

# BACK STAGE

## *By Martin Schaeffer*

*CABARET HAS FURNISHED A FERTILE GROUND* for developing and nurturing musicals. Witness "Closer Than Ever," "Forever Plaid," and "Forbidden Broadway." Recently, shows such as "Domestica" have pushed the cabaret musical in a new direction. "Two Hearts Over Easy" at *Don't Tell Mama* (Tuesdays in June) follows a more traditional format.

The show, written and composed by Robert W. Cabell, takes an affectionate look at the difficulty of relationships in this age of AIDS. Two cousins, Jimmy (Cabell) and Maggie (Paula Newman) meet regularly for Sunday brunch at a popular eatery. Rusty, the manager, (Randy Weiss) is casting an affectionate eye on Maggie. There's also Gina (Lauren Duquette), the zany waitress and aspiring actress.

Although the story line is predictable, even a bit clichéd, I found the musical really charming and warm. The small cabaret setting is perfect for intimate shows such as this. Mr. Cabell's music is lovely and occasionally poignant. His acting and directing skills, however, leave something to be desired. Ms. Newman, Mr. Weiss, and the off-beat Ms. Duquette acquit themselves with success. I'd like to see Cabell tighten the book—have it flow with a bit less awkwardness. But "Two Hearts Over Easy" is charming cabaret entertainment.