

SO WELL THOUGHT OUT & WRITTEN! GREAT JOB CAPTURING THE FUN SPIRIT OF THE SHOW IN YOUR CRITIQUE!

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Mr. Pschirrer

Stagecraft

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The Strange and Wonderful Magic of LC's Xanadu

catchy critique title

The night of April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019 erupted in glitter and 80s fanfare with Lewis and Clark

date

theatre/producer

High School's production of Xanadu, the cult-classic, roller-skating extravaganza, with book by

show name

Douglas Carter Beane and music and lyrics by Jeff Lynne and John Farrar

playwright/composer/lyric

with several recognizable songs, with Scott Martinez's sound design ensuring a proper balance

sound designer

between the LC actors' own talents and the classic 80s tunes, Xanadu follows the Greek muse,

Kira, as she comes to Venice Beach, California, to inspire Sonny, an aspiring artist who wants to

build a roller disco. However, things start to go wrong once Kira develops a forbidden affection

for the mortal Sonny. Director Greg Pschirrer embraced the outrageous concept from the original

Plot Outline

film by packing the set and stage with as much glitter and as many 80s call-backs as possible,

costume designers

working with Lisa Caryl-Vukas and Pauletta Caryl to bring the 80s clothing

trends back on the LC stage, with lighting designer Emma Hendricks to make the color schemes

lighting designer

set scenic designers

pop and the glittered elements shine accordingly, and also by leading the LC Stagecraft class in

the construction of certain iconic elements of this production to truly capture the fun and

outrageousness of Xanadu.

Emma Hendricks' lighting design succeeded in using bold pinks and purples throughout the show to capture the bubbly, colorful tone of the 80s

effect of overall performance

establishing the time and place of the production by using select color palettes to light the Mt.

Olympus scene in soft baby blue and skillfully employing beach projections while the characters

were at the Santa Monica pier

Establish time/place

hanging position

Furthermore, Hendricks' careful placement of the lights, with

How enhance overall performance

minimal shadow effects to bring as much light to the stage as appropriate, allowed for the bright illumination of the costumes and glittered elements onstage, literally making the stage dazzle during certain scenes. [The wash effect of Fresnel lights was the predominant choice by

Hendricks to ensure that no part of this set remained dark or grey.] Light types

The LC Stagecraft Class accomplished the construction of several iconic *Xanadu*

elements, namely those of the *Xanadu* and Santa Monica Pier signs, as well as the 80s-style phone booth, while also providing a versatile onstage structure that created permanent levels without the need for structural transitions that would otherwise slow down the tempo of this production. This stationary back structure served as the backdrop for the many settings in the production, providing a neutral base that still permitted dynamic moments within each scene.

Effect of overall performance

The fly-in elements of the signs, as well as the clouds during the Mt. Olympus scene, were the primary set aspects that served to establish the time and place, with the Santa Monica Pier sign in particular serving as a real-life reference to the actual sign in Venice Beach, California.

Time/ place

Furthermore, the Greek columns on the stationary back structure enhanced the show by infusing a Greek element throughout the production, and the glittery telephone booth and *Xanadu* sign were the main focal points of the entire show, acting as centerpieces to the 80s extravagancy that is *Xanadu*. [While the back central structure was stationary, the movement of the fly-in elements,

Enhance overall performance

as well as the fact that the telephone booth was on wheels, created a dynamic and quick-paced feel that infused the show with fun while also making for a manageable production.]

set movement/ automation

Veteran sound designer Scott Martinez succeeds again for his management of the sound in this production. [Overall, his design champions a perfect balance between the old classics of *Xanadu* while also accenting the talents of LC's own actors.] The background [music during

Effect of overall performance

Danny's office scene, as well as the old-fashioned music to characterize Danny's artistic dream versus Sonny's, effectively establishes Danny's "stuck-in-the-past" character in addition to



establishing the separate setting of Danny's office itself. Furthermore, Martinez' skill in

Time/place

accentuating the actors' voices allowed the actors to belt their lyrics and create the loud,

Enhance overall performance

boisterous atmosphere of the 80s without causing harm to the audience's hearing. Despite

microphone troubles in earlier LC productions this year, Martinez ensured the proper functioning

Mics & Balance

of the mics for this performance of *Xanadu*, allowing the audience to comfortably enjoy the

show without straining to hear the spoken conversations or wincing at accidental screeching.

The costume design duo of Lisa Caryl-Vukas and Pauletta Caryl had a ball with this 80s-

crazed production. Overall, they succeeded in choosing bold colors and outfits emblematic of

Time/place

80s California, including sweatbands, jean shorts, bomber jackets, and lifeguard-style attire (not

to mention the big curly hair) that were professionally well-coordinated to be over-the-top

without clashing in a meaningless mix of color. While Caryl-Vukas and Caryl stayed true to

Effect of overall performance

certain iconic costumes, namely Kira's form-fitting pink dress of Kira and Sonny's short jean

shorts, they deviated just enough to make the production LC's own while also staying true to the

How enhanced overall performance

essence of the original characters, making for a compromise sure to please any fan of *Xanadu*.

The overall concept of blending Greek with 80s California prevailed, a concept especially

notable in the outfits of the muses, which combined Greek and 1980s aspects, such as wearing

Overall concept

headbands along with flowing Greek dresses.

LC's production of *Xanadu* fulfills all the classic elements from the original film and

Broadway performance while also infusing some of LC's own unique style. Specifically, the

many flown-in set elements allow for a dynamic and fast-paced show throughout the many

specific highlight #1

setting transitions while still maintaining a sense of connection and coherency even despite the

outrageous premise of this show, a feat especially impressive for a high school production. The

fact that a high school could pull off this intentionally flashy and tacky show, with the right

awareness of the irony of the flamboyant plotline, is equally impressive. This attention to apt

specific highlight #2

detail shows in nearly every aspect of the tech in this show, most visibly in the costume design, where Lisa Caryl-Vukas and Pauletta Caryl had just enough fun with their costuming to make for a energetic show without overloading the stage with saturated colors and leg-warmers. Overall,

Recommendation

this production is a roaring success for LC, and is enjoyable for all ages and all levels of *Xanadu* lovers willing to suspend their expectations and enjoy the ride through the 80s.