



ADJUDICATORS COMMENTS 2022/23

Society	Cosmopolitan Players		
Production	Sherlock Holmes – The Hound of the Baskervilles		
Adjudicator	James Sidgwick		
Date	Thu 23rd March	Matinee or Eve?	Eve

The percentage mark of all categories combined provides the score for the Best Musical and Best Play awards. The combined percentage mark for categories 1 – 3 provide the score for the Best Visual Presentation Award.

The questions posed in each category are suggestions only, and provided as a guideline for the adjudicator. Other comments should be written if these are felt to be more appropriate to this adjudication.

Positive comments on the production's strengths	
1	<div style="display: flex;"> <div style="flex: 1; background-color: #f0f0f0; padding: 5px;"> <p>Include positive comments on any of the following aspects of the production:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lighting; Costumes, hair & makeup; Props, scenery & projections; Sound; Musical direction / orchestra / band; Projection; Acting Singing Direction Choreography / Movement </div> <div style="flex: 2; padding: 5px;"> <p>Lighting suited the show throughout, everything was lit. The red light during the hound's 'kills' was atmospheric.</p> <p>For the most part the costumes worked well – mostly in a black and white theme with a few splashes of colour. The mime costumes were well sourced, and it was nice to see Holmes in his signature deerstalker hat.</p> <p>There was some very appropriate original music for this play which I really liked. It was perhaps a tad overused, but the melody was really nice and perfectly encapsulated the mysterious nature of the show.</p> <p>I liked Dr Watson's inner monologue too, but did wonder if they could have been recorded in higher quality as they sounded a little muffled.</p> <p>Richard Hunt held the play together as Dr Watson, who unexpectedly was probably the lead performer, given that he heads to Baskerville Hall without Sherlock initially. Richard knew the role well and performed earnestly throughout the show, it was a strong performance.</p> <p>I enjoyed the mimes at the start of the show. I must confess to not really understanding how they</p> </div> </div>

		<p>related to the show's content (other than that they were a useful way to move set around), but nonetheless, I loved what they were doing as the audience came in. It created atmosphere and gave us something to look at. Hats off to all three of them.</p> <p>It's not easy to direct in the round, but the conversations stayed mobile for the most part, and when actors were seated, they were often doing so with one facing one half of the audience and the other facing the other, which was great for both sides of the audience and this really worked I thought. The way the space was set up meant that there was a good space for travelling, which worked well particularly for some of the death scenes, such as Graham Siddle's in the opening moments of the play.</p>
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Constructive comments on the production's weaknesses / opportunities for improvements

<p>2</p>	<p>Include constructive comments on any of the following aspects of the production:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lighting; • Costumes, hair & makeup; • Props, scenery & projections; • Sound; • Musical direction / orchestra / band; • Projection; • Acting • Singing • Direction • Choreography / Movement 	<p>I found the props in the 'eating' scene a little bizarre. It looked to me, like meringue, carrots, and bread, with bun cases. But I was later told it was ham and cheese. I don't know – I was very close to it and it looked unusual. I suppose whatever it was it didn't look to me like an ordinary sort of meal, and the actors didn't look like they were particularly wanting to eat whatever it was.</p> <p>I must confess that in the opening moments of the show, I happily assumed we were about to watch a self-aware comedy send-up of Sherlock Holmes. This was I'm afraid, due to the 'dog on a stick' shadow puppet we saw, which I'm sorry to say, I found funny rather than scary. But I thought it was intentionally funny. I felt bad for laughing once it was clear that it wasn't supposed to be funny, but that was my natural reaction.</p> <p>Sadly on the night I was in, James Hart seemed to be struggling with lines, which did impede his ability to portray the highly self-assured, intelligent and confident character of Sherlock Holmes with the believability that I was hoping to see. There were several times where he called "line" to the prompt (I think for immersion purposes, waiting for the prompt rather than calling for it is better practice), and numerous other times where he appeared to be staggering through speeches struggling to remember</p>
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		<p>what came next. Sadly this did detract from the character of Sherlock.</p> <p>I should say that I do feel that James Hart had the ability to be a strong Sherlock. On lines where he was more confident in what he was saying, his character did come across, but unfortunately this wasn't consistent throughout the performance that I saw.</p> <p>An incident where Dr Watson was left pottering around onstage waiting for the next actors to appear, while the Stage Manager dashed out of the room to get them was also disappointing. Not sure whether this was to do with communication with the dressing rooms or actors not keeping an eye on cues etc, but it was a shame, both for Richard (who stayed in character well with nothing to do) and the audience.</p>
Overall Production / Entertainment Value		
3	<p>Provide a conclusion on the production, and include any comments on aspects of the production not covered by the above entries.</p>	<p>As I entered, I really enjoyed the atmosphere created by the mimes onstage, and I found that (despite my tonal misconception in the early moments due to the dog that I thought was funny), the atmosphere was retained well throughout the production.</p> <p>That said, I did think in terms of 'polish', it was perhaps in need of a bit more rehearsal. When actors onstage are stumbling through their lines, the audience starts to think more about the actors than the characters (well I do anyway), which in turn means that the intricacies of the dialogue (and when dealing with Sherlock Holmes, the intricacies are plentiful) get lost.</p> <p>That said, I enjoyed my evening, and as ever, look forward to seeing what Cos do next.</p>