

'DID MY HEART LOVE 'TILL NOW?'

Romeo and Juliet

by Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

at Shakespeare North Playhouse , 15th November 2022

appraised by Lisa O'Hanlon

I want to take this opportunity to congratulate you, Our Lady's Catholic Primary for your marvellous interpretation of Romeo and Juliet as part of the Autumn 22 Shakespeare Schools Festival. It was a great night at the theatre, and I'd like to take this time here to mention a few things that I really loved!

It was lovely to be treated, once again, to brilliant costume designs by the multi-talented Kat Egan. The Guns N' Roses rock theme worked perfectly for the piece. The sunglasses clad SWAT 'keepers of the peace' and the blinged-up snazzy Paris were particular favourites of mine! This visual treat perfectly complemented your strong characterisation skills. The sweet, innocent love between Romeo and Juliet was played very sensitively and maturely. The aggression between the Capulet and Montague families was perfectly introduced in the opening scene with some rockin' sounds. Your great music choices continued throughout - I especially loved the beautiful track in your final scene which helped convey the poignancy of Romeo and Juliet's death and the beauty of the reconciliation. Lovely work!

You were all so disciplined and professional in the technical run - it was clear you knew the script well. I was told by the theatre technicians that Kyle and Arron did a great job assisting them with lighting and sound - well done!

Throughout the day your voices and characterisation skills got stronger and you became more confident in the playing space. Working in the round is not easy, but with your excellent blocking and direction you created wonderful images throughout your piece. Excellent stagecraft!

Some details I enjoyed were: the use of ensemble voices off-stage, which worked really well in the Cockpit Theatre. The live version of "Come Hear the Noise" had me rockin' in my backstage seat, and the drunken party-goers were fabulous, if not a little too convincing! You transported us to the mean streets of NYC, especially during the Tybalt & Romeo fight, which provided a fresh and creative alternative to the streets of Verona. Guns N' Roses sang, "One in a Million" - they could easily be singing about your Romeo and Juliet!

This was a mean and moody, yet beautiful Romeo and Juliet by a characterful, rockin' group of actors.

We're thrilled to back in a theatre with you again this year and have been so impressed by your commitment, bravery and resilience. We hope that you and your teachers are very proud of what you have achieved. Looking forward to seeing Our Lady's Catholic Primary in the next Festival!

**A MEAN AND MOODY, YET
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A CHARACTERFUL, ROCKIN' GROUP
OF ACTORS.**