

Review by Laura Sonier: La Cage aux Folles, by EODS at the Devonshire Park Theatre

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THERE were sequins, stockings and feather boas galore on stage at EODS' opening night - and that was just the men.

The high-kicking camp of La Cage aux Folles had an enthusiastic reception from a packed theatre, who threw themselves into the spirit of the show with plenty of whooping and applause.

The show, directed and choreographed by pro (and former EODS member) Stuart Simons, is set in St Tropez - Jean Michel (Tom Robinson) wants his family to meet his fiancée Anne (Susie Blundell).

However, his parents - drag queen Albin (Steve Stapley) and his husband Georges (Neil Sellman) - are not exactly what Anne's hardline father Eduoard Dindon (Nick Reynolds) is expecting. So Jean Michel asks his long-absent mother to take Albin's place, unwittingly setting off a chain of events, both emotional and amusing.

There are very strong, believable performances from the two leads, Steve Stapley (who belts out a heartfelt I Am What I Am) and Neil Sellman; two charming performances from Tom Robinson and Susie Blundell as the young lovers, some cracking comic fun from Dave Nicholles as Jacob the butler (maid!) and plenty of vim and vigour from the Cagelles.

All the cast threw themselves into the roles with such vigour that the occasional rogue piece of sparkling costume accidentally detached itself from a performer on the first night.

But the show - and the fun - most definitely went on.