



man of Great Expectations

Directed by Ms Lindley, Drama teacher St Pius

*Follow the intrinsic journey of Pip, through his discovery to become a man of Great Expectation, Coming into a play as an audience, one expects suspense and surprises from the beginning. There are many details that stand out from the beginning of this play, such as examples of revealing set design and European period costumes. An adaptation of the timeless classic *Great Expectations*, one of the standouts of **English** Literature written by world famous English writer Charles Dickens also known for *A Christmas Carol* and *Oliver Twist*.*

*Set between the English town of Kent and London during the mid-19th Century the story outlines the growth of Pip's journey to becoming an English gentlemen. Dickens's interpretation of the struggles of a simple blacksmith to becoming an Englishman of Great Expectation. A fastidious production in the school, in the words of Mr Sean Brannan "They managed to take a 500 page book and condense this into a play without losing any of Dickens's power as a storyteller. I wish we could take it on tour. The cast take us from their hulks and moors of 18-Century England to Miss Havisham's wedding prepared drawing room inspired by Dickens understanding of colonial Australia. To quote *A Tale of Two Cities*: It was indeed the 'best of times and the worst of times.'" A resonating play on a confronting and naturalistic story directed to be compelling to the audience.*

2-4th April, St Pius X College and Mercy College production, the Spx Sarto centre



Great Expectations is one classic and iconic novel written by Charles Dickens. This readaptation produced by Director (Ms Lindley) has excluded peripheral details to fit the main events into a stage production. However, the play does a very significant job at dissecting main scenes and bringing the true meaning to an audience. All the actors were true to their characters, using various accents reflecting the socio-economic backgrounds. Overall the physicality and mentality of the characterisation created suspense and intrigue for the audience. The plot followed the key events of the novel, and laughter resonated throughout the audience towards the characterisation and the humorous adaption of the play. Some main characters who put on sublime performances included Mr Jagger's (Daniel Halverson) as a convincing English gentlemen and Pumblechook (Adam Hawthorne) bringing a more satirical approach rather than the stern Pumblechook in the novel. A worthy mention also to Ms Havisham (Louise Frost, Betsy Walker) evidently the frail acting and the use of the cane being

specific to the characterisation of Ms Havisham. That being said, all actors put in a stellar effort to construct the play to work systematically and harmoniously to be enjoyable to the audience.

The lighting and music worked harmoniously with each other and was compensated and sparsely used to great effect. The use of just four variants of lights - green, blue, red and yellow-orange were very good choices by the director to represent the different tone to be represented throughout the different acts of the play. It also created awe in the audience and added suspense to the outcome of scenes. The four colours, green for narration was transparent, red as a keen idea of danger, blue also played in contrast with this and the yellow-orange provided harmony and warmth in certain scenes.

One particular highlight was the dramatic arrest of Magwitch (Taylor Allen), during which the audience were treated to a flashing lightshow of red and blue. The use of music worked with the lighting creating suspense and mood on stage, looking around seeing the audience engaged was quite a spectacle. Without spoiling it too much, there is an major dance scene just after the interlude which is in the original Great Expectations novel, where there is an clever contemporary choice of music throughout this scene. Something utilised very well was smoke. This was used in scenes such as the set changes and the times Pip (Alec Ramsbottom) and Magwitch (Taylor Allen) crossing the river on the shady boat as well as symbolising the misty night. Much of the audience was quite surprised by the clever use of smoke, so kudos to the director.



The set changes were precisely executed. The effective work as an ensemble, with singing, dancing and moving props were intriguing to the audience. The encompassment of all these aspects of a play make the audience feel elated and happy to call it a good play. Summed up by the Director in her notes. *"it is the job of an actor to understand what a character wants and to embody that physically. This is a constant challenge that is addressed at every rehearsal and hopefully throughout every performance."*

As said by our proud deputy principal Mr Mark Casey *"Under Ms. Lindley's direction, the students of Mercy Catholic College and St Pius X College Chatswood have achieved success beyond their years. Their production of Great Expectations was funny, frightening, engaging and full of spirit. My congratulations to all involved."*



Lastly, I would like to commend all these actors and production staff for their tireless work towards making this performance a phenomenal adaption of the literacy novel *Great Expectations*. If I could

see it again I would. In addition, to the director Ms Lindley thank you for bringing a new adaption to the story of *Great Expectation* from an appreciative audience member.



Biography to writer

Hi, my name's Ky Simpson, I am in year 12 St Pius X College as well as the drama class and am an moderate actor, let's say. I am recently working on experience on analysis of many different play types and writing reviews on them. Hope you can enjoy my review sincerely. I hope you watched the show as it was quite a spectacle for both actors and audience. Btw, this review is not advertisement it is 100% free, so please enjoy.

I would like to congratulate everyone involved, actors and the backstage crew light, sound, music, set designers, dance choreographers, stage managers, prop designers, costumes, poster designers, photography and hair/makeup and backstage. For their work in the performance.

Thanks to Mercy College, for making this play able to function and for their support in the production