

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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Deja Vu

Doug Kouma

Coolness a 'skate' of mind

I was cool once.

Out there on the open road, the wind in my hair, going where the day took me ...

... no skate key dangling 'round this neck.

Yup. In 1984, there wasn't much cooler on my block than roller skating ('cept the new kids next door).

I had on my brand spankin' new shoe skates, fresh out of the J.C. Penney's catalog. After what seemed like weeks, they had finally arrived, and I couldn't help but feel that I had arrived, too. Finally, I would be able to skate with the best of 'em. No more of those clamp-on, metal slippers of death for me. Iron maidens, as it were.

As I stepped off the porch and glided down the driveway onto the sidewalk, I couldn't help but notice how quietly the red rubber wheels glided over the pavement. I couldn't help but notice how snug and secure the shoes felt around my feet.

I couldn't help but notice how I didn't crash and get a nosebleed going over every other crack in the sidewalk.

I skated faster and faster, laughing in the face of danger. Stones, twigs and small animals were crushed under my power. I couldn't be derailed. My new skates had a secret weapon, something my old metal skates could never offer.

Stoppers.

I sped down the block, hoping the neighbor kids were peering out their windows, watching the blur of blue and red I had surely become. No longer could they scoff. No longer could they look askance. Ha! Who among them would dare call me "that metal skate boy" now!

The flower bed at the far end of our cul-de-sac was in sight. Surely, this was the fastest any kid on my block had ever skated. The passing air roared in my ears. My "Go for the Gold, L.A. '84" T-shirt pressed tightly to my chest in the gale. The cars on the nearby highway seemed to crawl in comparison.

My legs burned, my lips chapped. Still, I yearned for more speed. I gave one final push, all that I could muster. Then, exhausted and hurting, crouched down with hands resting on my knees. I coasted toward my final destination. Judging the distance carefully, I waited until the last possible moment.

And I applied the stoppers.

Long story short — whoever decided that suddenly pressing a little rubber doughnut hole to the pavement was a good way to stop a speeding child wasn't experiencing one of his or her brighter moments.

Not that they didn't work. I stopped all right, albeit not quite as suavely as I would have liked.

In retrospect, "that metal skate boy" has a nice ring. More than "Scabby Doo," anyway.

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Courtesy of Savoy Pictures

Anthropologist Lillian Sloan (Barbara Hershey), and bounty hunter Lewis Gates (Tom Berenger), discover a place lost in time deep in the Montana wilderness in "Last of the Dogmen."

'Dogmen' fetching tale of lost tribe

By Cliff A. Hicks
Film Critic

Hope that "Last of the Dogmen" is not first-time director Tab Murphy's last effort, for it truly is a captivating film.

With a complex story line, "Last of the Dogmen" is a tale of a group of Native Americans living in the wilderness undiscovered, a rugged cowboy story and a story of the struggle to come to peace with one's self.

All of these aspects combine into a dramatic film that should earn several Oscar nominations, as well as audiences' approval.

Tom Berenger ("Major League," "Platoon") plays Lewis Gates, a bounty hunter who is drunk as much as he is sober, and still blames himself for the death of his wife.

Gates is hired to find three escaped convicts by the town sheriff — his father-in-law — played convincingly by Kurtwood Smith ("Boxing Helena"). Sheriff Deegan has not forgiven Gates for

the loss of his daughter.

When Gates finally catches up with the convicts, all he finds are some shreds of cloth, a spent shotgun shell and an arrow, all of which are coated in blood.

The arrow eventually leads him to Lillian Sloan, played by Barbara Hershey ("Beaches"), an anthropologist who focuses on Native American culture. The arrow markings belong to a group known as the Dogmen, a division of the Cheyenne, who have been gone for years.

Gates convinces Sloan to go searching with him for this mythical group. That's where the story gets good — they actually find a group of Dogmen.

The up-and-coming leader of the Dogmen, Yellow Wolf, played by Steve Reevis, does not initially like the intruders. Reevis, who has very little dialogue since none of the Dogmen speak any English, is intimidating by his very presence alone.

Both Berenger and Hershey captivate with magnificent performances. Berenger is flawless in his depiction of a rugged mountain cowboy, noon shadow and all, with that faint touch of hangover always lingering. His gruff tone, his

The Facts

Film: "Last of the Dogmen"

Stars: Tom Berenger, Barbara Hershey, Kurtwood Smith, Steve Reevis

Director: Tab Murphy

Rating: PG

Grade: A

Five Words: Oscar-contending drama of hope

walk and his appearance all scream trailblazer.

Hershey seems slightly out of place in the wilderness, as her character should. Her dream comes true and the audience can see the stars in her eyes.

The other character who is much in need of mention is Zip, Gates' dog. It may sound silly, but Zip is what a sidekick should be — friendly and

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Playhouse successful again with 'Annie'

By John Fulwider
Theater Critic

Everyone's favorite perky red-head returns in "Annie Warbucks," the delightful musical sequel to the Broadway and film hit, "Annie."

"Annie Warbucks" is set in mid-1930s New York, picking up where "Annie" left off. Annie (Anna A. White), the former orphan, is now happily living with her adoptive billionaire father, Oliver Warbucks (Rex Holsapple).

But trouble always seems to follow Annie around. It's not long before trouble shows up in the form of Commissioner Doyle (Myrna Robbins). It seems the Department of Child Welfare does not allow

single people to adopt children.

This presents a problem for the happily single (and old) Oliver Warbucks. Commissioner Doyle gives him 60 days to find a wife, and if he doesn't, Annie must return to the orphanage.

As Warbucks searches for the perfect wife, Annie does her best to fix him up with his secretary, Grace Farrell (Shari Yanak).

But Warbucks is interested in Doyle's assistant, Mrs. Kelly (Kristopher Filarski). And there's more to the widowed Mrs. Kelly than meets the eye.

White gives a flawless performance as Annie. Her singing outshines the entire cast, and her facial expressions and acting perfectly match the film image of her character.

Robbins is perfect as the frumpy Commissioner Doyle. She's grumpy, rude and loud — just like you'd expect a New York City official to

be.

Yanak, as the elegant and redoubtable Grace Farrell, nearly steals the show. Her stage presence is quite strong; even when she says nothing, she draws attention. Farrell is one of the underdogs in the story, so it's easy to root for her.

The play was thoroughly entertaining. Unfortunately, it was marred somewhat by a number of technical problems that detracted from what could have been a nearly flawless performance.

The biggest problem was with the sound system. Nearly every character used wireless lapel microphones, which were poorly placed. Every time the actors turned their heads away from the microphones, their voices were drowned out by the orchestra. And the presence of only two small speakers to cover the entire playhouse contributed to the problem.

There were high points in the

The Facts

Play: Annie Warbucks

Company: Lincoln Community Playhouse

Director: Donald-Brian Johnson

Grade: B

Five Words: Everyone's favorite orphan's continuing adventures

technical production, however. Most impressive was a shadow screen during a scene in Commissioner Doyle's office. While Mrs. Kelly sang about her life in Hell's Kitchen, the shadows of other actors were projected onto a screen, illustrating

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