

When I read that you were presenting an evening of Alan Bennett, I thought what a brave move, to go for a whole evening of Alan Bennett. So, it was with some trepidation that I took my seat.

First of all, may I congratulate the backstage crew on creating a space for 3 different plays, yet cleverly using the same furniture and flats for all three. A triumph in creativity. What a shame there were no credits for directors and/or crew, so I can't mention anyone by name. All I can say is you know who you are and pats on the back all round.

We were treated to 3 different pieces, but, interestingly, all 3 had an underlying theme of old people. Mam and Dad in the first, Graham's mum in the second, and the referred to, but not what she seemed mother in the third. Mr Bennett has quite an understanding with the older folk, which shows in his writing.

SAY SOMETHING HAPPENED

A lovely set. Typically dressed for people of that age, in that period. I was instantly taken back to a room at my Uncle and Aunt's house. Good use of an 'off stage door', but do leave enough space behind the tab curtain to imply a door. Gemma, you did very well as June. I loved the hesitancy in your voice, whilst trying so hard to get these elderly people on your side. A good character study. Perhaps, occasionally you could have used a little more light and shade in your voice. One thing to mention...when you are offered a cup of tea....please use the handle of the cup. It looked very awkward when you picked it up using the body of the cup. (I apologise if this was scripted), but otherwise, a good performance. Elizabeth and John made a great couple. They really came over as a couple who have been together for years, and in no way were they going to allow anyone to change their way of doing things. Character portrayal was good. Occasionally I felt it needed a little more pace and action but all in all a sweet little piece, which was enjoyable.

A CHIP IN THE SUGAR

One word....Wow! What a performance from Graham Batchelor. This is not an easy play to do, as it is so well known. Many congratulations Graham. I am so glad you didn't try to emulate Alan. You captured the essence of poor Graham perfectly. I loved how you showed perfectly that pauses can sometimes say more than words. I have never known whether to feel sorry for Graham, or to want to shake him and say get out and get a life....and yet, after watching you Graham (crikey, this is confusing!), I had an overall feeling of empathy. The character, as written, is not one to make a show of anything, and is happy, to a point, to avoid any confrontations. Of course, Mother was doing her best to antagonise him, and, thanks to a visitor, he got his way in the end. I really enjoyed your performance. You made good use of the space available to show the progress of time. A fantastic performance.

TWO IN TORQUAY

I have heard this play several times on the radio, but had never seen it. Sandra, you were great as Miss Plunkett/D S Alma Briscoe. The thinking person's honey trap!! Bob, cast as Mr Mortimer, or

whatever your name was... the older woman's lothario was entirely believable and gave a very animated performance. It still made me chuckle when the recording device down the trousers was mentioned, and likewise the one in the bra of the former Miss Plunkett. There was a good rapport between you and this showed in the performance. You made a good use of the space allotted to you. The last little twist always comes as a surprise, and leaves everyone wondering, did she or didn't she? Well done to the two of you.

Over all the plays the attention to detail with costume and props etc was its usual good standard. 3 good plays well executed. I think you can all guess that I enjoyed my visit to FADS.

Every good wish for 2017.

Marlene