**[NODA Review: Bugsy Malone](http://www.nomadskingstheatre.com/2015/04/20/review-bugsy-2015/)**

Young NOMADS’ production of *Bugsy Malone*had a cast of nearly sixty young actors performing in two teams. At the Tuesday performance we were entertained by Team A.

The plot – as if you need reminding – is about the ambitions of nightclub singer, Blousy Brown, set against the rivalry of gangs in prohibition era Chicago. This show has everything – great solo pieces, ensemble work, music, dancing and splurge guns shooting copious amounts of foam.

There were some excellent performances within this young cast, seemingly ranging in age from 8 to late teens. Heavily weighted on the female side, it required most females to play male roles.   However, all played their part and the auditioners, the workers in the Chinese laundry and the fighters in the boxing gym – most of them doubling roles – all threw themselves into it with enthusiasm.

From the battling gangster bosses Fat Sam (well played by Joseph Beach who I had seen only recently as an excellent Fagin) and Dandy Dan (played with authority by Jake Overy) via Fat Sam’s number one sidekick Knuckles (played by Alex Armstrong) and a sassy Tallulah (Emily Brighty who delivered her songs with confidence), to featured cameo roles like the ever hopeful Fizzy (Emily Bowman – an obviously talented young lady who delivered her songs with skill and mellifluousness), Bangles (Rhiannon McBean a young lady with a lot of stage presence) and the hapless policemen Smolsky amusingly played by the diminutive Tom Burrows and Samuel Burrows as the towering (against Smolsky anyway) O’Dreary.  These two were a hoot and the audience loved them.

The heroes of the piece – Bugsy Malone (Joseph Hall) and Blousy Brown (Emma Brewer) – I felt needed to point their blossoming romance a bit more, but Bugsy did a great job of holding the whole piece together as he moved seamlessly between the role of narrator and the character of Bugsy. An impressive performance. He is a very natural actor who is perfectly at home on stage.   Initially I was worried that Blousey was rather quiet but she has a good singing voice and with a bit more projection as she gains experience has much potential.

Radio mics often cause problems and this show was no exception.  It is good to have them available but only if they work when they should and not when they shouldn’t.  Unfortunately it also points up those who have the odd line of dialogue or lyrics who are not ‘miked up’ as their voices become lost in the maelstrom of sound.

With the exception of Blousey’s white flowery dress I thought all the costumes were excellent and fitted the period and the settings, although simple worked extremely well. Lighting was fine but having the two offices on the elevated area did cause dark patches and there were one or two blips with cueing.

The music was excellent and Musical Director Katy Cox had obviously worked this young cast well as all ensemble numbers as well as the solos were well done.  Once again the talented Jessica Clifford was in charge of choreography.  She always manages to pitch it just right giving the young cast routines they can cope with expertly.  I must make mentioned to Tallulah’s Girls who’s energetic routines were impressively executed

In summary, this was a fun show with much to commend it and what it lacked in pace was made up for with energy and enthusiasm.  Congratulations directors Sarah Smith and Tim McCormick and the A Team. ***Review by Julie Petrucci***