



CENTRAL YORK PERFORMING ARTS

PARENTAL GUIDE

ABOUT LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS

SYNOPSIS (from www.mtishows.com):

A deviously delicious Broadway and Hollywood sci-fi smash musical, Little Shop Of Horrors has devoured the hearts of theatre goers for over 30 years. Howard Ashman and Alan Menken (*Disney's The Little Mermaid, Beauty And The Beast, and Aladdin*) are the creative geniuses behind what has become one of the most popular shows in the world.

The meek floral assistant Seymour Krelborn stumbles across a new breed of plant he names "Audrey II" - after his coworker crush. This foul-mouthed, R&B-singing carnivore promises unending fame and fortune to the down and out Krelborn as long as he keeps feeding it, BLOOD. Over time, though, Seymour discovers Audrey II's out of this world origins and intent towards global domination!

One of the longest-running Off-Broadway shows, LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS, the charmingly tongue in cheek comedy, has been produced worldwide!

LANGUAGE:

Some of the characters use language that might be inappropriate in some circles. This language includes the use of the words "damn," "crap," "freakin," "God," and "hell" in a few scenes.

DRUG USE:

The Dentist character (ORIN) uses and abuses laughing gas (Nitrous Oxide) to add to his crazed-disturbed nature. This abuse is "campy" in nature and is meant to be seen or understood as a satirical, over the top rendition of a dentist.

VIOLENCE:

Audrey II is a man-eating plant that demands to be fed. The plant is successful in "eating" some of the main characters as a means to satisfy his greed. In another scene, the remains of one of the characters is fed to the plant. All of the violence is "campy" in nature and not gory/scary. Also, Orin, the dentist, is a pretty awful person and is abusive to Audrey, his girlfriend. This could potentially be troubling to some, but it is meant to serve as a dramatic device to make the dentist out as one of the true villains.

FOR WHICH AUDIENCES?

"No it's not for the faint of heart, but LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS is a classic. The premise of a man-eating plant charming its way to stardom isn't too hard to imagine. The plot is campy sci-fi at its best, which works well with the doo-wop soundtrack. The music is very good --- and the solos by Seymour and Audrey hit unexpected emotional notes." (From commonsensemedia.com)

Though it's thoroughly entertaining, there are some scenes in LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS that may not be appropriate for some viewers and could potentially be scary/creepy to viewers under the age of 13. Pre-teens should only attend at a parent's discretion.

RATING:

LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS has been assigned a rating of PG-13 by MTI (Musical Theatre International).

FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION: *(from NYU Teacher Resource Guide)*

Various elements of the plot of LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS pose powerful questions for the audience to consider. As such, performers and theatre-goers may have a number of questions about the production and it may be worthwhile to allow them a space to talk about these lingering questions. Part of the rehearsal process has been dedicated to discussing some of these questions with the cast and crew, and we encourage families to consider exploring some of these questions with your child:

- *LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS is a dark comedy, satirizing the social values, virtues, and vices of its time. What are some modern examples of "dark comedies?"*
- *In the show, Audrey dreams of "somewhere that's green" and the members of Skid Row dream of getting out of "the gutter." How do you think social values have changed since the 1960s? Has anything stayed the same?*
- *Consider the domestic abuse in the musical. What are the relationships between abuser and victim? What point do you think is being made about domestic abuse?*
- *If the characters looked back on their actions in the play, what or who might they blame for their behavior?*
- *Discuss the use of music and lyrics throughout the musical. How are music and lyrics used for comic effect?*
- *Seymour winds up "selling his soul" to the plant in exchange for money, success and fame. What are the dangers of compromising your morals or ethics in order to become famous, rich, successful or happy?*
- *What do you think we can learn from a play or musical like Little Shop of Horrors?*
- *What do you think Little Shop of Horrors says about gender roles? Why? What do you think Little Shop of Horrors says about love? Why?*