

up front

MUSIC MANIA

The best in local talent is showcased at SDSS on the weekend.



Music Mania, the 31st edition, was held to sell-out crowds on the weekend. At left, Jim Cadieux sings a tribute to Elvis, while above, John Greenwood (left) and Rick Lightfoot perform in the reluctant pirate skit. Below, the combined chorus sings, and at bottom, Barb Burgess and Jack Watson dance for the appreciative crowd.



Music Mania proved Stouffville has gone Hollywood

Variety has nothing on the Stouffville Tribune. Our own man on the scene Bruce Stapley, used his status as local paparazzi to get in with the stars of the show. His review follows.

They held auditions for Music Mania - The Movie on the Stouffville District Secondary School stage over the weekend.

And when it was all done, the every-day housewives and average joes of Stouffville may have failed to impress hot shot Hollywood director Cecil B. Schmeel, but they had the audience roaring its approval.

Hollywood? Eh?, the title of this year's 31st Music Mania production had been billed as upbeat, fast moving and technically advanced by past standards.

And while the show fulfilled its promise, it didn't disappoint those who return year after year to see and hear the old standards and Music Mania traditions.

It all started as the pompous chauvinist Schmeel, ably portrayed by Chris Burkholder, breezed into Slowville, to give the town's annual musical variety show the break of a lifetime: the chance to be featured in a Hollywood movie.

The townspeople strutted their stuff in an effort to portray Western-style productions, legends and classics of the entertainment industry, horror films, musicals and gangsters.

Along the way, the show offered a combination of colorful

mass choreography, lustily rendered chorus numbers, entertaining dance numbers and acting in the timeless Music Mania tradition.

As usual, there were corny one-liners, the drunks around the lamppost, the worn-out gags and the flatulence jokes. For it just wouldn't be Music Mania without a little tackiness.

But from the standpoint of sheer artistry, there was Ozzie Bradshaw and Sue Brugger teaming up to give a most pleasing rendition of Unchained Melody, while dance director Mary Nicc showed the extent of her versatility by pairing off with Kathi Phillips to take us back to the 1940s with their smooth-as-silk Someone to Watch Over Me.

Newcomer John Greenwood brought the house down as the pantywaisted pirate who decided he would rather sing and dance than womanize and plunder.

The Stockings gave the Nylons reason to stand and take notice with their inspired acapella effort of Up the Ladder to the Roof; the Beatles' Twist and Shout brought the first half to a rocking wild finale; Larry Gibbs and Mary Nicc, along with the rest of the dancers, were daringly adept during In The Mood.

And the chorus earned the loudest, longest ovation of the night, touching a chord with its Sound of Music medley.

Town Council even got in on the act, taking off, along the Yellow Brick Road in search of Stouffville with a big pipe, as

Mayor Sue Myers and crew pondered what they could do if I Only Had a Drain.

Rick Lightfoot continued to perfect his caricature of a caricature of Councillor Jim Sanders, while the others were certain to have induced wincing from the councillors they portrayed.

However, it was the provincial and federal politicians who incurred the wrath of the audience, which roared its approval when Brian Mulroney and Bob Rae ended up as the two biggest boobs, given the floozy talk show guest granted one wish by the genie.

In the end, the colorful turtles had strutted their stuff under the black light, and Marilyn Monroe had been recreated in that dress over the subway grate; it was time for Stouffville to stand up and be counted.

Schmeel was sent packing by Director Cathy Christoff, after Rick Lightfoot incited the troops to riot.

The chorus finished up by reclaiming the show and town with the grand finale being performed in front of a backdrop when suddenly the immortal Hollywood sign in the hills changed to Stouffville.

The event was directed by Christoff, assistant director was Dave Duggan, producer Doris Harvey, assistant producer Liz Lightfoot, chorus director was Ann Bell, dance director was Mary Nicc and skit director was Cathy McNaught and her assistant was Susan McPhee.