

RAPPAHANNOCK NEWS

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Wig out on 'The Talented Clementine'

BY LARRY "BUD" MEYER

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Warning! There's no way to step gingerly around it: When you go see *The Talented Clementine*, you'll be seeing red.

As in big floppy red-haired wigs. Lots of wigs — from the one adorning standout performer Nona Gregg in the title role of RAAC Community Theater's spirited holiday play, to the mop atop her exasperated dad, to the enormous puffball worn by her scene-stealing dancing baby sister.

And heavens (!) you'll see stars, from the stars (and moons) above Cynthia Stamps' terrific set to the many-generation ensemble cast of singers, dancers, actors, hula-hoopsters, rapsters, tapsters and a howlin' dog named Buddy, all happily tromping the boards.

No doubt you'll see talent — though *Clementine* has doubts about her own from the outset. Seemingly every talented child in Rappahannock County plays a role in this year's family-friendly holiday play, directed by RAAC theater artistic director Patty Hardee (who once portrayed a pretty good onstage dog herself).

It indeed takes a village to mount such a production and pull it off, and you'll see ample evidence of that in the credits, among the crew, and in

the crowd of beaming parents and siblings afterward on Gay Street.

The real kudos for this performance go to artistic director Paul Reisler and *Clementine* music director Cheryl Toth of much-admired *Kid Pan Alley*.

Reisler wrote it by adapting Sara Pennypacker's theatrical book, infusing it lovingly with nearly two dozen catchy tunes with witty, kid-driven lyrics. Two decades of teaching young people about the power of music come to the fore in *Clementine*, with standouts abounding.

Personal fave: *Sister for Sale*, adeptly performed by McKenna Torosian and Giuletta Pates leading the ensemble cast. Choreographers Anne Williams and Philip Rosemond should be proud.

I dare you not to giggle when *Clementine's* kid sister shimmies. And just how did little Parker Grace Shaw keep that orange-ya-glad, made-ya-laugh prop of a wig atop her tiny head anyway?

Bet you'll wig out on *The Talented Clementine*. I did.

RAAC Community Theatre's The Talented Clementine returns to 310 Gay St. at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 13; 3 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 14; and 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 15. For reservations: <https://raacc.org> or call 1-800-695-6075.