

# Ground breaking begins at MGM Grand site

by Morgan Fisher

As Kirk Kerkorian, Burt Reynolds, Lonnie Anderson and Dorothy of *The Wizard of Oz* pushed down the symbolic TNT plunger, they set off a flurry of fireworks to open the new MGM Hotel, casino and theme park construction project.

Las Vegas will welcome the new casino/hotel in 1994. With 5,007 guestrooms, a 33-acre theme park and a 15,000 seat sports arena, it will be a Hollywood-inspired family entertainment attraction. This new resort will be located on 112 acres on the

corner of the Las Vegas Strip and Tropicana Ave. This emerald green hotel complex will be considered the largest in the world.

Robert Maxey, president and chief executive officer of MGM Inc., said, "MGM's biggest project to date represents the next step in the evolution of entertainment attractions."

The resort will recreate the elegance of the 30s and 40s movie era, centering around the movie *The Wizard of Oz*. Visitors will pass through the main entrance, under the 88-foot MGM Lion, and into the Emerald City,

a 22,000 square foot theme attraction. Patrons can then check into one of the 733 luxury suites and visit the theme park to ride on 12 major attractions and shop at the 11 retail shops.

At night, adults can return to the casino to try their luck at 171,500 sq. ft. of gaming area, with an estimated 3,500 machines and 165 gaming tables.

"We believe there is a tremendous family market potential to be tapped since only five percent of all visitors to Las Vegas bring family members under 16 years of age," said Maxey.



(Pictured from left to right) Burt Reynolds, Dorothy, Lonnie Anderson, and Kirk Kerkorian start the groundbreaking festivities of the MGM Hotel and theme park with a bang.

# 'The Taming of the Shrew' is a hit at UNLV

by Gary Puckett

## COMMENTARY

If the performance of jugglers

tossing flaming torches in the darkness while accompanied by an individual swallowing a flaming sword

does not excite you, you had better check your pulse. These stage antics were the initial treat for the opening

night crowd last Thursday, Oct. 3, at the Judy Bayley Theatre at UNLV.

This crowd was on hand to see Jeff Koep's direction of William Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*.

The audience was in for a treat this night. An observer would be hard pressed to tell who enjoyed the play more, the audience or the cast. The emphasis was on fun from beginning to end.

Charles Paddock played a very convincing *Baptista Minola*, a man caught in the dilemma of trying to marry off two daughters. The youngest, Bianca (Ann-Marie Pereth), posed him no problems and had many suitors including Lucentio (Gerry Schooler), Hortensio (Ian Pugh), and Gremio (Robert Dame).

It was the elder daughter, Katherina (Linda Pierson), who created the problems for Baptista which released the comedy elements of the play. Being shrewd, Baptista decided that Katherina must marry before Bianca is permitted to. Since Katherina was the perfect shrew, this was no small requirement.

Only Petruchio (Todd Espeland) stepped forward to accept this challenge. Espeland's performance was admirable and athletic and matched the plight of his character. Petruchio proved

to be up to the challenge.

In the meantime, many comic scenes ensued. Notable, was Biondello's (Josh Musselman) announcement of the impending arrival of Petruchio as a suitor for Katherina in Act 3, Scene 2. Musselman's performance during this lengthy monologue involved elaborate histrionics and had the audience in stitches. A lengthy applause followed the performance.

Hortensio was given the unenviable task of teaching Katherina music. The result of this endeavor was that he wore a mandolin bashed over his head. As if this injury were not enough, he was continually frustrated in his courtship of Bianca by Lucentio.

The most comic scenes were, of course, those between Katherina and Petruchio. The classic lines between these two characters continually produced laughter from the audience.

Linda Pierson was stunning. Her presence on stage always seemed to draw attention. The reply I received when commenting to a friend about how well she

sang in *Romance, Romance* was, "You can tell she can sing well by how strong her voice is in the spoken lines." Pierson is extremely gifted and UNLV is fortunate to have her.


Circus technique was abundant throughout the play and at times the comedy was almost slapstick. Hits and falls were realistic and convincing, and as a viewer I was impressed with the athletic ability these actors and actresses must possess to enable them to perform like this, all the while maintaining character roles.

This play was what it has been for nearly four centuries: fun for all involved. Anyone looking for a good time should not miss this. It will continue playing Oct. 12, 16, 17 and 18 at 8 p.m. and Oct. 13, at 2 p.m. at the Judy Bayley Theatre.

*The Taming of the Shrew* is being played in conjunction with *Kiss Me, Kate* which will continue to play Oct. 9, 10, 11 and 19 at 8 p.m., and on Oct. 20, at 2 p.m.



Clockwise from left: Todd Espeland and Linda Pierson star in *The Taming of the Shrew*. Patton Rice and Dana Roppolo of *Kiss Me Kate*.



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