

arts & entertainment

Wild, crazy 'Goin South' displays splendid script



The 'slightly touched' characters played by Jack Nicholson, center, and John Belushi, right, add to the antic good humor of *Goin' South*.

By Peg Sheldrick

It's no coincidence that the main character in *Goin' South* is named Henry Moon, because lunacy is the order of the day in this frontier farce.

movie review

It's an odd vehicle for Jack Nicholson, but he certainly brings it off. Compared to some of his other works it's a little light-headed, but it's also light-hearted and as much fun to watch as it probably was to make.

The story centers on the afore-mentioned Henry Moon, a crude, lewd rascal doomed to hang for his modest attempts at becoming the terror of Texas. Actually, he's not very good at being an outlaw. His horse faints on him and his old gang won't even try to spring him from the slammer.

Marriage salvages hero

His number seems to be up, until, by a strange legal twist, he finds salvation in marriage. His bride: Julia Tate, a strong-minded maiden in need of a hired hand, who sees wedlock as an inexpensive way of obtaining a helper.

This is a classic case of strange bedfellows and the relationship that develops between Henry and Julia holds few surprises. It's awfully fun to watch, though.

Nicholson dances and mugs his way through as Moon.

Mary Steenburger holds her own as Julia, bringing a nice comic touch to a stock character. This is her first film, and it's much to her credit that Nicholson doesn't steal the picture from her.

The townsfolk Henry and Julia are up against must be the weirdest-looking bunch of movie characters assembled within recent years. Christopher Lloyd is among the oddest as Towfield, a nasty deputy who hates Moon for stealing "his" gal.

Everyone 'slightly touched'

John Belushi has a minor role as a Mexican deputy, sort of a Killer Bee without the antennae. Everyone seems slightly touched here, which only adds to the antic good humor.

This isn't really the wild west—it's more the wild and crazy west. At its most serious *Goin' South* is a melodrama. The script is splendid, first-rate farce. There is plenty of slapstick and the dialogue is often hilarious. The hyperbolic acting and good staging make the film as engaging as it is eccentric.

Nicholson directed this cock-eyed western skillfully. He punctuates moments with sounds and gags so that everything just bounces along. He obviously felt no obligation to try anything even halfway serious with this one, but that's a strength and not a weakness. Good farce is just as hard to bring off as good drama, and Nicholson brings this off.

Other effects contribute

The music adds to the feeling of fun that pervades, ranging from rinky-tink piano rags to fully orchestrated chase music. The photography also is nice and there is some pleasant scenery.

Many moments seem to be right out of the old Saturday matinees with Hopalong Cassidy and friends. Of course, nothing turns out the way it did for Hoppy, and the language is a good bit saltier. But the tradition of the bloodless gunfight remains. In fact, nobody even comes close to getting hurt. These days, that's a change of pace.

Though it doesn't convey any powerful messages, *Goin' South* is high caliber entertainment. Nicholson seems determined to kick up his heels and have fun, with the clear hope that the audience will join him. Even if it does shoot with blanks, you'll get a bang out of it.

It's playing at the Cinema 2 Theatre.

Math background is unusual for accompanist

By R. A. Wiegel

The art of accompanying is a position in the School of Music that is often overlooked or not given the emphasis that it sometimes deserves.

profile

It is an art that probably started around the 16th century and is today extremely important in any musical preparatory work.

Of the two staff accompanists in the school of music, one comes from a very different background.

"I started playing piano before I was interested," said Robert Rhein, a 26-year-old composer and accompanist. "I didn't become interested in playing until my mother gave up making me practice."

Holds math degree

What makes Rhein unusual for such a position is his undergraduate degree in mathematics.

"The position began with the area of excellence program and the funds come from the opera program," he said. "I guess there are no degree requirements for the job."

"I'm doing graduate work in music here at UNL at the same time that I'm full-time staff. That keeps me busy with having to accompany up to 55 lessons a week and doing, during the recital season, at least one recital per week."

Rhein sometimes doubles as more than an accompanist by coaching the singers in the opera program for recitals and roles.

Prefers instrumental accompanying

"We are supposed to coach, especially for the opera program, but I still feel more at home with instrumental accompanying. I see this job as an in-between of a student and a professional career, but the experience is that of a professional career."

Rhein said he thinks of Nebraska as a stepping stone to bigger things when they open up.

"I've been interested in composing and arranging since I was in high school. I feel

the most comfortable with writing for chorus," Rhein said.

Apparently there must be something to what he says because three of his arrangements are now being published by the G. Schirmer Publishing Co. and he is waiting to hear about some original works that also have been submitted to Schirmer.

Writes for friends

"I write entirely in tonal conservative idioms. I'm most successful with that. Most of my things I've written for friends who conduct a choir and then if I like what I've done I'll submit it for publication."

Rhein also said it took him five months from the time he submitted the works before he received the final royalty agreements.

In order to coach singers properly it is considered necessary to know several

different languages, Rhein said.

"German, I think, is the most important because so much of our musical heritage comes from the German countries and composers from Handel to Berg. I'm working on the other languages too in an effort to be a better coach," he said. Rhein said he continues to read in many languages to keep up his skill.

Planning stage

Though still in the planning stage of a career, Rhein hopes to add more as a musician instead of a mathematician.

"I'm glad I'm a musician and not doing math. The math that I was interested in was not the practical worldly math anyway, but the abstract. What people don't realize is the artistic approach to mathematics. I think music is the most abstract of the arts but I also think math is the most abstract of everything."

Jazz singer to appear at Kimball



Jazz singer Betty Carter, who has performed on *Saturday Night Live*, will be in Lincoln tonight.

Jazz singer Betty Carter will be in Lincoln tonight at Kimball Hall at 8 p.m.

Widely considered to be one of the best pure jazz singers alive, she has performed everywhere from the Newport Jazz Festival to NBC's *Saturday Night Live*.

"I approach my music more aggressively," said Carter in a Newsweek article. "It's more down, gettin' to it. My concept is what makes it jazz, not the song itself."

entertainment notes

The John Hicks Trio is appearing with Betty Carter. Reserved seats are still available for \$6 from Dirt Cheap, the Kimball box office and at the door.

"We have a number of tickets that have not been sold," according to Dave Luebert, president of the Lincoln Jazz Society. "If there are tickets available 15 minutes before the concert begins, we will sell them to UNL students with ID's for half price."

"We believe this will be one of the best concerts we've produced and don't want students to stay away because of ticket prices."

Sponsored by The Lincoln Jazz Society,

the concert is presented with the support of the Nebraska Arts Council in cooperation with the UNL Cultural Affairs Committee.

Three UNL vocal ensembles will present a free public concert of Christmas music. The University Chorus, Varsity Glee Club and University Chorale will perform in Kimball Recital Hall at 8 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 5.

The Varsity Glee Club, a group of 70 men, will sing a number of seasonal favorites, including "O Come, All Ye Faithful," "O Tannenbaum" and "Stoppin' by Woods on a Snowy Evening."

Selections from Benjamin Britten's "Ceremony of Carols" will open the program by the University Chorale, an ensemble of 30 women.

The University Chorus, a mixed chorus of 220, will present a number of Christmas songs, including Vaughn Williams' "Fantasia on Christmas Carols," with UNL Professor Edward Crafts as baritone soloist.

Jazz singer and composer Ray Charles performs from Switzerland with several friends on "Ray Charles at Montreux" in a two-hour musical production Tuesday, Dec. 5, at 8 p.m. on NETV.