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The cat came back

BY CHRIS DUPUIS

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Do we really need another production of Cats?

I'll just go ahead and say it. Does the world *really* need another production of *Cats*? Andrew Lloyd Webber's 1981 mega-musical about a group of hair-metal rejects vaguely disguised as feral felines is the second-most produced of its genre in history (just behind his other gem *Phantom of the Opera*). Elaborate makeup and hard-bodied dancers in spandex can consistently sell tickets. But is there contemporary relevance beyond quick cash for producers?

"We had a long discussion on the first day about why we were doing it," says director Dave Campbell. "The actors need a bigger task than making people happy and getting a paycheque on Thursday. Trying to figure out what the show has to offer today was a big part of this process."

Trained as a dancer, Campbell treats the show as a sort of ballet; most of the story is told through movement. His edged-out goth-influenced production (designed by long-time partner Tim Webb) looks for deeper meaning in a piece usually presented as



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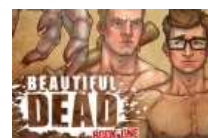
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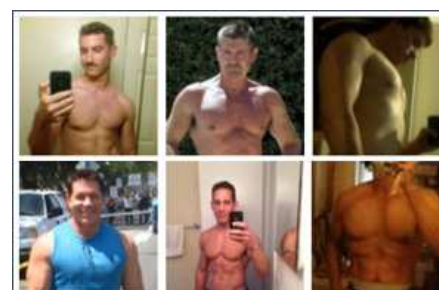
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