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CasiNotes: In Atlantic City, family will be charmed by 'Magic & Beyond'



By Chuck Darrow

IT WOULDN'T be summer in Atlantic City without a full-blown magic show, and this year's DW (Designated Wizard) is veteran hocus-pocuser **Brett Daniels**, who's spending the summer at Tropicana Casino and Resort.

Daniels is back on the Boardwalk for the first time in 13 years (when he played Resorts Atlantic City, if memory serves). His return is surely welcome.

Daniels' presentation, dubbed "Magic & Beyond," is above all a family-friendly affair. Unlike some magicians, Daniels has no use for anything "edgy." No (fake) blood is spilled, nor is there anything that can be considered off-color. Even the costumes worn by his female dancers/assistants seem rather modest by modern standards.

Judging by the comments I regularly get from readers, there is strong demand for this type of fare in Casino City.

But age-appropriateness would be a moot point if "Magic & Beyond" didn't work on the most important level. More than anything else, the program gives Daniels ample room to show off his mechanical skills; he is among the best technicians ever to play AyCee, displaying consummate skills whether he is manipulating a deck of cards, or climbing into a bizarre looking chamber for a disappearing trick.

The most impressive is the one in which a kid from the audience chooses a playing card from a deck. Daniels asks him to return it to the deck, then tosses all of the cards high in the air over the stage. At that moment, a parrot swoops in from above the audience and catches the kid's card in his beak. It is simply marvelous piece - a few more like it would have made "Magic & Beyond" truly special.

However, the overwhelming majority of the illusions are based on chestnuts like "Cut & Restore" (in which Daniels' appears to shred a newspaper and then return it to a pristine condition) and making himself and others disappear and reappear in the blink of an eye.

But that's for cranky, magic-show old-timers like me to nitpick. For the majority of people who don't see every such production in Atlantic City, "Brett Daniels: Magic & Beyond" is sure to provide 75 minutes of awe and wonder for youngsters of any age.

Tropicana Casino and Resort, Boardwalk at Brighton Avenue, show times vary (based on headliner schedule), \$25,
800-736-1420, tropicana.net.