



CHECKING THE SCRIPT are June Rado of Farmington (left) and Charlene Slabey of Northville. They're the writing-composing team responsible for a new musical called "Mackinac!" (Observer photo)

# 'Cabaret' Is Not As Gay As It Seems

By BETTY MASSON

There's something about the movie "Cabaret" that troubles me. If we want to see it and took the message literally, then maybe we wouldn't go to movies like "Cabaret." Or maybe we would.

The movie operates on two levels. Part of it is surrealistic and sinister. The other part is sex, some of it sick.

Not sick is Liza Minnelli. As the American girl, Sally Bowles, adrift in Germany, she's her mother's daughter and then some. Liza belts out a song in a way that would do Judy Garland proud, and adds her own special qualities to the role.

AS A NAIVE, love-starved, promiscuous and ambitious entertainer, she is perfectly believable. In the stage version (based on Christopher Isherwood's stories of Germany in the 1930s), it was much harder to believe in Sally.

But it's against the background of Sally's love



DICK BENSEK

All cheeses, with the exception of cream, cottage and ricotta cheeses, are at their best at room temperature. For best results with your cheese, remove it from the refrigerator at least two hours before serving. What to serve with it? It's best to have on hand at least three different kinds of bread, crackers, or rolls. Black breads, thinly sliced are especially delicious. Fresh fruit is also a fine complement to good cheese: a cool pear or an apple is perfect. And wine? A dry red wine, or for a special occasion, an authentic Portuguese port wine is an impeccable taste. Cheese, delicious, economical, full of protein - given the right company, it can be a meal in itself!

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HELPFUL HINT: To keep cheese, cover tightly or wrap in a wet cloth, and wet the cloth again every few days.

CABARET now showing at Mai Kai Rating: PG

a frantic frenzy of the pursuit of pleasure and non-involvement.

The neophyte Nazi party savagely beats up the manager of the Kit Kat Klub, while his gaudy, tawdry, bare-thighed dancers entertain the crowd with whom anything goes.

The clean-cut lad with the voice of an angel sings "Tomorrow Belongs to Me," and gradually the beer garden crowd joins in with the swastika-decorated youth.

AN OLD MAN is beaten up in the street, and the citizens go on about their business.

A young Jewish couple is married, and the ceremony is beautiful. But what will the future bring? It's a chilling moment, the realization of where prejudice can lead.

The lipstick-painted grotesque emcee of the Kit Kat Klub extolls the virtues of degradation in his strident, brassy voice, but his eyes never smile.

Nero fiddled while Rome burned. Germans danced in their Kit Kat Klubs, and Americans send their children to films in which amorality is portrayed as an accepted way of life.

Yes, "Cabaret" is a troubling film.

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# 'Mackinac' Could Go Far

By BETTY MASSON

Two members of the Farmington Musicals may be doing for Michigan what Rodgers and Hammerstein did for Oklahoma when they wrote the musical of the same name.

But it's hard to imagine Rodgers and Hammerstein doing their collaborating over the telephone late at night, after a day of music lessons and coping with children.

The two who may be putting Michigan on the musical map are June Rado of Farmington and Charlene W. Slabey of Northville. Mrs. Rado has written the play and lyrics for a musical to be presented by the Farmington Musicals and Mrs. Slabey has written the music.

THE BOOK is extremely good, and cast members who are now rehearsing are just as enthusiastic about the music.

When commissioned by the Musicals (affiliated with the National Federation of Music Clubs) to write an original musical, Mrs. Rado and Mrs. Slabey were advised by a Farmington librarian, Clayton (Tim) Timmons, to write something based on the history of Mackinac Island, because "everybody was there."

The new musical thus is entitled "Mackinac!" and not

only will it be performed in Farmington, April 14 and 15 in Harrison High School, but the cast has been asked to go to Mackinac Island for a performance June 25 in the Grand Hotel.

Mrs. Rado has never been to Mackinac Island, but became steeped in its history during many hours of research in the Farmington Library. Mrs. Slabey went to the island last summer "to check it out" with the script.

Bessie Pickering, a settler's wife, is the heroine of the story, which also involves a missing husband, conflict with an Indian mother, and plenty of comic relief in the form of a couple of female tipplers and a girl who gets all tied up in her snowshoes.

The action takes place on ice-bound Mackinac Island around 1820, and involves the joys and troubles of settlers, fort wives, traders and Indians, trying to survive the winter.

Or, as Mrs. Rado puts it in the overture, after describing the island in glowing romantic terms, "We shall surely perish here of tedium." The ladies then set out to live things up a little.

THE MUSICAL has 13 principals, 11 women and two men. As the authors explain, "With all those characters, you can hardly miss having variety."

Going by the book, it should be a most happy milestone in a creative partnership that's been going on for the past four years.

Mrs. Rado, the mother of seven children, is a graduate of Ursuline College, Cleveland, Ohio. Though writing is her primary interest (she used to scribble verses riding the bus to work), she is also a pianist and was trained as a youngster for the concert stage.

Mrs. Slabey, who has three children, is a well-known composer and piano teacher. Her religious works have been performed in many churches. Delta Omicron, a national music fraternity, and the Tuesday Musicals of Detroit, have featured her compositions as well as the Farmington Musicals. She studied music at the University of Detroit and the Detroit Institute of Musical Art.

Mrs. Rado went to a concert of Mrs. Slabey's work and

"came away on cloud nine."

An immediate collaboration was forthcoming, since Mrs. Rado's chief delight is writing poetry and she wanted to hear it set to music.

She has also written three novels, two of which she threw out, and a one-act play when she was in college.

Since then the Slabey-Rado combination has written many art songs, which have been well-received by fellow musicians. Many more are in the works, including a Vacuum Cleaner Suite in B-flat, the note of Mrs. Slabey's Hoover, and some one-acts for women's groups.

THE SOURCES from which they can draw seem endless. Immediately after finishing their first major work, a Christmas cantata, Mrs. Rado was so relieved that the work was ended, she had to write a "Psalm of Thanksgiving."

Then of course, Mrs. Slabey had to write music for it.

The two have found that the best time for collaboration is after 10 p.m., when the house is quiet and they can get together over the telephone. Occasionally when the fires of inspiration are burning bright,

these conversations can go on for four hours.

"We have so much fun, if the operator were listening in, we might be committed," they comment. And for convenience, this form of collaboration has meant an addition to the Slabey household. Instead of moving the grand piano to the telephone, a new jack has been installed for a phone on top of the piano. Now Mrs. Rado can hear the music written for her lyrics without waiting for the movers.

They work well together because "we feel things much the same and we understand each other."

At least once over the past year, the telephonic communication had to come to a stop. Mrs. Slabey lost her voice for three days after writing (and singing) the music for a bass solo.

Rodgers and Hammerstein never had troubles like these! If you want to get your tickets early (I recommend it), contact Farmington Musicals members, Mrs. Jack Monahan, 24356 Bonnet Hill, Mrs. James Love, 26194 Kiltaron, or Mrs. George Krauss, 24196 Twin Valley Court. They are \$2 for adults and \$1.25 for students.

Oh, yes, in movie parlance "Mackinac!" gets a VG rating—very good for both children and adults.

## Southfield Ballet To Debut

The Southfield Ballet Company, formed in April, 1971, will present its debut performance at 3 p.m., Sunday, March 5, in Southfield-Lathrup High School Auditorium, 1930 W. 12 Mile, Lathrup Village.

Tickets are on sale at the Southfield Parks and Recreation Building, 26000 Evergreen, the Tel-12 Mall and the Judy Lee Dance Schools in Southfield and Livonia.

THE BROOKSIDE Jazz Ensemble will play for the contemporary program, Craig Strain, its director, has arranged an original score from a Bach violin concerto, to accompany a dance choreographed by George Zoritch. Zoritch, who is artistic advisor to the company, is a former premier danseur with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo.

Featured with the company will be two lead dancers from the Flint Ballet Theater Dancers and Alvin Mayes of Oak Park and Lori Kanat of Southfield.

The company was formed under the sponsorship of the Southfield Art Council. It will give a special performance at 12:30 p.m., March 5, for school children who will be bussed to and from the concert. This is being made possible through the council, J.L. Hudson Co., the Oakland National Bank, the National Bank of Southfield, the Southfield Board of Education and many other businesses.



THREE LIVONIANS are shown in rehearsal for the Southfield Ballet Company's debut performance at 3 p.m., Sunday, March 5. Left to right are Pam Crowe, Becky Blodgett and Connie Cox. Both Livonia and Farmington are well-represented in the new company. (Observer photo by Bob Woodring)



AMONG THE DANCERS with the Southfield Ballet Company are Beth Liles (left) and Jamie Landry, both of Livonia. (Observer photo by Bob Woodring)

## Faculty Quartet Will Perform At Schoolcraft

A recital featuring members of Schoolcraft College's full and part-time music staff will be performed Monday, Feb. 28.

Sponsored by the cultural and public affairs committee, the recital begins at 8 p.m. and will be presented in the Liberal Arts Theater of the campus, 18600 Haggerty Road, Livonia. There is no charge.

The program announced by Donald Morelock, head of the piano department, will feature

## Dutch Painters Are Featured

"The Light of Experience" is the eighth film in the renowned color series being shown at Madonna College, 36600 Schoolcraft, Livonia. It will be shown at 4 and 8 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 29, free of charge.

Seventeenth century Dutch painters are important figures in this film.

The series "Civilisation" being shown weekly is on loan from the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.

## 'Shaggy Dog'

DETROIT Omibus Children's Film Series of the Jewish Community Center will present Walt Disney's "The Shaggy Dog," at 2 p.m., Sunday, March 5. Tickets are on sale now at the center, 18100 Meyers.

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## Redford Symphony Concert Is Free

Symphony-goers have an opportunity to enjoy a free concert Sunday afternoon (Feb. 27), when the Redford Civic Symphony, sponsored by the Redford Township Music Society, presents its annual family concert.

The event will take place at 4, in the gymnasium of Redford Union High School, 17711 Kinloch.

Besides being free, the concert will afford an opportunity for young performers to demonstrate their abilities. Laura Kargul will be featured as piano soloist and the RU Choir, Triple Trio and Madrigal Singers will sing.



INEZ REDMAN