look after the audience.

Organise the theatre ready for the audience members

Attend final rehearsals

Set Builder

6

Install the set

Repair any wear and tear damagers

Fix all the minor details and finishing touches to the set.

Paint the set

Assist the set designer

7. Design: How would you describe the imaginative world of the musical?

What is its Location? What is the period of your production?

The period of this production is set in Pre-World War Two – 1930's in Berlin, the capital city of Germany.

This should be a minimum of 300 words, and rather than giving a synopsis of the productions. Should give an understanding of what you liked about it – why it inspired you. It should be a personal response to the production, and should at least touch on how the technical elements of the production supported the narrative.

Wicked

My experience in theatre has been with amateur productions – it was exciting to see a professional show of the magnitude of Wicked. The stage for Wicked was imaginative and impressive. The lighting in Wicked was particularly inspiring and I could easily make connections to my past lighting experience such as in Wizard of Oz, an amateur production I was involved in with a similar storyline. I can see how aspects of Wicked could be incorporated into the Wizard of Oz production to make it more professional.

Special effects were projected throughout the production to add to the set and properties, to portray illusions into the audience. The image of Glinda opening entrance when she descended in a bubble onto the stage was fabulous. Another example was seen in the creating of rain. I was awed by the lighting effects produced by the projectors to create the backdrop of the magical green sparkle on the backdrop of the map of Oz which was seen as the opening and closing of the production.

In the final scene in Act one - during the song ' Defining Gravity', Glinda is singing about her feelings of being scared, after she was tricked by the wizard to use her magical powers to turn the talking monkey into an evil flying monkey unable to talk. She uses her flying broom stick to escape, I was inspired by the lighting as it was used in a dramatic way as she rises into the air, use of prism scattered gobos in all 5 intelligent fixtures focuses on her as she ascended into the sky, creating a powerful silhouette of colour and rays of light in all directions, ending in a quick blackout to end the song a very powerful ending using the lighting.

The use of lighting elements such as colours to create mood, gobos to add patterns and shapes allows the audience to move from reality to the imaginary world of Oz. In Wicked the attention to detail was very obvious. The use of fairy lights built into the set and the use of tracks to move sets on and off stage was amazing and resulted in an impressive production. My goal is to produce theatre as amazing and as professional as what I saw in this production especially in lighting and sound.