

Theater: Effects create eerie mood

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a king. He and his wife then plot to kill the current king while he visits their home.

Lyn Burg-Habib convincingly plays Lady Macbeth, adding a human touch to a character who is often portrayed as evil and cold-hearted. Driven insane by guilt over her crime, she provides a contrast to Macbeth's guilt-free attitude.

The three witches who make the prophecy that compels Macbeth to commit murder are a more integral part of the play than in many productions. Their eerie antics lend a spooky tone to the entire production.

Incredible sound effects and haunting background music

by Ron Vandevender also enhance this eerie mood.

The set is simple and versatile, allowing easy scene changes and open interpretation of the play's location and time period. The costumes were also slightly ambiguous.

With a few mildly surprising and impressive special effects, including flying sparks and a slow motion combat scene, Lord Leebrick's *Macbeth* is funny and entertaining in spite of its spooky tone and heavy subject matter.

Macbeth is playing April 12, 13, 18-20 at 8 p.m. with matinees April 14 and 21 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$11 general admission, \$8 for students, and all are \$6 Thursday and Sunday.



Macbeth (Christopher Leebrick) and Macduff (Richard Leebrick) duke it out.

'The Birdcage' stereotypes homosexuals

By Jim Ransier

Freelance Reporter

Five years ago, *The Birdcage* might have been considered ground-breaking in its content.

But in the aftermath of AIDS-oriented movies (*Philadelphia*, *And the Band Played On*, *Longtime Companion*) and drag-queen flicks (*Priscilla: Queen of the Desert*; *To Wong Foo, Thanks For Everything, Julie Newmar*), it seems repetitive, stereotypical, and only moderately humorous.

A remake of the 1978 French comedy *La Cage aux Folles*, *Birdcage* is a simple story. Albert (Nathan Lane), an aging drag queen, is the headliner at a South Beach club owned by his lover, Armand (Robin Williams).

Although their relationship seems rocky and unstable, they've been together more than fifteen years and always manage to work out their differences.

When Armand's son shows up, he announces his engagement to a girl and asks for his father's blessing. The only problem is that the girl's parents want to meet Armand and his wife, and the girl's father (Gene Hackman) just happens to be an ultra-right wing senator up for re-election.

As one may guess, mass confusion soon follows when Armand's son asks Albert to leave town for the weekend. When Albert refuses to leave, he dresses in drag and pretends to be the mother.

Even in its mediocrity, *Birdcage* has its moments.

Scenes with Armand and Albert are not only memorably funny, but touchingly human. In

MOVIE REVIEW

The Birdcage

Rated R

Starring: Robin Williams and Nathan Lane

★★ 1/2

them, we realize that they are human people who truly love one another.

On the other hand, it is sad that people continue to generalize gay men as cross-dressing, flamboyant people. But it is equally important that a positive gay couple is presented to mainstream America, and in that respect, the film's stereotypical weaknesses are acceptable.

Williams's performance is controlled and surprisingly real. In so many of his films he comes across strong and edgy, but in *Birdcage* he seems like a real man with real feelings and emotions. This is probably his most sensible, serious role since *Awakenings*.

Nathan Lane, an acclaimed and respected Broadway actor, shines as Albert.

Directed by Mike Nichols (*The Graduate*, *Wolf*), *The Birdcage* is filmed in amazingly bright, gold colors. Even though it is obvious that most of the movie was filmed on back lots and sound stages, one still gets the feeling of Florida just by the colors of the scenes.

Stylish, yet predictable, *The Birdcage* is an admirable attempt at presenting positive gay roles, even if the stereotypes seem all too clear.

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Sign - Interpreted



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June 12, 13, 14
July 17, 18, 19
Aug. 14, 15, 16
Sept. 18, 19, 20
Oct. 16, 17, 18
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