



# Show Report

AllStage Oldham

## Chicago: Teen Edition

01 November 2025

## PRODUCTION INFORMATION

PRODUCTION	Chicago: Teen Edition
SOCIETY	AllStage Oldham
VENUE	St Joseph's RC Parish Centre
GENRE	Musical
CAST SIZE	25
PRODUCTION TEAM	Ruby Firth, Hannah Welsby, Lucy Young
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT	Annie Cottle
MANAGEMENT TEAM	Chris Amis, Lauren Amis, Jayne Collins, Ruby Firth, Tom Penketh, Andy Welsby, Hannah Welsby, Lucy Young
STAGE MANAGER	Chris Amis
DEPUTY STAGE MANAGER	Lindsay Collins
BUILD TEAM	Chris Amis, Lauren Amis, Ste Brady, Holly Byrne, Joe Millington, Tom Penketh, Andy Welsby, Hannah Welsby, Jeff Welsby
SOUND DESIGN / OPERATOR	Andy Welsby & Hannah Welsby
LIGHTING DESIGN / OPERATOR	Ian Young & Aaron Smith
FOLLOW SPOTS	Tom Penketh & Annie Other
WARDROBE MISTRESS	Jayne Collins
PROPERTIES	Janet Hinchliffe
LEAD CHAPERONE	Keeley Schofield
SAFEGUARDING	Jayne Collins
PHOTOGRAPHY	Lucy & Ian Young
FRONT OF HOUSE	Society Friends & Family
PROGRAMME DESIGN	Lauren Amis
WIGS	Peter Stanton
SNACK BAR	Eliza Burns
MAIN BAR	Phil, Lisa & Caffè Grande Abaco

## CAST LIST

Velma Kelly	Izzy Rogan
Roxy Hart	Deryn Francis
Matron Mamma Morton	Ellie Burns
Billy Flynn	Alex Craven
Liz	Ash Smith
Annie	Jessie Cottle
June	Darci Hall

Hunyak	Lola Simpson
Amos Hart	Evan McKenna
Emcee & Fred Casley	Henry Buckley
Mary Sunshine	Erin Birch
Mona	Belle Chadderton
Go-To-Hell Kitty	Scarlett Robshaw
Sgt Foggarty	Annalee Bateman

## ENSEMBLE

	Matilda Chadderton
	Daisy Dixon
	Lillie Earle
	Izzy Hilderley
	Elsie McCullough
	Isabelle Scrivens
	Pippa Walker

## DANCERS

	Natasha Brown
	Charlotte Curtis
	Isabelle Davenport
	Robyn Griffith

DATE OF PERFORMANCE	Saturday 1st November 2025
DATE REPORT PUBLISHED	Monday 3rd November 2025
ADJUDICATOR ID	NSA1001

NSA LOGO ON POSTER	Yes
NSA IN PROGRAMME	Yes
PROGRAMME CLASS	Original Design

## THE REVIEW

REVIEW WORD COUNT

1910

STRONGEST ELEMENTS

### Powerful Performances

- **Izzy Rogan's** portrayal of Velma Kelly is done with mature confidence and powerful dancing. She never failed to complete every move with purpose.
- **Erin Birch's** characterisation of Mary Sunshine was compelling. She reacted well to any scene she was a part of and her singing left an impression.

### Bold, Intelligent Direction and Structure

- **Ruby Firth, Hannah Welsby** and **Lucy Young** worked together well to bring a youth cast to the stage with a piece that is complex and intricate.

### Striking and Cohesive Design Choices

- The take on Hunyak's special rope trick was interestingly done and worked not only in the space but for the youth cast as it was not too explicit about the subject it was referring to but did not make light of it either.

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Driving up to St Joseph's Parish Hall we were unsure what to expect but as soon as we entered, we received a warm welcome from the AllStage team. My guest and I were whisked backstage to see what the team had created with the space they had been given. They put most of the stage in themselves and created staging that was minimalistic but effective which worked for this production. The staging was a black box featuring light up letters that spelt out the musical's title. The seating was even organised in cabaret fashion in keeping with the style of the piece. The staging was created by their build team consisting of **Chris Amis, Lauren Amis, Ste Brady, Holly Byrne, Joe Millington, Tom Penketh, Andy Welsby, Hannah Welsby** and **Jeff Welsby**.

The show started with an appearance from **Henry Buckley** who portrayed Emcee to introduce us to the show and let us know what we were expecting for the rest of the show. Henry grabbed our attention straight away with clear diction and strong projection. We would later see Henry play Fred Casley. At times he turned to exit the stage before finishing the delivery of his dialogue. In future productions, I wish for him to take more time to deliver his lines and let the audience take in what he is saying and he will grow his confidence with more experience. He was also able to use his full body to create comedic moments, and I could see him pursuing more comedic roles in the future.

The first of our female leads came in the form of Velma Kelly played by **Izzy Rogan**. As soon as she entered the stage, we witnessed her compelling stage presence. She played the part with a convincing confidence which suited Velma's character well. You could definitely tell that Izzy has enjoyed playing and embracing this role and it meant that the audience were able to enjoy every moment she took to the stage also. At times her projection during her speech needed a bit more of a push as she projected well when singing so I knew this is something that she was capable of. Her soft and smooth singing voice was also accompanied by her strong dancing skills. Every move was done with flair and great extension which drew my eye whenever she was dancing as she lit up the stage.

Izzy was accompanied in Cell Block Tango by the other merry murderesses of the Cook County Jail. These were comprised of Liz played by **Ash Smith**, Annie played by **Jessie Cottle**, June played by **Darci Hall**, Hunyak played by **Lola Simpson** and Mona played by **Belle Chadderton**. During their separate sections of the Cell Block Tango, Ash had good projection, and Darci and Belle had great confidence. Lola's accent and characterisation of Hunyak was particularly fitting for the role and she drew my eye during this piece and throughout the musical. They were all great dancers and took part in some intricate choreography. Although all of them were strong and having fun on the stage - the standout dancers alongside Izzy were Lola and Darci. In other dance numbers they were also joined by the featured dancers **Natasha Bowden, Charlotte Curtis, Isabelle Davenport** and **Robyn Griffith**. The choreography throughout the show was complex and though at times needed further synchronisation, it cannot have been easy for the whole cast to learn and perform and they did it very well.

The leader of the merry murderesses of the Cook County Jail was Matron 'Mama' Morton played by **Ellie Burns**. She entered with her powerful singing during 'When you're good to Mama' and I was impressed by her vocal and breath control. Though I wish this would have transferred to when she was speaking as her speech often felt rushed, she needed to slow down so we could hear everything she was saying and to keep control during her dialogue also. But this will come with more experience and practice and can elevate her talents.

Our second female lead was played by **Deryn Francis** who took on the role of Roxie Hart. Our first introduction to Deryn is during her rendition of 'Funny Honey' where she displayed her bold vocals and these continued throughout the show. She put on a good accent and was able to keep that up, along with her energy and delivered light and shade throughout her dialogue. Her singing was able to command the stage and with further performance opportunities I hope Deryn can further command the stage during dialogue also, using her stature and making her movements bigger and more excentric. Her interaction with Billy Flynn was memorable especially the scene where she was playing a ventriloquist doll for Billy to control, she played this well but also could have taken the movements in this even further and larger but nevertheless, it was very entertaining and a joy to watch.

Helping both of our leading ladies throughout the show was Billy Flynn played by **Alex Craven**. He was able to drive the story well with his cocky confidence that suited the character well. You could tell that a lot of work had gone into his characterisation of Billy Flynn, using consistent

mannerisms, facial expressions and a great accent that was well sustained throughout. He also had a well-rounded singing voice and great diction especially in 'All I Care About Is Love'.

Roxie Hart's simple and loyal husband Amos was played by **Evan McKenna**. He played the role well and was able to get the audience to empathise with him. A few of the scenes he was involved in were at difficult points where there were other things going on on the stage and though he stayed present during those scenes it would have been more effective for him to play the character out to the audience more. He was brave to sing 'Mr Cellophane' solo and I think with growing confidence from other roles in the future, he will be able to further his acting skills to really draw the audience in and will go on to play large Principal parts with confidence in the future.

The reporter Mary Sunshine was portrayed by **Erin Birch** who played the sickly-sweet character with conviction. When she began singing in 'A Little Bit Of Good' there seemed to be a slight hiccup with the music and after a little chuckle from Erin she went back into character and adlibbed and went on to sing the song with a confident vocal and lovely use of vibrato. A moment like this would have shook even the most seasoned of performers so finding out that this was Erin's debut stage performance made it all the more impressive. Her characterisation never faltered, and I look forward to seeing her in more roles in the future.

The ensemble was well directed and were used to fill the stage well. Sgt Fogarty played by **Annalee Bateman** was engaged with the scene well and then reacted well to other scenes she was a part of. **Scarlett Robshaw** who played Go-To-Hell Kitty had her moment centre stage and you could tell that she was enjoying herself throughout the piece as her smile was always visible. The ensemble consisted of **Lillie Earle, Isabelle Hilderley, Elsie McCullough, Isabelle Scrivens, Pippa Walker, Matilda Chadderton** and **Daisy Dixon**. The youngest two members of the team were Elsie and Matilda, and it was noticeable that Matilda knew the show well, mouthing along and enjoying other characters' songs throughout. Also, Daisy displayed her diction and projection well when playing the judge during the trial scene.

The lighting was run by **Ian Young** and **Aaron Smith** during the production and was minimalistic but helped to keep the attention on the performers. They used follow spots (controlled by **Tom Penketh** and **Annie Other**) which helped to draw your attention to where the most action was happening and enhanced the feel of the piece. They also used a red wash which created an atmosphere especially during 'Hunyak's special rope trick'. During this scene, the stage started off fully lit then reduced to just the back entrance being lit red when the character fell to the floor and I found it a very interesting way for such a difficult subject to be directed, especially in the Teen Edition and the production team planned this well.

The sound was consistent throughout and levelled well by **Andy Welsby** and **Hannah Welsby**, with the use of backing tracks for the musical numbers during the show. There were a few moments where the performers had to wait just a little longer for their microphone to be turned on but with my knowledge of performing myself, it seemed as though the sound desk were waiting for applause to finish or for a little break between the action to give their audience

chance to digest what had just happened but with a youth cast, they still handled these moments well and did not let anything throw them off their focus.

The costumes were organised by **Jayne Collins** who made sure that all of the costumes were in keeping with the style of the musical. Most of the costumes were black with hints of sparkle, beading or that little something extra. One standout costume was worn by Mary Sunshine, and it stood out in a great way as it suited the character perfectly. Jayne was also the person in charge of safeguarding which was no small undertaking due to their limited space in the venue, but she made it work, and you could tell it was something she was passionate about.

The direction was led by the production team **Ruby Firth, Hannah Welsby** and **Lucy Young** with production assistant **Hannah Cottle**. The direction was well thought out, there were moments where there were just one or two performers on stage but there were also moments that they used all of the cast. There was a build throughout the piece and great use of a breakaway space just to the side of the stage. They were well aided by Stage Manager **Chris Amis** and Assistant Stage Manager **Lindsay Collins**. Though at times I was looking for a bit more energy from the performers, I know as a performer myself that a matinee show can sometimes be the most difficult trying to get your energy up to the level that is needed whilst still conserving enough energy for a second performance later that day. At times the ensemble needed to smile a bit more or if they were trying to look stern it needed to be a bit more obvious but for the first show from a brand-new society, it was a great start and thoroughly entertaining.

The show ended with a high as all of the cast members hit the stage to sing the reprise of All That Jazz. It was far from a cacophony as all of them sang with strength and smiles as their performance finished on a double show day. This being the inaugural performance from this society, you can tell that this is only the beginning, and I cannot wait to see what direction this society heads in next. Thank you so much to AllStage for your hospitality and we cannot wait to see what else you have in store in the future and thank you to all the cast and crew for a wonderful first production – you should be immensely proud!

## PHOTOGRAPHS





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## PROGRAMME

