

the Fine Print

Brian Priesman

'X-Men' fan makes his own movie

For years, fans of Marvel Comics' "X-Men" have been waiting, patiently (not), for their beloved mutants to take the big screen.

But considering Marvel's lack of success with film and television projects (like the never-released "Fantastic Four" and the god-awful "Captain America," not to mention the ill-fated "Incredible Hulk" TV movies) the X-Men won't be coming to a theater anytime soon.

So, with some help from my fellow arts and entertainment staffers, I have decided to make my own "X-Men" Movie — my movie, my story and my cast.

Jan DeBont, director of "Speed," would be tapped to direct the flick. He knows how to keep the audience on the edge of its seats and he likes to blow things up, a must for my movie.

Then I'd get Industrial Light and Magic to be in charge of all of the special effects, except for the computer effects. PIXAR, creators of "Toy Story," would do all of them.

But who to cast ... that's where we get into trouble.

Some of the cast is easy. For instance, Patrick Stewart is a shoo-in for Professor X. He commands respect, he's noble and he's bald.

And Michelle Pfeiffer, that ferocious sex-kitten, is a definite shoo-in for the villainous White Queen. And just think, she'd get to wear that lacy white bustier! Schwing!

But after those two, it gets difficult. Who should I cast as the heroic, all-American Cyclops? What about Val Kilmer? Or maybe David Duchovny (X-Files). Harrison Ford? Nah, not Harrison. He's cool, but he's too old.

And what about Cyclops' lovely wife, Jean Grey-Summers? My personal pick is Julia Roberts.

Iceman? I'm gonna have to go with Chris O'Donnell. Heck, with Val Kilmer and Chris O'Donnell, we might need to boot out Patrick Stewart and cast Christopher Reeve. Then it would be the Superman/Batman X-Men.

Beast? Well ... that's a tough one. In the end, I think Beast should be played by an accent-less Jean Claude Van-Damme.

That ragin' Cajun, Gambit, has to be played by Andy Garcia. Or maybe Steven Seagal. After all, he's got the hair.

Colossus? That's easy — Ahh-nuld. He's big, he's buff and he's got the accent. Cool.

But the most difficult X-Man to cast is, without a doubt, Wolverine. Robert DeNiro could do it, except he's not very buff. George Clooney was suggested, but I think he's too pretty. My choice? Definitely Patrick Swayze. He's buff, he's tough and he's got the attitude.

But I can't forget the villains. For Magneto, I have to go with Sean Connery. He's cool. And Apocalypse would definitely have to be animated. That's what PIXAR is around for. But his voice? James Earl Jones. "Wolverine, I'm your father ... Now you shall know the dark side of my mutant abilities ..."

Wow. With a cast like this, who needs a plot?

Priesman is a freshman theater and news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan staff reporter.

Rough ride

Critters and clowns featured at rodeo

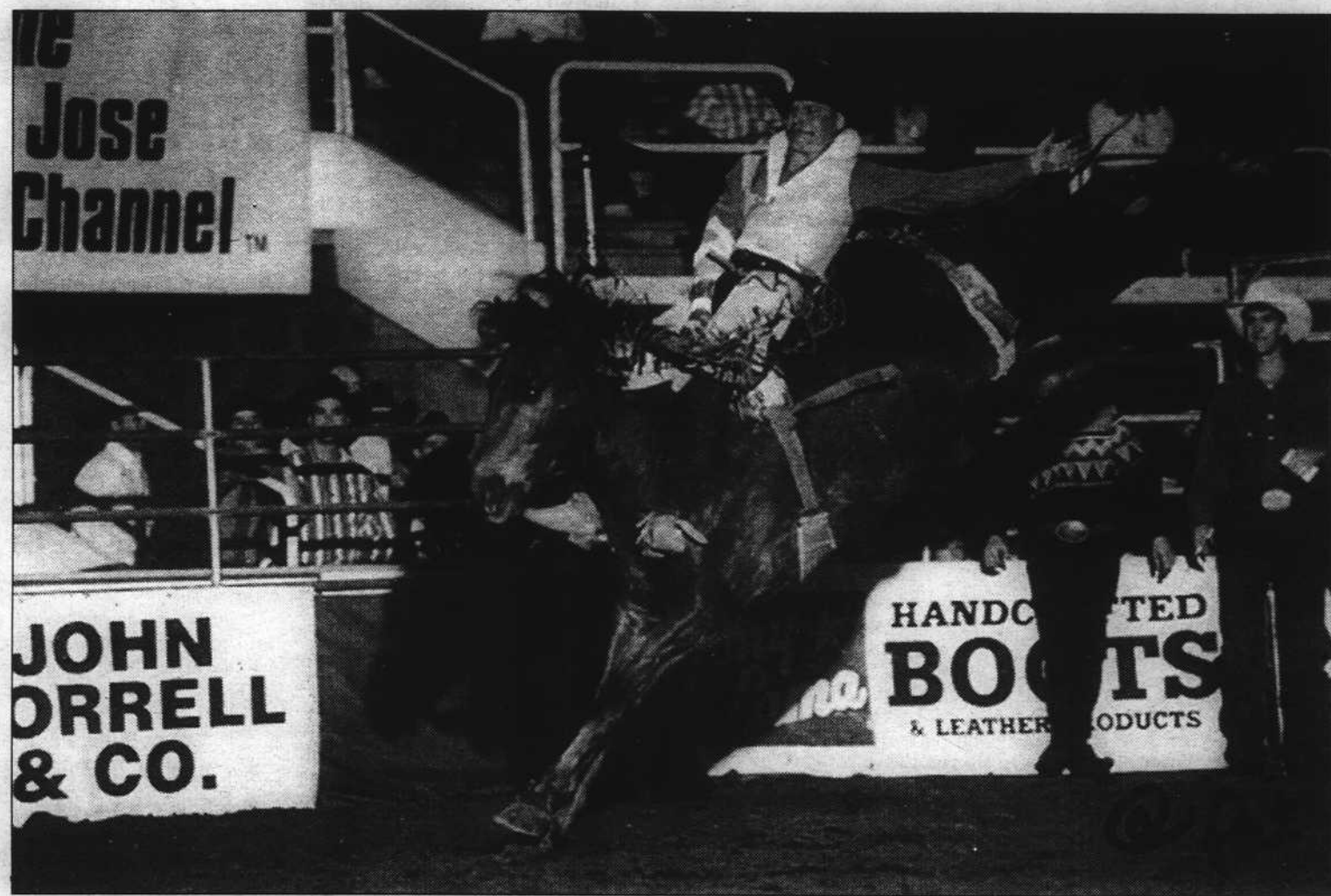


Photo courtesy of the World's Toughest Rodeo
Saddlebronc riding will be just one of the featured events when the World's Toughest Rodeo arrives at the Pershing Auditorium, 226 Centennial Mall, this weekend.

By Patrick Hambrecht
Senior Reporter

Billed as an animal "whose courage in overcoming a handicap will amaze you," in His Glory II is a true performer.

As only a horse with a twisted spine can, he will march in place, smile and hula dance for the World's Toughest Rodeo in Pershing Auditorium, 226 Centennial Mall.

The swaybacked horse is only one of Tommy G. Lucia's amazing animal performers. The former rodeo clown's hairy entourage also will feature Whiplash, a South American Capuchin monkey who herds sheep while riding a Scottish border collie. The monkey is dressed in a full Hollywood western outfit, a reminder of his distant evolutionary kinship to the American cowboy.

"These monkeys have tremen-

dous balancing ability," said Lucia, speaking of Whiplash's riding prowess. "There's no danger of him falling off."

Many of the comedy and stunt routines are thought up by the animals themselves, Lucia said, and some of Whiplash's antics are wholly improvised.

"The way he throws dirt and stuff, you don't teach an animal to do that," he said.

"I also had this horse who did this thing I called the 'Bunny Hop' where he would gallop in a circle, and sort of jump in and out to the music," Lucia said. "It was really sensational. The crowd loved it, but he came up with it himself."

Whiplash's spontaneous mugging and rodeo skills have made him a media celebrity, as he has appeared on Dairy Queen commercials and the television shows "That's Incred-

ible" and "Rogan's Heroes."

The monkey's trainer also was featured as a rodeo clown in the film "Jr. Bonner," with Steve McQueen.

Lucia began training animals full-time after 20 years of being chased by bulls as a rodeo clown.

Rodeo clowns distract the bull after the rider is thrown in bull-riding competitions. Dressed in circus makeup, the daredevils have to risk their lives in front of the horned animal long enough for the bull rider to escape.

"I'd run around the bull and get stepped on and hooked and gored and laughed at by the crowd, and all the normal things," Lucia said.

Lucia said his 27-year-old son, Tommy Joe Lucia, works as a "barrel man." Such clowns jump in and out of barrels to draw the bull's attention to the barrel and away from the rider.

Often, however, barrel men do not escape in time, Lucia said.

"A lot of times, those bulls knock those barrels 20 or 30 feet in the air," Lucia said. "I've been inside when that's happened."

"I've had severe head concussions, broken my nose and ribs. That bull might take that barrel 50 or 60 feet, all the way down the field, with someone inside."

Lucia said rodeo clowns and animal acts were just a small part of the event, which also features calf roping, steer wrestling, bareback bronco riding, "those cowgirls riding around on their fast horses" and clowns.

The World's Toughest Rodeo will run at Pershing Auditorium this Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Tickets are \$16 and \$12. Those interested should call 441-7500 for more information.

'The Glass Menagerie' conveys life story

By Brian Priesman
Staff Reporter

"I have tricks in my pocket. I have things up my sleeve. But I am the opposite of a stage magician. He gives illusion that has the appearance of truth. I give you truth in the pleasant disguise of illusion."



Starting tonight, theater fans will have the opportunity to see that truth as presented in the Tennessee Williams classic, "The Glass Menagerie."

"The Glass Menagerie" tells the story of Amanda Wingfield and her

family. Caught between the fantasy of Southern gentility and the reality of abject poverty, Amanda strives to give meaning and direction to the lives of her children, Tom and Laura.

Tom, the narrator of the play, is a poet with a job in a warehouse. Driven to distraction by his mother's wheedling, he escapes reality through alcohol and the world of fantasies found in the movies.

Laura also is trapped in her world of illusions. A childhood illness has left her with a limp.

"Most of Laura's problem is inside," said Tice Miller, the play's director and chair of the theatre department. "The problem is that she thinks of herself as crippled."

"It's a very moving piece."

For Williams, the play was very autobiographical, Miller said. Tom is Williams; Laura represents the playwright's sister; Rose and

Amanda represent his mother.

Williams' sister Rose was committed to an asylum and given a frontal lobotomy in the early 1940s.

Also, Williams' father was not very involved in his family's life. In "The Glass Menagerie," the father is often referred to, but the audience only sees a picture of him.

"The father still has a lingering presence in the household," Miller said.

The play is told through flashback.

"Tom is in 1944, and the play takes place in 1937," she said. "In many ways, for 1945, the form is very cinematic."

Miller said the last character of the play, the gentleman caller, symbolized the reality that invaded the Wingfields' fantasy world.

"The one man that Laura had a crush on in high school is all of a

sudden in her living room," she said.

The character is important enough to the story that the play originally was called "The Gentleman Caller."

"The gentleman caller is on for about 15 to 20 minutes," Miller said, "but he leaves an incredible impression on the audience and the characters."

"The Glass Menagerie" runs tonight through Feb. 17 and February 20-24 in the Howell Theatre at 12th and R streets. All show times are 8 p.m.

Two 10:30 a.m. matinees are scheduled for Feb. 19 and Feb. 21 for high school students in Lincoln.

Tickets are \$6 for students, \$7 for faculty, staff and senior citizens and \$9 for the public. They are available at the Temple Theatre box office, 472-2073.