

GUYS AND DOLLS - NODA Review

This was the 25 anniversary production by this group of highly talented young people. This well known and much loved show took place in New York City depicted by the excellent set, designed by Nikki Mundell Poole and constructed by Graham Green, with screens and props to effect the changes. The Hot Box night club setting was very colourful as was the Havana setting. There were some superb digital effects (Trevor Drury and Ian Holmes)

Liv Possee played Sergeant Sarah Brown, the leader of the Save A Soul local mission and was suitably demure until she met Sky Masterson, played by Jenson Bacon. Both had excellent singing voices and worked well together on stage and I especially enjoyed their duet of My Time Of Day (Sky) and I've Never Been in Love Before (Sarah). A very good pairing which allowed both to bring out their own interpretation of their roles. Sky had a really strong voice and I thought that his rendition of Luck Be a Lady, sung with the guys was very powerful.

Miss Adelaide (Hannah Ireland) was all that a night club hostess should be; loud, extravagant, effervescent and cheeky, with a superb singing voice. I enjoyed the songs which she sang with the Hot Box Girls (who were brilliant), especially Take Back Your Mink and A Bushell and a Peck. Super dance routines as well ! There was a tender but highly charged duet (Marry the Man Today) with Miss Adelaide and Sarah which was a credit to both.

Madison Austin, as General Matilda Cartwright, leader of Save A Soul had a reassuring and calming presence when she visited the local mission.

Fraser McLauchlan was an energetic Nathan Detroit trying to persuade venues to run an illegal crap game and Will Hackett was a first class Nicely Nicely Johnson. He was a sensation in leading the company in such a lively Sit Down You're Rocking The Boat routine which was brilliantly choreographed.

Ben Rolph, as Benny Southstreet, and Ryan Wuyts, as Arvide Abernathy, were both well cast as guys and acted out their roles well. Michael Stewart ,as Lt Brannigan, played the part of the rather dreary local policeman trying to catch the guys at their crap game.

Without exception, all the singing was powerful, with the sound levels well balanced. The energetic and enjoyable dance routines were very well choreographed and a pleasure to watch.

The cast of Hot Box Girls, Guys, Salvation Army members and chorus all contributed to this sparkling production which moved on at a cracking pace. And all the cast maintained their American accents throughout. Well done to you all.!

The large band, under the direction of Musical Director Emma Nash, was versatile and created just the right level of support to the singers on stage.

Finally, I thought that the wardrobe team had done a great job with the colourful costumes and the many costume changes throughout.

Many congratulations to Director and Choreographer Nikki Mundell Poole on having the inspiration and vision to bring this familiar script to the stage.
Well done to everyone involved with the production in any way.
I really enjoyed the evening.