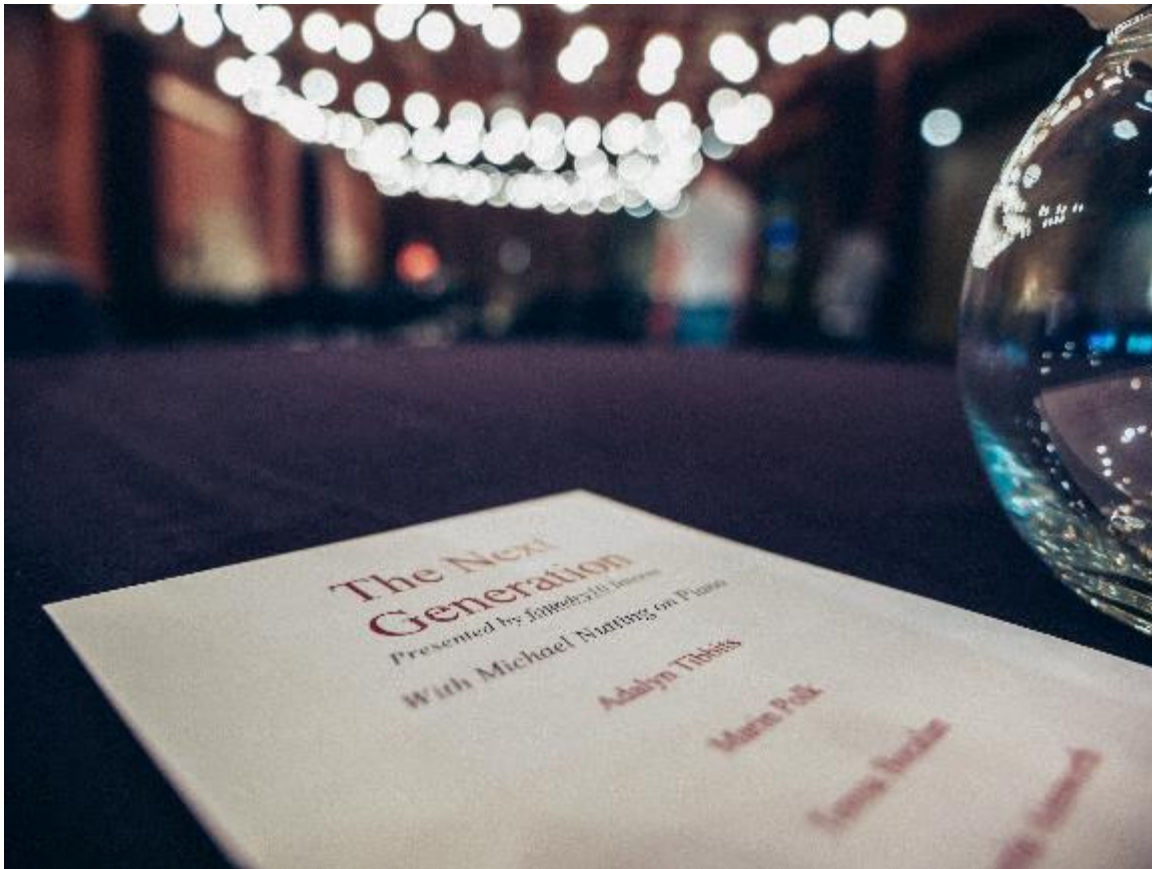


## On Making Our Own Cabaret/Showcase By: Dramatic Arts Intern, Alex Robinson



As recently graduated high-school seniors, there aren't many opportunities to learn to curate a cabaret (or any show) that you can take anywhere, build upon, and turn into a real gig! I wanted to learn more about the world of cabarets and apply that knowledge to creating my own 15 minute show. It was also important to me to direct and coach others so that they could participate in this new opportunity as well.

Aside from being an apprentice or an assistant director, there aren't many opportunities to take your own project from start to finish for an 18-year-old aspiring director. However, what you need to build any show is hands-on learning and experience. As an added benefit, putting something like a cabaret together is a great way to make connections and introduce your work to people who are in the industry today. So, we wanted to find a way to get a bunch of theatre folks together in one room and show them who we are and what we can do, especially before this cabaret team all split apart on our different paths.



Matt Ircink, a young performer interested in production management, and I joined together and pitched an idea of a cabaret-style showcase as part of an internship with foundry10. The idea was to feature 10 performers each with a 15-minute slot in which to showcase their artistry. My role as artistic director was to help my peers make their sets cohesive, craft a theme, and coach their performances to be personal and authentic. It is a rarity, as a performer, to get the chance to be yourself onstage instead of playing a character, effectively carrying your own mini show. This experience provided all of us with the chance to try out a different style of performance, and for Matt and I to practice leadership in the performing arts in our respective areas of interest.



Following the performance itself, we talked as a group about the experience of running and being in a cabaret. Every student came away feeling more confident in their abilities than when we started rehearsing our work. It was an inspiring feeling to see all of these performers shine in their own way and be celebrated for their individuality. Each of the performers made their 15 minutes a true snapshot of who they are as artists, and it was a great joy for me to be able to help them develop this voice. As a director, I wanted to create a show that not only had varied styles of performance, from dance to singing to comedy, but also highlighted each distinct personality. The overwhelming love and support we received from foundry10, friends, family, and industry professionals was incredibly inspiring. It was humbling to realize the amount of work that production managers and directors put into a show. As young people who have now accomplished this in our own small way, we are leaving feeling empowered and excited about the future.





I hope that those who experienced our cabaret realized that age shouldn't hold anyone back from dreams and aspirations. In a month and half, Matt and I took a skeletal idea and turned it into an impactful and fun

experience that we could share with our peers, heroes, and loved ones. From budgeting, inviting people, securing a venue, finding performers, running our own rehearsals, all the way to dealing with microphones and sound equipment, we were able to overcome all the challenges that came up. We wanted to create something unique and reflected the skills we gained throughout our high school careers. One piece of wisdom that I took from this experience is that as performers creating our own work, instead of finding all the reasons we couldn't do it, we found all the reasons we could, and should, and did.



