

Spring Awakening Show Feedback

We received 13 responses to the feedback form; 5 cast, 2 prod team, 3 audience and 3 tech team.

Direction:

What went well?

There was much praise for Ollie and Patrick's direction, with people using words like "fantastic", "amazing" and "epic". Of the 5 cast members who submitted feedback, 4 commented on the character workshops which "made us get into really in-depth character detail even if you weren't a principal role," and "really allowed each person to bring their character to life and made sure they were unique." A member of the tech team also talked about "Impressive transitions between scenes, overall production was of high quality." There was also praise for the dynamic between Ollie and Patrick with someone saying that there was "really nice cooperation between the Director and AD." With regards to the sensitive issues the show explored, several people made a point of saying how well this had been dealt with, using phrases such as "very tactful" and "great handling".

To be improved:

There were quite a few comments about time management, with regards to both rehearsals and during show week. One cast member stated that "more than once did we need to wait more than an hour for Ollie to come to rehearsal. This was especially frustrating given the short time period we had for rehearsals." A member of the tech team also said that "runs began late each night and cast seemed difficult to wrangle." Audience members also echoed these feelings. Contrary to some of the positive feedback, a couple of cast members felt that Ollie and Patrick's working relationship was not very effective. One said how "it was quite clear Ollie did not involve [Patrick] much in the process as he did not know much of the blocking in the show when asked on occasions." Another explained how "it didn't really feel like Patrick had too much ownership within the project," and that "there was an issue with Ollie having blocked sections of the show without Patrick - Ollie ended up being very late to one rehearsal where if Patrick did have information on this blocking, the cast's time could have been used better." However they did go on to say that "[Patrick] never seemed disgruntled about it and was always a positive presence in the room and gave good input when needed. A couple of cast members and a prod team member noted that Ollie and Patrick's control over the cast was not strong at times. Someone from the cast explained how "if people were talking too much or being disruptive, Ollie was not able to effectively organise the cast, instead letting conversation happen at the expense of time." There was one comment from an audience member who said that they were "confused that the chemistry of the actors didn't translate to the stage as all actors seemed to stay very separate in their blocking."

Musical Direction:

What went well?

There were a lot of very positive comments for the MD team with words like “incredible”, “enthusiastic” and even “perfect” being used. Praise was given especially to the teaching and recapping of songs with one cast member saying how “songs were taught quickly but efficiently and recaps were provided whenever requested and were frequent enough to ensure none of the harmonies were forgotten.” The band also received many compliments from cast, prod team, tech team and audience alike. One person mentioned how they “loved having the band on the stage where they could be seen and appreciated,” and another said simply “The band absolutely slap.” Cast members were positive about Ben and Kit’s relationship too, with one commenting that “Ben was patient, and Kit was useful in giving feedback at times when Ben was occupied at the piano.” Someone also said that “the work he put into helping his AMD on their first time in the position was amazing and it’s obvious how grateful he is.”

To be improved:

One issue picked up on by a cast member was about accents while singing. They said that “watching the accents when singing would have been beneficial especially when changing the accent from the recordings people have access to.” Some cast members also felt that there were some issues with the AMD. One talked about how “it became apparent that Kit had not sufficiently practiced to accompany us during Ben’s absence. This made it difficult for us to rehearse, which was stressful given the time constraints,” while another noted that “the dynamic between MD and AMD was a little weird and I feel like Kit could have done with a little more guidance, particularly when giving out quite clearly incorrect knowledge at a vocal workshop.” There were also comments from both cast and audience members about some of the vocal quality. Someone from the cast said that “there were some songs where the range or voice of the actor didn’t quite suit the song.” One audience member thought that “some of the vocals were weak,” and another said “choose individuals who have a range more suited to the role they are cast as.” A member of the production team had a suggestion to “maybe just put harmonies up rather than asking for cast to suggest them so people aren’t waiting as long to receive them.”

Choreography:

What went well?

Cast, prod team, tech team and audience all thought Amy did a fantastic job as choreographer. People used words like “impressive”, “unique” and “patient”. Cast members said that her teaching methods were very effective, one person saying that she “did an amazing job with breaking down the dances and teaching them at a nice pace.” Another cast member said “she managed to develop a consistent style throughout the show which was so emotion driven and yet relatively simple to pick up.” This same person went on to say “The videos she did make were helpful and I'd recommend future choreographers (if possible) to film videos of them doing a routine in a room with a mirror so that the cast can use these to consolidate learning in the same way that harmony tracks are used for singing. These are much more useful than just filming the cast doing the dance straight after learning - as these

are usually littered with mistakes.” There were many references to Amy being patient with everyone and that this helped those who were less confident in dance to do better.

To be improved:

The main thing that people would have liked was more recaps, with this being picked up on by cast members and tech team as “there were often parts of dances people would forget.” Another cast member noted that Amy could be “too cool at times, occasionally letting the cast get a little too disruptive in dance rehearsals,” though they went on to say “she can afford to throw her voice around a bit more and assert herself, which she did do more at the end of intensive week.” One member of the audience said the following: “When doing a ballet/contemporary solo/duet it needs to be flawless and stunning! I felt they were very static and underwhelming!” One cast member had a slight issue with Amy’s teaching, saying “I’m not really a dancer and so I don’t know if it’s commonplace to choreograph to lyrics but every piece of movement I’ve done before has been to beats of the music. It was really hard to put movements to lyrics, particularly when a lot of soloists would play with their melodies and not sing the same thing every night.”

Production:

What went well?

The production side of the show was also praised highly, with words like “coordinated”, “superstar” and “legend” being used. Many people commended Georgia’s organisation and Gerson’s helpful attitude with costumes. Several people commented on the paper tickets, with one person saying “they added a higher quality feel to the production.” The organisation of props and costumes was dubbed as excellent, one cast member said “props were available as soon as intensive week started and they simplicity in what was used was lovely. Costumes were amazing could not have asked for anything better.” Another cast member said simply, “For what was apparently Georgia’s first endeavour as a producer, in my eyes, she managed to perform as if she had been producing for years.”

To be improved:

The main point of improvement seemed to be the promotion of the show. Many people mentioned how having videos and trailers up earlier might have helped ticket sales. One cast member said that “there were hardly any videos, especially in comparison to shows like OAP.” A couple of people also mentioned problems with the flyering for the show. According to one cast member, “better enforcement of flyering was needed.” A member of the tech team also commented that they “didn’t see much publicity beyond a few people changing their profile pictures.” One cast member had an issue with costumes as they said that “some of the costume choices were pretty abhorrent, particularly when looking at sensitive topics. Ed being told that he had to wear a black leather apron as an abortionist is just downright wrong.”

Tech:

What went well:

The response to the tech was incredibly positive with words like “atmospheric”, “brill” and “smoooooth” being used. One cast member described the tech team as a “really helpful crew with TDS that took control of the tech.” They also went on to say “sound is hard to do in the Annex but I thought it went really well with very few issues with mics and they constantly checked batteries.” Several people mentioned how good the lighting was with one member of the tech team said “lights looked so cool and really managed to set tones for the songs naturally,” and someone from the cast saying “very impressive lighting.” Almost everyone made a comment about the tech team themselves, dubbing them “always helpful and easy to get along with,” “accommodating” and “clear and courteous in their instruction.”

To be improved:

There was very little feedback for improvement though one member of the audience said “there were clearly a variety of issues with regards to the sound of both the band and the vocal mics - I don’t know if this was due to lack of experience though.” Other than this, there was only one comment about a couple of missed lighting and sound cues as happens with every show.

Any Other Feedback:

A couple of the tech team just wanted to say how much they’d enjoyed the process with one saying “impressive show, with super talented cast. It was great to watch every night and in the multiple dress runs,” and another saying “absolutely fabulous! The cast and crew must be so pleased with themselves.” Some of the cast made comments in the same vein as feedback made in the Direction section by others. One said “overall, the process was kind of fun but mired with the stress of a short turn around. Too many liberties were taken with discipline and authority, which was especially problematic given the time constraints.” Another cast member said “the only real negative/constructive piece of feedback I’d like to give in regards the process: Ollie really was quite late (2/3hours) to a couple of the rehearsals which can feel disrespectful to the cast and fellow prod team members. It’s a big waste of time when you’re meant to be doing blocking but don’t have a director and it was visibly irritating members of the prod team and cast who were present (especially with the number of deadlines that we all have to fit around our commitments - this slot in particular!)” However, this was then followed with “on the whole the show was fantastic to be a part of and a great learning experience for the cast. It feels like a really special show to have been a part of.” These sentiments were mirrored by other cast members: “A difficult show with difficult themes out together sensitively and cleverly. The production team should be very proud of themselves.” “love is all I have for this. I’m sad to see it gone. Thank you to the rest of the prod-team for making this an amazing show.”