

'La Cage Aux Folles' Does Not Disappoint An Excited Audience

The Studio Theatre Tierra Del Sol's production of the award-winning musical continues through March 4.

By LEAH SHEWMAKER
Daily Sun Staff Writer

Once again, The Studio Theatre Tierra Del Sol dazzled its audience. Patrons didn't conceal their excitement to see the theater's performance of "La Cage Aux Folles." Weeks before the show opened on Feb. 3, tickets for the show's first handful of performances were sold out. "My husband and I like to see musicals," said Betsy Abromaitis, of the Village of Hemingway. "I've seen the movie and we're expecting to see good dancing and singing." She said she also loves the way The Studio designs its sets and brings out the essence of each show.

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MATT MONROE
Village of Sunset Pointe

"La Cage Aux Folles" is an award-winning musical, and it inspired the movie "The Birdcage." The show features the hit song, "I Am What I Am," which inspired this season's theme at The Studio. It's set at La Cage Aux Folles, a nightclub run by Georges (Kevin Kelly). His partner, Albin (Matthew Burton), is the star of the club's drag show.

The pair face challenges when Georges' son, Jean-Michel (Jose Carlos Rivera), announces that he is bringing his fiancée and her disapproving parents to meet them. Patrons can see the show at 2 and 7 p.m. on select days through March 4. Tickets are \$40 and are available at thevillagesentertainment.com or any Villages Box Office location. Audiences will see both



The cast of "La Cage Aux Folles" performs the final number of the beloved musical.

Submitted photo

glamour and humor with showstopping ensemble performances. The cast boasts of many talents, especially consistent and alluring vocal ability. And the set features a turntable, which rotates sets, allowing the story to seamlessly transition between Georges and Albin's home, the nightclub, the dressing room backstage and the street outside a nearby bakery. A creative use of lighting colors and shapes build-contrasting ambiances for each setting. The seven-person live band, conducted by music director Gary Powell, sat above the set, making great use of the small

space. However, the theater's intimate setting didn't hinder the performers from delivering a smashing performance. Matt Monroe said he thoroughly enjoyed the show. He and his fiancée, Melissa Francis, came back to experience "La Cage Aux Folles" after enjoying The Studio Theatre's first performance of the season, "In the Next Room," back in October. "I thought (La Cage) was incredible," said Monroe, of the Village of Sunset Pointe. "I grew up in New York and lived in Las Vegas, so I've been to my fair share of productions. I was pleasantly surprised by

the production value." He said the actors did a fantastic job of immersing the audience in the story. "You can't fake that passion and artistry in a small venue," he said. "People think it's going to be a small play, but it's not presented that way. The props, the costumes — they were all very well done and authentic."

Monroe said it was an amazing experience and he suggests the production for anyone who enjoys live theater. "We have this little jewel in The Villages," he said. Staff writer Leah Shewmaker can be reached at 352-753-1119, ext. 5228, or leah.shewmaker@thevillagesmedia.com.

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