‘Cabaret’ highlights history and current issues

By Emma DeFelice
Contributor

For their Fall 2026 musical production, the Crescent Players, a student-run theater organization, performed “Cabaret.”

The musical is set in 1929 – 1930 Berlin, amid the twilight of the Jazz Age and the tumultuous rise of Nazi power. It follows the Kit Kat Klub and American writer Clifford Bradshaw, played by theater major Trey Griggs, a senior, and his relations with Sally Bowles played by music major Aliza Clark, a sophomore.

“This specific year was the right moment for Southern to stage this production because there are parallels between ‘Cabaret’ and today’s world,” Griggs said. “Right-wing nationalists in Germany did not view Jewish people as Germans, just like how right-wingers in the United States don’t view documented or undocumented immigrants as American.”

“Cabaret” serves less as a historical artifact and more as a stark, urgent mirror reflecting our contemporary political landscape.

The musical captures a culture distracted by self-indulgence and theater while authoritarianism quietly rewrites the rules around it, a dynamic that resonates deeply with modern political polarization and civic complacency.

For director Larry Nye, the show’s power lies in its sobering warning: the warning signs of 1929 are not confined to history books—they are a living reflection of the ideological fault lines and silent complacencies shaping today’s world.

At the heart of “Cabaret” lies the Kit Kat Klub, a glittering oasis of nightlife and party culture designed to drown out the noise of a collapsing political world.

Music major Jade McGovern, a senior, who steps into the iconic role of the emcee, sees a direct line between the clubgoers of 1929 Berlin and her own generation’s coping strategies.

“More and more I find it more difficult to discuss politics even among those I agree with,” McGovern said. “I feel like I and many of my peers cope with this reality by finding escapism in all sorts of vices; partying, drinking, smoking, doomscrolling... they’re all just ways of numbing our brain a little bit.”

By holding up the emcee’s world as a mirror to modern life, the production offered a quiet warning: the temptation to retreat into distraction, whether onto a dance floor or behind a smartphone screen, can leave a society dangerously oblivious to the shifting world outside.

The theme of escapism offers a much-needed breather when the real world feels like too much, but Cabaret makes it clear that looking away only leaves the door open for the worst to happen.

Beyond the explicit rise of extremism, Cabaret delivers a quieter, sharper warning about the dangers of sitting on the sidelines. While Generation Z has earned a reputation for using social media as an unvarnished platform for advocacy, that constant noise can just as easily breed a comfortable kind of numbness.

“What I’ve noticed specifically about Gen Z is how vocal we are about problems we feel are right and wrong,” Clark said. “With this, also comes people who feel they can simply tune out politics from their lives.”

Silence is compliance, why is why it iscrucial for people to use their voices to speak out about what is going on around them, regardless of whether it impacts them or not.



PHOTOS | LILY RAND

Dancers perform on the Lyman Center stage on Saturday, Oct. 10.



The cast of ‘Cabaret’ at the end of their show on Saturday, Oct. 10.

‘Sibling Night’ connects students to their families

By Mackenzie Byerlee
Features Editor

“Sibling Night,” held on the Residence Life Quad on Friday, Oct. 9, brought students closer to their families with activities for people of all ages.

The annual event was hosted by the Residence Hall Association and Assistant Director of Residence Life Willie Epps shared that the event is a kickoff to “Homecoming and Family Weekend.”

“This is an event for Southern students, both residents and commuters, to invite their siblings or their cousins or whoever,” Epps said.

The event had several activities set up for students and their families such as an inflatable obstacle course, face painting and a bungee trampoline.

This unique experience gave students the opportunity to have fun and see their family that they might not have seen in a while.

“Sibling Night” was not only the outdoor activities, but also part of a larger event for Homecoming weekend. It extended into the night and allowed students to have their younger siblings or family members spend the night in their residence halls.

“I wanted to bring my sister here, she’s 14, and give her the college experience,” special education major Kayla Puorro, a freshman, said.

Showing their families where they spend their time and what it looks like to live at school is not something that students can do any day of the week.

Typically, students that live on campus are not allowed to have guests that are under 16, so spending time with their younger family members and being able to immerse them in college life is quite a rare occasion.

Environmental and marine science major Dan Lopez, a freshman and treasurer of Chase Hall, had the opportunity to volunteer at the event and oversee the obstacle course. He spoke about how this event can be important to those in the campus community.

“This is an event that allows resident students to bring their younger siblings to essentially see what college life is about,” Lopez said. “They can come here, spend the night, get their face painted; just do all sorts of fun stuff.”

According to Epps, there were 281 siblings that had registered for “Sibling Night” this year, making it a very good turnout.

Epps also shared that he felt even more connected to the event this year, as he is a new father himself.

“Seeing the little ones is really hitting home for me,” Epps said. “I love to see the smiles on their faces and see them enjoying themselves.”

There were also students that had attended the event in previous years that chose to come back again for the fun.



PHOTO | LILY RAND

Students at ‘Sibling Night’ on Friday, Oct. 9.

“My little cousin really wanted to visit again, so I had to make that happen,” elementary education major Emily Santos, a senior, said.

So whether this was their first or final time at the event, students were able to bring their family members and have a fun night to get their minds off of academics.

“I think it’s a really good opportunity to bring your family, your siblings specifically, to see what college is like,” Epps said. “Maybe one day they can see themselves as a Southern student.”

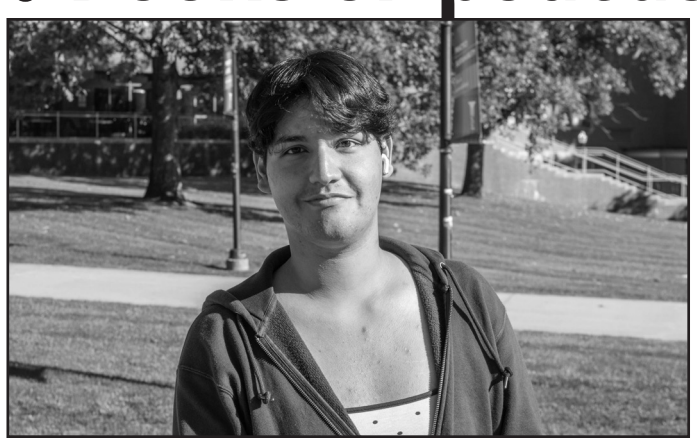
Owls Decide: Books or podcasts?

By Mackenzie Byerlee
Features Editor



PHOTOS | LILY RAND

“Books because I like having something physical and visual.”
- Earth science major Reilly Greene, a junior



“Podcasts, but depending on the topic. I like feeling like I’m part of their conversation.”
- Marketing major Juan Moreno, a senior



“Books because I’m imagining the whole story; with a podcast I can’t focus.”
- Theater major Ellie Valentin-Cotto, a sophomore



“Books because I feel like I can use my imagination to its fullest.”
- Health science major Audrey Beausejour, a sophomore



“Podcasts because I like the thought of someone talking at me instead of me having to read it and picture it in my head.”
- Theater major Nexxus Ortiz, a sophomore



“Books because I find it easier to immerse myself in a different world.”
- Health science major Sahrene Vertus, a sophomore