

Holiday movies to enjoy with family

BY BRIAN J. KUCHAR
STAFF WRITER

Well, it is my favorite time of the year again. My dorm room is decorated with a plenitude of lights and garland. I even listen to Christmas albums now more than any other genre of music.

I may have just moved from Massachusetts where there is a feeling of Christmas with the snow, but Las Vegas has the same Christmas spirit, despite not having 25-degree weather with wind chills below zero.

The following movies are three of my all-time holiday favorites. They don't include the cartoon shows which air every Christmas, like *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, because these are full-length theatrical releases.

These movies span three different decades: *The Bishop's Wife* is from 1947, the immortal *White Christmas* from 1954 and the timeless *Miracle on 34th Street* is the 1994 version.

Many people at this point would be asking, "Why the new *Miracle on 34th Street*?" I do like the original movie and I do like the all-time American favorite *It's a Wonderful Life*, but I decided to recommend these

three overlooked videos, which can be found on Blockbuster holiday shelves and other video stores around the valley.

The Bishop's Wife stars Cary Grant as an angel sent to earth to help out David Niven, a priest, and his wife, Loretta Young, raise money for a new church.

At first, Niven does not like Grant, thinking Grant is trying to woo away his wife. Both are unaware that Grant is really an angel. Grant's usual suave manner shines through in this character, and he manages to touch the couple and the community in this caring holiday movie.

White Christmas stars Bing Crosby and Danny Kaye in this reworking of the Christmas classic, *Holiday Inn*. It was in this movie the classic Irving Berlin song "White Christmas" was first featured. The popularity of that song gave the title to this new movie version.

The movie starts out with Danny Kaye saving Bing Crosby's life during a battle in World War II. Afterwards, Crosby tells Kaye he would owe Kaye anything he wanted after the war, in return for saving his life.

Kaye decides that because Crosby is such a talented singer, that he should be part of

the theater group Kaye is putting together. The movie then shows how they are going to perform at their ex-officer's (Dean Jagger's) resort in Vermont. Rosemary Clooney also stars in this classic musical.

Last, but not least, is the remake of *Miracle on 34th Street*. This remake keeps much of the same theme with a little girl (Mara Wilson) not believing that there is a Santa Claus until she meets the real thing.

Richard Attenborough, most recently seen in *Jurassic Park* as the park's owner, plays the big man in the red suit. His smart performance is also comparable to the other two major stars in the movie: Elizabeth Perkins and Dylan McDermott.

The movie is up-to-date without losing any of the original's magic. However, the movie did not do very well last Christmas because it played in the shadow of the massive Tim Allen vehicle, *The Santa Claus*.

So make some popcorn, spice up some eggnog and settle down for a long winter's nap. With holiday classics like these, the Christmas season is only a VCR player away.



The Dallas Brass entertained chamber music fans in Artemus W. Ham Hall Sunday with a special pre-Christmas program.

Dallas Brass rings in Christmas early

BY RON HIBBLE
STAFF WRITER

The celebration of Christmas came early to the UNLV campus when the Dallas Brass performed Sunday at Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall.

Although there wasn't a big crowd to hear this outstanding brass ensemble, audience members were treated to a performance that demonstrated why this group is recognized and revered throughout the world.

"Our performance is designed for the entire family," said Michael Levine, director of the group. "Our ideal audience has a range in ages from 5-95. We don't put on a recital,

we put on a show. Our goal is to entertain and enrich by playing great music while showing our audience how much we enjoy what we do."

Now in its 13th year, the Dallas Brass has appeared throughout the United States and Canada, as well as Europe and the Far East.

Sunday's "celebration" was a program of music from Europe to America, spanning 400 years of history: from renaissance, baroque and classical masterpieces to Broadway, Hollywood, ragtime, dixieland, swing, patriotic, popular and holiday favorites.

If there was a sour note for this concert, it was only with the attendance.

Rave

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delicious argument ensues. She insults him, and he walks off, leaving her to wait for her mystery date who never shows up.

The choreography in this section was wonderful. Although only a delivery boy at the perfumery, Laszlo is transformed into an incredible dancer, front and center in the main dance number. Kudos to DeVous for his excellent performance.

The crowd was especially favorable to Ambler in her solo about receiving "Vanilla Ice Cream." They rallied behind her from the moment Balash starts writing to "dear friend" to her distraction and curiosity with the bearer of her fa-

vorite sweet. This leads her to start to look at Nowack in a very different way.

The rest, as they say is history. Secrets are revealed, love conquers all and they all live happily ever after. Of course, this is a cop-out so the ending isn't spoiled, but that is easily remedied. If you love quality entertainment, superb acting and a great storyline, you won't want to miss one of UNLV's finest theatrical productions to date.

She Loves Me plays through Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m. in Judy Bayley Theatre. Students with valid ID get in free, with a \$5-8 ticket price for general, senior and group admission. For more information, contact the Performing Arts Center box office at 895-3801.

Tidbits

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Venom, that's four bands). Anthrax has always been the tamest, if not the lamest of this braindead genre that technically died at least five years ago.

All of these bands have gotten weaker over the years. It's to the point now where you can drop the thrash portion of the title. The cover of this CD explains it all. It's a big ball of metal in a junkyard. Gnarly. I guess it was inevitable that these groups would begin taking the place of Judas Priest in stadiums across America. Look at the size of that mosh pit, dude!

This is a good Christmas present for the long-haired 24-year-old that lives at home with mom and still wears a Dio shirt from the Holy Diver tour.

Replicants

Replicants
Zoo Entertainment

This is a side project by members of Tool and Failure. It is all cover songs done in their own style. Some of these songs sound amazingly identical to the originals, which I think is a waste of good CD space.

Since the "interpretations" are so similar to the originals, I'd have to suggest you buy a Pink Floyd box set, or a Neil Young LP before wasting valuable Christmas money on this. A standout is the odd cover of Paul McCartney's "Silly Love Songs."

Capleton

Prophecy
Def Jam

The dancehall style of reggae has had a lot of hits and misses. What was Snow? Who cares about Shabba Ranks anymore? Regardless of that mess, there are still plenty of Cutty Ranks and Daddy Fred dies in the world. Numbered

among those positive "toasters" is Capleton.

He uses his strong voice to put forth strictly positive lyrics. Every song in praise of Jah, Marcus Garvey and Haile Selassie. A good mixture of roots, Rasta and Dancehall styles. Don't get me wrong, his style is completely modern dancehall with a hip hop beat. Not too original, but the culture lyrics and Rasta spirit save him from mediocrity.

Asleep At the Wheel

The Wheel Keeps
On Rollin'
Capitol

More than a bunch of hoe-down hicks, Asleep At the Wheel add many different elements to their brand of country music. They bring their fresh sound out by fusing country, swing, jazz, boogie, honky-tonk, Cajun, blues, and even rock.

The song "Hightower" is a jazzy masterpiece featuring Bela Fleck tearing it up on the banjo. Who'd have thought country could swing like this? I had no idea there was a style of music called Western bebop.

The Geraldine Fibbers

Lost Somewhere Between the Earth and My Home
Virgin

This band stands on the sappy edge of country and "punk." They don't take any of the lively elements of these two genres, instead they follow the "feeling sorry for myself, cryin' in my beer, yet I'm really artistic" approach.

The music isn't too bad overall. In fact, it's quite unique. It's just that it tends to be a downer, which can be interesting or irritating depending on your mood. Good gift for the manic depressive.

Becky Sharp

Way Cool Music
MCA

Competent guitar-driven

rock with a strong sounding singer.

Maybe it's me, but all these loud guitar rockin' bands with strong sounding singers seem to be blending together. I guess this could grow on you if you were forced to listen to it everyday at work. Some songs have an intensity to them when the guitars get pumped up.

There just doesn't seem to be enough personality showing through in this music. It's pretty faceless, which makes it very average. Who knows, maybe they're better live. At least as good as Superchunk, Sebadoh, or any other loud band that doesn't have anything interesting to say.

The Rolling Stones

Stripped
Virgin

Isn't this like the 15th live record by the Stones? Well, it's 1995, so it's a CD. Since they're helping to sell Windows 95, it's also an interactive CD. Pretty hip for a bunch of geezers!

The selections they play on this CD are the slower songs they rarely do live, so it could be considered unplugged in some ways. They do "Angie," "Wild Horses," and "Like a Rolling Stone," among others. You have to be a diehard fan to be interested in this, but if you are a diehard fan, you won't be disappointed.

Erick Sermon

Double Or Nothing
Def Jam

Erick and Parish used to be in business: Making dollars. Now Erick is in business for himself. With this, his second solo album, he stands to make some cash.

Known as a superproducer, Sermon has knocked out tracks for everyone from En Vogue to Redman. The beats on this record are stamped with just as much precision.

STRINGS

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