

# Gigi captures the Drury Lane spirit

Gigi, Civic Theatre

DRURY Lane may be "dark", but its spirit lives at the Civic this week, where CAODS are presenting Gigi.

Of course we don't have West End facilities, and the first night had some unfortunate accidents. However, I know that this is unavoidable, given the schedule, and that things will have improved enormously by the end of the week.

Lerner and Loew's original is rather heavy-handed, and one of its wit was laboured. But the audience warmed to some superb central performances.

Audrey Hinton, as Aunt Alicia, and Joy Wallace as a worldly-wise but warm-hearted Mamita, were both totally convincing. Most stylish, incidentally, was Arthur Hull, doubly inscrutable as a butler and a head waiter.

Patrick Tucker sang brilliantly as Gaston, the young dandy who gets the girl.

The "Chevalier" role was taken with considerable panache by Leo McGiff, nerves and a few memory lapses notwithstanding. But why did he, alone, sport a throaty French accent, I wonder?

But, as Honore reminds us, the reason we are here is Gigi. She was played delightfully by Christine Young. Her gamine charm — and vulnerable innocence — won the audience straightaway. One of the most memorable moments was the vision of her biting the toffee-apple on the back seat of a tandem.

The production, though short of magic, was competent and colourful. My only quibble was that the subtle nostalgia of "I'm glad I'm not young anymore" was drowned by the caricatured cavortings of a geriatric chorus line. The nearest thing I've seen to an error of judgement in a Ray Jeffrey production.

The Musical Director was Gerald Hindes, conducting his first show for CAODS.

ERIC ASHLEY



Four lovely ladies . . .



Gigi — Christine Young — takes the centre stage.