

'Tate' compels with warmth, humor

★★★
 FILM: *Little Man Tate* is currently showing at the McDonald Theater. Rated PG.
 ••• don't bother ••• wait to rent
 ••••• worth the time ••••• a must see

ADMIT ONE

As a former staple of Disney films and former child actress, Jodie Foster was known to act in simple flights of fancy. Now, as director of *Little Man Tate*, Foster has grown to present a mature, heartfelt film of importance.



Courtesy photo
 Jodie Foster, as Dede Tate, and Adam Hann-Byrd, as Fred Tate, fill the screen with a story of ordinary and extraordinary people.

Newcomer Adam Hann-Byrd is unassuming and quietly spectacular as child genius Fred Tate. His character is a brilliant scholar as well as an artistic wonder. His far-reaching understanding of both facts and emotions is astounding.

Because of his brilliance, he has incredibly little by which to relate to his peers. Therefore, he is ostracized and has a strong relationship with only one person: his mother Dede.

Foster plays Fred's mother. She refuses to spoil him. Instead, she treats him as an equal. She's carefree, vigorous and amazingly unpretentious, considering the types of characters that usually inhabit a film like this.

Dianne Wiest plays a specialist in the education and study of child prodigies. Believing she can fill a gap in Fred's life, she talks Dede into allowing Fred to join her school group of

geniuses and to go with them on a trip to an academic competition.

But Wiest is motivated by selfishness and a lust for her own fulfillment. Contrary to what would have been easy, she is not framed as a hate-worthy villain of the piece. In her rush to mold Fred in her own image, she alienates Dede and threatens to make Fred's precarious situation worse.

This is an incredibly entertaining film filled with humor, warmth and a good amount of restraining the sentimentalism. That is why Foster's character is so important in maintaining the integrity of the film.

There are some flaws worth

noting, however. There is too little exposition to set the movie in motion. The effect is jarring as the audience is simply thrown into his world. The ending comes too quickly. It moved from the tone setup in the last half of the film into a wholly different one without a good reason.

Other than those minor complaints, which come at the beginning and end, the film is compelling and beautiful. It's a movie about the heart and soul of important people, both average and extraordinary ones. It is likewise an important picture.

By Lucas J. Gutman
 Emerald Contributor

CAFE

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another way to give songwriters a way to perform their songs and to find another open-mike series," said Eric Van Keppel, WOW Hall publicist. Offering up their microphone was just the way to do it.

"It's a way for people to perform not only for each other, but for the public as well," Van Keppel said.

"The focus of the cafe is on original compo-

sition," he said, adding that the original works rule is what distinguishes it from the hall's Emerging Bands Showcase.

Currently scheduled to run through Dec. 10, the series includes feature artist Pete Christie on Nov. 12, Steve Pory of the Daddies on Nov. 26, and the Renegade Saints on Dec. 10.

For show and volunteer information, contact WOW Hall at 687-2746. The hall is wheelchair accessible and open to all ages. Admission to the Songwriter's Cafe is \$2.

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