



Salute to Cabaret Month

Getting Your Act Together

BY RONN MULLEN

In recognition of March as the celebration of Cabaret Month, *Back Stage* spoke to several artists, club owners and managers, directors, workshop teachers and informed professionals in an effort to discover just how one goes about putting together a successful cabaret act. The investigation has been an education. Before you decide to jump on the bandwagon and launch yourself into the cabaret arena with a dozen tunes and a stunning new outfit, consider what some of the top artists have shared with *Back Stage*, evaluate your commitment and only then decide if you have what it takes.

Bronwyn Rucker:
Cabaret As Alternate Space

Bronwyn Rucker readily admits that she is "not your normal cabaret performer." As an actress she has created her own pieces to make an opportunity for herself to perform. It's evolved, she says, into "a peculiar cabaret act," or theatre piece. She performs in both cabarets and theaters.

"You've got to believe in yourself," Ms. Rucker states. "You have to have a great personal commitment to doing it [your own cabaret act]. No one's asking you to do it. You have to believe what you're doing is important—that you matter, that you count."

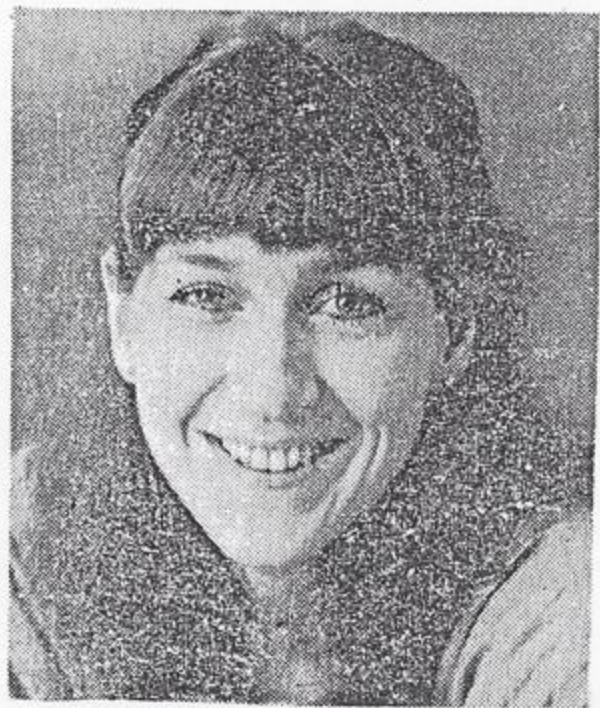
An actress can get work in the theatre, she says, but in a one-person cabaret show, you get the chance to be yourself—to gear a performance based on your individual talents and personality. Nowhere else is there this intensely personal relationship between a performer and an audience, this one-to-one communication.

After all the work involved in creating a show from an artistic standpoint, Ms. Rucker comments on the necessity of "filling the house," that process of badgering your friends to
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come one more time to see you perform. "You soon exhaust your list of friends," she observes, "and find it necessary to meet new people—make new contacts." Which is one reason, she states, that she recently took a hiatus from performing in traditional theatre and cabaret venues by going the "performance artist route" in underground performance spaces. In addition to allowing her to grow as an artist, the experience led to new contacts, a building of the all-valuable mailing list.



Bronwyn Rucker