

## Into the Woods Feedback

To begin with I would like to congratulate Showstoppers on another fantastic show, and thank them for being so prompt an efficient with their feedback - 26 responses is awesome compared to normal, meaning I had over 8,000 words of feedback to go through, (not so good for me but fantastic that so many people are interested in furthering and bettering the society and it's shows) so well done.

For those of your who don't know, I have omitted some details about the feedback, from this report, because it has been fed back to those individuals concerned and so needs no more discussion.

### **Direction/Staging, Musical direction, Choreography**

A few specific issues aside, the majority of feedback for the show was fantastically positive. Most thought it fitted very well in the Annex, however there were a few people who suggested it might have been a nice show to see in the Nuffield. The prod team on the whole seemed to be on top of most things, producing fun rehearsals and eventually a wonderful show, and commended for their ability and the effort they put in. There was mention, quite a few times, about the size of the prod team however, with Cast and Prod team alike mentioning that it felt far too big, some roles were lost or had no function, and it sometimes left cast feeling confused or forgotten about. This also cropped up when talking about themes within the show, as cast sometimes felt the creative didn't have a cohesive idea, and often cast were told contradicting things from different prod tem members.

It was disappointing to see the number of cast, StageSoc and prod team who noticed a discord within the prod team as well, and noted that they felt it propagated easily into the cast-prod team relationships, sometimes putting a dampener on rehearsals, especially during intensive and show week. It was suggested that Josh and Ruthie especially, should perhaps take a look at the way they interact with cast, prod team and crew a bit more in the future, and pay attention to keeping their own stress levels down to allow rehearsals and shows to be fun for all, including themselves! Many people however, although admitting it was not perfect yet, praised Josh for the improvement, in the way he handled himself, spoke to others and relayed feedback, making rehearsals much more enjoyable.

Danny and Phoebe had special mention **many times** for the effort they put in, and were commended a lot for their effort; diligence and character work with the cast. Many people were bowled over also, by the fantastic job that Charlie and Gem did with the musical direction, and said how fantastically they did, especially given it was their first time AND a Sondheim. "For first time MDs Gem and Charlie were incredible"

### **Rehearsal Process**

Many cast members seemed pleased with the way the scheduling was handled, commenting on the flexibility and care the prod team took to trying to fit in with cast's other commitments. Some of the cast felt that those with smaller roles perhaps got a bit of a bum deal, as they seemed to spend a few rehearsals waiting around not doing much, especially in intensive week, and perhaps a tiny bit more effort could have been put into some more efficient scheduling towards the end of the process.

Intensive week was just that – intensive, and although rehearsals were long and difficult, the cast and prod teams both seemed to accept that this was to be expected from such a long and difficult show, over all though they tended to be fun and enjoyable, with a good number of games and breaks, and show week was fantastic. The combination of music first, then blocking in the same rehearsal seemed to work well too, making it easier to follow blocking.

Unfortunately some cast members felt that during rehearsals the prod team would have definitely favourites, and comments made often disheartened or excluded some cast, making them feel slightly inferior.

### **Production**

There is one member of the prod team who could not get enough praise and that was Kimberly, the thanks, awe, and general admiration was incredible, and she should be very proud. The obvious effort that she put in to sourcing

and fixing the fab costumes should be highly commended and many said how they put the finishing touches to a fantastic looking show.

There was a minor upset that some costumes and props weren't ready for the dress run which lead to some cast feeling a little extra stressed and it was suggested that the trailer could have been filmed slightly earlier so it didn't feel so rushed, but overall Trini seemed "on it" and was commended for being very organized. The programme design was mentioned by many to be fantastic, and loads of props went to Kenni for ... props! Again the size of the prod team was mentioned to be an issue, meaning communication wasn't very effective, which lead to budgeting issues and some producers perhaps being a little lost in the crowd.

### **Cast**

Words used to describe the cast were: "Fantastic, hard-working, talented, fun, amazing, a delight, fab at taking direction, improved so much, supportive of each other, wonderful, hardworking, wonderful (again), gifted and very professional". With a huge thank you coming from StageSoc for the fab effort put into the get out. "10/10 could not fault them at all"

An interesting comment from a bit of StageSoc feedback was "If only all the other shows could have been like this, we wouldn't struggle to get crew for your shows", this is something to think about!

Although there were noted to have been a few minor slip-ups in rehearsals with a slight lack of professionalism from some cast members, all in all the behaviour and enthusiasm from the cast was said to have been impeccable.

### **Tech/Set**

StageSoc were commended many times for the hard work and effort they put in to the tech and set in the show, with some saying "the set brought the show to life". The professionalism from the techies made the tech run and show week flow very well, with special mentions going to David Young for his fab lighting, and Catherine and Lottie for their help with milky white and backstage.

StageSoc themselves mentioned the tech run could have been made EVEN smoother, by a little more patience from the directorial team, as some techies felt they weren't being listened to.

Some people mentioned that they felt the large furniture made the stage a little crowded, and that it would have been nicer to have had more space on stage, and quite a few thought that perhaps a change in lighting to darker colours might have helped make the second act darker and more mysterious, and would help contrast the two acts nicely, but other than that it was noted that the set looked fantastic with the contrast of the trees and the colours working really well.

### **AOB**

A suggestion from both Cast and Prod team, was that perhaps callbacks should have happened, although it has been mentioned that there was limited time available, so it perhaps wasn't really feasible.

### **Show Overall**

Many people were obviously so thrilled with having been involved in what was a fantastic show. It seemed to be a very good choice not only because it was able to ride the publicity of the recent film, which made it even more exciting to be involved with, but because of the wonderful outcome. Many of the cast and prod team also commented on the incredible development that happened within the cast and prod team as individuals.

Some thought the show week was perhaps let down a bit by some negativity within the prod team, however for most people it seemed the process overall was thoroughly enjoyable and they would love to go "Into the Woods" again.