



Society : Starmaker Youth Theatre Company
Production : Buggy Malone
Date : Saturday 7th October 2017
Venue : Wilde Theatre - Bracknell
Report by : Jeanette Maskell

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Show Report

This is great show for youngsters to perform not only can they tremendous fun it also helps to develop their acting skills. It was a lively energetic performance with some great characterisations super choreography and highly entertaining from start to finish.

Louis Chapman – (Bugsy Malone) – This was a smashing portrayal; he was sincere charming and charismatic yet with the streetwise swagger we expect from this character. His accent was excellent and he maintained this throughout whilst delivering his energetic dialogue with immaculate diction. He worked well with everyone on stage and it was clear to see why he was such a hit with the girls. His easy confident movement enhanced his performance greatly and I particularly enjoyed his rendition of “Down and Out”.

Millie Johnson – (Blousey Brown) – This young actress gave a good account of herself with all the wide eyed longing of youthful innocence yet ready with a fiery persistence to take on the world when put in a corner. Her dialogue was clear and audible with an expressive tonal quality. She moved well and her singing was delightful; “Ordinary Fool” was superbly sung with a soulful poignancy.

Seth Macleod – (Fat Sam) – I have watched this young man develop over the past couple of years and to date this is his best performance by far. He has a natural aptitude for comedy and he used this skill to great effect which in turn enhanced his character. His dialogue was spirited and animated as were his visuals.

Alex Hutson – (Fizzy) – As the cleaner longing to become a performer this young man delivered a quietly understated performance which was perfect for the role. His dialogue though doleful (which was right) was in fact well presented with great inflexion. “Tomorrow” was well sung in character with some expert moves.

Johnny Coombes – (Dandy Dan) – I really enjoyed this young man’s performance it was great fun. I liked the pitch and timbre of his voice which added greatly to his stylish debonair character. He was animated and lively and this carried through to his jaunty movement and singing. “That’s why they call him Dandy” was highly amusing and most entertaining.

Jodie White – (Louella/Tillie) – This young lady was the perfect foil for Dandy Dan they looked super together and built a good rapport. Her dialogue movement and visuals were all first rate and culminated in creating a fabulous character.

Elsie Wood-Blagrove – (Tullulah) – As singer at Fat Sam’s this young actress made the perfect gangster’s moll. She looked fabulous and her movement was cheeky and sassy. Her dialogue was fresh and dynamic and her singing quite splendid. Her title song was pure joy!

Winnie Coombes – (Lena) – This is one talented young lady. Her character was absolutely perfect and she certainly had the voice for the part albeit rather grating. “Show Business” was a tour de force.

Alessandro Porcelli – (O’Dreary)

Ronan Cundy – (Captain Smolsky/Pickett) – These two youngsters were awesome! They worked so well together bringing out the comedy at every opportunity. Their chaotic antics and frantic movement had the audience in stitches. They bounced their dialogue off each other brilliantly and the pace they achieved without losing the diction was most commendable.

Woody Wheeler – (Leroy Smith)

Harley Emmitt – (Cagey Joe) – As boxer and trainer this pair had a blast during their number “So you wanna be a Boxer” It was energetic brisk and lively with good dynamics in the singing.

Oliver Widdis – (Roxy Robinson)

Francesca Waters - (Bronx Charlie)

Jessica Hilton-Owen - (Laughing Boy)

Faith Wood-Blagrove - (Benny Lee)

Megan Jones – (Yonkers)

Elizabeth Holden – (Shoulders)

Evie Cripps – (Doodles) – As Dandy Dan’s gang these youngsters acquitted themselves admirably. With little or no dialogue it is vital to make a mark in other ways. This they did with their stylised movement and vivid visuals which complemented their characters famously

Liam Champion – (Knuckles)

Corey Aberly – (Ritzy)

Katie Weller – (Angelo)

Woody Wheeler – (Louis)

Daniella Mackinnon – (Snake Eyes) – These lads were spectacular; their dialogue was pacey and at times fast and furious which was quite superlative. Their timing was exemplary and this added to the overall performance. “Bad Guys” was an absolute show stopper.

Matilda Lawrence – (Loretta)

Molly Barnett – (Dotty)

Hayley Crofts – (Dorothy)

Robyn Warrick-Clarke – (Bangles)

Hannah Day – (Velma) – As showgirls and backing singers to Tallulah these youngsters were like a breath of fresh air. They were vivacious and peppy and sparkled through their dialogue movement and singing.

Loeey Whitlam – (Mama Becker)

Fergus Wood-Blagrove – (Oscar de Velt/Seymour Scoop)

Gracie-Mae Deane – Shady)

Maddie Jones – (Baby Face)

Poppy Antell – (Joe) – There are always minor characters that are integral to the plot and need to be portrayed by competent actors. These actors did just that they supported the principals with great aplomb and delivered their dialogue with good diction and projection.

Dancers – This troupe of dancers were lithe agile and perfectly in tune with each other. Their routines were uniform and they performed them with spirit and enthusiasm. It was a joy to watch their smiling faces; they were clearly enjoying every moment.

Ensemble - These youngsters were super; they threw themselves into everything they were given. They looked great and sang with gusto and moved with fluidity.

David Parsonson/Rachel Warrick-Clarke – (Co-Directors) – This team had done a superb job in creating a visual masterpiece. The confidence they instilled in these youngsters was incomparable and this was apparent from the lead characters to the minor one liners. Characterisations were fabulous and they had clearly worked on dialogue delivery, timing and deportment. Staging and blocking were excellent and entrances and exits well contrived to keep the action and pace flowing. However I was somewhat concerned with the substance used in the splurge guns as it did make the stage extremely slippery. There were nice little touches throughout especially the undertakers coming on to remove the bodies; it was noted that some of the stiffs leant a helping hand in getting into the coffin. The use of video for the car chase was another lovely touch and worked really well. I'm guessing that it was their idea to have the old video sequences playing as the audience took their seats; this was inspirational and most enjoyable. The ensuing credits were quite brilliant and it was great to hear siblings cheering as they saw a sister or brother's name roll up.

Anton Gwilt – (Musical Director) – This MD had ensured his cast were note and pitch perfect; there were confident entries and assured timing. He guaranteed the youngsters made the most of the lyrics by making certain their diction was impeccable. The small band under his expert control accompanied the singers famously and the balance was spot on.

Jenna Ellis – (Choreographer) – assisted by **Amy King** had created some super diverse routines which the cast performed to maximum effect. She used lots of patterns that were most pleasing to the eye and stylised them to the era. The opening number was a particular favourite being bright lively and zingy.

David Parsonson – (Production Manager) – How did David find time to take on this role as well as co-directing? It is a huge undertaking to bring everything together at the right time; however as a seasoned producer it obviously did not faze him and the society had a smoothly run production.

Chris Dinsey – (Stage Manager) – assisted by **James Cooke – ASM** and **Michelle Palin – DSM** – This was a well-run stage and although there were only nominal changes they were effected quite effortlessly. With such a large cast I'm sure they had their work cut out making sure the children got on and off stage safely.

Rebecca Simons – (Lighting Design) – operated by **Sam Tait** - This was an excellent plot with a great use of colour. The rain effect was fabulous and created real atmosphere. The desk was

well controlled with all video sequences timed perfectly. The spotlights were particularly effective and expertly operated by **Stuart Brookfield/Louis Martin**

Tom Horrox – (Sound Designer/Operator) – I always like the sound in this venue however this I'm sure is down to the expertise of the operator who incidentally did not miss one cue. The use of stage mics was great as it meant the chorus singing was clear and audible. Sound effects were cued to perfection and pleasing not intrusive. All in all sound was quite superb.

Cherie Emmitt – (Costume Administrator) – Costumes were fabulous. The boy's suits and the girl's dresses were authentic to the period and had been chosen to suit the character they were playing. The dancers' costumes were colourful and co-ordinated which was most eye catching. Dandy Dan's coat was really dapper and suited him down to the ground.

Rhi O'Keefe/Saffron Harrington – (Properties) – These had been well put together and all appropriate for their use; from the table and chairs in Fat Sam's to Fizzy's mop. The splurge guns of course were the pièce de résistance!

Jo Stringer – (Hair/Makeup Designer) – Makeup had been applied in the 20's style whilst keeping a fresh youthful look befitting the age of the actors. I liked the attention paid to the detail in the hair styling and particularly pleased that no one had hair falling over their face. Talullah's wig was perfect for the character and framed her face nicely.

Thank you

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Jeanette Maskell - NODA Representative - London Region - Area 13