



Cabaret Theater on a mission:  
art, higher education,  
and community service  
brought together to do  
real work in the real world.

## ABOUT THE CONCEPT

### ***A Short Story:***

Gathered in a room is a microcosm of life – college students in pursuit of higher knowledge with worldly aims and the time and resources to explore them; staff from the women’s shelter working towards solutions and aid for real life circumstances; victims of domestic violence who, though from all walks of life, now wear the blinders of survival until they are safe to look beyond them...and us, two artists looking to build the bridges between all these different lives. Clearly, this is a room full of potential, particularly in the coming together. But relationships take building and the work ahead is unclear. How would we even begin and how long will it take?

We step to the front of the room and present a song that tells the story of a woman who struggles to survive and, more, to thrive with what she has been handed. When it is done, we ask some questions we have about the woman in the song and what she’s trying to say. We try on a few different endings – same words, but different intent and experiment with the interpretation through theater, tempo and tone. As we do, the others in the room start to question as well. What will the woman in the song decide? And what, really, is her opinion of her situation? Is there a right way to see it? Soon, everyone in the room is thoroughly engaged and it’s almost as though the woman in the song is there along with us.

In fact, she is there several times over...as student, social worker and victim. The façade of the fictional character fades away easily and now the discussion is about the lives in this room: the stories, decisions, opinions, and hopes. Everyone is a participant and the barriers of role and unfamiliarity have gone quietly away.

Plunge! A Cabaret Concept is a performing arts troupe and residency program working in the cabaret style of music and theater to bring reality into the spotlight. The program offers an array of endearing and compelling cabaret shows. Each is an engaging, self-contained theatrical performance about realistic personalities complete with struggles and achievements, times of hilarity and grief, quirks and triumphs. In our residency program with higher education and community service organizations we use excerpts from the shows and the venue of music and theater as a catalyst for creative and substantive work on a variety of human development issues.

### **The Three Elements**

**ART** draws out the most human elements in us – the most passionate, instinctive, honest and vulnerable of thoughts, opinions and feelings.

**HIGHER EDUCATION** institutions engage in intellectual inquiry, driving scholars to discover how we develop and advance, and inspiring them to create solutions for contemporary social challenges.

**COMMUNITY SERVICE** organizations come face to face with our human condition – addressing issues of health, growth, strife and survival.

Together, these three form a powerful symbiotic relationship – something unique and more encompassing than each part alone. They create an atmosphere that encourages communication at a very comprehensive and personal level, and a structure that incorporates the focus and resources of higher education and community service with the creative catalyst of art. An ideal setting that allows us to Plunge! into the heart of the matter with lasting and positive results.