Purely Accidental: The Stories of Kander and Ebb

An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)

by

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Abstract

Cabaret is a form of performance art in which the performer creates the evening's entertainment. It is unlike a musical in that it does not focus on a single story line or narrative. Instead, a thread of personal anecdotes is woven through the chosen material to connect songs and make a coherent and entertaining performance. It is a free form of art, where the performer can choose to include any music in her show. A song can be changed to mean whatever it is the artist chooses, altered to better suit the artist's performance. The only rule in cabaret is that there are no rules. In this cabaret, I focus on the works of an infamous Broadway duo: composer John Kander and lyricist Fred Ebb. I use some of their lesser-known material to narrate my personal transition from high school to college, and the shift in values that takes place during a big life change. Included in the submitted materials is a DVD video and a program from my performance, a typed version of the patter for the show (the bits of monologue between songs), copies of the sheet music I selected and arranged, and preliminary research notes to show the creative process of putting together a cabaret.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Michael Elliott for all of his guidance and mentorship in advising this project. A constant beam of support, his collaboration made this cabaret both a wonderful experience and a reminder that hard work is an artist's best tool.

In addition, the culminating performance of this cabaret would not have been possible without the assistance and enthusiasm of accompanist and collaborator Jay Schandt. My gratitude for his ideas and volunteer commitment cannot be measured in words.

I extend an extra thank you to Dr. O'Hara, Mom, Dad, Justin, John, and all of my classmates who have encouraged me along the way. Your work inspires me and I hope we always lift each other up.
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Included in pocket: DVD and program from final performance.
Author’s Statement

My cabaret is an exploration of self through a limited source, the limited source being the works of John Kander and Fred Ebb. I began this process with the idea that I wanted to focus on how college has changed me so quickly in four years. Much of what I have learned in classes, both through the Department of Theatre and Dance as well as the Honors College, has been centered on identity: what makes us unique and how do we get to the point where we truly know ourselves? As a Musical Theatre Major, it is simple to say that I love to sing, act, and dance, but I wanted to dig deeper into myself and try to put words to who I have become before another big shift in life’s norms: graduation.

One day, I was sitting in a weekly class that all Musical Theatre Majors take called Master Class. It is a two-hour period where a select group of Musical Theatre Majors from every grade come together under the instruction of their vocal coach to watch each other perform a song and receive feedback. A good friend of mine was performing a Kander and Ebb song I had never before heard. The lyrics spoke to me in a way that lit up my insides, and I knew I had to follow this impulse.

Upon further research, I found myself waist-deep in material written by Kander and Ebb, sobbing on my bed after hours of being immersed in their beautiful storytelling. So powerful are their songs that I knew I had to perform them. I wanted others to see and hear their messages, which are so consistently honest to the human experience that I challenge any person to disagree with me.

To solidify my decision, I began to read a printed interview with Kander and Ebb as told to Greg Lawrence in a book entitled Colored Lights. I opened to the Introduction written by Liza Minnelli, who is a well-known and constant collaborator with the team as well as a long-time Broadway star. She speaks for several pages about Kander and Ebb’s ability to “[give] voice to what [she] was feeling,” with their direct and “in the moment” language (Minnelli ix). It was by reading this that I came to understand my affinity with Kander and Ebb was the same as hers, the same as most people who listen to their music: they say what we think and feel in the way we wish we could say it.

Kander and Ebb are my favorite writing team to date, not only for their style but for their tenacity and ability to take artistic risks in the face of growing commerciality on Broadway. Their first big hit, Cabaret, was a concept musical of nightclub style, with very little plot but more than enough political and social commentary. Cabaret was written in a time following the Golden Age of musical theatre, when the big book musicals of Rodgers and Hammerstein swept the stages, nothing but imitations enveloping the Great White Way. By focusing on the need to tell a story that interested them, Kander and Ebb decided the fluffy, neat, and formulated book musicals needed a challenge, so they wrote something that was just the opposite: “full and nasty and life” (“Broadway… ‘Hidden Treasures’”). Many of their works take on this nature: a challenge to a standard. They did not try to make money, they tried to tell stories that would be
interesting and important. And it is their insistence on the greatness of artistic power over monetary power that made them so successful.

Now that I have explained why I chose the writing team, I will explain why each particular song is included in my cabaret. First, it must be understood that I was attempting to dig into material that is less familiar to me so the legacy of any particular show would not overpower the simplicity of the piece itself.

First, I chose the song “Yes” from a show entitled 70, Girls, 70. I read the lyrics to this song in a score I found and knew it would be in my cabaret. My first instinct was to take it in a direction of overcommitting to clubs and extracurricular activities in college. Then, I looked more closely at the meaning of the words and found that they resonated with me without having to supplement with a comedic element. So, in the end, “Yes” became an anthem for the entire show, as well as a kicking off point for the arc of the cabaret.

Next, I included a mashup of two songs: “Not Enough Magic” from Kander and Ebb’s The Rink, and “Once Upon a Dream” from Disney’s Sleeping Beauty. The former inspired me to think of how much we lose in growing up: the magic of youth. We are taught to be realistic and to play by the rules instead of just play. This reminded me of my experience as a princess at children’s parties, a moment in time when I was always allowed to pretend I was a kid again. I played Sleeping Beauty at a number of parties, so the latter song was a perfect pairing to complete the segment. This mashup is a tribute to something lost in adulthood: reckless abandon. Or maybe just hope.

Then I simply had to include “Colored Lights,” also from The Rink. This song makes me cry every time I listen to it. As a woman who has only begun to find herself, this song moves me with its simplicity and honesty. I have noticed lately that a lot of my female friends and I talk about our pasts in markers of who we were dating or crushing on or in love with at the time. For me, the most vivid memories of my younger years have to do with men. This song contains the realization that defining self in terms of someone else’s idea of you is not a definition of self at all. It tells the story of someone who wants to go back to before she defined herself by her relationships, back to when things were simpler and she knew what she wanted.

I chose to make a sequence of three songs to add some comedic flair into the show, focusing on the perils of auditioning to get into colleges for a theatre program. I knew my audience would be mostly theatre people who would enjoy this kind of song. So, “Nowadays” from Kander and Ebb’s Chicago, with “Life Is” from their show Zorba, and “When You Come Home to Me” from Jason Robert Brown’s The Last Five Years seemed like the perfect combination of two songs everybody has heard and a song (“Life Is”) that few people have heard. By changing the lyrics to the Kander and Ebb songs, I was able to morph the songs into three different feels based on their melodies: beginning with a jazz lament, followed by a frantic and hopeful lilt, then a wordy and panicked drive, ending back at the beginning with a jazz lament, but this time poking fun at everything that was just discussed. This mirrors the arc of panic when one is auditioning. I think this was my most successful piece in the show, for one because it
spoke to my specific audience, but also because the lyrics I rewrote were unpredictable and smooth, as though they had always been written into that song. I think these songs created an interesting mix of trying to decipher just exactly what it takes to survive and be happy in a world that is constantly changing. Especially in a profession where I am asked to be criticized and simultaneously be vulnerable, everything is guess and check.

My next song was "One of the Boys" from Woman of the Year. I did little to change this song beyond updating and personalizing the lyrics, so I think it was a good representation of something half Kander-Ebb and half me. As a woman who can (and has been known to) sing the tenor line of any given choral arrangement, I can easily identify with this song, and therefore knew I had to include it.

I wanted more material from Chicago in my show, as it is one of my favorite Kander and Ebb musicals. I loved the idea of using "Roxie" and inserting my own name, but I was not sold on singing the entire song. I settled on a teaser: something with which everyone in the audience would be familiar, but changed slightly so that everyone would be in on the joke. This was a fun moment to add and got a few laughs.

The piece of which I am most proud is the mashup of "Isn't This Better" from And the World Goes 'Round and "Thinking of Him" from Curtains. Unfamiliar with both of these Kander and Ebb pieces, I was drawn to their lyrics, but could not choose one over the other. I combined them to create an entirely new story arc that wound up being more personal. I originally intended the song to be about past relationships, but I felt I had already covered that topic with "Colored Lights," so I chose to mold the song into being about my relationship with the theatre. The words made sense, but even more, I fell in love with the similar themes found in the music. The keys flow from one to the next smoothly, and the story of the resulting song is compelling to me as an artist because of its shift in point of view.

For a finale, I wanted to bring back the theme of "Yes" combined with something new to show growth and improvement throughout my journey. I chose "New York, New York" because it was one of Kander and Ebb's early hits and is representative of their following success. The words are simple: "If I can make it there, I'd make it anywhere. Come on, come through New York, New York!" This perfectly tied up the thematic element of saying "yes" to a hope for the future and all of its possibilities—to something bigger.

My chief regret was not being able to include a song from Cabaret in my cabaret. This is my all-time favorite show, but I had a qualm with singing its most iconic 11 o'clock number "Cabaret." While this is a dream role of mine, I did not want to do the song a disservice by taking it out of the context of the show. In describing the show during an interview with National Public Radio, John Kander said "it was a song which starts out very jaunty, and nasty, and cheerful all at the same time. Sung by a girl who has just been insulted by her lover and found out she's pregnant and is actually in misery" ("Broadway... Hidden Treasures"). This made me rethink my choice to open the show with this song. I felt it worked directly against the point of the song to make it a happy-
go-lucky opening number. I love the show too much to take away the song’s poignancy. In its place, I wanted to make a medley of all of the songs of Cabaret performed in three minutes or less. I thought this would be a good way to share my favorite show with my audience. In the final stretch, however, my accompanist and I decided it was better for my show to tag the last section of “Cabaret” after acknowledgements and applause because the medley did not have the comedic effect I had desired. I was disappointed that I did not get to make “Cabaret” poignant like it deserves to be, but I was selfishly very glad I got to sing a small piece of it for an audience outside of the safety of my shower.

The need to research and fill in the gaps of my knowledge about the performance style of cabaret and the work of Kander and Ebb made this venture an academic one in addition to the artistic one I have already described.

I had to familiarize myself with the format of cabaret: the dos and don’ts. In doing this, I read a book entitled The Cabaret Artist’s Handbook that I borrowed from my advisor. It provides a lot of basics about cabaret that I quickly learned, and I noted a few interesting tidbits that both inspired me and fueled my project. The first step to making a cabaret is to make sure that it has a structural purpose. The second is to make it really you—personalized, individual, and specific. The author states “even the weakest voice can pierce the darkness when it has something to say and really feels the need to say it” (Harrington 115). This was the jumping off point for my project: what did I need to say? Approaching graduation and the rest of my life, I can safely say I have no idea who I am. This is a step forward from when I arrived at Ball State, when I thought I knew and had a long list of what I wanted out of life. I felt this moment in time right now, before a leap into the unknown abyss, was the perfect opportunity to try to track my progress in sense of self since beginning college.

It turns out I was right. This project helped me realize what compels me about performance: speaking truth. I also realized that sometimes other people speak my truth more coherently than I ever could.

I then had to research Kander and Ebb’s history as a writing duo. The book I have already mentioned, Colored Lights, includes a transcript of an interview between Kander, Ebb, and Lawrence, discussing the team’s career together. One of the most notable segments deliberates what has been deemed the “Kander and Ebb brand” for songs and shows, suggesting the two have a style from which they base their work. In response to this, Ebb states “I think the songs that have become what people think of as Kander and Ebb songs are purely accidental” (Lawrence 29). Thus, I took away the title for my cabaret, capitalizing on the idea that the entirety of their career together was fueled by an interest in a certain topic, a need to explain it to others, and an inclination for the risk of live theatre. This was a creative method which resulted in unprecedented success. They explained several times in the interview how they were always surprised and humbled by their audience’s visceral reactions to their art.
I was led to a number of songs from an album that was released in 2015, called *John Kander: Hidden Treasures, 1950-2015*. This album is a compilation of early recordings and demos for smash hits and unpublished songs alike, giving me a great starting point to hear material I had never heard before. From this, I made a list of songs whose lyrics spoke to me the most, then whittled that list down to songs I thought I could frame differently in some way. I wound up with my final set list by using the songs for which I could find sheet music. A number of really compelling songs were difficult to find because they had never been published or were associated with a huge flop. It was thrilling, though, to hear Kander and Ebb singing their own tunes back in the early stages of creation, eager to make a good recording for whatever producer they hoped would back their new show.

In researching Kander and Ebb, I learned details about their lives and career together that brought me to admire them even more. This cabaret was an expansion on an impulse, an impulse very much driven by the fundamentally human stories this duo generated. At the end of their career, they boasted more than a handful of hits on Broadway, some of which continue to run or be revived today. With the tragic death of Fred Ebb, the duo's work came to an end. Their legacy, however, is not in the production of their stories, but in the lasting impact those stories continue to create on their audience. For me, they have helped put words to feelings I have been suppressing since childhood. They have inspired me to take risks and to challenge the status quo. They have made me confident that my colored lights are right around the corner.
OPPORTUNES COME YOUR WAY You CAN'T SEEM DETERMINED WHAT TO SAY You
NEVER WIN IF YOU NEVER DARE SAY YES THERE'S
- 4 - YES

MINK AND MOP-1-GOLD RIGHT OUTSIDE AND LONG WHITE GO-1-LINES YOU CAN RIDE THERE'S

NOTHING GAINED IF THERE'S NOTHING TRIED SAY YES

(REPL)
“thank you very much for coming... (SAX)"

"YES of course YES how I love YES I'll happily thank you very much WHY NOT?"

"Come on say YES say YES"

"little more laid back"
(HARRY) YES

(SINGS) YES

There's lots of change but there's lots of what they say

(EDDIE) YES

You might get nudged as you walk the street but
ON THE OTHER HAND YOU MIGHT GREET THAT HAND-SOME STRANGER YOU'VE LONGED TO MEET.  

(etc.)  

Feiliu, Melia, etc.  

OTHERS (go lit)  

AND THE SHOW  

(continues)

 msg on  

John Kendra 2
CRESC

V.

YES I'LL TRY

YES I'LL DARE

YES I'LL SHAME

YES I'LL HAD-PI-LY

FLY

CRES

(ADD SAKES)

L.

R.

THANK YOU VE-RY MUCH

YES

OH YES.

END

351
DINO: "ARE YOU SCARED OF ME, HONEY?"

"Kids are great..."

"What could be better?"
ONCE UPON A DREAM
from Walt Disney’s Sleeping Beauty

Words and Music by Sammy Fain
and Jack Lawrence
Adapted from a Theme by Tchaikovsky

Moderately

"and then I would ... and we would sing"

Fmaj7 F6 C9/G

I know you! I walked with you once up

F#dim D7b9 Gm C/G Abdim7 Gm7

on a dream. I know you! The

gleam in your eyes is so familiar a gleam. Yet, I
F  Fmaj7  F6  Gdim7  Gm  D7

But if I know you, I know what you'll do; you'll love me at once the way you did once upon a dream.

E7/G♯  F/A  F/C  D7♭9  Gm  B♭/C

and we would all hold hands.

a dream. Yet, I dream.
ROUND IT GOES ROUND IT GOES JUST LIKE THE EARTH.

more companh feel

ON-LY MUCH MORE BEAUTIFUL
COLORED LIGHTS

(BEGIN IN DARKNESS)
"Announcement: "Pants east now cocking"

SAFETY VAMP!

I was sitting on a sand dune in...\)
MEMBER THAT I TURNED TO SAM AND SAID,
OR WAS IT FRED? WELL

ANY WAY I SHOULD BE UP AND YET I'M DOWN INSTEAD.
SOME TIMES

MISSING SAM—SOME TIMES MISSING FRED. SOME TIMES MISSING HERE.

(c. 1965 AMER. BID)
ANP... ANP... ANP... ANP...

ANGEL:
WHERE ARE MY 2 COLORED LIGHTS?

(= BIRD SONG)

BEADS AND BLEACHERS AND COLORED LIGHTS
SAILING OUT OF LONG BEACH ON A CAT-HAR-AN OR FISH-ING SLOW WELL

ANY - HOW I WAS LEAN-ING, CHEW-ING CASH-ENDS OFF THE STAR-BOARD BOW THAT

SUN-SET, WOW! WELL ANY - HOW I RE-
WHERE ARE MY \textit{COLORED LIGHTS}?

BEADS AND BLEACHERS AND \textit{COLORED LIGHTS}?
Colored lights

GIGGLES OF GIRLS IN THE MEZZANINE

FILTERED THROUGH COLORED LIGHTS PINK AND YELLOW AND

GREEN

AND I
Tried to find the answer in the friends I made
Or beds I'd share
Well

Anywhere but with other people's music ringing in my ear

Could'n't sing well, anything and I
Thought if I could just be twelve again or was it ten? Well,

Any way it seems to me I knew the secret then. It's so

Simple, twelve, it's so simple, ten it's so simple here.
AD LIB (ON ONE)

LEAVING HOME YEARS A-GO

[spoken]

WHAT WAS I LOOKING FOR? I DON'T KNOW

"LAST CALL"
### CAN'T RECALL WELL ANYWAY

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<th>Tempo</th>
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- Bm,7
- Bb6
- Am7 (no 6)
- Am7

- Gm7
- Am7
- Gm7
- Am7

- Gm7
- Am7
- Gm6
- Gm7

- Gm6
- Gm7
"Fun Isn't It?"

"And Now Poetry in Motion"

"Heaven, Nowadays"

"For Notice"
LIFE IS
from Zorba

Moderato

LEADER:

while you're

waiting to

sing

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while you're waiting to leave.
if you're lucky, waiting if you're not going through the lyrics

convinced that you are thinking of the new shoes that you should've bought

the only dream you've got!
is where you stand
hoping that you aren't flat

only that, god, man please go wait downsmics that's me

that and nothing more than that

into bell tone
good person. I'm an attractive person!

I am a talented person! Grant me...

Grace!

When you come... home... I should have told them I was sick last week. They're gonna think this is the...
way I sing. Why is the pianist playing so loud? Should I sing louder? I'll sing louder. May-be I should stop and start over. I'm gonna stop and start over. Why is the director staring at his crotch? Why is that man staring at my resume? Don't stare at my resume. I made up half of my resume. Look at me. Stop looking at that, look at me!
No, not at my shoes. Don't look at my shoes. I hate these fuck-ing shoes...

Why did I pick these shoes? Why did I pick this song? Why did I pick this ca-ree-r? Why....

does this pian-ist hate me? If I don't get the
call-back, I can go to Crate and Bar-rel with Mom to buy a couch Not that I want to spend a
day with Mom, but Jamie needs space to write, since I'm obviously such a

horrible, annoying distraction to him. What's he gonna be like when we have kids? And once a

A tempo

gain... Why am I working so hard? These are the people who cast Linda Blair in a musical. Jesus

Christ, I suck, I suck, I suck! When finally you come home To...

Okay, thank you.
Attack and applause
"So I got into them boys"

TEMPO MOD. BRITE 2

"Boys"

"What makes me different?"
P.C.

Tess one of the girls

who's one of the boys

Enjoying the jokes

and the smokes and the noise

Wanna buy a gun

play paintball

WELL HAND ME THE RIFLE.

I
"...LEDIS"  
(N.Y.C.)

SOMETIMES SING TEND TO
OR BUT
THAT'S JUST FOR FUN

ONE OF THE GALS WHO'S ONE OF THE GUYS

PUT UP YOUR DUKES AND I'LL BLACK-EN YOUR EYES

Bb7
P.C. -8-

HOLD ALL THE GUCCI THE APPEAL AND PEARLS I'M

ONE OF THE BOYS ALTHOUGH I'M ONE OF THE GIRLS

"BOYS"
(MAY.CO.)
- 9 -

"Boys"

(NAT. CO.)

Spite of the dress, the finesse and the poise, I'm one of the girls — who's really one of the boys.

"Here's a few examples of what I mean..."
ONE OF THE GIRLS
WHO'S ONE OF THE BOYS
EN -
COME YE MEN MY

JOY-ING THE JOKES AND THE SMOKES AND THE NOISE

SO GY MUS TIC

Bb7

(3 HABS)
I WANNA GO FISHING WELL, HAND ME THE REEL

WHO

DAIN

ALL

(Chs)

(Male)

(Piano)

(Male)

(Piano)

(Male)

(Piano)

(Male)

(Piano)

(Male)

(Piano)

(Male)

(Piano)
ONE OF THE BOYS

KICKLINE TEMPO (HOLD BACK)

ONE OF THE DAMES — WHO'S ONE OF THE KNIGHTS.

ONE OF THE DAMES — WHO'S ONE OF THE KNIGHTS.

FRIEDAY NIGHT TREAT IS A SEAT FOR THE FIGHTS.

FRIEDAY NIGHT TREAT IS A SEAT FOR THE FIGHTS.

POLITICAL RIGHTS

POLITICAL RIGHTS

Bb7

Dm6b
ONE OF THE BOYS
(NAT. CO.)

LOVE TO GO STROKE WITH A VARIETY CREW. YA

WANNA PLAY SOCCER WELL, TIE YOUR SHOES

I'M SHE'S
ONE OF THE BOYS
(NAT. CO.)

T: ONE OF THE JANES — WHO'S ONE OF THE JOES — HERE,

MEN: ONE OF THE JANES — WHO'S ONE OF THE JOES —

BELLS

A

AMA. 9

AB

AMA. 7

HOLD MY CIGARE — WHILE I POWDER MY NOSE — I'VE

MEN:

Bells

Cello 1

AMA. 9

CLD. + BUW

B.C.

B. CLO.

134
ONE OF THE BOYS
(NAT. CO.)

LAY-ERS OF LAC

QUER A LA-DY EN-JOYS

I'VE

EAR-RINGS AND BRACE-

LETS AND VAR-I-ous TOYS

BUT I

P/I0
ONE OF THE BOYS

MEN:

T:

LOVE WHEN I'VE SLIPPED
INTO RIPPED CORDUROY

BECAUSE I'M

ONE OF THE GIRLS

I YAM

MEN:

T:

ONE OF THE GIRLS

C#m

(Viola, Trumpet)

SUS


(Spoken) BARKEEP! (DRINKS) (THEY SNOKE HER ALONG THE BAR)

F oc.

Bots!

(BEG. W//S, BES)

(BEG. W//S, BES, TES)

BEG
Long monologue

Start on monologue

cue:
ROXIE TEASER

"I roose have a round act... A double end of yes..."

"butcher a name out loud & be corrected..."
"ROXIE"

The name on everybody's

Lips is con-n-a-b-le

Rakin' in the chips is con-n-a-b-le

Chippa Music Reproduction • 1041 Broadway • New York, New York 10013
I'm gonna be a celebrity. That means somebody everybody knows.

They're gonna recognize my eyes. My bone, my body, my voice.
new mordogue
PIANO CONDUCTOR

Isn't this better?

Thinking of Him

Cue: "So I try something different.

[Lento] Conventional, moderate

[start]

I loved a man, truly I did

When he would touch me I'd act like a

Long, long, kid

Isn't this better?
3. Thinking Of Him
from the Musical CURTAINs

Music by
JOHN KANDER

Some-times it seems I spend ev'-ry mo-ment of my wak-ing day
Think-ing of him.

Copyright © 1985, 2000 by Kander & Ebb, Inc.
All Rights Reserved
Making him laugh. Sometimes making him strong. Sometimes

Making him feel some place in the light is his. Telling him just how

special he is. Thinking of him. Thinking of him.

Telling the truth. When nobody's willing to tell him the truth. Fighting for him.
LIVING FOR HIM

Thinking of him, Thinking it over That's what I think I do. Well, isn't it time? Isn't it time? Isn't it high time I was thinking of me? Too?

BOBBY: May be it's too?

AARON: May be it's time.
Now I am calm, safe and serene.
Heart-ache and hurt are no longer.

Part of the scene
Isn't this better? The way it should be.

Better for him
And oh, so much better for her.
There's always hope for a new beginning.
"As long as you continue to say...

You can't look back to a chance that's lost so far..."

Yes, Yes, Yes, Yes, The dice mean nothing unless they're tossed the way they're supposed to be.

(Chime or bell)

Loco

352
(Saxs Cilla Voce)

14 - YES

The cost is usually worth the cost. The hope of summer brings the fruit gay.

CRESCE

YES I AM YES I'll BE YES I'll GO
THEME FROM
"NEW YORK, NEW YORK"

Moderately \( \frac{1}{2} \) \( \frac{1}{2} \)

Words by FRED EBB
Music by JOHN KANDER

F

C7sus
N.C.
F

Start spreadin' the news,
I'm leaving to...

gm7/C
C7

I wanna be a part of it.

New York, New York.

These vagabonds

© 1977 UNITED ARTISTS CORPORATION (Renewed)
All Rights Controlled by EMP UNIVERT CATALOG INC. (Publishing) and ALFRED PUBLISHING CO., INC. (Print)
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shoes are longing to stray

and step around the heart of it, New York, New York.

I wanna wake up in the city that doesn't sleep to find I'm
I'd make it there, I'd make it anywhere.

It's up to you, New York; New York,

CODA

king of the hill;
head of the list, cream of the crop at the top of the heap. My little town blues are melting away. Fill make a brand new start of it in old New York.
If I can make it there, I'd make it anywhere. Come on, come through, New York, New York.
Start by admitting, from cradle to tomb——

Isn't that long a stay.

Life is a cabaret, old chum——

accel. poco a poco
On - ly a cab - a - ret, old chum, And

I love a cab - a -

Brass octaves

ret.

Vln.

Brass, Saxs., Acc.

ff +T.T.
Willkommen, bienvenue,

"Hit it Jay"

So who cares? So what?

SALLY:

You can tell my grand-ma, suits me fine; just yes-ter-day she
joined the line. But don't tell Ma-ma what you know.

Now I've this perfectly marvelous girl in my perfectly beautiful room and we're living together and

CLIFF: Sally, I'm afraid it wouldn't work.
You're much too distracting. SALLY: Distracting? No, inspiring!

Ad lib.

GIRLS:

Bee-die dee dee dee dee,

Fr. Cl.

(Acc. sust.)

Str. + Banjo

HERR.

pine-apple for me.

Vlns.

Gtr.

Cl., Trb.

SAXS.

+ Brass

SAXS.

+ Str.

ALL:

Me, Str., Acc.

I'm sitting pretty, I've got

Str.

+ Str.

all the money I need.

"money x3 spoken"

SAXS.
For you one day, Look around and
if you could see her through my eyes,

Tomorrow belongs to me.
What would you do if
Str.

you were me?
Not too fast

[CAKE-WALK] (Slower)

Start by admitting, from cradle to tomb
Tpt. Solo (Harmon mute)

Is n't that long a stay.

Life is a cabaret, old chum,
On-ly a cab-a-rett, old chum, And

I love a cab-a-a-a-a.

Brass octaves

Vlns.

Brass, Saxa, Acc.

+T.T.
Senior thesis CABARET Thoughts

"even the weakest voice can pierce the darkness when it has something to say and really feels the need to say it."

-115 Harrington "Cabaret Artist's Handbook"

* there should not be a structural PURPOSE

- the act should be planned and reflect your overarching goal

- make it really YOU

- eclectic with something to say

- what people see me as:

  * innocently sexy w/ a body of last names
  * witty & intelligent despite being a blonde Californian

- what I see myself as:

  * search for identity on shifting college ground
  * writing up
  * hiding defenses behind laughter
  * learning about myself through other people (acting, dating, etc.)

* "you become a singer when you stop listening to your voice and start listening to the sound of your heart." — Sylvia Syms

* make the arrangements YOU (both vocally & piano)

* "cabaret does have to be real" — hey, I'm real. People tell me I'm real. Give it a go. no pretty girl bonhoo. my love life cycles

- fake teeth
"If you can't write a short 91 on why you picked a song, what it means to you, and what you're trying to say with it..."

On Being a Woman in Search of Identity

Section One: Growing Up Californian

A Little Bit of Good and a Little Bit of Bad

Section Six: Feeding the Soul

Section Two: Finding Theatrland and the Unnecessary Struggle to Please: A Tutorial on How to Find Your Voice Although It May Be Different from Others: A Disappointment Story

Section Three: Mundi or Bust: One Girl's Journey to Coin for Training and an Escape

Section Four: A Little Bit of Good and A Little Bit of Bad: The Sequel: Perceptions of Me and Who I Actually Am

Section Five: Love Hurts (But Sometimes It Just Plain Swells)
* Eclectic w/something to say but unsure how to say it

** Cabaret Ideas **

* 45 min *

** TITLES: On Being A Woman In Search of Identity **

** SECTIONS: A Little Bit of Good and a Little Bit of Bad **
- Feeding (the soul and stomach)
- A Disappointment Story
  - the wriggling parakeet
  - Finding the treed land of the incessant struggle to please
- Mandy: a transformation of acceptance
- Midwest or bust: one girl’s journey to corn & training
- A Little Bit of Good and a Little Bit of Bad (PT.2)

** STORIES TO INCLUDE: **
- tattoo
- tooth saga
- last name drama
- France?
- Jimmy John’s
- waking up?
- floor pizza, trash pizza?
- Drury Lane
- Jordan as guest
Cabaret openers

Why should people listen to their music/care?
Why do we like their songs?
Thread of passion/interest/relatability

Metaphors: Human issues & struggles

What would you do?

Orange is the New Black -> gifts/glamour
Chicago

Sara Lee

New York, New York, close?

* pick up books from Michael at interview

* NPR interview w/ John Kander

Why do you like a song in particular?
Colored Lights - Kander & Ebb

* Sara Lee - p. 21
* My Coloring Book - 1st major hit p. 24
  p. 24 "It was one of those songs that came out simple and full from the start."
* I Don't Care Much about a hookup
  "I never thought of us as being anything but extraordinarily lucky." - Fred Ebb
* "I think the songs that have become what people think of as Kander and Ebb songs are purely accidental." - Fred Ebb p. 29

Cabaret as vaudevile → Hal Prince's idea
  → collaborative process of creating the storyline
  Hal: "dividing the stage between the real world and a limbo world." p. 163
  controversial "She wouldn't look Jewish at all" → had people staying after the show to argue
  → that's what their shows do! Force you to face the disgusting and FEEL something about it!

The Art of The American Musical p. 95-112

p. 98: "I think people are just as interested in great partnerships as they are in marriages that last a very long time, as though there's some sort of secret sauce
  - Interviewer

p. 103 [about Kiss... Spider Woman]: "I felt that it was really interesting; it was very daring, it was bold, it was essentially trivially romantic, and it offered great contrast between the casual reality of prison and the wonderful fantasy of a corny imagination."

→ p. 102 on Cabaret & Nazism
Kander & Ebb

WHY SHOULD PEOPLE CARE?

- music gives voice to what I can't say on my own
- that's what I feel an affinity with about musical theatre
- gives identity to the weird, bizarre, and real
- I know we've all had that moment when

-> For me, it

one-woman Cabaret medley

- "Kander and Ebb: Givers of Voice"
- they don't follow rules! (musically)
- story makes music

1. Cabaret
2. New York, New York
3. Sara Lee
4. What Would You Do / So What
5. If You Leave Me Now - The Happy Time
6. Not Enough Magic - The Rink
7. Call & response @ end w/game
8. You, If Anyone?
9. Yes
10. being a soldier OK on overcommitting
9. I Get My Music From My Dad
10. Nice People - All About Us -> Nannie Bsu tour
11. Jamie = Johnny
12. Never You
13. Nowadays
14. Walking Among My Yesterdays - The Happy Time
15. Summer With You
16. Isn't This Better? - Funky Lady / American Dream
17. That's A Room In My House - Frankie's Affair
18. My Coloring Book
19. Wait For Me World
19. Rouse -> Brandy
- all about the movie - didn't care if it was a hit or a flop, never always surprised and humbled by audience's reactions. I wanted the real stories that interested them.
- topics like jail imprisonment, Nazism, thieving old folks, murder.

in thinking of Slim & Curtains
in colored lights - the Pinkie
life as defined by relationship

[Handwritten notes and scribbles]
1. Yes Opener
   a. Introduction, thank you very much for coming to Purely Accidental: The Stories of Kander and Ebb, filled with the music of this amazing duo who so changed the genre of Musical Theatre. Known for their concept musicals, their words and music and the stories they chose to write together inspire me, and I hope you all will be inspired by the end of today’s performance. I’m going to ask you all to please turn off your cell phones at this time and join me in celebrating John Kander and Fred Ebb!

1b. Yes Segue
   a. So when did I start saying yes? Princess parties. In high school I decided it was time to start working, and a friend recommended me to a knock-off Disney entertainment company that sends princesses to kids parties. And I thought you know: kids are awesome, pay is great, and also there's...

2. Not Enough Magic/Once Upon a Dream
   a. They would actually pay me to do that. And even though that job varied from sucking the hardest to making my ovaries glow for my future children, it taught me that I was missing the reckless abandon of childhood. I mean, you see a little boy who wanted nothing more for his fifth birthday than to have a princess party and dress up like Cinderella, and he’s dancing around and singing all the songs by heart, and his friends are clapping and cheering, and you wonder why you can’t care that little about what other people think of you and who you are. You realize that you’re almost a grown ass woman and all you want is to be accepted, and that maybe you’ve been living your life through other people, so obsessed with their idea of you, and you have no clue who you are and what you want. You want it to feel simple again.

3. Colored Lights
   a. But I still had to get into college or else my mom would’ve killed me, so I made my five-inch binder of all the theatre schools in the country, my top 52 at the front, and highlighted everything about the school that I liked in blue and everything I didn’t like in pink. Then my mom and I taped up the eight page spreadsheet to the wall with color coded keys for each program and whether or not it was a BFA, a BA, or otherwise and... why are you guys looking at me like that? I mean don’t lie you all had that binder and spreadsheet and.. Oh no? That was just me and my mom? Oh...well... SOOO I wound up auditioning for fourteen programs. Which meant a lot of traveling and early mornings and screaming beltresses that I was competing with at the tender age of seventeen.

4. Life Is/Nowadays
   a. So I got into Ball State, and I had to do a lot of self-discovery. I had to figure out what makes me different.
   b. MIDDLE OF SONG: here's a few examples of what I mean. I refused to wear the color pink until I got into high school. Also, my freshman year of high school, I
wore a dress for the first time since I was allowed to dress myself, and none of my friends understood why I insisted they take pictures because my family would never believe me. And to top it off, I did sing tenor in a caroling quartet because we didn't have enough boys and I was the only one who could sing low enough. I also don't know how to cross my legs and I think I'm allergic to glitter.

5. One of the Boys
   a. Now that I knew how I could shine, I needed a new name. I was actually recently asked by a wonderful guest casting director who shall remain nameless "what I was going to do about that last name" because it was "unpronounceable" but I'm pretty sure that was code for "I'm lazy and make it sound American." He didn't try to say it out loud. Here's the thing, I'm not particularly Polish beyond the last name and the klotchys and pierogis at Christmastime... and an inherent thirst for beer. I mean I tried to learn Polish last summer and I was like WOAH. That can't be right. But I think it would be cool for people to know my name like Adele Dazeem... Idina Menzel. I mean it's an accomplishment when I can get my new phone to stop autocorrecting my last name. Or when websites don't stop me to tell me I've submitted a gibberish word in my shipping address. And I'd like to imagine people these days appreciate other cultures enough to at least butcher a name aloud and be corrected.

6. Roxie Teaser
   a. You know what, he's right, that's not gonna work. But really for me, it's not about the name in lights. It's about the work. It's about hope, magic, and fearlessness. It's about saying "here I am and this is what I've done, all the good and the bad." Every actor has a crazy relationship with theatre...like let's be real, theatre has been my boyfriend for as long as I can remember. I'm lucky enough now to have an actual, human boyfriend, but theatre has always been my one true love. And like every relationship, the one between actor and audience takes trust, and its risky and scary, and you never know what comes next. But you take the leap together. And every time I find myself on a plateau with my craft, I step away for a moment and tell myself I might be happy being a nurse or a chemist. So I break it off and try something different for one day.

7. Isn't This Better/Thinking of Him
   a. Each time I think about walking away, I am inspired, and that pull draws me right back into this thing called theatre. Which is why I wanted to share Kander and Ebb's work with you all tonight. Their work gives me my clearest voice. They say the things I think and feel in the way I wish I could say them. So, I hope you hear a part of yourselves in their stories as well. I encourage you all to take the leap with whatever you feel that pull for in life because there's not enough magic in settling. There is always hope for a new beginning as long as you continue to say...

8. Yes/New York, New York Closer
   a. Thank you all for coming to my shindig. Can we give a hand to Jay Schwandt!

9. Cabaret Tag
Works Cited


Special Thanks
Jay Schwandt
Michael Elliott
Michael O’Hara
Annie Evans
John Osterhoudt
Colleen Tovar
The Class of 2016
Purely Accidental:
The Stories of Kander and Ebb
A Cabaret by Brandy Drzymkowski

Sunday, April 17, 2016
2pm
Pruis Hall
Songs

1. “Yes” – 70, Girls, 70 (1971)
4. “Nowadays/Life Is” – Chicago (1975) and Zorba (1968)
5. “One of the Boys” – Woman of the Year (1981)
6. “Roxie” – Chicago (1975)
9. “Cabaret Medley” – Cabaret (1966)
Artist’s Statement

Kander and Ebb never saw their expansive career coming. They wrote because they had something to say. They chose stories that interested them, that pushed boundaries, and did not fit into the pretty box of commercial theatre. Works like Cabaret, Chicago, and Kiss of the Spider Woman were daring and shocked audiences by exploring dark topics in musical comedy style. Utilizing a blend of nostalgia and originality, their brand changed the idea that musicals had to be purely for entertainment. Their shows forced audiences to feel something about the subject matter, to have opinions, to stay after the show and argue.
"I think the songs that have become what people think of as Kander and Ebb songs are purely accidental." — Fred Ebb