

## **LADIES DAY APRIL 2010**

**Friargate Theatre** *Directed by Andy Armstrong*

The choice of play was a clever one; a play that used only a few actors, but in demanding and fulfilling roles. The play is so well written: funny, witty, poignant, and thought provoking. It is so entertaining. What I found really clever was the contrast between the first scene and the others. The audience is thrown from the mundane chat of the previous night's tea at the fish filleting plant to the excitement of York races and the study of each characters high's and low's.

The script was packed full of one-liners and was a joy to listen to. It would seem that Jill was redundant on Saturday evening and no prompts always give the audience a feel that they are definitely not amongst "amateurs".

### **THE SET**

This is what sets the scene and was most admirably put together by all concerned. It was the small touches that made all the difference; from the poster to set the scene of the races to the health and safety notice of the Hull factory. Indeed it is not often that a set itself gets a rousing applause. Well done to the design from Mike Bowen and the team behind the whole effect!

Set changes were slick and teamwork was good. I was amazed at the attention to detail. For example the "fish" made by Trish.

### **LIGHTING/SOUND**

This again sets the scene and really gives a background to the whole scene. Hats off to Ken & Maria. The music and voices really did make the words fit the set. It was really well done and the voice-overs must have taken time to produce and to play in the right place. A real challenge of technology. I bet Maria really needed an extra pair of hands to cope!!

### **PROPS**

As already mentioned Trish has again done a sterling job and her detail is her signature. From the boiled eggs in the picnic to the fish made from bread, though that was not obvious. Well done

### **COSTUMES/MILLINERY**

Jill did a great job with the colours and co-ordinating the characters. The transformation scene was a real treat and very slick. Some details didn't appear to work – for example some of the handbags, but the characters themselves would not have been that sophisticated, so may have been a deliberate detail. Sean's outfit was superb and well worth the money! The hats and outfits of the elegant ladies were suitably "posh" and really set them apart

from the factory girls. The “wedding cake” hat was an absolute triumph, well done Marie!

## **PROMPT**

As already mentioned Jill had very little to do, well done to all concerned for not only learning their own lines, but also the others that surrounded them. Anyone struggling for lines simply appeared to be wrestling with their emotions. It fitted so well.

## **DIRECTOR**

Andy is going from strength to strength with each show that he directs. He brings the script to life and gets the most out of his actors. This was not an easy play to stage and he did it justice. Well done.

Not only that; Andy also designs and pulls together the themed posters & programmes etc. very professionally.

## **FINANCES**

It will be no surprise to all hear to know that putting on a show is very expensive and so to get sponsorship from the Co-op is a real godsend. The balance sheet will talk us through the costs and receipts from the show. But the bottom line is that we all need to be part of our fundraising events at St Crux and the Murder Mysteries.

## **THE CHARACTERS;**

### **PEARL** (Christine)

Christine was spot on, great emotion and a believable wife taking early retirement. Her scene with Jan (Lisa) was great – they both put their hearts into it and the result was stunning. It really laid bare their emotions and the gaps that they felt were in their lives. We could all relate to what they alluded to.

### **JAN** (Lisa)

I felt that this was Lisa’s best role yet. Her character was totally believable and she could no doubt use her own life experiences, of a daughter leaving home to go to Uni’ to support the role. A great scene with Pearl as already mentioned. Her drunken state was very convincing... Did she do some practice for it??!!

### **SHELLEY** (Marie)

A first class performance by Marie. She really brought every scene that she was in to life. Very convincing and very over the top. She was so bitchy with a soft underneath. Her brassy-ness was her veneer. The scene with Jim was

very good. She was so easily tempted; and who could blame her with the mess that she had got herself into with cards etc.

**LINDA** (Rose)

Her attention to detail was spot on. The Tony Christie badge was a real hoot! Rose is a welcome addition to the group. Her voice was excellent and her mannerisms were convincing. She personified the young woman who has not quite got the confidence in herself and is still awkward in the presence of men. This was perfect casting. Her scene with Patrick (Dave) was excellent and so entertaining. At last she was being treated with respect. The only unbelievable detail that a jockey who was in a constant battle with his weight eating a Quattro stagioni at her house on Thursday!

**JOE** (Duncan)

Will there ever be photographic evidence of that hat and hair net?! His character was good and his delivery good, but his age was not so plausible. It was the only detail that I could not accept. What a part for Duncan – surrounded by women and the object of one's affection!

**FRED/PATRICK/KEVIN** (Dave)

I must admit that Kevin's diction was a little lost by his slurring although I'm sure that he had very little that was meaningful to say. Fred's spiffy outfit was spot on and really gave his character the right feel. Dave's scene with Rose as the jockey who is full of self-doubt was very convincing. We all felt for him with the life of hardship and denial that he leads. Well done. The accent was very good indeed and the silks looked just right.

**JIM/BARRY** (Sean)

What a welcome addition to the group! An excellent voice and great presence. His delivery of his lines "to the camera" were spot on and his character was totally believable. He clearly spent hours meticulously learning his lines. An excellent performance. His final scene as Barry was very poignant and I'm sure it brought a few tears to the eye. If only Barry and Pearl had been brave enough to express how they really felt!

**ELEGANT LADIES** (Janet, Eileen and Barbara)

What a bunch of toffee nosed cows! They really were the perfect foil to the Hull girls. The outfits were spectacular and they added that extra dynamic to the scenes. They really looked down their noses at the drunken ramblings of Jan.

They looked stunning and added that extra sparkle to Ascot at York. I wish I'd "found" a ticket to go along!

**OVERALL**

It was a brilliant, slick, funny and most entertaining performance. Well worth every penny.