

ROMEO + JULIET 1992

RICHMOND DRAMA AWARDS



Verona in Elsinore?

A CHILLY northern atmosphere pervades this week's presentation of *Romeo and Juliet* in the unheated Hampton Court Theatre.

Despite Gordon Wood's setting of ochre walls and terracotta tiles, designed to suggest a sun-baked Verona, an Elsinorean tone is set by David Evans as a surly Capulet, by Susan Bell as his glacial wife, and Barry Evans as a tough talking burgomaster Prince of Verona.

David Hannigan, until recently a leading member of Youth Action Theatre, gives a weighty performance as a Romeo with the vocal melancholy of Hamlet, star-crossed with Clare Lee's mature Juliet. She convincingly portrays the fourteen-year old bride in her skittish scenes with Heather Godley's Nurse, but at other times seems an outspoken shrew with a brisk temper.

Roger Smith plays a comfortable, Tuck-like Friar Laurence with a sonorous voice, while sunny performances come from Karim Peermohammed, clearly enjoying his role as Tybalt, Ben Martin as Mercutio, and a graceful Count Paris by Stephen Wicks.

John Roth's production for Teddington Theatre Club, entered for the Richmond Drama Awards, employs the fluid style of the Elizabethan playhouse, with an almost seamless flow of scenes, linked

by Prokofiev's ballet suite, and fine period costumes organised by Helen Smith and Kaye Hawkes. Final performance is tomorrow.