

**Review of The Best of Broadway by Sharon Drummond
North West Theatre Arts Company (NWTAC) June 2018**

Cabaret shows, whilst sometimes appearing easier to stage are in my opinion a lot harder as although individuals can learn songs at home, dances and harmonies need rehearsal time. This group never cease to amaze me putting on shows in a few weeks with a handful of rehearsals. For this group the short time scale doesn't compromise the quality of the production – EVER.

The growth of each individual performer is such a joy to watch with these young people and the supportive, challenging environment created by the adults who mentor them is perfect for this development. The choice of songs was very varied and ranged from old shows including Gilbert & Sullivan, Showboat and Oklahoma to the newest ones on Broadway including Hamilton, Dear Evan Hansen and Book of Mormon so there really was something for everyone.

This group of young people are always up for the challenge and this show had 42 songs many of which were company numbers and included choreography. All this in a few rehearsals. I love that all the cast have parts to play including presenting skills between the songs with one half of each duo mastering American accents.

I can't comment on every performance as with 42 songs this review would take a week to read but the one thing I can say is each performer grows with every performance.

On Broadway was a great start to the show which lovely harmonies and choreography. Three Little Maids was beautifully performed by Grace Donohue, Eva Carty and Annabelle Cook and Ol' Man River was a nice song choice for Adam Whitmore to show off his vocal range. I loved "Nothing" from A Chorus Line which was well sung and acted by Holly Norbury.

There was a fabulous performance by Gabrielle Adebajo on Broadway Baby with nice dance moves, great vocals and bags of stage presence. I Got Rhythm, and You Could Drive a Person Crazy were beautifully performed and I loved the Barnum number headed by Liam Watson who is perfect for these big company numbers as apart from strong vocals he is so watchable with bags of stage presence. The Second half of Act 1 had lesser known songs from more obscure musicals but I loved each and every one with I'm not Afraid by Eva Carty and Life in Living Colour by Liam and the full company being personal highlights. The dancing performed in all the numbers was beautiful and Melissa Grimes and Poppy Evans deserve a special mention for Mama who Bore Me.

The second half was stunning and I can't find enough expletives for how great many of these numbers were. I loved Hello from one of my favourite musicals by the Boys, Proud of Your Boy was great by Szymon Tomczyk and Alexander Hamilton was beautifully executed. Seize the Day from Newsies was brilliant with Reuben Williamson heading the seconds in this number. Grace Donohue, Jade Hamer and Annabelle Cook performed their numbers faultlessly and the Color Purple by Jasmine Nisic and company was breathtaking. The last two numbers, Under the Sea from The Little Mermaid and You Will Be Found from another favourite show of mine Dear

Evan Hansen were absolutely fantastic and the ending putting on their hoodies with the powerful message emblazoned on their backs was very powerful. I thoroughly enjoyed the show and watching the talent that is abundant in this company. Keep up the good work and see you all soon.