



# McCord Gallery show reminds 'You Can't Be Serious' but you can help make the world a better place



Cynthia Clarey, Caryn Caffarelli, Hilary Ann Feldman, founder and artistic director of Acts of Kindness Cabaret, perform "You Can't Be Serious." (Acts of Kindness Cabaret)

**Ginger Brashinger**Daily Southtown

---

"You Can't Be Serious," an Acts of Kindness Cabaret performance at McCord Gallery and Cultural Center Aug. 10, promises an evening of musical comedy without "an utterance" of political talk or modern negativism.

“Not a single note, not a single syllable,” Hilary Ann Feldman, founder and artistic director of the not for profit, said of the evening’s entertainment.

Instead, the audience can look forward to a family friendly and “intimate evening” with the performers.

“We talk directly to the audience,” Feldman said.

The music and comedy, featuring contemporary and classic songs and stories, strives to eliminate stress and offer a humorous look at everyday situations in a light that will “make you laugh so hard your sides will hurt.”

Feldman said nearly two decades ago she knew she wanted to do something to make the world a better place, but she wasn’t sure her singing talent would be enough of a draw to get her anywhere.

The story of Karen Loucks, a woman who used her knitting skills to make blankets for sick and traumatized children in what became the nationwide “Project Linus,” inspired Feldman to found the Acts of Kindness Cabaret.

Feldman said Loucks’ success “made me realize that if I made it about the people I was trying to help, that the model could work here.”

Acts of Kindness Cabaret became an official organization in 2005 with the help of “like-minded” friends, she said.

Since then, the organization has helped other nonprofit groups raise money by raising the roof with comedy and song.

“The performances we’ve done have helped to raise over \$300,000 for various organizations around Chicago and now we’re growing like crazy,” Feldman said.

The recent hiring of an executive director has eased Feldman’s multiple duties and she can now concentrate on being an artistic director full time and continue its growth, she said.

“The goal now is to try to double our capacity to do good and do twice as many performances a year,” Feldman said.

Fellow performers Cynthia Clarey and Caryn Caffarelli will join Feldman Friday evening in the modern form of cabaret which ties “songs and storytelling together by some common thread,” Feldman said.

“And the common thread (in our show) is humor,” she said.

Music will include “tin pan alley days and some contemporary stuff,” including original work from local artists.

“Everything from Rodgers and Hart to Bobby McFerrin is in this show,” Feldman said. “It’s a great variety and people should come prepared to laugh and have a good time.”

The two-act performance will be the second time the Acts of Kindness Cabaret has performed for McCord Gallery, but it will be their first in the Anderson Annex, Feldman said.

Joshua Wood, marketing director at McCord, said the combination of music and comedy show is “something new to our building.”

“McCord is trying once again to branch out and bring new performances to the community,” Wood said.

### **Acts of Kindness Cabaret’s ‘You Can’t Be Serious’**

**When:** 7-10 p.m. Aug. 10

**Where:** McCord Gallery and Cultural Center, 9602 W. Creek Road, Palos Park

**Cost:** \$35 Reserve tickets at 708-671-0648.

**Information:** [www.mccordgallery.org](http://www.mccordgallery.org)