

Christmas Royal Mail celebrates sentiment,



THIS YEAR'S Christmas stamps feature traditional pantomimes. In addition, the 1st and 2nd class Madonna and Child stamps issued last year will go back on sale for those who wish to use a specifically religious image on their Christmas mail. All these stamps go on sale on 4 November.

The Pantomimes set comprises: 2nd class and 2nd class Large, the Ugly Sisters from Cinderella; 1st class and 1st class Large, the genie from Aladdin; 50p, Captain Hook from Peter Pan; and 81p, the Wicked Queen from Snow White. They were designed by Steve Haskins and team at so design consultants of Bristol, using photographs by Peter Thorpe, and printed in gravure by De La Rue on self-adhesive paper in sheets of 50. They will also be available in a conventionally gummed miniature sheet.

The Madonna issue, designed by Peter Willberg, features the religious paintings *Madonna and Child* by William Dyce, c1827, and *The Madonna of Humility* by Lippo di Dalmasio, c1390-1400. The two paintings are respectively held by the Tate Gallery, and the National Gallery in London. These two stamps are printed in gravure by De La Rue in sheets of 50, on a self-adhesive paper.

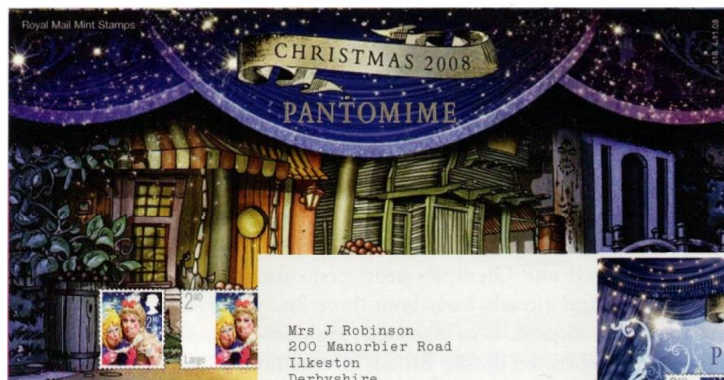
On the stamp books, the wording (It's behind you! etc) is printed on the selvedge edge.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Orders for serviced FDCs must reach Tallents House (address below) by the day of issue. Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (Tallents House postmark), or a Special Handstamp Centre (Bethlehem postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FDO827' (Tallents House), or 'FDO828' (Bethlehem). For details of sponsored special postmarks see the *British Postmark Bulletin*.

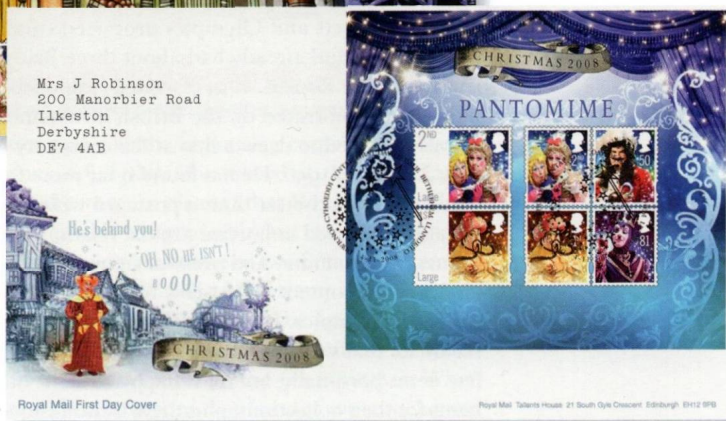
The presentation pack, written by Maev Kennedy tells us about the introduction of pantomime in the 18th century, with profiles of the principal characters – the ugly sisters, the baddie, the dame, the principal boy, the fairy and the panto cow! The pack was designed by so design consultants, with photography by Peter Thorpe, and printed by Walsall.

AIRLETTERS The 2006 airletter (standard and bilingual Welsh/English versions) goes back on sale at Post Office branches on 4 November, having remained on sale from Tallents House since November 2006. The airletter features reindeer and Father Christmas by Tatsuro Kiuchi. The standard version was shown in the November 2006 *Bulletin*, on page 74.

slapstick and anarchy: the British Pantomime



The illustrated presentation pack, above, describes the introduction of pantomime in the 18th century, with profiles of principal characters. The FDC is shown at right, with the miniature sheet.



GENERIC & SMILERS SHEETS The 2008 Christmas generic sheet contains eight 2nd class, eight 1st class and four 81p Christmas stamps, priced £8.85. It will be printed in litho by Cartor. The adjoining labels feature pantomime scenes and panto cries. Four Christmas Smilers sheets, with customers' own images printed on the labels adjoining the stamps, will be available, containing 10 × 1st class (£7.50), 20 × 1st class £13.50 (£12.50 each for two or more sheets), 20 × 2nd class £8.50 (£8 each for two or more), and 10 × 81p £13.50 (£12.50 each for two or more). Handling charge of £1.45 on all orders. These sheets will be shown in a future *Bulletin* ●

Christmas prices Miniature sheet is abbreviated MS

Set of stamps or MS (Pantomime)	£2.88
Set of stamps (Madonna)	£0.63
Presentation Pack (Pantomime stamps)	£3.40
FDC envelope	£0.30
Serviced FDC: Pantomime stamps/MS (UK orders)	£3.86
Serviced FDC: Pantomime stamps/MS (overseas)	£3.29
Stamp cards set (6 Pantomime stamps and MS)	£2.80
12 × 1st class book: It's behind you!	£4.32
12 × 1st class book: Abracadabra!	£4.32
12 × 2nd class book: Oh no it isn't!	£3.24
12 × 2nd class book: Oh yes it is!	£3.24
Generic sheet	£8.85
Airletter (standard or bilingual version)	£0.63