

THRILLER OF THE YEAR

Thank you for inviting me, once again, to your production. It is always a pleasure to come, and to see how well you are doing.

First of all, I must congratulate all the back stage crew. A wonderful set, with just those little touches to let us know we are in the 1970s, even if we hadn't read the programme. Well placed furniture allowed the cast freedom of movement, which is always a bonus. Well done on the sound effects, especially the off stage phone calls, although I did feel that the gas explosion in the kitchen could have been either louder or longer....It just sounded like the pilot light went out....however, that is just a small matter.

So, Thriller of the Year gave a chance for the ladies of the company to show us what they can do, and so they did. An interesting play, a thriller with a mystery running through it, shows us the life of Gillian Howard. It starts when Gillian and her publisher, Irene, return from an awards ceremony and a series of unfortunate accidents lead on to Gillian being worried that someone is trying to kill her....

Carol, you were amazing. Such a huge part, and hardly off stage. What a lot of different emotions for you to conquer, well done. You really captured the character of Gillian. A woman full of neuroses, and controlling of everyone who works for her, but still extremely canny!! I loved your dress, very 70s, but I spent the whole show wondering whether you would have a costume disaster!!!

Irene, this was a big part for you. I felt you were a bit nervous at first, but as you relaxed you improved. Could I just mention when attempting to create a posh accent, please be wary of inflection. It can have the impact of sounding monotone, but a good effort, all the same.

Sarah, your timing is brilliant. Such stage presence. I had the feeling that the character should've been played by an older woman, but you were wonderful.

Helen, what an improvement. You played that Doctor with ease, very relaxed. Had us all believing you were full of good intentions.... !! Well portrayed and you certainly looked good.

Elizabeth, what can I say? A small but essential part. Very sensitively played and almost too likeable for a mother in law....!!!

All of you had great diction, but occasionally, especially when at the back of the stage it would pay to speak up a little.

Yvonne, Congratulations on a superb piece of direction. You had your cast using all of the areas, even off stage, or in the Doctors case, just off, up a ladder! There were 2 occasions, both involving the Doctor, when she moves to the front to read out of the book, especially at the end....when this happens, and a cast member is facing the front, the tendency is to look at the audience and not over them. Doing this, to my mind, then breaks the fourth wall rule. I am not keen on this, but it is just my opinion, and not a major criticism. You really pulled it out of the bag, knowing the problems you encountered at the beginning.

A very enjoyable show, and a cracking good night's entertainment. Well done.

Marlene.