

Bugsy Malone Jr. musical, 'a roaring good time' for audiences of all ages



Written By **Marie Hoy-Kenny**

Residents of Dufferin County are invited to come out and support a cast of local 7 to 16-year-old actors and singers as they take the stage by storm, performing 'Bugsy Malone Jr.', a fun and lively stage version based on the hit 1976 film that featured Jodie Foster and Scott Baio.

LP Productions, a non-profit theatre company based out of Shelburne, has put the performance together.

According to the play's producer, one of LP Productions' founders and Dundalk resident, Alison Port, 'It's like a mini West Side Story, but has been adapted to suit kids. It is a parody of 1920s gangster movies without the violence. Instead of shooting, they threw custard pies. We're using silly string for this one.'

The show is sure to be entertaining with its catchy music, delightful choreography, and humorous and clever script. The young actors are polishing up their New York accents, ready to shine for the show.

Port decided to choose this play because she has fond memories of watching the movie as a child. Although the production features rivals competing, the deeper message is about resolving conflicts and forming unlikely friendships. She explains that this play 'touches on some modern-day difficulties facing kids today regarding bullying,' and that her favourite part is 'the happy ending with everyone coming together and realizing that they could have been anything they wanted to be and fighting didn't solve anything,' which is always a timely moral for people to contemplate.

Port also expresses that youth sporting events may fill stadiums and arenas, but not every child is going to receive praise and recognition for their athletic skills, and supporting developing skills in the arts is crucial. Learning to present publicly is an asset in most careers, and at the same time, these young people are learning the critical importance of dedication and commitment. They attend practices three times a week in preparation for this performance.

Port hopes the young actors will be able to look out into the audience and see the encouragement of their community, propelling them towards continuing to demonstrate strong public speaking skills or even possible careers in the entertainment industry, future stars forming on a local stage.

To quote a line from the play, 'Okay fellas, this is our moment. Keep a cool head and keep those fingers pumpin', 'cause remember, it's history you'll be writin'.'

Perhaps our local youth are writing history before our eyes. Shelburne's Grace Tipling Hall is sure to be bursting with fun and

energy during the show dates, which run from Nov. 24 to Dec. 3. The stage will come alive through music, dancing, acting, and plenty of laughter.

Tickets are available through Eventbrite.