

Fleetwood Macbeth

Reviewed By: [Jonas Schwartz](#) · Jul 10, 2011 · Los Angeles

What's so striking about the Troubadour's new Shakespearean spoof, [Fleetwood Macbeth](#), now at the Falcon Theatre is how much the intensity and savagery of the great tragedy comes through at the same time everyone's poking fun at it. Chipping away at much of the Bard's original text are pratfalls, puns, and inside jokes about CARMageddon, Sarah Palin, Weinergate and Ahr-nold's love child.

Meanwhile, some of the characters in Shakespeare's tragedy have been stretched to the limits. Seyton, Macbeth's lieutenant, has been twisted into Satan, a roller-skating devil in 80s headbanger's gear; Hecate, queen of the witches, has been pummeled into the ugly duckling of the group -- the spitting image of Witchiepoo from *HR Pufnstuf*; and youthful Malcolm, the future king of Scotland, has been transformed into a fey surfer boy with a penchant for showering with his soldiers.

Director Matt Watkins also utilizes a Greek chorus of eight sexy witches to entice Macbeth into murder. These sirens add a tantalizing Vegas showgirl element to the proceedings as they sing and gyrate their way into Macbeth's greedy heart.

While the music of supergroup Fleetwood Mac doesn't fit the Scottish play like a glove, it's always wonderful to hear these great performers take on such tunes as "Go Your Own Way," "Landslide," "Chain," and "Tusk." Some songs are used for actual pathos, as in "Gold Dust Woman," which is heard at Lady Macbeth's funeral.

Choreographers Christine Larkin and Nadine Ellis showcase the group's fast feet and fancy moves, and vocal director Rachael Lawrence makes sure that nothing laughable emits from those fantastic Troubie vocal cords. Making them sound even better is the four-piece band led by drummer Eric Heinly.



Lisa Valenzuela and Morgan Rusler in *Fleetwood Macbeth*
(© Chelsea Sutton)

The cast is impeccable. In a fetching Stevie Nicks wig, Lisa Valenzuela lends elegance to the vicious Lady M, while Morgan Rusler presents a goofy puppy-dog version of Macbeth. When giving their two famous monologues, "Out Damn Spot" and "Tomorrow, Tomorrow, Tomorrow" Valenzuela and Rusler, respectively, display genuine dramatic acting talents that prove neither are pure clowns.

Most of the laughs come, as usual, from gifted comedienne Beth Kennedy as the decrepit, insecure Hecate, while Evan Arnold is a standout as the dim Ross, who has a particularly effective Grand Guignol moment.

Sharon McGunigle's costumes are as creative as always, with special mention going to her tight-fitting, veiled dresses for the witches, assorted Hobbit feet for the men, and a leaky, hard-nippled breast plate for King Duncan.