

Billy Elliot

The Reporter was lucky enough to go and see Billy Elliot last year in London.

But now we have a different kind of show here in Edinburgh.

Edinburgh Gang Show and The Manor School of Ballet present Billy Elliot The Musical at the Festival Theatre on 4th and 5th June 2010



It is fabulous and at the same time sobering to realise that these are very young actors and dancers who are appearing on stage. The acrobatics have to be seen to be believed!

To celebrate five years in the West End, the producers of Billy Elliot The Musical have launched Billy Youth Theatre, an exciting new initiative providing schools and youth groups around the country with the opportunity to perform their own version of this internationally award-winning show. Billy Elliot writer Lee Hall, together with Martin Koch (Musical Supervision and Orchestrations), have adapted their original script and orchestrations for groups staging local productions as part of Billy Youth Theatre. With 115 separate shows being staged across the country, and seven in Scotland, Billy Youth Theatre is a nationwide event and Edinburgh Gang Show with The Manor School of Ballet are delighted to announce that they will be taking part with their production planned for 4th and 5th June at the Festival Theatre, Edinburgh and at the same time raising funds for Radio Forth's Cash for Kids. As part of Billy Youth Theatre, selected productions of Billy Elliot from around the country will be invited to perform at showcases held in major regional theatres between April and June 2010. This will culminate with some groups being offered the opportunity to follow in the steps of Billy and perform at the BYT West End Gala at the Victoria Palace Theatre, Billy's

London home, on the 18th July 2010. Lee Hall, who originally conceived the idea behind Billy Youth Theatre, said: "I am delighted that young people around the country will have the opportunity to bring the story of Billy Elliot to life in their local communities". Billy Elliot director, Stephen Daldry said: "It is very exciting that we are able to offer young people around the country a chance to pour their energy and creativity into local productions of Billy Elliot. We are looking forward to seeing their ideas brought to life."

The boy who will play Billy in Edinburgh, 13 year-old Matthew Hall, is hugely excited about playing this iconic role. He said: "It's awesome to be able to say that I'm Billy. I've loved learning to dance and be part of this amazing opportunity – and I get to perform on the massive stage of the Festival Theatre!" Billy Youth Theatre is open to schools and established youth groups in England, Scotland and Wales, and to performers aged 10-19.

The Edinburgh Gang Show is the largest annual show at the King's Theatre and features over 200 young people from Scouting and Girlguiding and is currently celebrating 50 years of entertaining in the capital and this is the first time it has undertaken such a project.

The Manor School of Ballet is one of Scotland's most established and respected Ballet Schools with branches across Edinburgh and the Scottish Borders. Billy Elliot The Musical will be directed by Andy Johnston. The Musical Director will be John Duncan with choreography by Claire Smith and Jacqueline Casey. The show will feature a cast of over 90 young people, a large orchestra and approximately 60 adult helpers behind the scenes.

The Gang Show will take place as normal in November