



TANTALIZING COLLAGE: Celine Bonnier plays Constance in Toronto filmmaker Peter Mettler's film adaptation of Robert Lepage's play *Tectonic Plates*.

Lepage play great on screen

By Vit Wagner
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Toronto filmmaker Peter Mettler takes an innovative approach to adaptation in his surprisingly successful screen version of Quebec dramatist Robert Lepage's stage production, *Tectonic Plates*.

Charting a course between two conventional and opposite approaches, Mettler neither opens the play up to the point of eradicating its original stage context, nor does he merely plunk the cameras down in front of a theatre performance and start shooting.

The result is an intriguing and visually tantalizing collage that bridges the two media in a way that structurally underscores Le-

page's themes of convergence, separation and transformation.

In one particularly fluid series of seques, a staged enactment of a gondola ride gradually becomes more filmic with the addition of rear-screen projection. Finally, the image slides out of the theatre altogether, neatly giving way to film footage of a gondola actually plying the canals of Venice.

The intentionally disjointed plot centres on Madeleine (Marie Gignac), a Montreal painter who becomes emotionally uprooted after the sudden departure of her mentor, the transvestite Jacques (Lepage). Madeleine's ethereal wanderings take her to Venice, where she becomes briefly involved with a young Scottish runaway and a globe-trotting concert

pianist.

Lepage's peripatetic stage production, which has been performed in various forms around the world since premiering at Harbourfront in 1988, explores the inexorable push and pull of life, represented by everything from the movement of the continents to the ebb and flow of human relationships.

It's a timely theme for a world that is fracturing into nationalistic bits at the same time as it is becoming economically integrated. And it's one that gains force in Mettler's sympathetic and intelligent adaptation.

Tectonic Plates screens tonight to Monday at the Bloor Cinema and Tuesday to Thursday at the Revue.