



## ADJUDICATORS COMMENTS 2021/22

<b>Society</b>	<b>Cosmopolitan Players</b>		
<b>Production</b>	<b>Agatha Crusty and the Murder Mystery Dinner</b>		
<b>Adjudicator</b>	<b>James Sidgwick</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>25/02/2022</b>	<b>Matinee or Eve?</b>	<b>Evening</b>

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	
<b>1</b>	<p><b>Include positive comments on any of the following aspects of the production:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lighting;</li> <li>• Costumes, hair &amp; makeup;</li> <li>• Props, scenery &amp; projections;</li> <li>• Sound;</li> <li>• Musical direction / orchestra / band;</li> <li>• Projection;</li> <li>• Acting</li> <li>• Singing</li> <li>• Direction</li> <li>• Choreography / Movement</li> </ul>

Lighting was very simple but effective.

The scenery was nice, there was some nice detail in pictures up on the walls and the red furniture definitely gave the play an 'aesthetic'. I also really liked that the prize for the audience winner was just plucked from the drinks table at the end, having been there all along. Simple but fun!

Costumes were all appropriate and looked the part.

There were some strong performances from a number of the cast members. The actors gave well established character portrayals throughout, and there were a few standouts.

I was sad to see Graham Siddle as 'Tim' bite the dust first, as I was really enjoying his natural and charismatic performance, and wanted more of him. I've seen Lee Sharatt play similar roles to Nigel before, and I always enjoy him as the 'posh twit'. Nigel's muddled perspective raised some of the biggest laughs of the play.

Leah Hamilton and Richard Hunt also stood out in their roles and had a really strong presence.

All projection was strong, there were no issues there.

		<p>Direction was on the whole good. The piece was delivered well, the plot was engaging and fun, and the whole thing worked really well together. It's nice to see such an ensemble play where all the characters get fun moments.</p> <p>I also found the 'solution' quite ingenious and because the 'mystery' was quite simple – the solution didn't have to be too wordy, which made it all easy to visualise, even though most of the action (and therefore clues) were offstage.</p>
<b>Constructive comments on the production's weaknesses / opportunities for improvements</b>		
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Include constructive comments on any of the following aspects of the production:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lighting;</li> <li>• Costumes, hair &amp; makeup;</li> <li>• Props, scenery &amp; projections;</li> <li>• Sound;</li> <li>• Musical direction / orchestra / band;</li> <li>• Projection;</li> <li>• Acting</li> <li>• Singing</li> <li>• Direction</li> <li>• Choreography / Movement</li> </ul>	<p>Sound levels were occasionally a little abrasive. The doorbell didn't sound ambient at all, it was a little too loud, as was the murder mystery tape recording. The vacuum noise was far too loud if we were to believe that some of the characters onstage couldn't really hear it.</p> <p>The acting styles were varied from character to character. Some characters seemed almost quite erratic and cartoonish at times, which I wasn't really sure fitted the piece, particularly alongside others seemed to be almost uncomfortable / unnatural in their body language.</p> <p>I found the blocking at times a little too static. I know with a small space and a large cast this isn't too surprising, but still at times, (particularly during Agatha's reveal of the solution), I felt a little more movement could have benefited in a few ways – firstly just to keep the visual 'fresh' for the audience, but also could have given Carolyn some other things to do with her hands / people to play off as she performed the monologue.</p> <p>A slight disappointment for me was the use of the prompt. Prompts were given and received very well, I'm just always a little disappointed when a prompt is used at all, as it can really eat into the play's immersion. Prompts were taken (I think) 4 times during the performance I saw. While that's not a huge amount by any stretch, if additional rehearsals could have eradicated this I think they'd have been well spent.</p> <p>Another slight niggle (though I know casting can be hard sometimes) – I'm not sure Anna and Tim looked like a particularly realistic couple if I'm honest. That said, in terms of characterisation, people did suit their roles well, it just looked a bit odd.</p>

**Overall Production / Entertainment Value**

<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>Provide a conclusion on the production, and include any comments on aspects of the production not covered by the above entries.</b></p>	<p>I really love the idea of allowing the audience to hazard a guess at the solution during the interval. Such a clever addition, makes us all feel a little more invested and concentrate that little bit harder I expect. I am pleased to say I got one of the murderers... but didn't manage both!</p> <p>These are fun plays and ideal for Cos as there are so many varied characters, they're really fun and light, and I'm already looking forward to the next one!</p> <p>Thanks Cos for an enjoyable evening of mystery!</p>
-----------------	---	--