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Be inspired by amateur theatre

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Dear Amanda,

Thank you very much for the invitation to see CSODS in their production of 'The Ladykillers', and so delighted with your sell-out support which was well deserved with a play of such high standard.

Peter Howell and his team certainly produced the goods in this slick and fast moving production, attention to details excellent in all aspects. Must congratulate the set design and construction from Grahame Woodrow: great imagination and ingenuity, a miracle to get on that tiny stage to allow for the action including the 'window to the railway', and all the effects from sound and light just added the right atmosphere.

The mood set well at opening with the patience and well-meaning almost weariness of Constable Macdonald (Andrew Payne) in his dealings with Mrs Wilberforce (Nona Gray), and concluding in similar fashion like book-ends, and this normal pace contrasted well with the frantic and speedy pace of the rest of the production.

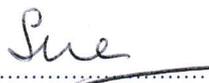
What can one say about this lady except she was a perfect character interpretation, looked right for the part and we could believe her gentle way of life, seeming innocence, and the hidden strength of character, but the steeliness and determination came through in her dealings with the lodgers and, of course she won in the end in a great final moment.

The casting of 'the gang' was a triumph for Peter and the success of the play was definitely due to the teamwork and interactions from all. Matt Scantlebury as Professor Marcus was quite outstanding as he led the plot: speed of actions and dialogue and the craft of plan and determining the actions of others, this was a masterpiece of performance delivery, but which also accentuated the moments of humour (the scarf a most effective prop) and brought out the talent of all on stage in excellent timing. Graham Blyth as the Major had the warmth of feeling and delicacy of characterisation in his interpretation and reactions to the lady of the house, and we felt quite sympathetic to his character. Neil Robertson came over well in his nervousness at his role in the plot of burglary. A triumph of character in Grahame Woodrow's One-Round, how he sustained his 'blank' personage was amazing and how we laughed at all his actions and non-actions. Definitely a mafia-like character in Carl Denis for Louis, one that was highly strung like a trigger spring, not someone to upset. This recruited team of gangsters just blended and worked together in a brilliant fashion to give us the atmosphere of the original Ealing comedy in this transition to a play: the laughs from the audience showed the success.

Thelma Torr led the team of delightful ladies who appeared for the tea party and concert (instruments murdered) adding to the humour of the piece. Details of the teas and other props aspects to be applauded for the well-drilled team from backstage.

A really excellent evening of entertainment much appreciated by all in audience.

Sincerely



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