

Cinders beats Mona and Lisa to be pretty as a picture

Sanderstead Dramatic Club
Cinderella

Donald Madgwick

THIS IS ONE of those few pantomimes in which you do not get a scatty but loveable Dame. True, you get two Dames for the price of one, but both are about as malevolent as they come.

Sanderstead's seasonal offering is in many respects all that a good village panto should be. They make the most of their resources, with brightly painted sets, lovely costumes, a simple but lucidly told storyline, and performers of whom they can be rightly proud.

Foremost among the last-named are John Shepherd and David Apps as the Ugly Sisters Mona and Lisa, who together, at least in their own estimation, make quite a picture.

Trading insults like a couple of bitchy old queens, they unite only to make common cause against Helen Chandler as poor Cinders, who really is as pretty as a picture.

In contrast, there is a pleasing freshness about the innocent relationship between Cinders and Alister Hussain's Buttons, a model of touching devotion who is also a great hit with the kids.

In terms of glamour, you could not put a cigarette paper between Catherine Yardley as Dandini and Katherine Thompson as Prince Charming. No household Kates they, and either one of them is equally fit to wear the princely garb.

The airs and graces of Dot Reid's Baroness Hardup meet an easy target in John Tait as her Baron, a wimpish worthy we long to galvanise into action with a smart kick in the pants.

As the Fairy Godmother, Glenys O'Sullivan's benevolence has to compete against introductory smoke flashes so violent they make us jump out of our seats. Ian Watson's avuncular Chamberlain completes an exemplary cast of principals.

A special word must be said about the dancing. The seniors, as leggy a crew as you will see for miles around and choreographed by Amanda Grace, perform a really smart routine at the Royal Hunt, to the fitting music of a Mozart horn concerto.

As for Pemy Parkes' children, alternately Miss Penny's Peaches and Miss Penny's Poppets, they are, quite simply, a delight. Many a, proud Mum there must be in the audience as they perform *The Teddy Bears' Picnic* in the woods.

They are the icing on the cake of a charming show produced by Liz Denton, with the musical direction of Chris Greenhalgh.