



If you can't skate... take a walk!

BY JARED DEAN

STAFF WRITER

There are many levels on which to review the Las Vegas Hilton's presentation of Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Starlight Express", all of which the production suffers on varying degrees.

When you take into consideration that the Hilton is the exclusive home of the "Express," and promotion of the play emphasizes the \$9 million dollar renovation and \$10,000-\$20,000 dollar costumes, and that the contract is for eight years, let's not forget the \$40 price tag (\$25 for children), you're going to expect more than your basic high school play.

Because it's good manners to present likes before dislikes, we will follow

etiquette, thus bifurcating the review. Everybody at the Hilton was real nice, and the first cocktail (for VIP's) was free.

Enough of the good, let's

OK, so the costumes can weigh up to 45 pounds, and the actors have to do approximately 200 toe stops per week. For a production this big you wouldn't want

there were 30 wireless microphones and only one sound designer. If in fact the sound designer's job includes making sure the mikes are turned on, then

fragments of plot left amplified, you could sort of contrive a story that went something like this: Everybody on stage is a piece of train. There's the diesel train, the electric train, and the steam train. The three decide to race to prove which is best, and each tries to get the best looking caboose.

The steam engine (Rusty) is the underdog and audience favorite. His father (Poppa) is a retired steam engine and the best part of the production. Poppa's vocal talents were unsurpassed, his acting abilities a joy to watch. Rusty's acting wasn't bad, and a duet in the middle of the play between Rusty and Poppa is almost worth all the falls, close calls, and "what did he say's?"

The lasers and lights were pretty impressive too, but for all the pleasure you have to endure some pain, and nobody should have to pay for pain, Andrew Lloyd Webber or not.



The Final Race: from left to right: Anthony T. Perry, Rod Weber, Steven Michael Skeels.

hear the gripes. What's up with the fact that two of the main characters couldn't even skate? After falling more than twice (each), you notice how shaky they were even when standing.

to open if one or more of the actors can't act. Even if acting means skating, if they can't skate they should walk...to the unemployment office.

Another very frustrating aspect was the fact that

he/she should be fired.

Several components of the cast went unheard for much of the production. Much of the missed dialogue/music was at the beginning, leaving much of the plot lost. From the

Berry, berry, berry, suede...

BY JARED DEAN AND DINGO!

Even though it was Suede headlining show, the audience was there to see the 'Berries. Dolores O'Riordan, lead-singer for the 'Berries jokingly said that "Suede was real stuck up about the fact that they should close the show. They said 'were bigger in England' and I said 'maybe so, but we're in America now.'" She can be

confident that America, or at least Las Vegas, is more into the Cranberries than Suede. Even if Suede does sell out stadiums in England, it was the Cranberries that sold out the Huntridge.

O'Riordan had the crowd eating out of her hand. Even the slightest move by her was met with cheers and whistles. She was donned in a cute pixie-like outfit with black boots and an Ankh necklace,

which she received from an audience member. The band sounded pretty good, but a little shaky on "Linger" and "Sunday". The crowd sang most of the words with O'Riordan and all but fainted when "Dreams" began. O'Riordan took off her shoes for "Dreams" and at the end of the show did a little Irish dance, bringing down the house. They returned for a brief encore and left along with most of the audience.



The Cranberries played their stuff in Las Vegas.

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