

LOVE ALL 2000

2000

RICHMOND DRAMA AWARDS

A true labour of love

SOMETHING for everybody was served up in Heather Godley and Stephen Oliver's ambitious compilation *Love All 2000* for Teddington Theatre Club at Hampton Hill Playhouse last week.

Urbane linkman was Michael Godley and the evening got off to a good start with an opening chorus sung with great elan, of 'Comedy Tonight' from Sondheim's *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, plus a *soupc*on of scenes from the show including astonishing acrobatics from Lisa Coster as Gymnasia.

Following thick and fast was Anon's 'Noah and his Wife'; from Shakespeare, of course, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with some rather dejected spirits of the night and the peacock splendour of Beth Hinds' Titania dazzled by Jim Tickle's Bottom.

A scene from Congreve's *Way of the World* was given sparkling, sophisticated performances by Rosemary Oliver and Nick Young as Millament and Mirabel, which left me wanting more of this superb

comedy.

Tessa Davies made a perky Polly Peachum with John Pyle in fine voice as MacHeath and after the interval, in Burns' 'My Love is Like a Red Red Rose'.

Hiss and boo time came with Andrew Sachs pastiche Victorian melodrama 'The Drunkard's Dilemma' in which Tessa Davies swooned balletically as wicked landlord Michael Norman tried to have his wicked way with her.

Gilbert & Sullivan were represented by Win Couchman's beautifully sung Fairy Queen from *Iolanthe* and Wendy Bedford as Katisha and Ko-Ko tripped the light fantastic in a duet from *The Mikado*.

George Bernard Shaw was given (indirectly) an assured voice by Nick Young's Professor Henry Higgins in 'Why Can't a Woman.....?' from *My Fair Lady*.

There was an irreverent look at the movies of the Twenties courtesy of Jerry Harman's *Mack and Mabel* with great costumes and Peter Slater as Mack Sennett serenading

Rosemary Oliver's Mabel in 'I Won't Send Roses'.

A touch of light romance came in 'Tea for Two' sung by bright young things Tracy Frankson and Marc Batten.

Tom Stoppard's 'The Invention of Love' had Peter Slater giving a moving interpretation of poet and scholar, A E Houseman as he confesses his feelings for Charles A Halford's Jackson.

Joan Scarrott was a deliciously knowing Mrs Swabb in Alan Bennett's take on the swinging Sixties, *Habeas Corpus* and there was excellent comedy playing from the whole team with Charles A Halston well cast as the lustful Dr Wicksteed.

It would seem impossible to satirise soaps since these days they are succeeding so well at it themselves, but Jimmie Chinn managed fairly well in *Stenderdale Street*, brimming with sub-plots galore and a round-up of all the usual characters and aided by the talented cast.

Indeed a labour of love for all by producers and the hosts of people involved.

Jenny Scott