

# Missing The Mark

DATE	9th September 2022
SOCIETY	Bispham Castaways
VENUE	Holy Family RC Church Hall
TYPE OF PRODUCTION	Farce
DIRECTOR	Sue Hope
PRODUCER	The Company
WRITTEN BY	Michael Maxwell

## Report

Author: Paul R. Mason

In a rented office somewhere we find Ethan and Devon. The duo quickly reveal they are in fact scammers. They have devised a cunning plan to fleece starry eyed hopefuls to part with their money to pay to audition for an imaginary movie.

Andrew Marsh as Devon, as the main malefactor, was in full command of his role. He showed us a man driven by the promise of easy filthy lucre. Always comfortable on stage Ian was clear in his delivery and maintained the pace of this fast moving show. I often talk about pace. It is a crucial element of successful playing, more so in comedy which this play certainly is. In fact all the characters were at ease on stage. They clearly were having a good time. This matters so much to engaging the audience. Ian Dodd as Ethan, Devon's co- conspirator, had more to do to convince us that he was not in truth wholly comfortable with their mischievous plan. He is the one character who the author has given the opportunity to show more than just one dimension. Ian took up this challenge and ran with it. Katie Ashworth was a scream as Starla. She had stage presence and assurance in abundance. Tracy Johnson as Callia, was a delight. Linda McKenzie as Charlene, who we discover is married to a billionaire, grasped the role with both hands. At times Linda showed us how much she was enjoying herself by little nods to the audience. Usually I would say this breaks the fourth wall and should not be attempted, but on this occasion it added to the production. I bet you didn't even know you were doing it Linda! Martine Bell as Alana, the undercover cop, played her part with conviction. Sue Hope, Shelly, as well as the director, completed the cast. To direct and play a major role is not something to be recommended as it removes, (in my view,) the essential element of detachment from the toolbox of a director. Sue however had managed somehow to successfully combine both responsibilities with considerable success.

The set was simple yet effective, with the sound and lights ably managed by Ian Fleetwood and Gary Tunnicliffe with the help of Alan Westhead and Hayley Price. Lesley Amos never let her eyes wander from the prompt copy and Martin Thompson drilled the backstage crew manfully.

It is a shame more people were not present to appreciate this silly bit of highly entertaining theatrical nonsense. Those of us who were present enjoyed our night out. Thank you to Harry Chambers for his welcome, the tea, coffee and superbly chocolatey biscuits at the interval, (all inclusive, I should add.)

Such community theatre groups as Bispham Castaways are crucial in continuing to bring affordable, enjoyable shows to their locality. I wish you every success for the future.

PRM.