

1993

Too nice, perhaps

**Chelmsford Operatic and
Dramatic Society, Cabaret,
Civic Theatre**

A GLITTERING red and black Kit Kat nightclub setting with cat's mouths as entrances for the cast, some very high class costumes, plus a new sense of purpose from the chorus and dancers, marked this sell-out production of Cabaret.

Kander and Ebb's jazzy musical set in 1930s Berlin seemed to suit CAODS well and for Kim Webster it was a personal triumph. With her attractive red-headed bob, she was confident as the flighty, nervy Sally Bowles, giving familiar numbers their full worth.

Barry Hester gave a nicely understated yet strong showing as Cliff, the American writer encountering Nazi ruthlessness for the first time.

Two lovely, gentle, touching per-

formances from Peter Smith and Audrey Hinton as the elderly lovers. Audrey's chanteuse's voice, full of haunting, wistful Brecht-Weil vibrato, captured the cynical ironies of the songs well.

Kevin Richards had a whale of a time as the Emcee with his knowingly leering grin, Patrick Tucker was chillingly nasty as Ernst while Debra Sparshot's Fraulein Kost was a really blowsy tart.

In spite of a renewed sense of purpose from the cast and an entertaining show, director Ray Jeffery wasn't able to demonstrate the link between the nightclub songs' comments on the rise of Nazi persecution. Or any reason for the Black Shirts' song, which seemed almost incidental.

Mary Redman

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