

I Did Something I Shouldn't Have

DATE	14th October 2023
SOCIETY	Ghostlight Performers
VENUE	Southport Little Theatre, Hoghton Street, Southport
TYPE OF PRODUCTION	Play
DIRECTOR	Richard Michell
WRITTEN BY	Paul-James Green

Report

Author: Jim Briscoe

I Did Something I Shouldn't Have – a play performed by Ghostlight Performers, on Saturday, 14th October 2023 in the Theatre Bar at Southport Little Theatre, Hoghton Street, Southport.

Before I start my review, could I please take the opportunity, on behalf of NODA (National Operatic and Drama Association) in welcoming the Ghostlight Performers to the NODA North West District 6 family. Although formed back in 2022, this was their first production as members of NODA since joining in July 2023, and what a way to start! Let's hope that this is just the start of a long and productive association.

OMG... 'I did something I shouldn't have' was a total emotional roller coaster from start to finish and not one for the faint hearted! From the opening scene to those final thoughts, this play dealt passionately with many serious issues including child abuse, loneliness, isolation, fear, betrayal and trust! The characters created, took us on an intense dark journey that dealt with and explored all those topics and more! Interwoven within those 'dark thoughts and deeds' we had 'moments of humour' ... plus we were shown glimpses of hope... in the form of healing, friendship and family support! I couldn't think of a more suitable intimate platform to stage such a production and I can only say if you missed it... you missed a good un!

The play was written by the ever so talented **Paul-James Green**, the initial draft, in just one day! Not only did Paul write this play, he also took on the role of Associate Director, Committee Producer plus one of the five characters within the play. I would suggest that Paul's professional background possibly assisted him in writing this play, although when

speaking with him, he suggested that none of the topics were taken from real life events. Be ever so proud PJ... this was an amazing play!

Production Team... Richard Michell (Director) was the one tasked with bringing this play to stage! This was Richard's directing debut, and again I say... surely there must be easier productions to take on board for your first venture! But having said that, there was little or no doubt that Richard knew what he wanted from this play and how to achieve it... he'd obviously worked extremely hard with the cast creating some well-rounded characters who knew exactly what he wanted from them to make this play work! Be ever so proud Richard... great job!

The Cast... a cast of six worked their socks off, creating some 'larger than life' characters! This is where I usually stick my neck out and start suggesting 'show stealer' and 'favourite characters', but this was another one of those occasions where 'the whole' far outweighed 'the individual'... and although each cast member made their own significant contribution... it was without doubt 'the whole' that made this play the success it was! So, the cast, in order as shown in the programme... we had **Orlando Campolucci-Bordi**, who took on the role of 'Sean Parker'. I've had the pleasure to see this sixteen-year-old in many youth productions over the past couple of years... but this was a complete change of role for Orlando! 'Sean', is the youngest brother of three, who discovers that he is adopted and wants to meet his father. The meeting and the subsequent events were spine tingling! Orlando provided us with a great character, his stage presence, was, as always, first class... with mannerisms and reactions that just added to the whole ... be ever so proud Orlando, another string to your bow sir! **Paul-James Green** (aka PJ) took on the role of 'Harrison', the eldest brother! Not only did 'PJ' provide us with a great script, he also provided us with a confident assured performance. Another with great stage presence, who made this role his own and the empathy toward his brothers throughout was tangible... be ever so proud 'PJ' great job all round sir! **Oliver Ridgeway**, took on the role of 'Will Parker'. This was, I'm told, Oliver's stage debut... something I found so hard to believe! 'Will' is the 'middle' brother... dealing with so many situations from his past. The opening scene, with 'Will' on stage, on his own, having a conversation with his unseen counsellor... will live long in my memory... the visual emotions were outstanding! His characterisation throughout was impressive as was his stage presence... be ever so proud Oliver! From debut boy to the very experienced **Gary Simpson**, who took on the role of the very nasty and vicious 'Vince Kelsey' father to both Harrison and Will, but what about 'Sean' I hear you say... you'll need to see the play to have that explained! Again, I've seen Gary perform on many occasions, but never in a role like this... but what a character he created! I, along with many others in the audience that night, actually loathed the ground he walked on! Great

characterisation, mannerisms, facial expressions aplenty, he just oozed stage presence... be ever so proud Gary! **Joseph Bigley**, another young actor, who took on the role of 'Max Wells' ... best friend and confidant to Sean Parker. Joseph was the person mainly responsible for the little 'drips' of humour, with some wonderful one-liners! Another great character created, great stage presence, loved the laid-back approach to life... be ever so proud Joseph, great job! Finally, **Phil Povey** who took on the dual roles of 'Karl and Lawrence' ... Karl... Vince's nasty side kick and hench man and Lawrence... the Counsellor allocated to Sean, who, having met Sean, now finds that he has his own issues to address. Well done, Phil, good job sir!

Staging/Set/Tech ... the theatre bar area provided the ideal intimate space for this production to work! No set as such, just minimal moveable stage furniture (table/chairs/etc) ... the furniture being moved throughout by the cast. Access to the 'performance area' was via two entry points through the audience, making it feel even more intimate! The stage was managed by Graeme Hunt, the 'Lighting' plot in the capable hands of Philip Hutchinson (Lighting Design) and Andrea Shacksmyth-Claire (Advisor)... the Sound plot designed by the Dave Cox, with 'Props' being cared for by Fi Billington. Congrats to one and all, great job!

I really didn't know how or where to include this... but here is perhaps as good a place as any... they say a 'picture can be worth a thousand words'... but what struck me throughout this play, and it happened a number of times... was how powerful, how intense... those moments of silence where ... OMG those pauses, those silent moments were 'deafening', so profound they brought shivers down my spine! What was also so wonderful, because of the intimacy of the surrounding, was being able to watch the different reactions, facial expressions of those sat opposite... I do honestly think that people were living through their own memories of similar events. I was a police officer for thirty plus years, and some of the action took me back to cases that I'd been involved with... this stirred memories of my own!

I heard comments, and I think I read some social media comments suggesting that this play should have been staged on the main stage... My opinion for what that's worth... I honestly think so much would have been lost taking it to stage... for me, it was the close/intimate feel to everything that made this play the success it was!

Can I take this opportunity to say thank you to the Ghostlight Performers for inviting my wife and I, it really was a privilege and a pleasure to be with you! Can I also thank Helen Bennett (Honorary President) for her welcome and for looking after us throughout the evening, appreciated Helen! We really did enjoy the evening, loved the production and can't wait until we meet up again...

Stay safe and keep well....

“Stronger Together”

Jim Briscoe

NODA North West

District 6 Rep