



Show Report

North Manchester AODS

Guys and Dolls

14 October 2025

PRODUCTION INFORMATION

PRODUCTION	Guys and Dolls
SOCIETY	North Manchester AODS
VENUE	NWTAC Theatre
GENRE	Musical
CAST SIZE	37
DIRECTOR	Sophie Lord
ASSISTANT DIRECTORS	Emily Fitzpatrick & Elliott O'Brart
MUSICAL DIRECTOR	Jon Gibson
CHOREOGRAPHER	Jayde Rylance
STAGE MANAGER	Lucy Strong
SET DESIGN	Mark Beaumont
LIGHTING DESIGN/OPERATOR	Mark Beaumont
SOUND DESIGN/OPERATOR	Katie Gough
PRODUCTION SECRETARY	Theresa Allcock
WARDROBE	Catherine King
MARKETING/PUBLICITY	Nick Lowe
BACKSTAGE	Theresa Allcock, Catherine King & Martin Taylor
REHEARSAL PIANIST	Isobel Ingham
FRONT OF HOUSE	NWTAC
CAST PHOTOGRAPHER	David-Lee Photography
TICKET SECRETARY	Annie Dixon
PROMPT	Lindsay Lowe
MAKEUP	Ashlee McMahon & Catrina Desousa
COSTUMES	The Boyz
FUNDRAISING TEAM	Maureen Leigh, Theresa Allcock, Phil Hamnett & Nick Lowe
PROPERTIES	Catherine King

MUSICIANS

KEYS	John G. Barry
REEDS	Kat Dunphy/Emily McArthur
TRUMPET	Andrew Farrow
TROMBONE	Adam Dutch
BASS	Simon Chaplin
PERCUSSION	Dan Bennett

CAST LIST

Nathan Detroit	Nick Lowe
Miss Adelaide	Emily Fitzpatrick
Sky Masterson	Adrian Davison
Sarah Brown	Sasha Carrillo
Arvide Abernathy	David Lawton
Nicely, Nicely Johnson/Hot Box Announcer	Elliott O'Brart
Benny Southstreet	Keith McEvoy
Harry The Horse	Anthony Horricks
Big Jule	Bernard Wynne
Lt Brannigan	Adam Cornett
Rusty Charlie	Oliver Hingston
General Matilda Cartwright	Annie Dixon
Agatha	Jenny Powrie
Angie The Ox	Luke Jones
Mimi/Havana Dancer	Caoimhe Bradley
Hot Box/Havana Dancer	Catherine Borg-Fenech
Hot Box/Havana Dancer	Vicky Parry
Hot Box/Havana Dancer	Jayde Rylance
Hot Box/Havana Dancer	Claire Williams
Hot Box/Havana Dancer	Jess Langan
Joey Biltmore	Martin Taylor
Save-A-Soul Missionary/Crapshooter	Phil Hamnett
Havana Waiter/Save-A-Soul Missionary/Crapshooter	David Long
Havana Dancer/Broadway Doll	Evie Smith
Save-A-Soul Missionary	Maxine Cregan
Newspaper Boy/Crapshooter	Toby Perks
Crapshooter	Fekhar Alawadi
Crapshooter	John O'Brien
Crapshooter	Kath Storey
Havana Dancer/Crapshooter	Isaac Brooks
Crapshooter	Artin Sayadi
Crapshooter	Andrew Evans
City Drunkard	Roy Dowson
Havana Dancer/Broadway Doll	Mel Jones
Havana Dancer/Broadway Doll	Sheila Byrne
Havana Dancer/Crapshooter/Broadway Doll	Rebecca Tonge
Hot Box Waitress/Broadway Doll	Julia Smith

DATE OF PERFORMANCE	Tuesday 14th October 2025
DATE REPORT PUBLISHED	Wednesday 15th October 2025
ADJUDICATOR ID	NSA1001
NSA LOGO ON POSTER	Yes - Social Media
NSA IN PROGRAMME	Yes
PROGRAMME CLASS	Best Licenced Design

THE REVIEW

REVIEW WORD COUNT	1775
STRONGEST ELEMENTS	Powerful Performances

- **Elliott O'Brart** created a compelling performance with his characterisation of Nicely-Nicely Johnson. His use of body, vocal range and comic timing meant that he drew the eye throughout the production and created laugh-out-loud moments.
- **Emily Fitzpatrick's** portrayal of Miss Adelaide showed great consistency. She captured the audience straight away with her strong accent, over the top facial expressions and use of her full body to act and react and she kept this up right until the very end (even during musical numbers which is no small feat).

Ensemble that made an impact

- It was refreshing to see such a large male ensemble of such varied ages. They were strong on the whole and made a lasting impression especially during musical numbers '*The Oldest Established*' and '*Luck Be a Lady*'.

Striking and Cohesive Design Choices

- The costumes sourced for this production really helped to bring you to the 1950's when this piece is set and it seemed as though every costume choice had been thought about especially the outfit chosen for Miss Adelaide in the final scene.

With this being my first time attending a production at NWTAC Theatre, I was unsure what to expect. After retrieving the ticket for my guest and I, we entered the bar area where we were instantly spotted and welcomed by Pat Smithies, the treasurer for North Manchester Amateur

Operatic & Dramatic Society, who gave us a programme for the show and showed us to our seats.

Seated directly in the middle of the crowd, we were able to get our first look at the open stage that was dimly lit whilst the musicians began the overture. The musicians, comprised of **John G. Barry, Kat Dunphy, Emily McArthur, Andrew Farrow, Adam Dutch, Simon Chaplin** and **Dan Bennett**, navigated through the music with ease and this helped to drive the musical along. The layout of the venue meant that the band were in a section along the right side of the front of house. This meant that they were not a distraction from whatever was taking place on the stage, but you were still able to direct your attention towards them especially when the orchestration was being used to cover a scene change.

Throughout the overture, we were able to get our first glimpse of the staging. The initial set featured an art deco style door towards the back of the stage which was fitting with the time period in which this musical is set and works to signify the entrance to the Hot Box Club which also has a sign next to it with the words Hot Box that were spelt out in lights that later on we saw lit up. As a contrast to the entrance of the Hot Box Club, there was also a shop front that is pointedly understated as we find out this is the meeting place for the missionaries of the Save-A-Soul Mission.

It is sometimes difficult to know where to start when bringing to life a classic such as *Guys and Dolls*, but Director **Sophie Lord** had a distinct point of view and aided by Assistant Directors **Emily Fitzpatrick** and **Elliott O'Brart** were able to bring the timeless nature of this musical to life. Under the musical direction of **Jon Gibson**, the musical numbers were strong throughout and with harmonies scattered throughout that caught my attention and left me wanting more, especially as the cast seemed able to deliver those harmonies with conviction. The set design by **Mark Beaumont** makes use of the stage space well, with the movement of the wall of the Save-a-Soul Mission to reveal an understated meeting place of the missionaries being simple yet effective. During the scenes in which we were viewing the inside of the Hot Box Club, there was a curtain drawn across and it was clear what this was signifying although I would have preferred there to be a starker contrast or more elements to signify the inside of the club.

The scene changes were done with ease which were led by **Lucy Strong** and her team backstage consisting of **Theresa Allcock, Catherine King** and **Martin Taylor**. Although at times the stage crew were seen changing elements of the set, this would have been more effective had there been a full black out during these changes or to make use of the large cast to move the set as when this was utilised it was really effective and helped to keep the flow between the scenes. The props also added to the story and were scattered throughout the scenes, and these were organised by **Catherine King** also.

After the overture, we were introduced to Nicely-Nicely Johnson played by **Elliott O'Brart**, Benny Southstreet played by **Keith McEvoy** and Rusty Charlie played by **Oliver Hingston** who began performing Fugue for Tinorns. The ineffable presence of Nicely-Nicely Johnson left a lasting impression that he continued to match throughout the whole show. Arriving on stage in his red and purple checked suit which matched the cheeky persona of his character so well, he showed that he also had a performance to match such an eye-catching suit. Elliott used his full

vocal range to create further comedy from delivering a message or imitating some of the other characters. He was also able to display some great comic timing through the role of Nicely-Nicely. **Keith McEvoy** as Benny Southstreet was often the scene partner to Nicely-Nicely Johnson but was not put off by his overexaggerated personality and was able to hold his own and the two of them shared some lovely vocal moments in the musical numbers in the show.

There is a shift in the atmosphere when the missionaries first enter the stage from the Save-a-Soul mission. The missionaries comprised of **Maxine Cregan, David Long, Phil Hamnett, Jenny Powrie** as Agatha and **David Lawton** as Arvide Abernathy. The missionaries played their parts well, as soft spoken but commanding of the stage in their uniform presence. **David Lawton** lent into the kind natured character of Arvide Abernathy and displayed a smooth and heartfelt rendition of More I Cannot Wish You in Act 2. The missionaries were also joined later in the musical by General Matilda Cartwright who is the leader of the missionaries. **Annie Dixon** played General Cartwright, with a softly spoken nature, this was an interesting take on the role as I was expecting a more stern delivery but enjoyed this portrayal.

The main voice box of the Save-a-Soul missionaries is Sarah Brown played by **Sasha Carrillo**. Sasha Carrillo began the role as commanding, well-spoken with great diction although seemed nervous when we first heard her sing, this seemed fitting for the character, and you could tell those nerves had truly melted away by Act 2. Sasha is also able to capture the change in Sarah Brown's nature after we found out that she has been drinking without her knowledge. The way she captures Sarah Brown becoming more chaotic throughout If I Were a Bell was captivating to watch.

We were then introduced to one of our leading men, Nathan Detroit played by **Nick Lowe** during The Oldest Established. It is obvious that Nick knows the role well and although understated in his delivery to begin with, still stands out amongst the Crapshooters. Another of the Crapshooters that stood out was Harry the Horse played by **Anthony Horricks**. His consistent use of his full body to portray his role and memorable laugh made sure that he always pulled focus in amongst a crowd (especially during his chicken imitation).

Along with some of the Crapshooters that have already been mentioned, there was also **Toby Perks, Luke Jones, John O'Brien, Kath Storey, Isaac Brooks, Andrew Evans** and two newcomers to the stage in the form of **Fekhar Alawadi** and **Artin Sayadi**. To see such a strong 'male' ensemble was really refreshing to see as it is not always the cast amongst amateur theatre and we often see theatre groups crying out for more men to fill roles. Another newcomer to the stage was **Bernard Wynne** with his portrayal of Big Jule. We saw the characterisation established with such a strong accent, fitting for the character when initially introduced to him but the characterisation grew into the second Act. With this being the opening night, I can only hope that Bernard Wynne becomes even more comfortable on stage and continues to develop his characterisation as I felt I was seeing the beginnings of some brilliant characterisation.

Adrian Davison also joins the Crapshooters in the role of the self-assured Sky Masterson. Adrian was gifted with many moments to show off his resonant and rich vocals. There is definitely a

switch in Adrian's portrayal of Sky Masterson when he realises his love for Sarah Brown, but I wished that the cocky self-assuredness was even more prominent so that this switch was even more of a contrast.

We first meet the long-suffering girlfriend of Crapshooter organiser Nathan Detroit, Miss Adelaide in the Hot Box Club with the other Hot Box showgirls. The Hot Box showgirls are played by **Caoimhe Bradley, Vicky Parry, Claire Williams, Jess Langan, Catherine Borg-Fenech** and **Jayde Rylance**, who was also the choreographer for this show. The choreography was reasonably simple but effective and seemed to have been created for a cast of mixed abilities. **Emily Fitzpatrick's** depiction of Miss Adelaide captures the audience's attention from the moment she enters the stage right through to the end of the show. She has a great use of her facial expression and full body even when she isn't the one speaking. Her accent is consistent throughout, even during her singing which isn't easy to maintain. Emily got a lot of laughs from the audience, but she also created a character that the audience empathised with.

There was also Lt. Brannigan played by **Adam Cornett** who played the role with a fast paced monotone voice which was fitting for the role. **Martin Taylor** made the most of his moment of playing Joey Biltmore in a phone conversation with Nathan Detroit and made good use of rise and fall to comedic effect. Amongst the ensemble there was also **Rebecca Tonge, Mel Jones, Sheila Byrne, Julia Smith** and **Evie Smith** who played a combination of different roles in different scenes. I believe that there could have been even more use made of any of the ensemble members to fill out and create more movement in more of the scenes. A special mention to **Roy Dowson** who played the city drunkard as he was committed to his role and his reactions and facial expressions were noticed throughout.

The lighting used, also designed and operated by **Mark Beaumont**, was appropriate and was used well to pull focus to a certain area of the stage or to indicate the time of day passing. The warm wash used was fitting during the romantic moments. The sound operated by **Katie Gough** was balanced to begin with but as always is the case in theatre, there may have been some opening night teething problems. Trying to manage the levels of head microphones and floor microphones is no easy task and it seemed there was some interference on the microphones in the second act in particular. Although you would not have been able to know by the way the cast reacted as they carried on as though there were no technical issues.

Overall, the production left me with some stand out moments that I will be remembering over the coming weeks, and everyone involved should be proud of this production and I hope the rest of your audiences enjoy it as much as we did. Thank you again to NMADOS for their warm hospitality; I very much look forward to visiting again.

PHOTOGRAPHS





PROGRAMME

