



## The Glamorgan Drama League - The Glammies 2024

### Moderator's Report

**NOTE: The Appraisers comments are mixed up in order to keep them as anonymous as possible**

<b>Moderator</b>	Jan Samuel
<b>Name of play</b>	The Producers
<b>Name of Company</b>	PODS
<b>Where/when performed</b>	The Paget Rooms, Penarth 15 <sup>th</sup> to 18 <sup>th</sup> May 2024
<b>Intro</b>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> As always we were greeted with a very warm welcome from Wendy and the front of house team. Our seats were at the back which I personally prefer so that I can get an overall view of the full width of the set.</p> <p>We were greeted to an open set with appropriate music being played over the speakers, always at the right level so to not interfere with the excited chatter of the audience.</p> <p>On the night we went I think it was very nearly a sell out and shows the community support PODS receive in Penarth, something I know a lot of other groups struggle to achieve.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 2:</b> I was familiar with this musical before hand, having seen the original film as well as the musical version of the film so I knew the story and some of the songs. I expected there to be humour, and some good dance sequences but having never seen it on stage I was unaware what to expect in terms of staging.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 3:</b> I've never seen the producers before this performance so it was nice to be watching the show with completely fresh eyes. Post – Glammies performance I was also looking forward to how PODS would deal with the production. The Paget rooms seemed a very fitting venue for this type of show with the glitz and glamour of Broadway enhanced by the setting.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 4:</b> Always a lovely welcome when you go to PODS Everything waiting for you, always greeted warmly and there was certainly a buzz in the auditorium so I felt straight away we were in for a great night. I thoroughly enjoy going to PODS as you are always made to feel welcome. No pomp and ceremony just a very warm welcome. Thank You.</p>
<b>Production</b>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> The overall production was of good quality; excellent set, costumes and lighting with some absolute standout performances from the cast. The comedy within the piece was received well by the audience and it really seemed that everyone including the cast was enjoying themselves throughout. A really lovely evening of entertainment</p> <p><b>Appraiser 2:</b> Well what more can I say but “West End Quality” from the acting, singing, choreography and first class direction PODS didn't miss a beat.</p> <p>I have seen the producers professionally done and I have to say this was a far better experience. Well done to everyone involved with this production, you could have easily packed up the set and transferred to the West End last Sunday.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 3:</b> This more than lived up to my expectations, in fact exceeded them. I've never seen a PODS production before but have heard good things and now I can see why the company is so highly praised. The talent on stage was to a West End Standard, the costume and lightings were professional and the staging clever. When you go to see a comedy musical you expect to laugh and laugh i did, throughout the production. You could see it was a production put together with love and passion and it will be an experience that will stay with me for a long time.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 4:</b> So on to the production. Before I go any further, I have to say that I am going to have great difficulty writing this appraisal as, hand on heart, I could not find anything wrong with this production. It was so, so funny and everyone, and I mean everyone, did such a fantastic job. Absolutely AMAZING I just wish I had been able to go earlier on in the week because I most certainly would have gone again. My sister came with me – she had never seen or heard of The Producers, but she was crying laughing throughout it and talked about it all the way home. Congratulations EVERYONE involved.</p>
<b>Presentation</b>	
<b>Set</b>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> I always say that the set of a production is another character and this set was a beast. Expertly constructed and dressed to suit every scene In the production.</p> <p>I loved the use of the curtain back drops to Instantly transport us to different locations. My only slight niggle with them was when they were stored stage left on one or two occasions they were not pulled all the way back and I could at one stage see them moving which for a split second took my attention away from the action on stage. It may have been as simple as they were too bulky to pull right back.</p>

	<p>On a very positive note I have to add that the moving pigeons were exceptional and brought the scene to life and the use of lights through the flats at the end to show other the productions. All of the scene changes were handled efficiently and looked effortless which is a well deserved nod to the hard working back stage crew. Overall this set was designed and used well and in itself brought the production to life. Great work.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 2:</b> The setting was just right, every scene was well thought out and I loved the way it seamlessly went from scene to scene. It all looks so professional and however they got all the cast on stage as well, I'll never know. Congratulations to Andy Bradshaw and his team, as good as any professional production.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 3:</b> The set was well thought through, with the playing space split into 3 sections, used effectively throughout. You could also tell the design had been carefully picked over, with really small details adding to the overall feel. The middle section of the stage acted as the office for the most part, the brown sofa, desk and name on the door really drew us into the scene, with Max's various "flops" on the posters giving us even more insight into this character's background. The middle section also used the curtain to transport us to other locations which I thought worked well, however at times this meant that a rather large chorus was pushed to the front half of the stage. The set also had some excellent hidden/interactive features, such as the safe, the various show lights (used so well in the finale) and the removable pigeon hutch section which doubled up as the jail. It's transformation for springtime for Hitler was simplistic but also highly impactful. Perhaps the section to stage right could have been used more, but overall a really wonderfully designed with excellent attention to detail.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 4:</b> The primary set, Max's office was the most detailed with humorous posters a desk and sofa, the other sets were fairly minimal, I suspect because of the space limitations, however this did not detract at all from the story and I was impressed with the inventive ways some of the scene were staged, for example the accountants office, using the stone wall curtain backing to represent the oppressive, jail like environment. The attention to detail also meant that some of the more minimal sets (like the rooftop which included moving pigeons one of which had a swastika on) did not feel lacking or forgotten. Considering the number of different locations in the musical (the office, the theatre, Rogers apartment, rooftop, prison, court, accountants office) meant this was a particularly ambitious musical to stage and it was pulled off very successfully.</p>
<p><b>Costume</b></p>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> From the Opening Night sequence when the ushers came out in slick outfits I knew the costumes would be impressive, but I was not prepared for the almost professional quality of the costumes used during the show. The tap dancing women, the prisoners at the end, the Nazi uniforms all looked like they were from a professional production. This is impressive in itself but more so if you consider this was just what the chorus were wearing. All the principle characters outfits were fitting to their characters and again looked like a professional production. The old ladies with their matching dresses and matching bad grey wigs looked funny and whilst the wigs did look cheap I think this was the point and added an additional level of humour.</p> <p>The amount of humour gained from the costumes is something that is worth commenting on, during Keep it Gay and Spring time for Hitler many of the costumes drew large laughs from the audience, especially the tight purple trousers and the very German headwear.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 2:</b> I thought the costumes were excellent for this production, I particularly liked Roger's art deco gown, and Carmen's sleek black outfit which worked well in contrast. The chorus costumes were also phenomenal, the coherence really had an impact on the production's visuals. I thought the old women costumes were brilliantly simple yet effective and the headdresses for the chorus girls in Springtime for Hitler were highly amusing and impactful, just when they needed to be. Everyone's costumes felt appropriate for the era, with some comedic ones thrown in for good measure. I also enjoyed the different personalities conveyed by the costumes in "Keep It Gay" which really brought the minor characters to life.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 3:</b> I mean, come on, not one costume hired!!! That is pretty amazing - no, that is incredible. The costumes were perfect and everyone looked incredible. I absolutely LOVED, LOVES, LOVED, The 'Old Ladies' with their green polka dot dresses and Zimmer frames, absolutely brilliant. The Nazi Costumes/Flags which were made in- house. Incredible. Roger De Brls and his 'men' all their costume were brilliant. The Audition scene, The Prison - I could go on an on. All were incredible. Congratulations everyone as I believe you all had a hand in this.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 4:</b> PODS always go all out on costumes and brought us the true essence of the era with the hundreds (or so it seemed) of costumes in this production. Nothing was out of place and every character, even down to the chorus looked as if they belonged in the 1940s.</p> <p>I have to applaud the use of the zimmer frames, I am including this with costume because It Is one of the things in the show that Is "Expected".</p> <p>I also loved the tanks at the end, though from where I was sitting I could only get a glimpse of them because they were at audience head level.</p>

	<p>Maybe there could have been one or two on the stage to compliment the ones in the hall. Overall though this production was suitably dressed for the era. Well done!</p>
<b>Makeup</b>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> The makeup was flawless.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 2:</b> The make up was appropriate for the setting and characters, the dancers and ushers were glamorous with red lips, no one looked washed out in the lights and it was good to see that Roger had just the right amount of makeup when he was trying to dress as Anastacia so it didn't look too over the top.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 3:</b> All the make up in this production was suitable to the time period, not overly done and worked well and any wigs looked totally of the period. Great attention to detail.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 4:</b> Makeup was appropriate throughout.</p>
<b>Props</b>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> The props were of a good standard from the moving pigeons, the accountants machines to the tanks that were worn during Springtime for Hitler you could see the craft and skill involved. The attention to detail was again very apparent, from the cupboard full of pictures of Max's backers (all with different frames), Max's erection covering hat, Leo's well worn blue blanket to the posters hanging in the office. Everything was era appropriate and I think the biggest praise was that you didn't really notice they were props.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 2:</b> All the props, all of them worked well – and I include the furniture in this – they were all brilliant. There were loads of props, well over 100 it says in the programme, but every one of them served its purpose – even the dancing girls headdresses – especially the very large one which made me roar. I don't know what more I can say except 'congratulations' to every one of you. I would also like to congratulate you on the programme here as it was excellent, very fitting your 100<sup>th</sup> year. And finally, the Pigeons – OMG – I nearly choked with laughter. They were brilliant.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 3:</b> There were no shortage of props on this production. I thought they were handled well by the cast throughout. The hats brought on during "I Wanna Be a Producer" were added into the performance, which I liked. The Zimmer frames were brilliant, and I particularly liked when the chorus used them to the beat of the song. However as this prop is quite large and the chorus were numerous at this point it made the stage look a little cramped. In "Springtime for Hitler" the addition of the dolls really added to the comedy value of the scene and the tanks that had been created for the two chorus members in the audience were a fantastic addition.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 4:</b> The props suited the time period of the production. I especially liked the animated pigeons and the zimmer frames.</p> <p>PODS always ensure everything is of the right era and looks right for all of their productions, this is important because if something looks out of place then it can instantly take you out of the production.</p> <p>Great work.</p>
<b>Lighting</b>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> Absolutely no complaints here as it worked seamlessly and very effectively. Not easy I realise that with so many cues but no faults and there were LOADS of lighting cues. Well Done.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 2:</b> Absolutely brilliant design and operation of the lights, I loved the use of the glitter ball and the way it brought the audience into the action. I loved the hall side lights turning red at the end of the show to match the colours of the flags on stage.</p> <p>An excellently well executed lighting plot that again would be very at home in the West End.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 3:</b> The lighting very much added to the experience but was never intrusive and did add to the experience, from Max kneeling down in a spotlight to highlight his prayer to God to the red lighting of springtime to Hitler to the prison bars created by lighting it complimented the action onstage. Standout moments for me was the use of the disco ball during I want to be a producer which was unexpected but really added to the experience, and the lights coming on in the audience during the intermission of Betrayed was a stroke of genius.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 4:</b> I thought the lighting in this production was superb and every cue was on point. It was used to enhance the production and performances throughout, rather than just being changed to different states of wash. The "lightbulb" spot use for Max's realisation was a very subtle but nice touch to the scene and was also used when Max moved downstage to pray for Leo to change his mind. I really liked the flashing lights used for the "stroke of genius" line, it added to the drama and comedy value. The second act saw us open to a lovely pink wash to add to Ulla's redecoration which gave an almost dream-like quality to the scene. The variety of lighting in "Betrayed" was outstanding; the jail gobo was simple yet effective, the LEDs around that part of the set used when Max went into the latter section of the song were a brilliant surprise and the switch to the lights up state during the "intermission" was hysterical. The finale saw great use of the LEDs to light up the names of the shows, with the end picture using the backlight being a lovely way to finish.</p>
<b>Music/Musical Direction (where appropriate)</b>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> It is always lovely to see a live band and my goodness what a score. The musicians brought the score to life with ease which just added to the overall magic of the production.</p>

	<p><b>Appraiser 2:</b> All the well known songs from the musical were well performed with some fantastic harmonies from the Opening number until the end. It is obvious that this was a well rehearsed production as every note was on point and the ensemble harmonies were extremely tight. Even songs which are quite sparse in terms of harmonies/melodies where there is no where to hide were stunning.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 3:</b> I thought the musical direction of this piece was well drilled. The cast were excellent with their cues and the music flowed smoothly throughout. At first I thought the balance of the band and the performers was a little off, with the band being quite quiet for “We Can Do It” and the performers seemingly being too loud against the music. However, I thought this improved throughout the show and the MD had clearly worked with the cast extremely closely to get this level of discipline and quality from their voices. I felt that some of the harmonies could have done with a little more refining, however the chorus delivered some lovely group numbers which really packed a punch, with great diction throughout. At times some of the chorus members would finish their notes at different times, but this was only on occasion. The main cast were well rehearsed and not a cue was dropped on their part, with the comedy really brought through in the delivery of the songs.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 4:</b> The musical Direction for me was faultless under the guidance of Ben Davies. All the songs were GREAT. The music wasn’t too loud so you could hear all the singing. There were a lot of songs in this – well, it was a Musical – and I enjoyed everyone of them from beginning to end. Too many to go through but some of the ‘stand outs’ were, well, all of them. Congratulations to all the musicians.</p>
<p><b>Sound/background music</b></p>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> The sound here was well balanced with both the band and the voices of the cast coming across well. There were a couple of technical glitches (Leo got water in his mic, at one point Max's microphone fell off) this did not affect the experience or sound. The only thing that stood out for me in terms of improvement was the gun shots needed to be a bit more in sync with the action but that is nitpicking really.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 2:</b> Any background sound was handled well, the pre-play music and Interval music were of the right era and played at the right level.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 3:</b> The sound cues were excellent throughout and appropriately selected. The cast used to create the pigeon noises were highly comedic, and the falling noises used for Franz and the old woman were very amusing and really gave the audience a picture of what was happening offstage.</p>
<p><b>Direction</b></p>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> So where do I start. Fiona has thanked everyone and given credit to everyone in the programme, and quite rightly so. However, I have to say that Fiona is one of the BEST Directors I have every encountered. I thought CHESS was good last year but this was really something else. Everything was so well crafted, no one masking, characterisations were amazing, placing, costumes, sound, lighting just about everything. The songs, the costumes, the characterisations and the pace of the whole production That is all down to the Director in the end.</p> <p>Fiona has an eye for detail and knows how to get the best out of her cast, acting, singing, humour and/or pathos in every production. Working with the Sound, Lighting and the Musical Director they make a brilliant team. The perfect combination.</p> <p>CONGRATULATIONS and Well Done Fiona and all the team.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 2:</b> I really liked the overall direction of this piece, with all aspects of the stage and room used effectively. The choice to have the split staging on the sides was great, with clearly defined areas as well as the curtain to enhance the playing space. I thought at times the choice to put all of the chorus in front of the curtain did make the stage feel cramped, but this was only on occasion. You could tell however that this director had a penchant for comedy, the timing and delivery of lines were spectacular throughout and had the audience in stitches, as well as the moments given to the chorus members. The cast moved across the stage well and the multiple exits and entrances enabled the story to be moved along swiftly. The main cast understood their roles well, and each character was highly distinctive, this director seemed to have worked with them to find each character’s mannerisms and discussed the choices they were making as performers. At times I felt that the scenes may have started too keenly, and left the performers very little space to grow throughout the scene. This was particularly evident in the first scene with Max and Leo, although it was still a funny scene, the level at which they started meant they had nowhere to go as the characters got more and more hysterical. However overall this production was clearly well planned and all aspects of the theatre considered by this Director, highly impressive with excellent attention to detail.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 3:</b> Fiona and Julia brought the show from the page to the stage with ease, bringing us the audience a highly polished, West End standard piece of theatre. Even when there seemed to be hundreds on stage everyone knew their place.</p> <p>The grouping was handled very well with no obvious masking at any point and everyone shone in their own way.</p> <p>This is a real credit to the directors who not only make the principles shine but take care to ensure that everyone has a spot in the limelight.</p> <p>All I can say was the show was a delight to watch from start to finish so well done to Fiona and Julia.</p>

	<p><b>Appraiser 4:</b> The direction of this production was spot on. The stage is quite compact and with quite a large cast who at times were on stage all at once it never felt super crowded. The blocking was well thought out and the clever use of space gave a grandness well beyond the limited space. The use of different levels was clever and added to this effect. Every element on stage was thought out and even when a character was just standing in the background and not the focus of the scene they were always doing something, for example Max counting his money, or Leo being flirted with by a Native American. The director clearly knew how to get the maximum amount of jokes to really draw out the humour, from physical humour to making sure lines were timed just right.</p>
<p><b>Choreography (where appropriate)</b></p>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> The Choreography from Ceri Wheatly was great. Funny but not messy and suited all the characters. Oh, I understand it is supposed to BUT sometimes a choreographer asks too much and it doesn't quite work out. However, that wasn't the case here. I loved the opening number 'It's Opening Night' 'In Old Bavaria, Der Guten Tog Hop-Chop', 'Keep it Gay', 'When You've Got it, Flaunt it', 'Little Old Lady Land' and 'Springtime for Hitler' to name but a few because I loved them all. Well, Done Ceri and the Team for some very memorable choreography. Congratulations.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 2:</b> Ceri had a stage of people to manoeuvre, and boy did she do It, every dance number was perfectly timed and choreographed to the music. The choreography was handled expertly and helped to bring each scene to life beautifully. Exceptional work</p> <p><b>Appraiser 3:</b> There were a number of dance sequences in this production and I was impressed both with the technical ability they required (the tap dancing sequences were particularly good) the amount of props used, which is an added level of complication. The stand out was the old lady routine with the Zimmer frames which was frankly outstanding and also mind-blowing in it's complication and ambition. There was a few times when you could see the concentration on the dancers faces when they passed the Zimmer frames around but this could be forgiven. The only thing which i thought may be slightly lost was during springtime for hitler when the actors formed a swastika shape on the stage, having seen the film I understood this was what was being done but for those that haven't seen it this moment could be lost as it wasn't obvious from the audiences position this was what was going on. The issues I have mentioned were very slight, however and did not retract from the outstanding choreography during the show.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 4:</b> There were some really nice choices with the choreography in this show, and I thought the chorus worked well together in the dance numbers. I thought Ulla's dance number was impressive, with some great tricks from the cast member to really enhance the character. The choreography with the Zimmer frames was also extremely well thought out, the passing of the prop was simple yet effective, I really enjoyed the domino effect created as well. In general the steps/moves were accessible for all the cast when they needed to be. When the more complicated tap numbers occurred with a smaller cast I did feel the energy was a little lacking, mainly because tap relies heavily on the beats of the feet rather than the outward performance of the chorus. I also felt a bit more could have been added to "Springtime for Hitler", but I believe the chorus were limited in their movement by the costumes. Overall I thought the choreography had great variety with some classy, memorable numbers created.</p>
<p><b>Performances:</b></p>	
<p><b>General</b></p>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> Overall the cast gave a really strong performance, the main cast performed their individual roles with gusto and pace, while the chorus took on various roles and performance styles to really bring this piece to life. A really excellent effort all round from PODS.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 2:</b> If you were to judge the performances here with a Broadway production you would be hard pressed to find many differences. An utterly professional level production with immense talent on the stage. The acting and singing were of a high standard. All actors obviously understood their characters and everyone was cast really well. On the night I went not one person dropped the ball and if they did I wouldn't have noticed because of the level of skill and professionalism.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 3:</b> This was a show that could stand up in the West End and Broadway amongst any of the professionals. Absolutely brilliant from start to finish. In fact, I didn't want it to finish. I don't know what else to say. Broadway Audition Studio- Again, so funny yet so well controlled. You couldn't help but love it. Springtime for Hitler – just fabulous.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 4:</b> In general, the production was brought to the stage to a professional standard, this is a credit to everyone involved. It was extremely obvious this production for all was a labour of love and fun to be involved with. A joy to watch from beginning to end. Well done PODS</p>
<p><b>Teamwork</b></p>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> This was obvious from the word go and through all the hard work brought us a production that was slick and so polished you could see your face in it. What I look for in teamwork is the generosity from the actors and all on stage in helping each other shine. Well done to all.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 2:</b> You could tell that this cast really enjoyed performing with each other, everyone seemed engaged and hardworking. The cue bites throughout the production really brought a pace and excitement to the show which kept the audience captivated which would only be achieved by the cast and director working with discipline.</p>

	<p><b>Appraiser 3:</b> With Teamwork in this production, it wouldn't have been anything, but everyone pulled together as one and this was the best Teamwork I have ever seen in a professional or amateur (and I'm not afraid of using the word amateur) productions. It was exceptional. You should all be very proud of yourselves and please keep it going.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 4:</b> The cast worked together well, the ensemble, many of who played multiple parts with multiple costume changes complimented the leads well and there were no instances of people looking like they shouldn't be there on stage. There were very few instances of people dropping character and many of the cast were able to have comedic moments even if they did not have a speaking part.</p>
<p><b>Char 1: Max Bialystock played by: Neil Parker</b></p>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> Neil had an extremely commanding presence as The Producer, Max Bialystock. I thought he took the stage by storm and really drove the story along with him. His pace, comic timing and physicality were exemplary. His interaction with "Hold Me, Touch Me" had the audience in stitches. His commitment to the role was evident throughout and this all came to fruition in his outstanding performance of "Betrayed" which I thought was a real highlight of the show. The changes of character, pace and voice were so well rehearsed and put together I think this showed the incredible work of an actor and director who knew how to analyse and really get the best out of this song. I felt at times Neil started the scenes a little too forcefully, leaving little way to go in terms growth/build throughout the scene. This was only on occasion and really only something for him to be aware of going forward! An outstanding performance all round.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 2:</b> Neil brought Max to life with ease, bringing us a well-rounded character that from the offset was totally believable. Neil has a tremendous stage presence and a booming singing voice to match. There isn't anything I can criticise Neil for; this was a well polished, well loved performance that will stay in my mind as one of the best musical performances both amateur and professional I have seen lately. Excellent Work.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 3:</b> Neil was a perfect choice to play Max. He had a good balance of sleaziness, charisma but was still likeable, which is key to a character like this because even if his actions are morally wrong you still want the audience to like him. The singing was simply stunning with not a beat missed and an incredible range shown. The chemistry between the two leads was fantastic and believable which made the show even more watchable. Neil's strengths did not just hinge on his amazing voice but his ability to command a stage, nail both physical comedy as well as jokes. This role is obviously heavily associated with Nathan Lane and it would have been easy to just do an impression but Neil was able to add that level of reference but also make it his own. An impressive and stand out performance.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 4:</b> Brilliant Stand Out performance by Neil – what energy. He never once faltered and I loved his reactions with the 'Hold me, touch me' especially the hat covering – well you know what. Neil really made this part his own and was one of the many 'stand out' performances. His singing, dancing, facial expressions, relationship with Leo – in fact I could go on an on. Fantastic performance of a very difficult iconic part. WELL DONE and CONGRATULATIONS.</p>
<p><b>Char 2: Leo Bloom played by: Paul Mellin</b></p>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> Paul was sublime and encapsulated Leo's naivety and vulnerability without straying into over the top territory. He really showcased his ability for physical comedy in this role, from his hysterical outbursts, to his clumsiness he was an excellent foil for Max. He had me in hysterics over his hysterics and his ability to screech like a child. His journey from wide-eyed accountant to married producer was believable. Paul's vocal skills matched his dramatic ones and he showcased his impressive voice, particularly in his big number I want to be a producer (where it would be easy to be upstaged by the comedic chorus girls) As I mentioned before he had great chemistry with Neil but also with his wife to be Ulla. Leo often provides the audiences viewpoint in many of the scenes and as a result the audience fell in love with him. Another fantastic performance.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 2:</b> Another stand-out performance. I loved Paul's facial expressions and reactions to 'awkward' situations. His eventual relationship with Max was excellent. His little 'blue blanket' was hilarious and really worked. His disbelief at everything Max stood for to his eventual coming around to Max's way of thinking. His 'falling in love with Ulla – just everything. As I have already said, 'Stand Out' performance which deserved all the praise you can give it.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 3:</b> Paul was a highly enjoyable and funny Leo with excellent tone of voice which added to the character immeasurably. You really felt Leo's awkwardness and Paul did this in many ways through his delivery of dialogue, physicality and comic timing, particularly when he was interacting with Max and Ulla. I really liked the way Paul allowed Leo to grow across the production, we really saw the character's journey and development which is essential for bringing the show's finale to a satisfying end. I thought his songs were delivered with strength and a high performance quality but felt he could've connected with the audience a little more, he often sang up to "the gods" rather than down to the stalls. This would have brought us</p>

	<p>further insight into this plucky character, which overall was excellently portrayed by Paul in this production.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 4:</b> What a bundle of energy, Paul brought Leo to the stage effortlessly. I enjoyed watching the transformation from being scared of everything and having to use a comfort blanket to being confident to get the girl.</p> <p>Paul worked well with Neil to bring us a comedy duo that was on a par with Morcombe and Wise. An engaging performance and a complete joy to watch. Excellent Work.</p>
<p><b>Char 3: Ulla</b> <b>played by: Chloe Welsh</b></p>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> Chloe Welsh embodied the blonde bombshell which was Ulla. Her accent was on point but didn't get in the way of her nailing those high notes. As well as looking the part she managed to show some amazing gymnastics abilities during her big song. Ulla can be a tough character to nail as there are so many facets to her, she comes across as a bit of a dumb blonde, but underneath it all is probably one of the most intelligent and subtly manipulative characters in the show - ensuring she looks out for her needs and using the show and Max and Leo to further her career. She is aware of the reaction she has on men and uses it to her advantage. There is a danger that she could come off as one dimensional by focusing on just one aspect but Chloe managed that tight rope well and made the character lovable, with just the right amount of innocence. Fleshing out Ulla to be a believable character who charms the audience. The comic timing, again was there and she complimented the two leads very well.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 2:</b> Another bundle of energy.</p> <p>Ulla makes you wait for her arrival but when she did arrive Chloe brought her to life with confidence. A fantastic stage presence which shone on the stage like a beacon, Chloe didn't falter, keeping her accent all the way through and playing Ulla in a sexy but not sleazy way. An absolute joy to watch, well done Chloe.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 3:</b> Ulla played by Chloe Welsh demanded an actress who really needed to understand the type of comedy required for this role, which I think was the most challenging out of all the roles in this production. Ulla not only needs to be a performer, but also capture a naivety and knowingness in equal measure. I thought Chloe did this well and warmed throughout the production, her first entrance was quite tricky, with a rather big song to enter on. I thought her dance skills were highly impressive and really gave some surprises to that number. By the second half I thought Chloe was brilliant in the role, really working well with Leo and playing against the other characters to bring out Ulla's ditziness as well as her annoyance at not being the centre of attention at the end of the "performance". Her performance in "That Face" was extremely funny. She was constantly working throughout the piece, and made good choices even when Ulla wasn't necessarily the main part of the scene, a true sign of a thoughtful performer.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 4:</b> Oh, my goodness, what can I say. Perfect casting. Chloe was excellent and her rendition of 'When You've Got it, Flaunt it' was superb. Even losing her shoe didn't throw her. Chloe was brilliant. My, could she dance and act. I really enjoyed this performance. I really don't know what else to say except 'CONGRATULATIONS and WELL DONE'.</p>
<p><b>Char 4: Franz Leibkind</b> <b>played by: Andrew Carr</b></p>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> Great performance here; made me laugh so much. He really was cast perfectly and played the part so well. I absolutely loved his talking to the Pigeons and he rendition of 'In Old Bavaria' creased me. Also the 'Der Guten Tag Hop-Clop' with Leo and Max – well I was weak.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 2:</b> Andrew brought a sense of fun to Franz, brilliantly maintaining his German accent all the way through and making the German dances look like second nature. A brilliant performance from a confident actor who also had great stage presence, this is one of my favourite performances of the night, I just loved the interaction with the pigeons too. Great work Andrew.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 3:</b> With characters like this you will sometimes get someone whose strengths lies in the characterisation (with the singing lacking) or a strong singer who fails to capture the comedy and absurdity. There is also a danger of overplaying. This did not happen with Andrew who both nailed the acting and the singing when it came to Franz. Going from someone who seems like a bit of a kook, to someone who could potentially be dangerous very well. Whenever he was on stage he really drew attention and a lot of laughs. A wonderful comedic performance.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 4:</b> Andrew was utterly committed to the role of Franz and thoroughly embodied the character's insanity and eccentricity. His entrance and interaction with the "pigeons" was outstanding and immediately established his character with the audience. Every time he was on stage the energy was raised entirely. His performance in "Der Guten Tag Hop-Clop" was also brilliant, it really allowed Max and Leo's dialogue to really come to life, creating even more comedic moments for the audience to enjoy. I thought the accent could have been a little stronger but this didn't detract from the energy brought by this performer.</p>
<p><b>Char 5: Roger de Bris</b> <b>played by: John Barnes</b></p>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> Possibly one of my favourite characters of the he show, John really light up the stage whenever he was on. From the hilarious Keep it Gay when he casually walks on in a dress, to his memorable portrayal of Hitler I found myself looking forward to when he came on stage. This character is obviously written as a bit of a stereotype, however John made him much more than that. His comic timing was nailed on and his egotism shone through, as well as his pure delight when he is given the title role in the musical.</p>

	<p><b>Appraiser 2:</b> Roger played by Jon Barnes was a tremendously funny performance. Again, another member of the cast with excellent commitment to the role. Jon’s tone of voice really added to the character and gave him something a little extra in terms of authenticity. His comic timing on the “I’ll do it” really hit the audience hard, and his interactions with Carmen were also hysterical. I particularly enjoyed the “labour” that descended into almost monkey noises which really got the audience laughing. His performance as Hitler really picked up the energy in that section of the show, which I felt was a little lacking in terms of energy. All in all an excellent portrayal of Roger.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 3:</b> Jon brought Roger to life with just the right amount of campness to balance with the over the top Carmen. Brilliantly played, Jon gave us a well rounded character that was well rounded and expertly handled, he also looked good in a dress. Extremely well done, congratulations.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 4:</b> Great performance here and I loved everything he did. Hi relationship with his ‘Team’ was great. I also loved his ‘Springtime for Hitler’ really funny and well performed. Well Done</p>
<p><b>Char 6: Carmen Ghia played by: Rhys Jenkins</b></p>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> Great Performance and Rhys knew how to command attention – quite rightly so.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 2:</b> I found that Rhys had the most authentic character portrayal of all those in the production. His tone of voice suited the character perfectly. His calmness as Carmen didn’t detract from the character’s energy (he had an excellent sweep!), there was almost a quietness that meant he had everyone listening to him. Rhys also had excellent comic timing, and again this was never delivered in hysterics but with poise and well-chosen tone. He worked really well with Jon playing Roger, their comedy as a duo also enhanced the scenes they were in. I really liked his delivery of “what alliteration!” which really gave the audience and I a chuckle. A thoroughly enjoyable and well-crafted performance from Rhys.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 3:</b> Rhys was a delight as the overly dramatic Carmen. From the minute he said a very long ‘Yes’ I knew who his character was. Like many other characters in the show there is the danger to play the often hostile Carmen in a way that comes off a bit abrasive but Rhys never did this. He kept it rooted in comedy with just the right amount of stupidity and faux self-esteem.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 4:</b> I absolutely loved this character; Rhys really went to town with the utter campness needed to bring Carmen to life. I would normally say try not to make a gay character too big but on this occasion it was entirely needed. I loved the way Carmen walked as if he was on a cat walk and the mannerisms were perfect. An energetic, fantastic and believable performance. Well done</p>
<p><b>Char 7: Hold Me, Touch Me played by: Lauren Farnham</b></p>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> Oh my goodness what a gem of a part and Lauren brought her to life so well. I was chuckling about this sex mad maneater on the way home in the car. Such a good performance. Well done.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 2:</b> Lauren was a masterclass in how to steal a show with a relatively small part. Her mannerisms and embodiment of an old lady never dropped when she was on stage. She really added another level of humour with her almost bleating of the word “Help”. You could tell Lauren was having a good time in this role and as a result we did too.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 3:</b> Very funny and really set the scene for the other old ladies and what Max was really like!!!.</p>
<p><b>Char 8: Mrs Marks &amp; Judge played by: Mary Gardner</b></p>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> Mary brought a genuine air of authority to her portrayal of both characters and was extremely believable in both roles.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 2:</b> Mary always brings a sense of authority to the stage. An experienced actor Mary knows just the note to hit with every character she plays. A lovely performance. Congratulations</p> <p><b>Appraiser 3:</b> As always Mary was really good at shouting her authority which suited the part perfectly. She frightened me to death.</p>
<p><b>Char 9: Kiss Me, Feel Me played by: Sally Mathias</b></p>	<p><b>Appraiser 1</b> Watching sally always makes me smile, it is what she doesn’t say that makes me laugh. Sally has a knack of giving us the best facial expressions that can say 1000 words. A true joy to watch in everything that she does. Great work Sally</p>
<p><b>Char 10: Usherettes played by: Abbie Prothero/Rowan Connell</b></p>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> As soon as Abbie and Rowan sang their first note I knew, as an audience, we were on for a good show. They sang with confidence and embodied the excitement around the opening of a production. Their many roles in the production, included some complex dance moves really highlighted their talent.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 2:</b> Great start to the show with Abbie and Rowan and Company. Really started the performance off with a bang.</p>
<p><b>Char 11: Red Indian, convict and other roles</b></p>	<p><b>Appraiser 1:</b> I am going to start calling Matthew “Mad Eye”</p>



<b>Played by Matthew Lee</b>	Oh my goodness, every part he played in this production being speaking or not drew my attention. What a talented and generous actor. Matthew has the talent of presence, no matter what he does he is always a joy to watch. Great work Matthew
<b>Char 12: Lead Stormtrooper Played by Dean Matthews</b>	<b>Appraiser 1:</b> Dean played a variety of roles in the show and really showcased his willingness to make an absolute fool of himself if the role required, and this is a massive compliment as it shows extreme braveness as a performer. Not many people could flash their nipples in the first act of a play and then be taken seriously as a high ranking member of the Nazi Party in the second but he managed to be believable as both.
<b>Char 13; Sergeant, Convict and other roles Played by: Bob Tucker</b>	<b>Appraiser 1:</b> Bob always brings a professionalism to any part he is given; you know that when you see Bob in a show the characters he plays are in safe hands. A hugely talented actor whose experience shines through which make Bob a joy to watch. Congratulations.
<b>Char 14: Pigeons played by: Elinor Brunker, Abbie Protheroe, Rowan Connell.</b>	<b>Appraiser 1:</b> All I can say is BRILLIANT. I ABSOLUTELY loved the Pigeons so funny and a real 'stand out' for me.
<b>Char 15: Bryan Played by Dean Matthews Char: Kevin Played by: Bob Tucker Char: Scott Played by: Robert Jenkins Char: Shirley Played by: Emma Dennett</b>	<b>Appraiser 1:</b> What a Team, what a team. Loved these and their entrances were excellent. All worked so well together yet had their own characters. WELL DONE and CONGRATULATIONS. You were all great.
<b>Char 11: Little Old Lady Land Played by: The Old Ladies</b>	<b>Appraiser 1:</b> This was absolutely amazing and I loved it and so did everyone around me. Oh, my goodness, how did you manage to get them all on a small stage and all in complete unison. ABSOLUTELY BRILLIANT. I also LOVED their costumes. FABULOUS.
<b>Chorus</b>	<b>Appraiser 1:</b> What a fantastic chorus we had with this production, old ladies with zimmer frames, accountants and hilarious dancing girls to name but a few. This chorus was the backbone of this production, everyone shone. One performance that stood out was the chorus girl that was repeatedly rejected by Leo, her facial expressions and determination was hilarious. Everyone gave It their all and worked as a well rehearsed team. Exceptional work all. <b>Appraiser 2:</b> The chorus were fantastic and the songs when they were all on stage they really added a dimension to the music. Never was it a case of too many cooks (as I've seen in other productions) and it was obvious everyone was there for a reason. The versatility of the chorus really shines through especially as some of them were playing 5 roles or more. <b>Appraiser 3:</b> I really want to mention everyone because everyone was so good but I tried and it all got very confusing, All I can say if I haven't mentioned you individually. I apologies. Everyone but everyone was great and you all worked together to make this a very memorable show – for all the right reasons. You should all be proud of yourselves and what you achieved in this very difficult production. <b>Appraiser 4:</b> I thought the chorus worked well together throughout this production. In the opening number I thought everyone worked hard to be active and busy, but this seemed to vary throughout the production. I really enjoyed the performance of the one chorus member in the dance for "I Wanna Be a Producer". She really added comedy and life to the dancing that was going on around her, her interactions with Leo, particularly when she reappeared behind the sofa were hysterical. The multi-role playing of the chorus was also handled extremely well with some stand outs in "Keep it Gay". A bit more consistency in energy throughout from the chorus would've enhanced the show even more. However, the commitment to the old women, particularly in the court scene was brilliant and you could tell that the entire cast had really enjoyed working on this production. Overall, a really fun chorus to watch.
<b>Summing up</b>	<b>Appraiser 1:</b> PODS brought The Producers to the Paget Rooms with style and ease. A West End quality production with West End direction and performances all round. This has to be one of the best musicals I have seen in a while both on the amateur stage and professionally. I want to congratulate each and every person Involved. Well done all. <b>Appraiser 2:</b> I take my hat off to you all – not a producers hat I am sorry – but my appraiser's hat. This really had been a difficult appraisal to do as I honestly couldn't find much that I could advise you all on. WELL, DONE P.O.D.S, YOU REALLY ARE AMAZING AND YOUR 100th YEAR WILL GO DOWN IN YOUR HISTORY AS – INCREDIBLE. CONGRATULATIONS.

	<p><b>Appraiser 3:</b> Overall, I thought this was a well-directed and excellently performed piece, with outstanding costumes, set and lighting. The musical numbers were handled extremely well with some really memorable moments and songs. It was a brilliant introduction for me to this show and I will definitely be going to see it again – but will anything ever top this one?! Well done to PODS on a brilliant show.</p> <p><b>Appraiser 4:</b> One of the best amateur productions I have seen which very much deserves to be seen by as many people as possible. This is obviously the result of a number of talented people both on and off stage putting passion and talent into a show and I would gladly see again (in fact I did go a second night).</p>
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