

Made In Dagenham Show Feedback

For our freshers show Made In Dagenham we received 21 responses across cast, prod team and crew. The feedback on the whole was very positive with most finding it an excellent and fun freshers show experience.

Direction

With regards to direction, the feedback was mostly positive with many saying the directorial team were “organised” and efficient and that “the whole process ran as smoothly as possible and accommodated everyone in rehearsals/scheduling.” On their directing and staging, one response said, “The directing looks incredible onstage and the prop movement etc worked really smoothly”. One response also said “It was good really slick transitions nice touches to add in comical timing.” The directorial team were obviously organised and instructive while also allowing for cast creativity. There were however some questions as to the work balance and skill share of the two directors, with one response stating “Better splitting of jobs for Co-directors” and another saying “A more wet dynamic and balance of work between directors and a lot more confidence in their vision”. There was also some call for more constructive and less critical feedback in rehearsals, for example “Could have been more patient and less shouty”. There were therefore some teething issues with criticism and directorial balance which should be considered in future shows, but for the most part feedback praised both directors for their work.

A few quotes to summarise the directorial experience are:

- “Chloe and Patrick you're fab”
- Need more “communication between band and prod team and stage techs”
- “They really did care and just wanted everyone to do well! Lots of time and effort went into the process.”

Musical Direction

Almost all of the feedback for musical direction was hugely positive, so kudos to Hannah and James for that. Some of the really positive comments about their work were “A really good duo dynamic where each knew their role and responsibilities and they shared them well. Both played to their strengths and occasionally split teaching in a time slot in order to get more done in the time constraints of the show which was really effective!! The Wednesday sessions were incredible of them for giving up their time.” and “Everything was so good! The MDs worked so hard giving us extra recap sessions on a wednesday and endlessly recording parts for us. And also it sounded INCREDIBLLLLLEEEE”.

However, the main issues raised with regards to music and musical direction were to do with the band. Some of these responses included “The band seemed to do as they pleased, walking around on stage while the audience were present, which reduced the professional feel of the production. The entire production would often be waiting on the band, especially during intervals where they would go to the pub, bringing their drinks back with them. These drinks were found in open topped pint glasses on top of technical equipment, which was a large risk.”. One respondent also said “More practice with the conducting and once the issues arise more initiative to calm the cast by running it with the band before a run and explaining the differences after it wasn't just James on keys.”. These

issues with the band and conducting should be resolved for future shows with better communication and leadership from the musical direction team.

Some quotes to summarise the feedback on musical direction are :

- “We were often left waiting for the band who would go to the pub in the interval or not be around when required.”
- “Amazing effort outside of rehearsals and thorough on harmonies”
- “Well rehearsed and performed, was a joy to listen to.”

Choreography

Feedback on Daisy and Ellen’s choreo work was overwhelmingly positive. People were particularly impressed with their hard work and patience. One response spoke highly saying, “The dances were taught in a way that was easy to understand and there were enough opportunities to ask and go over parts I was unsure of. It was simple enough that everyone could do it, but there were opportunities for the stronger dancers to showcase their abilities.”. Another said “the videos of the dances to practise at home were really helpful, and ellen and daisy were really good teachers”. The only negative feedback received was that they “Could have made sure Daisy was more familiar with some of the choreo for teaching purposes but ultimately this was not a massive issue, just a minor observation.” and a call for more recaps, which happens with longer show slots.

Some comments that summarised the feedback were:

- “Extra sessions with daisy and Ellen.”
- “Ellen and Daisy were a lovely pair and taught dances really well catering for everyone’s dance abilities. The choreo was sick!”
- “Dance was fantastic and suitable for multiple abilities, perfect for freshers show.”

Publicity

Publicity was highly praised and Will’s hard work was certainly recognised. One comment commended him by saying “Wills graphics looked fit his trailer were well made and done in great time . We sold out isn't that proof that his publicity banged.” Another praised him by saying “We sold out twice!!! Yay! Also the headshots and programmes and everything look so cool!”. The only other feedback that wasn't a total praise was “Maybe more notice for flyering cuz I had loads of essays that week and if I knew I had to do that I would have been able to structure my time better but other than that it worked and it looks really cool!”. It may be helpful to organise a flyering schedule sooner in future, but it was not a widespread problem. Many called for cast clothing sooner, but we are aware that this isnt always an easy accomplishment due to external restrictions.

Some comments that summarise the publicity feedback are as follows:

- “You sold out a lot well done.”
- “People knew about the show so that's good!!!”

Costume and Props

As far as costumes and props were concerned, Beth and Immy did very well and there was little that was commented upon with anything but the highest praise. Some of the comments on what went well with regards to this element of production were as follows, "I like that we all had fun with it (horses) and as an ensemble member I felt really involved as I had costume changes and the outfits were pretty sick too eg cheerleader and Cortina dress." and another saying "Immy and Beth are just superstars. They were Hella organised, and got the cast and rest of the prod team really involved!". The only slightly negative comments were "I would have liked to have been told about supplying our own costumes sooner as there was not much time to get hold of things" and "practising with key props earlier in the rehearsal process". More attention to detail e.g material in machine scenes, and more use of props earlier in the process could be helpful but not essential. Some comments which summarised the overwhelmingly positive and constructive responses were:

- "One more run with costumes and props before show week"
- "Beth and Immy are such a good team. They were on it all the time and worked tirelessly throughout the process."

Staging and Tech

There were a few issues with staging and tech but there was also a lot of really positive feedback. Some of the really positive comments included "The transitions were slick and the lighting was so cool! Especially the dramatic lighting in storm clouds and stand up etc" and "Staging was fab. I mean come on, they individually programmed 50 lights for the American flag, how amazing is that!?". Some issues raised included "Sound tech had some issues early on although it is clear there were several inexperienced new stagesoc members working on it so it understandable. Maybe in the future more effort could be spent to make sure inexperienced tech crew members are more familiar with their role going into show week.". With work on mics and sound, the feedback could have been more positive. One note that is very important to prevent happening in future shows is, "It was really upsetting that cast didn't help out at all with get out, and instead decided to get drunk in the green room, and that this seemed encouraged, not stopped, by some members of the prod team. It sets a bad example for future shows and again, people shouldn't be drinking at all. Risk assessment aside it was just came across quite disrespectful.". Hopefully future production teams will be more aware of this.

Some comments which summarised the overall feelings about tech and staging were:

- "We love Stagesoc. The flag was fab and I loved the staging."
- "Seemed very smooth on most nights, with few obvious flaws."
- "Tech was off on the first show but by the second show it had all been sorted so I can only be grateful!"

Summary

When asked about their overall feelings coming away from the show and the process respondents shared that, "All in all the rehearsal process and final product was an absolute success and both the production team and cast have clearly had an amazing time being involved in it. This is

especially great as it is already proving to have greatly improves our freshers retention from last year and if we continue to have freshers shows this strong the future of our society looks extremely healthy."Another commented that they "Thoroughly enjoyed being part of this show as the cast and prod made the experience less stressful for an 8 week turn around and incredibly fun.". One respondent very kindly said "Shoutout to Imy our show Liaison", and it actually wasn't her. Future shows can be even better with better division of work, communication with band and crew and greater professionalism in some instances. However, this seems like a roaring success of a freshers show, which all involved greatly enjoyed.