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Mr. Bengford

Tech Theatre II/4

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Grease

On Friday May 1st, I watched Grease, a musical written by Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey, at Oak Grove High School. The musical was directed by Jennifer Davidson. Grease is the original High School Musical. Sandy, a young woman, meets a boy over the summer and falls in love. She changes schools and ends up going to the same school as the boy, Danny. She finds out that he is a bad boy greaser, and head of the T-birds gang. Sandy befriends the Pink Ladies, the T-birds' counterparts. Sandy is wholesome naïve girl and begins see how some girls live life in the fast lane. One night Kenickie, one of the T-birds, gets a hold of a car and begins to supe up the car. Most of the Pink Ladies begin pairing up with T-birds for the prom, however Rizzo gets in a fight with Kenickie, and Sandy is still angry at Danny for treating her differently than he had during the summer. At the dance Rizzo and Kenickie get back together and Danny ends up winning the dance contest with Kenickie's date. Meanwhile Frenchie, a Pink Lady that dropped out of high school, had just dropped out of beauty school. While at the diner, she realizes she should go back to high school. At the drive-in Danny tries to express his feelings to Sandy, but in the end he ends up pushing her away. Later at the end of the year party, everyone finds out that Rizzo might be pregnant. Sandy tries to comfort her, but is a lost cause. Sandy decides she needs to change. She gets a make over from Frenchie and comes back to school looking like a Pink Lady. Rizzo finds out that she's

not pregnant and gets back with Kenickie. Danny and Sandy also finally get together. They end their final year of high school together.

During the show, audio definitely caught my attention. Sound for the show was run by Daisy Garcia. In the beginning of the show the EQ for some of the mics was strange; it sounded like there was cotton in their mouths. As the show went on they fixed the EQ and their voices sounded more natural. During the song “Summer Nights” it was difficult to hear both Danny and Sandy. Either the actors were not speaking loudly enough or the sound op was not pushing them enough. The band was at a good volume but the singers were almost inaudible. When Grease Lightning comes in the sound effect was on cue but it wasn’t the best choice. The quality of the sound effect was very poor. It felt unnatural, like there was an old sound effect playing. If they wanted to be “super fancy” they could have faded it in and out from the right speaker to the left speaker as the car came across the stage. For the most part it is better not to have any sound notes because it means that it sounded natural and the audience’s attention is not drawn to the way sound is being run. However I do have some other notes about sound. All of the transmitters were in the pockets of the actors. At one point one of the T-birds has his pants pulled off and the microphone went with it. They used Countryman microphones that go right over the ear, whereas at Westmont we use audiotechnica jaw elements. Our elements bend and hook into the ear so there is less of a chance of them falling off. The countryman microphones kept falling off during the show once the actors started to dance and sweat. They should have secured the mics with spirit gum, not just medical tape. At one point one of the sound effects was played too early and it interrupted Danny’s last note in “Alone at a Drive-In Movie.” This was a very noticeable mistake that I have made

before. They could have prevented this by being more alert and cautious. I also felt the intermission music and post show music choices were very good. They blended in to the background and they were period correct.

I also was engaged by the costume and make up design. The designer's name was not listed. At the beginning of the play the glee club sings. I was very disappointed in the glee club shirts; it looked like the words were written with a red sharpie. They all had different hand writings and did not look very professional. The cheerleader outfits were very nice. They had a megaphone with and R on their top and long red skirts with scarves in their hair. The Pink ladies and the T-birds had very nice jackets with matching logos. I liked the waitress outfits at the diner. They were period correct and they had roller skates. I really enjoyed all of the costumes worn by Rizzo. She often wore skirts with high waists and button up tops that were usually pink. For hair and makeup I felt the designer was very lax. There were a lot of actresses with very unnatural highlights. There were also actresses with multiple facial piercings and tattoos. These were definitely not period correct and should have been taken out or covered up. Many of the wigs were not very good. Frenchie's Easter egg pink wig was all tangled and her dark hair was easily seen through it. I really liked Danny's hair it was all slicked back with the little curl in the front like Elvis's.

As a whole I thought the play was okay. I thought their theatre was very nice. There were some really cool props like the "switch-blade comb" and some poorly made props like the baton with the blue painter's tape wrapped around the ends. Grease is definitely not one of my favorite musicals. I enjoyed watching one of my friends perform onstage without a drum. I only had the movie to compare this production to. I felt it was

more confusing and did not flow as well as the movie. However, there are a lot more possibilities in movies than in live theatre. I felt a lot of the T-birds were more entertaining than the main characters. Some of the greasers were obviously better singers than Danny as well. I was surprised by the look of their cast; it was ethnically diverse compared to a lot of other productions. There was no one predominate race. I enjoyed the play overall and I am definitely going to try and watch the original movie later.