

Arts Council of Australia

N.S.W.
DIVISION

ARTS COUNCIL PRESENTATIONS LIMITED

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1974 DRAMA FESTIVAL

ADJUDICATION REPORT

WYONG DRAMA GROUP

"Ladies In Retirement" by Edward Percy and Reginald Denham.

CHOICE OF PLAY

A fascinating old melodrama which I feel stood the test of time, and proved to be an interesting, thrilling revival. A good character play with strong dialogue and interesting comedy.

SETTING

The set was excellent in every department - my congratulations to the designers and the stage crew.

COSTUMES

Excellent.

MAKE-UP

Satisfactory.

PRODUCTION

The selection pre show music was bright - but it was too modern. I feel a Gilbert and Sullivan selection would have captured the era and carried us back to the period. This is important because it helps to establish a definite mood and feeling of time. The Director had an excellent approach to the play and obviously knew what the play was about. I would have liked to see more of the lonely qualities of the women - don't just make it a thriller. When the characters talk about themselves and their past - let them dwell on it, so that we can all understand the loneliness of the Victorian era. All your characters were well defined, and you kept them busy most of the time. Movement on the whole, was satisfactory, although I would have liked more. There were moments when scenes were too static. At times, some masking occurred for too long. These are small mistakes and if a little more care is taken here, you will be a first rate Director.

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Your casting was physically excellent. The pace of the play was good - just at times it needed to go, e.g., Albert shouldn't move after he opens the oven - we need only a quick glance before the blackout. Your scene music was an excellent choice, it provided a good ominous quality. Sound effects were convincing, except for the boiling noise from the kitchen - if a sound isn't working - don't use it. Keep up the good work, Bonnie.

ACTING

- Lucy A delightful actress. Your accent was consistent and so was your characterisation. Good work.
- Leonora A good characterisation - good theatrical quality suitable to Leonora - your singing voices excellent. A difficult character to play. Just remember, Fran, to keep her convincing at all times.
- Ellen A good actress, very convincing. Good commanding character especially the maternal qualities with the sisters. I would have liked your reactions to be a little better defined and don't sit around so much, it is not part of the character. Otherwise, I enjoyed your performance very much.
- Albert ~~A good characterisation, physically well cast.~~ Just make him a little more convincing - make him sly, confident, and don't be too slow on cues or delivery.
- Louisa Excellent character - I loved the busy quality of the sounds - it gave us the feeling of a highly strung, insecure lady. Your "little girl" quality was convincing. Make the bigotry stronger.
- Emily Good contrast to Louisa - conveyed to me the butch, protective quality of the sister - almost the boy of the family. I enjoyed your scene when talking about father. Nice work.
- Sister Theresa I believed she really was a Nun, except I would have liked to keep her hands together when talking. I have not yet seen one Nun who doesn't. Your entrances were well timed, and you didn't anticipate or convey any feeling that you knew what was going on. Good work.

The cast's team work was excellent, and the tension of the play was well sustained. I enjoyed my visit to Wyong, thank you for your hospitality. I look forward to meeting you all again in 1975.

PETER WILLIAMS
Adjudicator