



Society Name

Thinly Veiled

Date of adjudication

01 – Production Information

Production	A Musical Name
Society	Society Name
Venue	The Venue used
Genre	Play
Cast Size	7
Director	Edward Langley
Musical Director	Not Applicable
Choreographer	Not Applicable
Stage Manager	Clara Jennings
Stage Crew	Miles Trent, Naomi Vickers
Set Design	Clara Jennings, Elias Boone, Tasha Wren
Lighting Design/Operator	Not Applicable – Professional
Sound Design/Operator	Not Applicable – Professional
Wardrobe	Greta Monroe
Properties	Dominic Hale
Front of House Manager	Jasper Quinn
Front of House	Lena Brody, Caleb Stroud
Marketing/Publicity	Not Referenced in Programme
Other Crew	Not Applicable

Sarah	Rachel Morton
Mark	Tom Weller
Emma	Lucy Heath
Paul	James Denning
Alan	Matthew Crane
Rachel	Jade Hamilton
Fiona	Claire Atkinson

Date of Performance	1 st September 2025
Date Report Published	3 rd September 2025
Adjudicator ID	NSA00

NSA Logo on poster	No
NSA in programme	Yes
Programme Class	01
Adjudicator Class	C

02 – The Review

Review word count	1090
Strongest Elements	Powerful Performances <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rachel Morton's restrained, emotionally rich portrayal of Sarah created a haunting presence throughout the play.• Tom Weller delivered a sensitive, nuanced performance as Mark, capturing the painful decline of mental health without melodrama.
	Bold, Intelligent Direction and Structure <p>Edward Langley's direction was ambitious and skilful.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The non-linear structure, unfolding through five disconnected scenes, was a creative risk that paid off.
	Striking and Cohesive Design Choices <p>The production's design served the story both practically and symbolically.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The static, multi-zoned stage layout allowed seamless scene transitions and reflected the fractured narrative.

Returning to this intimate and welcoming theatre was a genuine pleasure. Having been impressed on my last visit, I was curious to see whether this latest production would uphold the high standards I've come to associate with the venue. I'm happy to say that it didn't just meet expectations—it exceeded them. This company may operate on a modest scale, but they consistently deliver quality work that combines affordability with artistic ambition. For anyone seeking theatre that is accessible yet impactful, their productions are not to be overlooked.

This latest piece, helmed by director Edward Langley, offered a gripping, emotionally layered experience. Rather than follow a traditional narrative arc, the play unfolded through five seemingly disconnected scenes, each set in a different location. Over time, subtle connections emerged between characters and storylines, inviting the audience to assemble the larger picture themselves. It was a bold and challenging structure, but Langley's confident, nuanced direction ensured that we remained engaged throughout.

Langley has a long-standing relationship with this particular script, having performed in it over a decade ago. That personal history clearly informed his staging. His deep understanding of the piece's emotional currents and tonal shifts was evident in every choice, from blocking to pacing to the delicate balance of ambiguity and revelation. While the company is often known for lighter fare or traditional works, this thoughtful venture into darker, more provocative territory was both refreshing and commendable.

Visually, the production was striking. The stage was divided into five static areas representing distinct settings: a garage, a kitchen, two hotel rooms, and an office. This smart design allowed smooth transitions without scene changes, maintaining the pace and enhancing the show's non-linear rhythm. It also mirrored the script's fragmented structure, subtly reinforcing the sense of disorientation and gradually building clarity. The audience was kept on its toes without ever losing the thread.

The cast delivered uniformly strong performances, with several standouts.

Rachel Morton was outstanding as Sarah, the hotel worker whose discovery of a body sets much of the action into motion. Introduced in an eerie monologue where she's referred to as an "Angel of Death," she commanded attention from the outset. Her quiet intensity, use of stillness, and emotionally rich

silences gave her character depth and mystery. She conveyed a profound vulnerability without ever overstating it. Morton's ability to say so much with so little made her performance particularly haunting.

Tom Weller was equally compelling as Mark, a man struggling with a deteriorating mental state. From his first entrance, there was a palpable tension surrounding him. Weller portrayed the character's confusion, anger, and fear with remarkable sensitivity. He allowed flashes of dark humour to break through without lessening the emotional weight. As the play progressed and Mark's grip on reality faltered, Weller's performance grew rawer and more exposed. His final scenes were quietly devastating, handled with dignity and restraint.

As Emma, Mark's partner, Lucy Heath brought warmth and tremendous energy. Her rapid-fire delivery, quirky behaviours, and emotional openness suggested a character grappling with her own neurodivergence, though never defined by it. Heath portrayed Emma's anxious optimism and fierce loyalty with absolute authenticity. One moment, in which she pleaded with Mark to get help, her voice cracking with emotion, was utterly heartbreaking. Her chemistry with Weller gave the play some of its most moving scenes.

James Denning gave a quiet but thoughtful performance as Paul, Mark's co-worker. Though his stage time was limited, Denning made a strong impression through subtle physical choices and precise delivery. Paul's awkwardness and discomfort were tangible, and his gradual entanglement in the show's darker threads added a compelling undercurrent of tension.

One of the production's most disturbing scenes took place in a modest kitchen. Here we met Alan and Rachel, a couple in a dangerously toxic relationship. Matthew Crane's portrayal of Alan was soft-spoken and withdrawn at first, in stark contrast to Jade Hamilton's Rachel, who oozed cruelty and disdain. Her biting tone and dismissive posture filled the room with dread. The dynamic shifted dramatically when it was revealed that she had hurt the family dog—prompting an eruption of violence from Alan. Crane's transformation from passive to explosively furious was chilling. His primal scream in that moment was utterly shocking, and the silence that followed in the theatre spoke volumes. It was a deeply uncomfortable, expertly played scene that lingered long after.

Claire Atkinson, in a brief but memorable role as hotel guest Fiona, provided a welcome injection of dry wit. Her confident, sardonic delivery offered levity at just the right moments, without breaking the tone. Though she appeared only briefly, Atkinson maximised every line and left a lasting impression.

Technically, the show was executed with admirable precision. Stage manager Olivia Marsh and her crew navigated the complexities of the production with apparent ease. Props were especially well-considered, from practical household items to small sensory details—like the use of real dog food during one pivotal scene, which created an unpleasant but effective atmosphere. Scene transitions were smooth and well-timed, with each segment clearly distinguished. A small mishap involving a sticky spill left onstage after Act One did draw some attention later, but it was a minor blip in an otherwise meticulous production.

Lighting and sound design were also handled with great care. Shifts in light temperature subtly marked emotional shifts, while the soundscape—ranging from ambient hotel noise to the faint hum of electronics—was always purposeful and never overbearing. These elements enhanced immersion and gave each location its own distinct texture.

One especially thoughtful element was the presence of QR codes around the venue linking to resources for mental health and domestic abuse support. It was a meaningful gesture that acknowledged the weight of the themes explored onstage. Rather than treating difficult subject matter as mere drama, the company showed responsibility and care for their audience. In a cultural moment where these issues are often ignored or sensationalised, such engagement deserves applause.

By the time the lights dimmed on the final scene, the audience was abuzz. Conversations afterward were thoughtful and emotionally charged. This was not a production that offered easy resolutions or comforting platitudes. It asked uncomfortable questions and respected its audience enough to trust them with the answers.

In every way, this was community theatre at its very best: bold, collaborative, emotionally intelligent, and socially conscious. If this company continues to embrace material of this calibre and treats it with such care, their place in the local arts landscape is assured. They are doing important, powerful work—and it deserves to be seen.



03 – Photographs



04 – Programme

