

'Strip Search' a brilliant portrayal of Las Vegas

Play showcases a different Vegas

By Jason Sheehan
A & E Staff Writer

Spectacular acting and an innovative script lured audiences to the Black Box Theater last week as UNLV's Theatre Department presented *Strip Search*, a series of eight short plays about life in Sin City.

According to Director Linsey Hamilton, the plays are about "dreams taking flight and dreams being broken." Each of the eight plays lasted 10 to 15 minutes in length and featured an assortment of lifestyles to which people living in Las Vegas subscribe.

All possible scenarios of life in Las Vegas were depicted on stage, including a scene in *Flamingo Fantasy* where actress Jaylene Irwin played a woman who charged her husband \$500 for a night of passionate sex.

The audience had its moral judgment tested in the play *Miracle of the Neon* when actor Kd Kaiser played a cross-dresser who seduced actor Larry Narlock, a man who had just lost an important business.

"It shocks me," said Kai-

ser, who had many people gasping for air upon discovering his gender when he removed his shirt. "I look in the mirror and I know who I am. I know it's me."

"A couple of people...were coming up and telling me, 'Oh yeah, you're a guy,'" Kaiser said. "It's funny. I'm glad the mystique is working and that it's thrilling that many people. I think it's kind of interesting."

While Kaiser shocked many in the audience, Christopher Keefe remained busy acting in four separate roles. Portraying a wide assortment of characters may have been a challenge for Keefe but he made the most of his situation and seemed to be enjoying himself.

"It's a blast," said Keefe, a theater major who will graduate next May. "There are so many different things that you can do."

"I've had so much freedom to play around," Keefe continued. "That was one great thing about the process. They gave me many opportunities to do whatever I wanted to do. It was a lot of fun."

Keefe admitted his roles were demanding but said, "You just focus and go for it."

Keefe wasn't the only one



hyun-ho han/rebel yell

Jaylene Irwin (Marsha) and Norman Federico (Donald), appeared in "Strip Search", a series of eight plays.

with a unique role. Actress Aleza Goldsmith played a naive young woman who ran away from home and stole horse semen in *All the King's Horses*.

Goldsmith said she used her innocence to portray the character. "My costume helped a lot because it was very Alice in Wonderlandish."

All *Strip Search* playwrights were accessible to the production's actors, a bonus for

those seeking insight into the characters they portray on stage, Keefe said.

"When you do a known script, you're not going to have the playwright to help. They're either dead or somewhere else," he explained.

"Original scripts are a blast because you have the playwrights there...to answer questions. It's great for character study," Keefe said.

The cast of *Strip Search* appeared to have a handle on things. Though they were unable to get together until the Friday before opening night, the gang generated a chemistry that may have convinced some audience members they were a cast of long-time pals.

Overall, *Strip Search* is a brilliant series of plays that warrants performance by other theater guilds.

CSUN president puts cap on spending

By Brian J. Kuchar
Staff A&E Writer

The budget that funds entertainment for UNLV students was practically cut in half this summer, making fewer on-campus events during the 1996-97 academic year a possibility.

Student government's entertainment and programming budget for the 1996-1997 school year was cut from \$100,000 to \$60,000, a 40 percent decrease from 1995-96.

"The many movies, bands and comedians who have come to the campus have been paid by this budget," said Entertainment and Programming Director Mike Castillo. Many high-profile acts, such as Generation X comedian Carrot Top, who performed at UNLV last fall, "cannot be brought to UNLV because of the cut," Castillo

said. Student discount ticket rates for Las Vegas Thunder hockey games may have to be cut as well, he added.

CSUN President Aaron Rosenthal said the budget cuts extend beyond entertainment and programming. "In no way do we see entertainment invaluable...but all student government departments across the board have been cut."

"I feel it is my responsibility as the chief administrator of student government to limit spending and to clean up what's happened in previous years," Rosenthal said.

Rosenthal maintains CSUN is not having financial problems but noted that \$40,000 over the intended budget was spent last year on entertainment and programming events. "Last year they said,

'Spend, spend, spend.' But you just can't do that. We're taking the conservative approach," Rosenthal said.

"One big criticism of student government in the past was their irresponsible spending...but we need to be prudent in our spending."

"We have an obligation to the students who elected us to be responsible with their tuition dollars," Rosenthal continued. "We're trying to find a balance between the services we provide and balancing our budget."

Entertainment and programming may be the first CSUN department to see a budget increase if more money is located for CSUN-sponsored activities, according to Rosenthal.

Despite the cut, Castillo said he's optimistic about the year to come. "We don't have a

negative attitude about the budget cut. We accept it," he said.

CSUN entertainment and programming events slated for the fall include "Boogie Knights" on Sept. 6, a flashback to the sounds of the '70s. "Noon Scene" will return to campus this semester where a variety of bands perform and free food is distributed to all UNLV students who attend.

In addition to live entertainment, a variety of films will be shown throughout the year in front of Wright Hall. The first movie in the series is "Mission: Impossible" on Sept. 22.

Castillo said he's focusing his efforts on entertaining students despite the budget cut. "This won't effect our plans for the year. We're still going to have good entertainment, steady entertainment," Castillo said.

'Grease' returns!

by Jennifer Evans
a & e editor

The wild and wacky supercool '50s are back in the new Broadway musical production of *GREASE!* which will be staged this weekend at the Aladdin Theatre for the Performing Arts.

The play is about those crazy days when your parents were in high school: hot rod loving boys in black leather jackets wore greasy coifs and boy-crazy girls wore bobby socks, poodle skirts and beehive hairdos.

GREASE sets the stage for an incredible lineup of actors, including two-time Emmy Award winner Sally Struthers, who portrays Miss Lynch, the busy body school teacher everyone loves to hate. Joe Piscopo leads the "pre-show bop show" in his role as deejay Vince Fontain. Some lucky audience members get to dance with Piscopo on stage. Sheena Easton portrays Rizzo and Adrian Zmed plays Danny Zucko.

For more information call the Aladdin Box office at 736-0419.



The Smashing Pumpkins performed a three-hour show.

Pumpkins smash T & M

By Jennifer Evans
a & e editor

Darkness filled the Thomas & Mack Tuesday as creatures of the night poured down the stairs looking for their seats. An enthusiastic audience screamed in excitement while a series of brightly colored lights flickered throughout the auditorium.

Guys and gals alike were dressed in the appropriate *Pumpkin* attire, consisting of metallic pants and matching shirts. Everyone was ready for an evening of hard-core alternative rock n' roll. And that's exactly what they got.

Opening band *Greatly Buffalo*, with their distinct alternative beat, prepared the energetic audience for what was to come.

When the *Pumpkins* took the stage excitement filled the air and brought the audience to its feet, waving lighters in honor of the smashing band. There wasn't an empty seat in the house.

The *Pumpkins* wasted no time capturing the audience with their hit song "Zero." Lead singer Billy Corgan and his gang, bassist D'Arcy, electric guitarist

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