

# arts/entertainment

## Crowd of children supply big market for Kiss gimmicks

By Casey McCabe

As the four members of Kiss stood on stage, bathing themselves in the splendor of their special effects, a large percentage of the crowd gazed in wide-eyed curiosity at their first experience with a rock concert.

On hand for the band's Monday night Omaha appearance was a crowd ranging in age from three-years-old to somewhere past 30, divided between those who really wanted to be there, and the fathers, mothers and chaperons who would most likely be the victims of some delightfully nasty prank if the four-foot-tall character in full Gene Simmons make-up next to them had not been allowed to see Kiss.

The fact that the auditorium was 2,000 seats short of its 11,300 seat capacity, shows that Kiss' platinum star has tarnished slightly from their days of guaranteed sell-outs. But the group's expansion into a multi-media event that spawned comic books and cartoons of themselves has gained them instant hero status in the realm of the pre-teen.

A cluster of mothers stood by and watched as their six-year-olds ran up and down the aisles, stopping on occasion to better absorb what was happening down on stage.

"YEAH, THIS is the first concert she's ever been to," offered one mother. "Everything is Kiss with her and her friends, but I'm not sure she can relate to seeing them here live and in person. She always thought of them as some type of cartoon characters."

"But I will say she was a hell of a lot more excited about this than going to the circus."

The Kiss circus offers its own variety of



Photo by R. K. Hahn

About 9,000 people watched Kiss perform Monday night at the Omaha Civic Auditorium.

sure-fire crowd pleasers; fireworks and high grade explosives, unlimited amounts of dry ice fog, fire breathing, confetti, exploding guitars, rotating drums, and cables that carry Gene Simmons 30 feet up in the air to play a solo on top of the lighting system.

The fact that this circus cost close to \$10 apiece for admission, didn't seem to

deter many. But the pained expressions on a few parents' faces showed some uncertainty about the attraction to the noise, crowds, strange odors and generally vulgarity of rock concerts.

WHILE THE Kiss stage show is undeniably elaborate, their music is undeniably simple. The older half of the crowd that

chose to stand on the floor for the show responded the most enthusiastically as the band cranked out such highly similar songs as "Dr. Love," "Firehouse," "Christine," and "Shout It Out Loud." While vocals were generally tight, and an Ace Frehley guitar solo was admirable, the lack of any spectacular musicianship was usually overlooked by turning up the volume a few decibels or using several special effects.

There was another show down on the floor of the auditorium. People had painted their faces to match that of their favorite Kiss member, and four of them had dressed up in full Kiss regalia convincing enough that they were signing autographs and having their pictures taken, though it's not exactly known if these fans were aware of what they were getting.

FARTHER UP front there were battles to grab for one of the dozens of things the band hurled to the crowd from the stage, usually things with high-souvenir value like guitar picks and seaty towels. In another corner a boy was learning a sage lesson about drinking too much Boone's Farm, at the expense of those around him.

While Kiss caters more to the older half of their crowd in concert, the ones who came most likely to hear their music, the band must know that the bread and butter to their continued existence lies in the eyes of those in attendance who were not yet born at the start of this decade.

The provocative use of Gene Simmons' tongue, or Paul Stanley's suggestive introduction to "Love Gun" fly by the younger eyes and ears, but produced rolled eyes and mild amusement from the cluster of mothers who wonder how long this phase is going to last.

## Visconti's film 'The Innocent' has interesting conflicts

By Pete Schmitz

Consider the following premise for the story in Luchino Visconti's final film *The Innocent*:

Tullio, an obnoxious but dashing aristocrat of late 18th century Italy has an affair with a widowed countess. He tells his wife Gilliana, in all avant-garde honesty that they can look forward to a relationship that will bring them as close as a brother and sister. In fact, later on, he even complains to Gilliana that Theresa, his mistress, is not paying enough attention to him.

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But does this distraught wife choose to sit back and watch her husband have all the fun? No. She has a fling of her own with Filippo, a successful novelist who writes popular romances.

Of course her liaison diverts her husband from his girlfriend, since he assumes that any wife who has the initiative to take a lover of her own can't be all that bad. So their relationship is rekindled. But wait. She is pregnant

by you-know-who.

And the consequences, instead of being hilarious as they would be on television, are fatal. But unfortunately this tragedy, which attempts to parallel the decay of marriage and bourgeois society, inspires little emotion of intellectual deliberation.

ONE PROBLEM WAS THAT Visconti, a self-proclaimed socialist, had a difficult time critically portraying the upper class from which he came.

The lavish photography, done in elegant blue tones, ornate settings and elaborate costumes does little more than show appealing comfort and nice aesthetic tastes, instead of moral societal decadence. Thus problematic considerations such as class and sex exploitation, unbounded passions and the utility of religion become muddled in the director's baroque-like fascination with life among the leisurely.

Admittedly, a fat, older woman is shown doing a poor job of playing Mozart, Chopin and Liszt on the piano, while bored bystanders in the parlor of a princess' house complain to each other. But this too-familiar scene ends up being mere comic relief, and poor relief at that.

For all the mistakes Visconti made with his interpretation of Gabriele D'Annunzio's novel, however, one cannot fault him for the way he handled his performance. I never would have thought that Jennifer O'Neill was

capable of being a good actress after seeing her in *Summer of '42*, *The Carey Treatment*, and *The Reincarnation of Peter Proud*. But with Visconti's guidance she finally has risen above her sensual appeal. The conniving intelligence and vulnerability that she radiates in her role as Theresa will not easily be forgotten.

For the most part, Laura Antonelli's subdued and earthy mannerisms are stunning. Yet her last moments on film, following the murder of her child by Tullio, are a failure.

From the lack of anger and sorrow displayed, one wonders if the writer failed her or if she failed her character.

Despite his sad eyes and frail aura, Giancarlo Giannini is convincing in his role that requires him to be both hateful and amusing.

Indeed *The Innocent* is a picturesque movie with interesting conflicts. However, given the advance publicity about it and Visconti's reputation, one is likely to be deceived that this will be a profound statement on lust and politics, when in reality it is a vision of life gone astray by the same vices which the director sought to prove again.

The movie will be shown this weekend at the Sheldon Film Theatre through Monday, along with another Visconti film, *Conversation Piece*, starring Burt Lancaster.

## Some album offerings break out of mold, some don't

By Casey McCabe

The recent recession in the recording industry has caused most major record labels to cut back on sending promotional albums, and it seems that college newspapers were among the first to bite the dust.

But here are a few that did manage to fall into our hands:

### The Memphis Horns/*Welcome to Memphis*/RCA

Now composed of four regular members who share duties on trombone, saxophone and flute, The Memphis Horns are hoping to get out of the shadow of their reputation as back-up musicians.

Their music resembles, but never provides the electricity of the horn-oriented sound of Tower of Power. More often than not, it comes closer to the danceable and romantic sides of Earth, Wind and Fire or the Commodores.

*Welcome To Memphis* is smooth and well produced, but doesn't give The Memphis Horns a chance to flex

their already proven musical talents to the best of their ability.

### Toby Beau/*More Than A Love Song*/RCA

This four piece band from Texas had a hit sometime last year with "My Angel Baby" and the material of their latest L.P. is basically more of the same.

Oriented around tight vocals and unobtrusive background instrumentals, *More Than A Love Song* contains less than 30 minutes of music, most of it in short romantic ballads. It is the type of music you hear on transistor radios—nice, but highly forgettable.

### Stanley Turrentine/*Everybody Come On Out*/Fantasy

Turrentine puts out some highly listenable jazz with his relaxing saxophone work and an excellent stable of supporting musicians, including Joe Sample from the Crusaders on keyboards, and Lee Ritenour on guitar.

*Everybody Come On Out* provides a continuous fullbodied sound and is, in general, a well-arranged, pleasing piece of jazz professionalism.

"Hope That We Can Be Together Soon" and jazz arrangements of Jimmy Cliff's "Many Rivers to Cross" and 10 cc's "I'm Not In Love" stand out on the album.

### Blind Date/*Blind Date*/Windsong

Now these guys are what you could classify as corporate rock 'n' roll. Stamped out of the mold that brought us Kiss, Cheap Trick, Aerosmith and countless others, Blind Date is someone's idea of what it takes to satisfy the younger crowds of the music business.

With names like Dane Bramage and Pinky Chablis, and a bizarrely decadent cover design, one could understandably wonder about the record's musical contents. But in fact, it is nothing particularly new, an occasional catchy harmony and a few obligatory and predictable guitar leads.

Blind Date, for all their pretense, is not totally without talent. It is just that in cases like this, their ability to make it in the world doesn't even hinge on their talent, but instead their ability to find a good promoter and slick-talking publicity agents.