



## Adjudicator Comment Form

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**School:** Oak Park High School

**Production:** *Disney's The Little Mermaid*

For each of the technical and performance categories below, please find the commentary provided by the adjudicators that recently attended your school's musical.

### *Technical Categories*

#### ***Artistic Contribution by a Student:*** ***(Direction, Music Direction, and/or Choreography)***

##### ***Direction***

Adjudicators considered—

- Believability and clarity of story and plot
- Dialogue interpretation
- Dynamics between performers
- Animation and energy of performers
- Performance level consistency
- Character consistency
- Physical pictures
- Effective use of space
- Effective use of performers

Name of Student Director: No student was considered for this category.

Comments:

## **Music Direction**

Adjudicators considered—

- Clarity and diction
- Animation and energy of performers
- Pitch and tonality
- Rhythm
- Vocal balance (i.e. chorus to principals)
- Overall balance (i.e. orchestra to stage performers)
- Consistency of musical elements

Name of Student Music Director: No student was considered for this category.

Comments:

## **Choreography**

Adjudicators considered—

- Appropriate for period and location of the show
- Inventive and creative
- Use of effective patterns
- Use of space
- Variety of movement
- Execution
- Animation and energy
- Level of difficulty
- Visual consistency of choreographic elements

Name of Student Choreographer: No student was considered for this category.

Comments:

## **Orchestra**

Adjudicators considered—

- Balance with stage performers
- Balance between orchestral parts
- Pitch and tonality
- Appropriate tempi
- Rhythm
- Execution
- Elements of professionalism (i.e. dress, deportment, etiquette)

Comments:

I really enjoyed the Orchestra's work in "Under the Sea." Their performance really caught the feel of the number and tempos were good. Generally speaking, balance within the Orchestra might have been better. At times I couldn't hear the melody and it was almost as if something was missing. On "Fathoms Below" the singers and Orchestra weren't quite on the same tempo. For me, the "Entr'acte" was cleaner than the "Overture" and had better sound. In "Les Poissons" it was hard to hear the performers, but overall, balance with the stage was very nice.

The Orchestra level was too loud and the mix with the stage made for a lot of inaudible moments for the audience. This is something to be worked on between the Orchestra, Sound Crew, and Music Director to find the right balance. Overall, the balance was just slightly off. The Orchestra also had a few pitch issues; "Part of

Your World (Reprise)" in Act I was especially noticeable. As a whole, the Orchestra was professional, did not distract during the show, and successfully hit its cues.

This Orchestra played with professionalism and dedication, which was important given their position in the center of the playing area. With an extended stage, this Orchestra was placed right in the center and maintained their focus and composure. They attacked the score with confidence and each section was heard, especially the oboe and percussion sections. There was a sense of ease and familiarity with the sound that shows preparation. There were moments that the tempo could have picked up a bit, such as during "The Storm." This group can also work on staying steady in balancing parts, especially allowing the strings to come out more. They clearly supported the pace and movement of this show.

## ***Scenic Design and Construction***

Adjudicators considered—

- Established and maintained mood
- Established and maintained time period
- Established and maintained location
- Ease of movement
- Appeared sturdy and safe
- Functional
- Complete and finished
- Size appropriate
- Well-executed

Comments:

First, I would like to compliment everyone involved in the creation of the wonderful puppets. There were some very creative designs and all were nicely functional and contributed to the show. I loved the birds, frogs, and turtles in "Kiss the Girl." Scenic Design and Construction were both excellent. I also appreciated the work that was done on the walls of the theatre. It took a great deal of work to create this environment for the audience. I also liked the area surrounding the Orchestra. The ship was attractive, well-constructed, sturdy and had nice detail. The quality of the sail didn't quite match. The perfect three-way split was a little distracting. Perhaps it might have worked to angle the ship a little bit and hide the magic. The design made good use of the pillars. I enjoyed all the different places they appeared. For the "One Step Closer" quartet, it seemed like a lot of effort to bring one on stage. I think the audience would assume that Triton was in his kingdom. The rowboat was nicely built and painted. It added to the fun of a wonderful scene. The underwater rocks were well constructed. Although, in Ursula's den, the objects weren't as identifiable. There were some slow changes into this scene, and perhaps it might have been possible to use fewer individual pieces to suggest the location. I liked the smoke effects. It was a little noisy, but dispersed quickly and didn't drop into the audience. There was a nice haze after Triton destroyed Ariel's grotto. The bubbles were a lot of fun. Overall, the Scenic Design was functional and effectively represented the two different worlds of the play. Everything appeared safe and sturdy.

While the sets appeared to be well built and provided us with the location of the action taking place, the pacing of the production suffered due to some lengthy scene changes. This is the inherent difficulty of film-to-stage musicals; changing scenes is done in a blink of an eye on film with no loss of momentum or interest. While this is part of the Deck/Crew's duty, it is also important for the Scenic Design to take into account how

long the shifts will take and consider that when designing elements. Some elements might need cut or reimaged to keep the momentum of the show moving forward.

The Scenic Design was filled with creativity, flexibility, and innovation. It immersed us directly into the ocean with the auditorium walls covered and the use of the slanted extension. It hinted at inviting the audience to fully engage in the suspension of disbelief. Many of the set pieces used onstage, such as the ship and Ariel's cove, were consistent and moved with ease. There was depth and texture with the knickknacks. The break-away ship pieces flowed with the needs of a storm and with ease. I applaud the ability for the actors to go in between them. The scene changes were long, however, especially going into Ursula's location. It is okay to use less pieces if needed. This was a large stage but when you have elaborate pieces in some of the locations, the others can be minimal to keep the flow moving a bit faster. The use of the extension helped this a bit and allowed for locations to keep moving. This design allowed for the actors to play with levels and physicality in creative ways so we were always guessing what would happen next. The "Kiss the Girl" scene demonstrated this playful innovation the most with the use of the multi-dimensional appearance of water and the gliding boat. There were some difficulties with the oars as they covered Ariel's face but the gliding movement allowed for creative pictures. The puppets added dimension as well and acted as set dressings almost to catapult us directly into place/time. The puppets also brought a lot of color and complemented the color scheme that was already present. Bringing a Disney show to life onstage is not easy with the various locations and expectations it brings with it. This design took that challenge seriously and successfully brought a movie to life.

## *Lighting Design*

Adjudicators considered—

- Established and maintained mood
- Established and maintained time period
- Established and maintained location
- Helped to focus the attention of the audience
- Well-executed

Comments:

The pre-show pattern on the act curtain was attractive and helped set the mood for the play. I really liked the lighting for Ariel's cavern. It created a definite underwater feeling. When the storm hit and the ship broke up, a little more storminess in terms of color and lightning flashes might have added to the tension and confusion in the scene and also provided a little more cover for the breaking up of the ship and actors going into the water. There were some interesting color choices, but not all of the readily made sense. For instance, I didn't completely understand the red light on the backdrop. Ursula's den had a lovely gloomy and evil mood, but she might have been better lit. Actors on the catwalk were sometimes in shadows. In "Finale Ultimo," Triton, Grimsby, and Eric were in shadows for a period of time. I understand this was a challenge and actors were in the light far more often than not. For me, the flashing overhead lights during "Under the Sea" were a little distracting and didn't add to the scene. Also, I would have enjoyed seeing a little bigger effect when Flotsam and Jetsam stopped Ariel and Prince Eric from kissing. Overall, the Lighting Design helped establish mood, assisted in focus, and helped establish location. Finally, there was a clear difference between under the sea and on land, an important element for this musical.

The Oak Park High School production of "Disney's The Little Mermaid" was visually stunning. The visual technical aspects of this production were well thought out, well designed and executed at a very high level. The Lighting Design set the mood and location quite nicely; I particularly enjoyed the use of all the different

gobos throughout the production. Throughout, the design did a solid job of indicating the variety of locations. However, the entire production could have been bumped up a point or two from the front lights in order to see faces a little more.

The Lighting Design Team knew exactly what they were doing with the variety, focus, and added side lights to find the depth. This design took us right into the water with the gels and multiple gobos for various locations underwater. They used texture as well as color to create mood. The extension was address delicately without the need to light the entire audience. This kept the mood and at yet allowed us to focus on the action. There were times, such as in Ursula's cave, that it became too dark. And, although the glowing eel heads were super fun, it was difficult to see the actors' facial expressions. I honestly did not even realize Ursula was purple until the end of the show. So, a little higher lighting level would have benefited these scenes. This design played with lighting in varying ways, using colors, dimensions, and reflections to enhance the overall experience. It moved as much as the stage pictures and was very much a part of the story.

## *Costume Design and Construction*

Adjudicators considered—

- Established and maintained mood
- Established and maintained time period
- Established and maintained character
- Established and maintained location
- Gave performers full range of motion
- Well-executed (fit, neatness, attention to detail, etc...)

Comments:

Overall, the costumes established and maintained character, helped create the worlds of the play, and fit the actors well. I loved the gull outfits. They were fun and functional. The sparkle of the costumes for Triton's daughters and the reflective quality of Ariel's mermaid costume definitely added to an under the sea suggestion. Ariel's wedding dress was lovely. Her Act II dress was pretty and I liked the layers in the skirt, although the hem slanted from back to front for some reason. Flounder's costume had lovely color and the actor was able to make good use of the fins. The costumes Flotsam and Jetsam wore were lots of fun and I enjoyed the glow in the dark element. I liked that Scuttle's costume had some suggested elements and Sebastian's costume worked well. The basic black for the puppeteers was both traditional and functional. I appreciate the creativity and hard work that went into the design and construction of the costumes for Triton and Ursula. Ursula's costume had a beautiful design and the fit was absolutely tailored to the actress. I had the opportunity to see her wearing it off stage. Ursula is the villain of the piece and the dark color is appropriate for her octopus/squid persona. But, it lost some impact in the mood lighting and tended to fade into the set. The addition of some reflective material or fabric might have been helpful in making the beautiful design more visible. The costumes made a solid contribution to the production.

The Costume Design was well thought out and complementary across all of the various characters. The Ensemble was always in uniform whether they were sailors, chefs, mermaids, or seagulls. This allowed for inclusion and flow. Each actor looked comfortable and had full range of motion. Costuming a Disney show is difficult as the audience generally comes in with their own ideas of what it is supposed to look like. This design used the general 'look' of the movie while adding innovation and creativity to make it their own. Giving Ariel a long skirt to show a tail while maintaining the popular color scheme gave her recognition and full motion. The high waist with all of the mermaids supported all body shapes. There was an attention to detail that was

clearly expressed in the seagull costumes with the mask, feathers, vest, and belt. This design thought about the overall picture. The one costume that stuck out, however, was Ariel's pink dress as it was too short and did not fit as well as it could. She used the length to refer to her legs but unfortunately it did not allow for the 'ballroom' tone. Chef Louis also had some fit issues but his breakaway pants worked with ease and humor! The creativity in the various sea creatures complemented the colors already seen in the mermaids as well as added their own twist. There was so much color present in this design that Ursula could afford to be dark and muted, however, her costume became so dark that with dark lighting we missed the purple underneath her tentacles. The design of her dress followed closely to what we know from the movie but again, like the others, allowed for ease and believability onstage. There was room for more dimension with Ursula as well as Triton and this can sometimes be achieved with higher shoes and or more layers. The transition into Ariel's legs seemed a bit cumbersome both times and I was wondering if that design could use a little more innovation for ease so the actor can feel more comfortable.

## *Hair and Makeup Design*

Adjudicators considered—

- Established and maintained mood
- Established and maintained time period
- Established and maintained location
- Established and maintained character
- Well-executed (fit, neatness, attention to detail, etc...)

Comments:

There was some very creative makeup and wigs in this production. I loved the looks created for the various sea creatures – especially Flotsam and Jetsam. Ursula's overall hair and makeup was excellent and contributed to her character. I felt the choices used for Triton were somewhat distracting. The more basic makeup for humans did a good job of bringing out features and adding basic color.

The Makeup Design for this production was solid. Everything was appropriate and created a great cartoon look and feel to the characters. Wigs, where they were used, were also appropriate and I noticed no discernible issues with fit whatsoever.

The creativity in this show continued with the Hair and Makeup Design. Every actor's look was addressed with hair and makeup, including shading of the hair. Sebastian's look was one of the most pronounced and transformed him completely into a red crab. King Triton's wig connected his look immediately to the wise, old character he is and Ursula's high wig and facial makeup played great from the stage. The choice of multiple colors, defined lines, and bold wigs, such as with Grimsby, established time period and character clearly. There was so much attention to the looks of every character that I wondered if the puppeteers could also have some more defined facial makeup and hair. Their unfinished looks stood out amongst all of the polished looks and they were using their facial expressions so much that they became actors as well.

## Lighting Crew

Adjudicators considered-

- Helped to maintain the design elements
- Maintained the world of the play
- Executed cues with accuracy
- Completed their tasks with no performance interruptions
- Transitioned smoothly between cues

Comments:

Overall, lighting cues were executed successfully, but there were some late cues and apparent errors. For example, in "Fathoms Below," the song had already begun when the lights came up. A light was brought up at stage right when Ariel and Eric exited after "Beyond My Wildest Dreams" for no apparent reason, which felt like a cue error. For "Les Poissons" the follow spot was chasing Chef Louis, instead of moving with him. Also, whether it be Lighting Crew or Stage Management, make sure there is a clear "house lights up" procedure at the end of show. The lights did not come up for quite some time after the show ended and people began to leave.

The lighting cues were nicely executed and the Lighting Crew supported the production. For future productions, the spotlight operators can work on improving their anticipation of onstage movement, but that is a minor quibble. Overall, nice work.

This Lighting Design was detailed and required a lot of focus. This Lighting Crew completed all tasks with a flow and ease in transitions. There were multiple lighting cues happening at once with scene changes and all movement was smooth with multiple instruments.

## Sound Crew

Adjudicators considered-

- Helped to maintain the design elements
- Maintained the world of the play
- Executed cues with accuracy
- Maintained balance between performers and orchestra
- Maintained balance among performers
- Provided clarity

Comments:

When all goes smoothly with the sound, the crew doesn't receive enough appreciation. Audiences tend to only notice the sound when there are challenges. In this performance, there were multiple instances when timing could have been better, including several late mic' cues. Grimsby's mic' went off entirely and for "Finale Ultimo." I couldn't hear either Grimsby or Triton. There was very serious, loud feedback that at one point almost shook the floor. Balance with the Orchestra might have been better managed and the recording of Ariel's voice was at such a high level it was impossible to hear Prince Eric. While the Sound Crew could improve on the late cues, some of the issues might have been equipment-related.

The sound had quite a few difficulties in its execution and its balance. Feedback, mic's coming up late, and mic's not being on (we missed Ursula's entire first number of the show) were just a few of the issues. That said, the Sound cues in the show had nice timing.

There were many opportunities for various sound effects and this crew found them all with accurate and on time cues. The splashes in the beginning set the tone and the crew was able to maintain balance between performers and the Orchestra. The cast got a little feedback as they came out to the extension and the Sound Crew worked quickly to fix it. The one character that we could not hear was Grimsby, as his mic' was never quite loud enough to hear his lines.

## ***Deck/Set Crew***

Adjudicators considered-

- Helped to maintain the design elements
- Maintained the world of the play
- Moved quickly and effectively
- Completed their tasks with no performance interruptions

Comments:

The Deck/Set Crew did a good job of maintaining the design elements. There were some instances of slow work. Two examples are the change from Ariel's grotto to Ursula's lair and the change into "Beyond My Wildest Dreams." There were curtain pull issues including an uneven pull into Ursula's first scene. At one point crew members came out in front of the proscenium and picked up "rocks" during a scene, in full view of the audience. Overall, the world of the play was maintained more often than not.

While the sets appeared to be well built and provided us with the location of the action taking place, the pacing of the production suffered due to some lengthy scene changes. This is the inherent difficulty of film-to-stage musicals; changing scenes is done in a blink of an eye on film with no loss of momentum or interest. The Deck/Set Crew remained focused and appeared to have a set duties in the shifts. So, part of the length struggle was built into the Scenic Design more than the Deck/Set Crew. Perhaps a few additional hands may have reduced the changes by a few seconds, but I know that isn't always an option or readily available.

This Deck/Set Crew kept the pace of the show moving amidst many scene changes. They struggled at times going into Ursula's set as well as with the larger castle pillars but kept moving and managed to complete transitions without interruption and with the support of the scene change music. They moved quickly, calmly, and quietly without a ton of wing space to work in.

## ***Flying Effects Crew (re: flying of performers only)***

Adjudicators considered-

- Helped to maintain the design elements
- Maintained the world of the play
- Moved quickly and effectively
- Completed tasks with no performance interruptions
- Appeared to be safely executed

Comments:

No adjudication was provided for this category.

## ***Costume Crew***

Adjudicators considered-

- Helped to maintain the design elements
- Maintained the world of the play
- Moved quickly and effectively
- Completed their tasks within a timely manner
- Accuracy and completion of the performer's look

Comments:

With several actors portraying multiple roles, the Costume Crew was responsible for multiple changes during the show – some of them fairly quick. The changes were made quickly and within the allotted time. The flow of the performance was never interrupted. In each case, the look of each performer was accurate and complete when they entered their scenes.

The Costume Crew was attentive and effective throughout this show. There was a lot of makeup, hair, and costume needs to be tended to and every actor came onstage with a complete and polished look. Quick changes, especially with Ariel's final dress, were done in a timely manner and all of the sea creatures had their tails, head pieces, etc. in place. There were a lot of wigs to manage and all of them stayed in place with the actors costume changes. They looked well brushed and realistic along with the makeup.

## ***Hair and Makeup Crew***

Adjudicators considered-

- Helped to maintain the design elements
- Maintained the world of the play
- Moved quickly and effectively
- Completed their tasks within a timely manner
- Accuracy and completion of the performer's look

Comments:

When the characters appeared for the first time on stage, their makeup seemed well executed and complete. Their hair was styled and wigs were solidly anchored. Several actors portrayed multiple roles that involved makeup changes. In all cases, the actors returned to the stage in complete makeup within the allotted time.

The makeup work was solid throughout this production. Everything was appropriate and created a great cartoon look and feel to the characters. Wigs, where they were used, were also appropriate and I noticed no discernible issues with fit whatsoever.

The makeup was a highlight, as there were many non-human species in this show. This Makeup Crew had a lot of work to do, with designs that covered the entire face, body, and hair in some cases. They created depth and maintained the look throughout the entire show. They played with texture and focused on a complete look for each character. The hair was nicely handled throughout with the looks being maintained well from curtain to curtain.

# Performance Categories

**Adjudicators considered the following for each performance category:**

## **Singing:**

- Pitch and tonality
- Rhythm
- Diction
- Phrasing and interpretation
- Expression and artistry

## **Acting:**

- Animation and energy
- Believability
- Dialogue interpretation
- Relationship to other performers
- Character consistency
- Elements of poise and ease on stage
- Stage presence

## **Stage Movement**

- Accuracy
- Character consistency
- Fluidity
- Motivation of movement
- Animation and energy
- Spatial awareness

## **Dancing:**

- Precision
- Animation and energy
- Execution of choreography
- Expression and artistry
- Spatial awareness

**In addition to the above elements, adjudicators considered the following for the Ensemble:**

## **Singing**

- Vocal balance
- Balance of harmonic parts

## **Acting**

- Dynamics between performers

# *Actress in a Lead Role*

Student's Name: **Sarah Collingsworth**

Role: **Ariel**

Comments:

Ariel did a very good job with the stubborn side of the character, which was always present in her performance. For me, other aspects of Ariel – her compassion, sweetness, and naiveté – might have been further developed, along with the self-doubt. At times, she seemed younger than 16. I would have liked to have seen more emotion under her line delivery, and more characterization based on character wants and needs. She sometimes anticipated and stopped when she was supposed to be cut off by another character instead of continuing until they actually did begin to speak. Gestures and movement might have been more motivated. Vocally, she was mostly on pitch but often pushed her voice. There was a very nice section before “Under the Sea.” I saw more of the character come through during the quiet, softer moments. Ariel made a good commitment to the role and always seemed comfortable on stage.

Sarah brought a gentleness to Ariel with her subtle choices and strong vocal command. She showed poise and confidence in her understanding of where this character comes from as well as her portrayal of the character's

intentions. She stayed focused with purpose of movement and spoke with clarity and passion and was believable and consistent throughout. Of course, I have the animated movie in mind when I am watching and Sarah incorporated a few of those movie qualities in the way she related to Scuttle and her sisters but also brought some unique perspective to the character with her boldness towards Eric and Ursula. Her vocals were well rehearsed and she had strong diction and breath control work. She used her full range and belt, especially in "If Only (Ariel's Lament)" and the iconic "Part of Your World." She took her time and clearly understood what and why she was speaking/singing. She could work on bringing more energy to her physicality by finding ways to be playful with her scene partners. This character has specific ways of acting with the other characters and she could find larger ways with more variety to show us how she felt about things, events, and others with her physicality. She can play more with tempo in her body and lines. Every body movement matters especially when she does not have a voice so finding bigger ways to communicate feelings with the face and body can help deepen relationships.

A very nice vocal instrument with good color and spin. Be sure to stay consistent with that and stretch to the pitch. There were a couple of places in the "Part of Your World" number where the placement was less-centered. It was equally powerful and soft when and where it was needed. You moved with ease and purpose on stage and you built and fostered solid and meaningful relationships with all those around you. Your dialogue delivery was well executed; acting and reacting to what you were saying and what others said to you. I saw the "tomboy" clearly, but at the same time the softness and vulnerability of the young woman. A well-rounded and solid performance!

## ***Actor in a Lead Role***

Student's Name:  
Role:  
Comments:

No student was considered for this category.

## ***Actress in a Supporting Role***

Student's Name: **Erin Hill**  
Role: **Ursula**  
Comments:

Every aspect of Ursula's performance was exceptional. She was consistently on pitch, with no vocal strain or forcing, exhibited excellent diction, and invariably portrayed character through both her vocal and acting performances. She made good use of the space on stage and her movements and gestures were motivated. Her energy level was always high. Her performance was believable and she was confident and at ease on stage. Her stage presence was commanding and her relationships with other characters were clear. I thought she really embraced her "inner Ursula."

Well done! Great presence, dialogue delivery, voice, and connection with the Ensemble and the script! You gave her just the right mix of smarmy and deviousness all at the same time. You gave the villain plenty of thought and it showed in your work! For future performance of this nature, find more ways to ground your stage movement with the character. Much like the mermaids had to sometimes use their hands to indicate

swimming, how would Ursula need to move underwater. You did have a set movement, but I felt it could have been taken farther. A minor element that can add an additional dimension to your performance.

Ursula is a big character with a lot of energy and Erin brought a tremendous amount of confidence into this role. She moved with her full body and had full command of the scenes and vocals. She attacked her vocals with a lot of variety and breath control work. "Poor Unfortunate Souls" demonstrated her range and highlighted her belt and playful tone she developed for this character. She could work on making her movements more specific, larger, and more varied, as she repeated some physical choices; especially when emphasizing the character's frustration. She could take up more space on the stage and play with invading the other characters' personal spaces more to create the tone of intimidation. Her lines were clear, strong, and drove the plot forward in an engaging way as she was successful in using variety, tempo, diction, and pitch communicating the sneaky ways of this character. She showed full commitment to her choices and managed to bring a cartoon character very much to life onstage.

Student's Name: **Chloe Pelham**

Role: **Flounder**

Comments:

Chloe brought such a sweetness to Flounder and her physical commitment to swimming was consistent and believable throughout. She maintained her physical choice and played it when appropriate, using variety in speed depending on how she was feeling and how fast she needed to swim. That type of playful commitment brings depth to a character beyond the lines. She could work on understanding what she is saying a bit more as her emotion and motivation were confusing at times. This could be practiced by using that same variety she found in physicality but with her words; she can speed them up, slow them down, or use pitch or pauses to communicate exactly how she was feeling. She can also work on diction and speaking with confident projection, as we want to hear every word.

The trusty sidekick was presented well. Work for more consistency in your delivery and your relationships with others around you. Your movement was a bit mechanical and stiff. This character is the "baby" of the group. Let that innocence and youthful exuberance lead you through the journey.

Flounder always seemed to be confident and at ease on stage. The character brought a great deal of enjoyment to me. Overall, the characterization and line delivery were believable and relationships with other characters were good. Flounder did nice work in "She's in Love." I enjoyed the vocals and energy level. I appreciated the consistent work with the costume.

## ***Actor in a Supporting Role***

Student's Name: **Dean Foreman**

Role: **Sebastian**

Comments:

Dean was fully into this character (as he was covered from head to toe). He showed poise and understanding and used his physicality, especially those claws, to communicate emotional tone. He took his time and practiced with the well-known accent of Sebastian. It came in and out but he held confidence and intention in delivering his lines regardless of whether the accent was clean. The scenes highlighting his confidence were, "Under the Sea" and "Kiss the Girl," as he commanded the vocals, pace, and tone of the songs. His use of

breath control work allowed him to have a clear tone in some of those deeper registers. Although he could work on diction, the message and energy of these songs extended out. He could work on relaxing into his body more so that he can have more flexibility with his physical choices. It is tricky when you are playing an 'uptight' character, but relaxing into the body and allowing the rigidity to come from a looser place often can help get the character out more. There were times when it seemed as though the actor was actually holding back energy. His energy grew as the show moved on and the scene with the chef allowed for him to move more. I could tell this actor had great instincts and could trust that he understands the intention and meaning behind what he is doing. For future performances, he could practice going to the next level in acting of turning that intelligent understanding into a fully-committed, relaxed communication with the body, taking risks that allow the character to have tons of variety.

Great work! This appeared to be very easy for you; natural and flowing from one moment to the next with great presence and thought behind your actions. You were able to relate to everyone around you easily and honestly. Nothing felt contrived or presented falsely. The voice was strong and solid. Make sure your breath support lasts all the way through the words and notes. At the end of "Under the Sea" the sound started to go a little sideways.

Sebastian was consistently on pitch and demonstrated a good understanding of the vocal style of his numbers. His accent was consistent, but sounded perhaps a bit more Irish than Jamaican. I know there are commonalities and appreciate the challenge. Diction was generally good. Both "Under the Sea" and "Kiss the Girl" were a lot of fun and performed well. There was clear character growth from Act I to Act II, as Sebastian's concern and compassion for Ariel grew. In "If Only (Quartet)," I could clearly see his feelings. It was a very nice moment for the character. In Act II, there were some nicely nuanced moments. Sebastian had good energy and was absolutely comfortable on stage at all times.

Student's Name: **Preston Weinzerl**

Role: **King Triton**

Comments:

King Triton is a powerful and commanding character, and can be a challenge to portray on stage. For me, there could have been a little more power and intimidation in this performance. He had a tendency to rush dialogue and when singing sometimes over-enunciated a bit. For instance, the dialogue about the loss of his wife was a little rushed. Triton seemed to push through his voice rather than his diaphragm when he sought to sound angry or powerful. Sometimes deep emotions can be communicated in softer, more introspective tones, rather than shouting. In "If Only (Triton's Lament)" Triton pushed his voice and became a little pitchy. Occasionally, he blocked his face with his triton. He made a good effort in his relationship with Ariel.

Be careful of the pitch and intonation; it was a bit out of hand during, "If Only (Quartet)." Your presence was felt but it was a bit of a younger presence. I am not sure of Triton's exact age, however, the movement and some of the reaction was just a bit young. Take that natural stage presence, which is a great quality to possess, and find ways to imbed the age and stature of your character into it.

King Triton held a strong command and portrayed age and status with his slow, specific walk and upright body position. He walked with poise and ease onstage and spoke with understanding of what he was saying. We could see the more vulnerable side of this character in his song, "If Only (Quartet)" where Preston met the vocal needs of the song and held balance and harmony with his scene partners. He used the costume and lights to his advantage as they enhanced the 'look' of Triton and he communicated the power of this King in

his deeper tones and subtle head movements. He can work on projection and clarity with diction as there were some lines that we lost to going under his breath. Practicing variety and motivation can help break vocal patterns that sometimes emerge when actors get too familiar with their lines. It is always an advanced goal to reach completely over to your scene partner with your tactics and it was clear Preston was practicing with this.

Student's Name: **Jacob Sokol**

Role: **Prince Eric**

Comments:

Prince Eric had good diction and brought a nice emotional quality to his songs, especially "Her Voice." His singing voice seemed to be very tired and occasionally struggled with notes throughout the performance. At times he seemed a little stiff, but this may have been related to his vocal concerns. Sometimes lines with important plot-related information got a little lost. Blocking and gestures might have been more motivated, but he had good spatial awareness and his physical choices were usually consistent with character.

Jacob held a strong physicality with this character and let his charm come through with ease. He was steady in his movements and walked with a gentle confidence, especially when he glided backwards up the stairs. He carried a confidence within his lines/vocals and used variety in pitch and tempo. He can work on finding the humor in this character especially allowing the discovery of his admiration in Ariel grow. This character can have fun finding ways to relax in her presence so that we can see a clear difference of how he feels with her and then with others. The scene with "Kiss the Girl" had some difficulties in the oar placement and I would encourage him to focus more on his intention with her than the oars. Jacob showed a clear understanding of this character and maintained focus and energy throughout.

Watch the pitch and intonation; stretch to the pitch instead of pushing up to it. Pitch and intonation was very noticeable during the Act II number "One Step Closer." Look for bigger and bolder choices for the character. As royalty, there needs to be a much stronger and bigger presence about Eric. There were a lot of moments where it felt nervous and unsure. Without that presence and boldness, the softer moments are not as effective.

## ***Actress in a Featured Role***

Student's Name: **Bayan Salam**

Role: **Jetsam**

Comments:

Jetsam always had wonderful energy and seemed absolutely comfortable and confident on stage. She worked wonderfully with Flotsam as a duo and also as a trio with Ursula. I absolutely believed the relationships. The characterization was consistent and vocals were good. However, sometimes I lost lyrics. Movement and gestures were motivated and dialogue interpretation was solid.

Good performance as the sidekick to the villain; you did her bidding well. Look for a little more deviousness and bigger and bolder action and reactions.

Jetsam worked well with Flotsam as they shared a lot of their physicality and played well off of each other. They really worked as a team and accomplished one of the hardest things to do on stage: lead without leading.

They used their bodies to communicate beyond just words and played with some vocal variety in stretching out words as well as pitch with their higher tones and scratchy voice at times. Jetsam can work on making more specific choices with her lines so they all come out differently yet still purposeful. She got caught in some line patterns and can practice giving her character a unique tone even though she is playing with a partner.

Student's Name: **Kyndal Smith**

Role: **Flotsam**

Comments:

Ursula's eels were filled with energy and playful physicality. They used their bodies to communicate the emotional tone of these characters as well as their vocal variety and elongated lines. They moved with ease and worked well with each other, crossing physical barriers. Their song, "Daddy's Little Angel" used a lot of stage movement and they showed competence and understanding of what they were saying and doing. What they could work on is matching the power of their scene partners. Just because their character does not have the 'status' in the plot does not mean their vocals and acting choices get smaller too. They could work on being very specific with their motivation and fully committing to every choice.

Overall you did a good job creating that iconic role of the villain's henchman. Similar to what I told you partner Jetsam, in future roles of this nature you can find bigger and more unique ways to move and react.

Flotsam always had wonderful energy and seemed absolutely comfortable and confident on stage. She worked wonderfully with Jetsam as a duo and also as part of a trio with Ursula. I absolutely believed the relationships. The characterization was consistent and vocals were good. However, sometimes I lost lyrics. Movement and gestures were motivated and dialogue interpretation was solid.

## ***Actor in a Featured Role***

Student's Name: **Zane Fincham**

Role: **Chef Louis/Sailor/Puppeteer**

Comments:

Chef Louis had great energy. His comedic timing, especially in the solo "Les Poissons," was excellent. The short falsetto section was wonderful and funny. He had good diction. The character doesn't have a lot of emotional depth, but he made the most of what was there. He had very nice focus, stage movement, and physical bits in "Les Poissons." In "Les Poissons (Reprise)," the movement seemed a little less controlled. It may have just needed a little more rehearsal. I think Chef Louis got every possible ounce of humor out of the dialogue. He was absolutely comfortable and confident and had good stage presence.

A very funny role! You can go even farther with this character. It can become very cartoonish in movement and in action. Work for cleaner diction; let us hear all those words clearly and concisely.

Zane brought a huge energy to the character of Chef Louis and had confidence in knowing his blocking. He could work on having that blocking come from a more natural place with purpose. For example, the chopping on the table was appropriate and in rhythm however there did not seem to be a 'need' for it. The same thing when he discovers Sebastian; it made sense and was funny but there could be more connection to a character purpose. Working in this way could help the actor understand the character more and find specific choices

that feel more grounded and less chaotic. This character had a strong projected voice and tone that matched the emotional needs of the scene so that there was a successful contrast between the large chef and small crab.

Student's Name: **Jeremy Webb**

Role: **Grimsby**

Comments:

Grimsby's physical characterization was consistent. I believed his use of the cane and he did a good job of projecting age. I wasn't sure what accent he was using and it wasn't always uniform. I felt there was good commitment to the role and he always seemed confident and comfortable on stage.

Grimsby is the character that gives us consistency and remains the voice of wisdom and steadiness. Jeremy used his body to portray age with his hunched shoulders and quick steps. He played with a deeper tone and communicated through his facial expressions the feeling tone of this character especially in the opening with the seasickness. He could work on projection and clarity with his voice. The mic' was not picking his vocals up and we lost a lot of lines, including the vocal variety in the lines that helps us understand how the character feels. The mic's are there to amplify sound but they cannot amplify if the sound is not there. There was a playful whimsy with Grimsby that can come out even more and I encourage the actor to find times where the character is surprised or discovers something and practice bringing those into the body and voice more.

Be sure to work for a much bigger and even more boisterous action and reaction at the top of the show during the "Fathoms Below" number; I would have liked to see this as a more rousing number full of energy and mood from all these men on the ship.

Student's Name: **Wyatt Cooper**

Role: **Scuttle**

Comments:

Scuttle always seemed to be having a great time on stage and made me laugh with his physical humor and line delivery. Physical character choices were clear and consistent. I appreciate the aplomb with which he delivered the corniest of jokes. Occasionally, I lost some lines and lyrics. This happened in the song "Positaggity," for example. I enjoyed Scuttle's interactions with the Gulls. Scuttle was consistently comfortable and confident on stage. Vocals were always delivered in character. I enjoyed the tapping.

Scuttle is a character I love to love and Wyatt gave me a performance filled with energy and humor. He brought out the quirkiness of Scuttle and attacked his lines and vocals with poise, confidence, and a sweetness. His physicality was fully committed from the flying across the stage, to his 'landing' with both feet, to his squawking arms, and inquisitive tilt of his head. He used every muscle in his body to communicate his feeling and personality. His voice was clear, loud, and had variation to communicate understanding. Also, he used pauses in his interactions with Ariel before responding. He could work on slowing down a bit and holding the breath more with his vocals as he got a little pitchy in his songs. He could incorporate his strong acting into the songs as well and work on cleaning up the intention behind what he is saying, especially with the songs.

You had good, believable delivery and very good comedic timing. This seemed very easy and natural for you. You provided great comedic relief to the show. Your confidence behind the 'know everything' attitude was delivered without it becoming pompous and arrogant and worked well. Nice job.

## ***Female Ensemble Member***

Student's Name: **Jorji Kellogg**

Role: **Andrina/Gull/Princess**

Comments:

I really enjoyed Jorji's attitude and enthusiasm. She was absolutely comfortable and confident on stage and always seemed to be having a great time. Her vocals were fine with good diction. She handled the humor in her Gull appearances and as a Princess with commitment and style.

Student's Name: **Charlotte Sipple**

Role: **Maid/Puppeteer**

Comments:

This puppeteer used her full range of motion communicating the puppets feelings with her facial expression as well. She carried this enthusiasm and energy into her role as the maid as well guiding us where to look and how to feel. Her excitement and emotion, especially at the end, brought that cartoon feeling into the story. She can work on having her reactions flow into each other and trust that she can relax into allowing the feeling of a character to unfold without having to push a feeling out. If you just play the intention of the character, the feelings and reactions will come out more naturally.

Student's Name: **Olivia White**

Role: **Dancer Fish Chorus/Dance Captain**

Comments:

Very sharp and precise movement! I enjoyed seeing the energy and focus you brought to "Under the Sea," where you really stood out to me.

## ***Male Ensemble Member***

Student's Name: **Nick Majetich**

Role: **Pilot/Chef/Puppeteer**

Comments:

Nick's vocals were consistently good, as was diction. He always brought an appropriate attitude toward each of the characters he portrayed and had good focus and energy in each scene. He was dignified as Pilot and great fun as a chef. Overall, he made a valuable contribution to the Ensemble.

The chef scene had a lot going on and he was right there in the action using his high kicks to portray the humor and absurdity of this scene. He was fully committed to this character and maintained believability. He can work on slowing down and moving with more purpose especially when the character is surprised or discovers something.

## ***Ensemble***

### Comments:

What impressed me most about the Ensemble was their wonderful energy, across the board. Actors had good focus and consistently contributed to their scenes without taking inappropriate focus. For example, the sailors were always active on the ship, but their business didn't distract from the main action. Triton's 6 daughters (also Gulls and Princesses) were always lots of fun as a group. Their solo vocals might have been a little stronger, at times, but when they sang together they had a lovely, strong blend. There was some excellent comedic timing within the group and I really enjoyed the dancing Gulls. Occasionally, I missed a little dialogue and lyrics, but overall they did very nice work. Overall, the Sailors had good focus and a nice sound. The vocal attack for "The Storm" might have been a little stronger. The Chefs seemed to have a lot of fun, but at times the horseplay could have been a little more controlled/rehearsed. There was good commitment to the business. The Maids had good focus and the cast who handled the puppets did excellent work. The puppets and puppeteers made an important contribution to the show.

This Ensemble was all-in with various elements of whatever the scene demanded. They were willing to play multiple characters and fully dive into each one; bringing commitment, believability, and energy to them all. They used puppets to communicate a wide variety of characters and used their energy to bring each puppet to life. They were fully engaged throughout the entire show and found vocal variety and clarity. They had confident volume in their vocals and stage movements and were huge part in creating the overall pictures that unfolded on stage. They could work on finding more volume and vocal balance so that all vocal parts can be heard, especially in the times where there are not many on stage (like on the boat in the beginning). They could practice exploring more physicality and/or levels with their bodies in communicating what their various characters are feeling. They could also practice allowing their characters to come fully out of their entire bodies, especially the maids, chefs, and sailors, so that every movement is also communicating what they are saying and feeling.

The Ensemble seemed to be engaged throughout the production. When on stage they were taking appropriate action and reaction to others on the stage. Vocally, there needs to be more diction and projection, particularly from the men (especially the sailors). The sound at the beginning of the number needs to be that rough and tumble, loud and boisterous sound one would expect from a ship full of men. Always sing out and project to the back of the theatre. The sisters were presented quite nicely. Each time they were on stage they were actively engaged with the action and reacting nicely with each other and those around them. Work for sharper and more precise choreography, particularly in the Act I number "She's in Love." "Kiss the Girl" in Act II was nicely presented with good energy and the correct mood.

## ***Direction:***

### Comments:

I was impressed by the wonderful and consistent energy of the Ensemble in this production. It was present in every character and the show had good pacing. Also, I want to congratulate you on the wonderful puppets. They were very creative. Sometimes they might have been a little better choreographed, but overall, they made a splendid contribution to this show. Their work in "Kiss the Girl" was delightful. The 'swimming' arm

movements worked very well for Flounder and the other fish, but I found it a little distracting when done by the mermaids, who didn't use it consistently. When Sebastian spoke with Triton at the concert, it may have worked to move him upstage sooner so he wouldn't upstage himself. For me, Ursula's entrance could have been stronger. I liked using the catwalk for the scene after Ariel saved Prince Eric, but I couldn't see Eric at all when he was on the ground. Chef Louis was very funny in "Les Poissons." The Sebastian-chasing scene with the multiple chefs "Les Poissons (Reprise)" might have been a little slicker. Some if it was funny, but it was uneven. "Daddy's Little Angel (Reprise)" could have had a more solid, definite ending.

The stage pictures in this show moved with a lot of variety and purpose as they carried us through many places, feelings, and events. It was clear that we were immersed into the sea immediately with the auditorium and the direction continued that immersion with the extended ramp into the audience. It was not over-used and the actors seemed comfortable knowing where they were when they were using it. The times it was used for scene changes such as the Nemo and Dory movement was clever but perhaps too long as the action of the primary story is more important. The actors as an ensemble had a lot of success in communicating this story with understanding. There was maturity in the acting, vocals, and dance. They showed competence in not only understanding and speaking lines that made sense and moved the plot forward but many of them were fully engaged in communicating with their bodies. The mermaids used their hands to 'tread' or swim, Flounder had his tail wag, Sebastian has his quick swagger, and Ursula had her large tentacle walk. This indicates a high level of safety and encouragement in the direction to be able to produce comfort in the acting body. I wondered if they studied the physicality in the movie as they all were playing with bringing more of that onto the stage at various times. The use of the puppets was purposeful and delicate with specific choices and room for all. There was no crowding issues, they played with levels, and the puppeteers communicated the emotional tones of their puppets with their faces as well so again, full immersion onstage. The blocking choices in the scenes with puppets gave them all space to be seen and move as well despite the various sizes. Each location (and there are many in a Disney show) was treated with specific choices to communicate place and time. The use of the boats in two scenes allowed for another dimension and it was fun to see the whole ensemble work to create these visions. There were a few moments that the blocking got muddy and we missed facial expressions. The main one was with the oars in "Kiss the Girl" as the boat almost became a handicap when we could not really see Ariel. The other moment was in the Chef chase as it became too choreographed to the point where actors seemed to be waiting for the next move so they could make theirs. In these two examples, we lost the flow and purpose for movement. It became a 'show' rather than an intention-driven scene in a real story. Overall, this was a show that was visually entertaining and delivered a fully dedicated performance by all involved.

The blocking was appropriate and gave the Ensemble a great amount of "play" area. The use of the stage thrust along the front of the stage provided good work areas for the Ensemble. Look for more consistency in your actions and interactions on the stage. As this is a cartoon, the movement needs to be even more exaggerated than that of a typical production. Take chances with your character choices and make these creatures bigger than life. There was a lot of tentativeness in action and reaction and un-natural, nervous movement throughout the Ensemble.

## ***Music Direction:***

### Comments:

The Ensemble showed wonderful enthusiasm in their vocals. Overall, they had good diction. In one case (Triton), the diction was a little over exact and over enunciated. In the number "Fathoms Below," the singers and orchestra weren't quite together rhythm-wise. When the actors who portrayed the Daughters of Triton/Gulls/Princesses sang together they had a lovely blend. In "Under the Sea" I couldn't hear the men. This number had a very clean cutoff. Ariel pushed her voice throughout the performance and Price Eric's voice seemed very tired and kept breaking. There could have been more of a vocal contrast between Ariel and Ursula in terms of quality. Both did lots of belting. "Kiss the Girl" had excellent sound and energy. There were balance issues both within the Orchestra, but balance with the stage was generally good.

It is always tricky to play a score that is so familiar and this Orchestra took that pressure with ease as they maintained composure and professionalism throughout the show. They were seen a lot as they were lit in the middle of the extended stage for much of the action. They showed focus and comfort with their task and played with confidence. They had balance and remained together setting the pace of the show. They could work on pulling back a little on the softer parts as to not overpower the vocals such as with the song, "If Only (Quartet)." There was room for the instrumentals to stay strong but softer so the vocal harmonies could be heard more. They could also work on their first attack, especially in the "Overture" and "Entr'acte" as they set the tone for the energy and can afford to go full out. They achieved this in the middle of songs at times but can work on attacking with that much energy on the first note. It was great to hear so many instrumental parts and the oboe was especially clear and confident, backed up by the strings.

This production was quite impressive from a solo vocal standpoint with some very expressive and emotionally engaging work. While some were solid in their effort and execution, several others contained pitch and intonation issues. One number in particular, "If Only," seemed to be out of the vocal range of a couple of the singers and the blend between voices was simply out of whack. While the Ensemble was engaged and enthusiastic, their diction can always be better with a crisper and well-projected sound that carries to the back of the theatre. The sailors were very noticeable in this aspect.

## ***Choreography:***

### Comments:

The Ensemble always had wonderful energy and this came through in their performance of the choreography. The choreography seemed to be appropriate for the skill level of the actors. "She's in Love" might have had a little more focus and logic. In "One Step Closer" Eric took extremely large steps, which made Ariel do the same. For me, there could have been a little more emotion and content in Ariel's dance, "Ariel Steps Forward." I loved the tapping Gulls. It was great fun. Also, Flotsam, Jetsam, and Ursula worked wonderfully together.

The choreography was appropriate and provided a nice aspect the production. One note, the 'food fight' in Act II seemed a bit scripted and mechanical instead of free and easy. This bit took a bit longer than I expected to land.

The choreography in this show played with natural moves as well as larger dance numbers. There was a variety in how the characters could use the choreography to express their unique personality and that allowed each number to have dimension. This was loud and clear in the "Under the Sea" number as even though they were all dancing, their unison movement categorized 'who' they were as characters. That was fun to watch how they could all dance the same moves but from an honest place of the character. This was even more effective when the puppets danced as they all had various shapes/sizes and yet were together. The actual choreographed moves were appropriate for ability level and place/time. Incorporating the idea that many of them were swimming was unique and brought depth to the stage pictures as well. The ballroom dance was perhaps the most formal dance scene and the actors looked comfortable. The pace was a little fast for them and there was room for more variety as it became repetitive after the second time around the stage. This could be a time when these actors discover more play in their connection.