



PRINCESS TUTU: VOLUME 1

5 Episodes, 125 minutes, Rating TV 14 (ADV Films)

Once upon a time, there was a little duck who dreamed of falling in love and to dance with her prince. But for the poor duck, it was not meant to be because...well, duck is a duck.

Until a bizarre old man gives the duck a pendant that changes the duck to a girl.

The girl, named Duck is given a chance but needs to follow the old man's order. That is to help the prince who appears to lack emotions, find pieces of his heart in order to bring happiness to the prince.

And with a special power of turning into Princess Tutu who has the power to unite the shards to the prince's heart.

All things seem to go well until you find out that Duck's presence as a girl also has its caveats. If Duck is to ever act like a duck, she will change to a duck (that is until she finds water and she'll change back to a girl).

The first five episodes feature Duck as she does what she can to help the prince. The first episode serves as introduction to main characters and the supporting characters of the series. As well as show-

ing the characters passion of ballet.

From episode 2-4, the storyline focuses on Duck as she encounters interesting characters who have the prince's shards of emotions but how will Duck be able to obtain the shards, when those holding on to them feel they need those emotions.

I have to admit, I was a bit cautious of watching "Princess Tutu", I thought it would be an anime only for young girls but actually this anime is pretty damn good.

The animation for "Princess Tutu" is very well done and I was very impressed with the vibrant colors during the day, the darkness during the nighttime scenery in correlation with the beautiful dancing and the music of the "Nutcracker" and "Swan Lake".

For an anime that was released on television, I'm very impressed by the animation of "Princess Tutu". Everything about the anime is quite beautiful and vibrant.

Each character of "Princess Tutu" from Duck, her friends to the Prince, Rue and many others are interesting and with beautiful animation and music, the animation drew me in. Some of the funny situations of

Duck remind me of the zaniness of anime like "Azumanga Daioh".

As for the languages on the DVD, as much as I enjoy watching most of my anime in Japanese, I was very impressed by English dubbing for this anime series.

Not since "Macross Plus" have I been so impressed by the English voice acting from an anime.

The video is presented in 4:3 and the sound is in Stereo 2.0.

As for special features on this DVD, "Princess Tutu" has a number of them.

Included is commentary by the staff and another by the voice actors. Also, included are anime featurettes such as "Etude" featuring the characters of Duck's friends explaining the dancing and music of "Princess Tutu" and another titled "Ballet for Beginners" featuring the feline dance instructor.

Included with the DVD is a sheet featuring commentary by "Princess Tutu" creator Ikuko Itoh who writes about of her experiences of listening to classical music as a young child and was enchanted by Tchaikovsky's "Swan Lake".

That passion led to Itoh wanting to produce an animation that features familiar classical music and how the character of Princess Tutu came from character designs that she did for another anime titled "Magical User's Club" for Junichi Sato (Sailor Moon S).

One of my favorite features is the outtakes and also "in the studio" as the English voice actors try to match their scripts with the mouth movements of the animation.

"Princess Tutu" is an enjoyable anime. The anime series has the zaniness of "Azumanga Daioh", transformation scenes like many other female heroines and a mystique about it that reminds me of "Fruits Basket" but a storyline enhanced by its visuals and music that makes it unique on its own. It's that good! Definitely check this anime out!

— DENNIS A. AMITH

REVIEW GRADE

A