

Muppets: fun for kids of all ages

By Mark Holt

I guess I'm still a kid. I like Cap'n Crunch cereal for breakfast, I occasionally dump out my Legos on the living room floor for an afternoon of fun, and I enjoyed "The Muppets Take Manhattan."

The story is a familiar one: the gang's got a show worked up but can't find the proverbial barn to put it on in. The cast goes its separate ways after apparent failure, but reunites when their leader, Kermit, makes good on his promise to find a producer. And

Movie Review

of course there's the obligatory romance between man and lady. Or should I say frog and pig?

As the title implies, most of the cast is not human. Producer Jim Henson needed to go only as far as the sewing room to find his stars. And that's why this film works; the muppets are the stars. Not only do they work cheap, but they are able to take a dead horse theme and give it a fresh look.

Scriptwriter Frank Oz (along with the muppeteers) does a credible job of bringing the characters to life, especially Kermit. Seldom does the viewer realize that they're just hands with socks over them.

And believability is always a factor in good film making. It sounds absurd, but I never once doubted that the characters or the actions were real. Well, maybe once.

Judging for myself and by the reactions of others in the theater (I think the grand total of their ages equaled my age) it seemed to be a fairly funny movie. Okay, it wasn't terribly sophisticated or high-minded, but it was worth a few yuks. Let's keep in mind that this is a kiddie movie and should be reviewed in a kiddie frame of mind. I didn't have much trouble.

The plot is also sweetened by a number of appearances by some stars who aren't made of felt and fake hair. Joan Rivers does a funny bit with Miss Piggy when the two make a scene in a department store. Dabney Coleman, who plays a filmflam artist trying to rob the muppets of their hard earned cash, is quickly lowered a few notches by muppet drummer Animal. And in my favorite scene, Brooke Shields gets propositioned by a rat who says, "Do you believe in interspecies dating?"

"The Muppets Take Manhattan" is an enjoyable show for college-going toddlers like myself. So put down your Hotwheel cars and Spiderman Coloform sets and head to the movies for a couple hours of fun.

Finney: T-Street to Easy Street

By Chris Burbach

Lynn Finney is a former Nebraska football player who has come a long way — from his boyhood home on T Street to a position from which he hobnobs with some of the world's wealthiest people. He didn't get there by playing football, though; he made it after he quit the sport.

Finney played ball for Pius X, where he was All-City and All-State in 1971. He was the Outstanding Defensive Player in the Shrine Bowl that year, and earned a football scholarship to UNL. After two years, he dropped his scholarship, and football.

"I didn't enjoy the game anymore," Finney said. "It was time to make a change. I had some doubts at the time, but now I think it was a correct decision."

Finney went from the gridiron to the stage. He became a dancer.

"I started out cold turkey. I had always wanted to dance but I didn't know how to pursue that," he said.

He started out in a rock opera at UNL, then went to a dance school in Denver. He continued studying ballet, jazz and modern dance during a seven and one-half year professional dance career. Eventually, the grind of a dancer's life got to Finney.

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Craig Andersen/Daily Nebraskan

Lynn Finney

Linoleums . . .

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The good ol' linoleums are getting pretty tough to find. Older rental houses are your best bet, but they are rapidly falling prey to the evil hands of overzealous landlords and developers who mistakenly think they are upgrading their property. Even a few friends of mine have expressed desires to "cover up that old crap" with new you-stick-em tiles, or worse yet, no-wax Armstrong.

This injustice must stop. If old houses can get historical landmark status, if Gerald R. Ford's birthplace can get a monument, if the Fonz's leather jacket and Archie Bunker's chair can be in the Smithsonian, then why can't we save our linoleum? I'm afraid they are doomed to follow the fate of those garage doors with the big diamonds, sparkly sidewalks and cars with fins. Our heritage, whether it be underfoot or not, must be preserved. We've already blown it with the Do-do bird and floral wallpaper with pink ducks. They're gone but for the memories.

Next week: Shag carpeting rears its ugly head.

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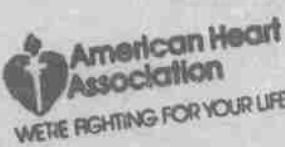
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