

Help! Feedback

Independent: Summer 2017



Rehearsal Process

The rehearsal process was praised unanimously in feedback, with the dedication, organisation and hard work of all involved emphasised, in quotes such as “it was so well planned”, “rehearsals were productive but fun”, and “the cast were wonderfully committed”.

The fact that the process was a bit rushed was brought up, but this was unavoidable due to the timing of the show, and general consensus was that it was a great achievement to have put on a successful show with such a short rehearsal process.

Direction

Many positive comments were made about the direction, especially when referring to the directors as a team, with quotes like “it was lovely to see them having such a good dynamic” and “direction was efficient, slick, fast, and creative”.

It was acknowledged that the direction of certain sensitive scenes “could have been handled better”, however there were suggestions that the issues with this was not just down to the direction, but “was more due to the script and lyric writing”, and once again the short rehearsal process.

Production

The fact that the producers got everything done in the short time frame was heavily praised. Some quotes were: “Set was nice and busy, well laid out”, “The props and costumes were sourced quickly.”, “The posters and publicity etc. looked AWESOME.”

The only area for improvement brought up, was that the producers could have communicated a bit better with one another, and divided the tasks up more equally, with one response saying “it would have been nicer to have been kept a bit more in the loop”, and another saying “splitting up the tasks evenly probably would have worked better”.

Musical Direction

“Gem and Jamie were fab.” There were many plaudits for Jamie and his first time MDing with Showstoppers. One response was that he had “a great style of teaching”. Gem was also praised for her role, “giving the cast useful vocal technique.”

One suggestion was “it would be great if Jamie could learn some of the typical structure of Showstoppers warmups, to make sure that cast are always fully warmed up with exercises that they know”. Another comment was, “as Jamie wrote the show, I would have loved to have had more insight

from him as to the songs and meanings etc. I think perhaps he wasn't confident in giving that sort of musical direction, but it would have been cool to know what he thought!" .

Choreography

Although there was not much choreography required for this show, responses were all positive, saying "Phoebe taught it well" and "5p looked sick and it was really funny".

Tech

StageSoc were, as always, acclaimed throughout feedback. They were "bloody wonderful", and "really are the real MVPs". Hannah "is a bae for days". The lights were "slick" and sound "well balanced". A big thank you to StageSoc "considering they really didn't have to do this show (but they did!)"

Final Comments

The response to Help! was generally positive, with praise aimed specifically at the cast and production team for managing to achieve what they did in such a short space of time. They should be very proud of themselves.

A few responses brought up issues with the script and "how the writing could have more sensitively dealt with some of the issues in the show".

Unfortunately, some audience members took issue with the portrayal of the themes of mental health, race, and sexuality, with one response saying "the treatment of racism, homosexuality and mental health was not carried out as well as it could have been". It is worth saying that not every response echoed the same feeling, with one saying that it was a "really enjoyable show to watch".

As ever with shows, there are always going to be divisive moments, and people will have a difference of opinion, but it is important for committee to be vigilant in future and make sure that we fully assess all aspects of shows, especially originally written ones.

One quote sums it up very nicely:

"This show shows that committee should thoroughly read and be familiar with the entirety of the show before agreeing to put it on - because it isn't sensible to take risks when they can result in audiences getting offended".

Despite this, feedback was generally positive, with the show being deemed a success, especially given the time constraint. To conclude, Help! "may have had its flaws but what was achieved was sensational and Jamie should be extremely proud that he made such a great piece of art."

