



ADJUDICATORS COMMENTS 2021/22

Society	Cosmopolitan Players		
Production	Agatha Crusty and the Murder Mystery Dinner		
Adjudicator	Peter Knowles		
Date	23 February 2022	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	<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

I didn't particularly notice the lighting, which is unusual for me, so it must have been fit for purpose. I did notice the permanent working light for scene changes, which is normal competent standard practice.

In these 'positive' comments I can say that some of the costumes were in keeping, notably Geoffrey and Nigel. I mention these two, Richard Hunt and Lee Sharratt, for standing out above the others in their acting ability. Carolyn Craven, I felt to her credit, held back her acting intensity so as not to outshine too much the general standard.

The Studio in end-stage configuration affords a very limited acting area. With such a large cast to deal with, positioning throughout was very carefully worked out, avoiding masking.

I don't know how big the pool of actors is the Director had at her disposal, but she probably got as much as she could from the material available.

All credit to the people on stage for remembering who they were, given the double cast of names the play demanded.

Clever way of holding a raffle, by the way. Buying entry to a competition to identify the killers. I got one of them – the most insignificant character on stage – Anna. Of course, I should have guessed that the other would be the most prominent – Geoffrey.

		<p>I have to say, though, I'm not sure how these two became a couple in the first place. There was virtually nil empathy between them by the time the events of the play came around. Perhaps not the fault of the actors concerned.</p>
Constructive comments on the production's weaknesses / opportunities for improvements		
2	<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>The plot concerns a celebratory gathering when party clothes could be shown off. I'm not sure that universal appropriate choices were made here. Perhaps the members of staff of a vacuum cleaner factory have a limited idea of dress sense. I do think that the hostess, Caroline, could have come up with something more eye-catching than a dark monochrome trouser suit. Perhaps the idea was to appear sophisticated. It didn't work for me. Maybe a large diamond brooch would have lifted the ensemble.</p> <p>It was a mistake to try and save expenditure on the furniture. Draping, very loosely at that, the same material over various chairs wasn't adequate. The furniture in the home of a factory owner would surely be a little more stylish or at least, more expensive looking.</p> <p>I have to say that the drinks tables appeared to be similarly cobbled together, with what looked like a net curtain draped over them.</p> <p>I got no sense of the ambience of the room, there being no scenery to speak of. The setting in such a limited space bears a heavy responsibility in creating a sense of place and an inspiration to the actors. Neither was achieved. As a consequence, the acting ability on view ranged from standard adequate to cringing. Which is a shame.</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>It was ambitious for the Cosmo's to attempt this very wordy play. Some may say, foolhardy. The abilities of the group may be better suited to, say, an Ayckbourn or a Priestley. I'm sure that the Director did her best with the material available, though the furnishings required better attention.</p>