

Performers to take stage for charity

TOYSTOCK from page 12

"I see bands that don't get huge right away, that take time to build up a fan base and make some good records as being the ones that last," he said.

The Hunger have performed in Lincoln previously, and have played with some of the other featured Toystock bands before.

The performer most familiar with Lincoln is guitar virtuoso Gary Hoey. This will be his third time playing in the Star City, and he said he's looking forward to helping a town he likes.

"It's always nice to get involved and be able to give something back," he said.

Gary Hoey, who has five albums under his belt, including a Christmas album entitled "Gary Ho-Ho-Hoey," is currently supporting his latest release, "Bug Alley." Produced by Ray Thomas Baker, this is the first album on which Hoey sings.

"I do a remake of Santana's 'Black Magic Woman,'" he said.

Hoey recently played a few West Coast dates on the G-3 tour, featuring Steve Vai, Eric Johnson and Joe Satriani.

"That was definitely the highlight of my life," he said. "It's a thrill to be playing with people of that stature."

As part of The Blaze's Toys for Tots campaign, morning show personalities Tim, the Animal and Johnny Royal held a 30-hour camp out to raise money and donations. Their goal was \$10,000 and 1,200 toys. They succeeded and surpassed their goal.

Tickets for the 19 and over Toystock '96 are available at all Ticketmaster outlets and cost \$15 in advance or \$18 the day of the show. The doors will open at 6 p.m.

Play brings true spirit of season to audiences

'A Christmas Carol' continues to be a heartwarming holiday classic

By LIZA HOLTMEIER
Theater Critic

Audiences who attended "A Christmas Carol" this weekend saw a professional and energetic production, but more importantly, they left the Lied Center for Performing Arts with an inner warmth and calm they did not have when they arrived.

From the beginning of the production by the UNL theatre department, the spirit of Christmas prevailed. The opulent sets of Larry Kaushansky and Dan Stratman, coupled with the rich costumes of Janice Stauffer, brought Charles Dickens' England to life. The mix of Christmas carols and gently falling snow generated the joyous, bright atmosphere of the holiday season.

The moment the lights rose on Scrooge's office, Robert Hurst commanded the stage. His hunched posture and miserly looks made Dickens' Scrooge real before Hurst even said a word. The entrance of Paul Steger's Bob Cratchit and his comic glances at Scrooge furthered the formidable image of Hurst's character.

The comic tone changed to one more dramatic as Jacob Marley's ghost, played by Steven Shields, visited Scrooge at his home. Though Shield's characterization was a bit over-dramatic, the fog, lighting and

sound effects achieved the dire sense of doom the scene called for.

Just when the audience was beginning to feel scared, the Ghost of Christmas Past entered, played by Joan Henneke and Kristi Covey. Henneke's exquisite old age makeup contrasted by Covey's youthful liveness produced an ethereal atmosphere in the scene.

The scenes from Scrooge's past showcased the range of emotions this show could produce. William Cover's Young Ebenezer, Jacque Camperud's Belle and Paul Pearson's Fezziwig established the roots of Scrooge's life.

The delightful flirtation between Belle and a youthful Scrooge brought smiles to the faces of the audience, while the confrontation between the two characters over young Ebenezer's greediness agonized not only the on-looking Scrooge, but also the audience.

Pearson radiated merriment each time he entered the stage. His gravelly laughter and cheerful growl for gaity heightened the tempo of the show and served as a symbol for inherent goodness.

Act 2 got under way with the magnificent entrance of Patrick Tuttle's Ghost of Christmas Present in a gilded chandelier lowered. Tuttle's hearty laugh sustained the sense of merriment,

though the scenes contained an underlying tone of sorrow.

Both scenes with the Cratchits were highlights of the play. The first, in which the family celebrates over Christmas dinner, established the chemistry between the characters. Heather Currie's Mrs. Cratchit was probably one of the most loving wives to be portrayed onstage, and Steger needed only to smile to portray the emotions and happiness of Bob Cratchit.

One of the most powerful scenes in the show occurred as the Ghost of Christmas Present took Scrooge around the world to show him the needy and the poor. As the lights lowered, cast members entered with candles to line the apron of the stage and the stairs out into the audience. As their voices rose singing the divine notes of "O Holy Night," the spotlight dimmed on Scrooge and the sky backdrop was bright with stars. It was a moment of purity and aching happiness.

Next came the Ghost of Christmas Future and with him, bleak sets and gray-green lighting to give life to the doom of Scrooge's future. Shadows and fog, accompanied by the cackles of Joe the Beetle, also played by Cover, rounded out the sense of fore-

boding for the audience and Scrooge.

The subtle approach by Steger and Currie to the death of Tiny Tim was beautiful. The characters' struggle to keep the tears and emotions under control was heart-breaking for both the audience and Scrooge.

After the exit of the Ghost of Christmas Future, the mood shifted once again as Hurst's Scrooge transformed from a cold, gruff old man to a giddy, joyful, schoolboy-like character. Hurst's scenes with a boy named Simon, played by Scott Shamblyn, were incredibly genuine. It was as if the two were unaware they were being watched by a sold out crowd.

This joyful, upbeat pace was upset though as the scene switched to people in the street on Christmas Day. A woman entered carrying a baby, and as the cast members gathered around, the lights dimmed and two donkeys were led in. The woman knelt with the child in her arms, and her husband came to stand behind her. This picture, meant to symbolize the birth of Jesus, seemed contrived and out of place.

The show did take its audiences through the emotional catharsis of Scrooge. By the end of the show, the cast had given more than a tremendous performance to the audience; they had given a lesson in the meaning of Christmas.

Box Office Top 10



Below are the top 10 money making movies of last weekend. The dollar amounts are represented in millions of dollars.

Movie	Earnings
1. Jerry Maguire	\$17.5
2. Mars Attacks!	\$9.7
3. 101 Dalmatians	\$8.75
4. The Preacher's Wife	\$7.4
5. Daylight	\$4.1
6. Jingle All the Way	\$3.73
7. Star Trek: First Contact	\$3.45
8. Ransom	\$2.8
9. Space Jam	\$2.2
10. The English Patient	\$1.7

SOURCE: AP

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