

University Wind Symphony delights attentive audience

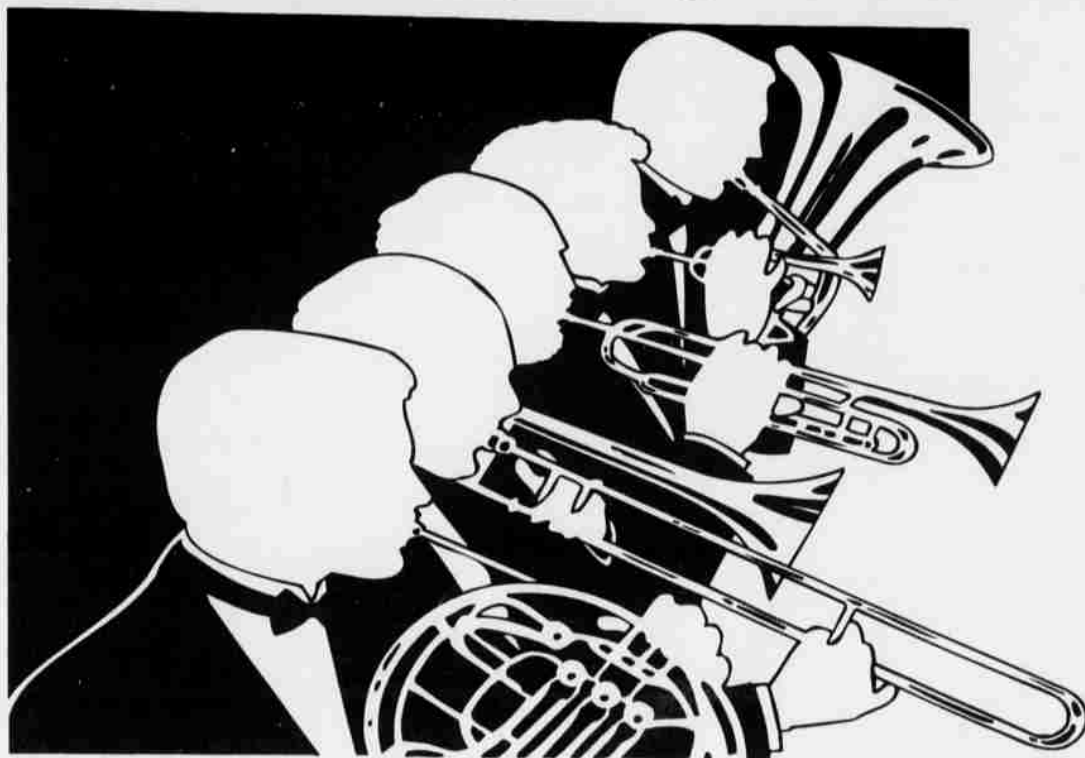
By Brian J. Kuchar
Staff A&E Writer

Playing to a younger audience than most classical music groups are accustomed to, the **University Wind Symphony** relayed a feeling of American pride Thursday in the Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall.

Although some regulars attended, swarms of "twenty-somethings" paid tribute to UNLV's rendition of "An American Portrait: A Salute to Great Patriots."

Led by conductor Thomas G. Leslie, nationally recognized for his direction of quality performances by UNLV bands, the symphony easily enchanted its audience by painting five distinct scenarios where nationalism always pervaded.

Robert Jager's "Esprit de Corps" possessed an odd similarity to Disney's *Fantasia*, although it was based on "The Marine's Hymn." Dramatic and full of energy, the composition starts off like a solemn marching drill. In the middle, the music changes pace by becoming lighter and features a "quasi-waltz" flavor. The end of this piece ended with a march, but with stronger vigor than the beginning. It's much like when the wiz-



ard in *Fantasia* defeats the demon. "Down a Country Lane," the second piece, portrays America in a romantic, more rural setting. Throughout the composition, the melody was more languid than the previous march, which is due to the exclusion of percussion instruments. Three quarters of the song emitted visions of a kiss, only to

climax in slow waves one after the other. This exemplified a calmer, simpler America than the battles our country has engaged in since the arrival of Christopher Columbus.

Christopher Chapman, a UNLV graduate student, serves as guest conductor for "William Howard Schuman's *Chester*," which was

originally part of his orchestral "New England Triptych."

It has been used in the past as the unofficial national anthem during the Revolutionary War. This piece tried to give soldier the confidence needed to overcome rough nights by focusing on a "we shall overcome" approach to life. One can envision a young man request-

ing the honor to fight for his country, encountering tragedy amidst the battles in which comrades were lost, and eventually leading his country to victory.

Inspired by national parks in the Western United States, Dan Welcher's "Zion" depicts the struggles people in Utah overcame to claim the canyon as their own. The piece strangely encompassed an Eastern flavor, with wind chimes and shrill notes scaling up and down during the entire composition.

As this magical piece reached its conclusion, images of rugged battles between the settlers and Native Americans over rights to the canyon become evident.

"West Point Symphony" marked the grand finale to the Wind Symphony's repertoire. The early movements were melodic, slowly preparing the audience for the raucously, merry second and final movement.

Overall, the performance by UNLV's University Wind Symphony was astounding. They successfully captured the spirit of the great patriots, illustrating the tragedies and obstacles America needs to overcome to claim her heritage.

United Artists' Cinemas on the Strip a huge rip off

By Jason Sheehan
Staff A&E Writer

Believe it or not, one of the worst theater chains in America has lessened its values.

United Artists Showcase Cinemas, which opened last month at Tropicana and Las Vegas Blvd., is the biggest soar to hit Las Vegas since Bob Stupak decided to build *The Stratosphere*.

Movie theaters in the 90s have become famous for having state-of-the-art THX sound and vibrant screens. This type of technology prompted George Lucas to re-introduce his epic *Star Wars* trilogy. But surely, Lucas didn't have these theaters in mind when he first decided to polish these timeless classics.

On paper, the new multiplex looks promising, since it's located only a couple miles from UNLV. But in reality, it's a haven for disaster.

From faulty screens to an ignominious parking scheme, United Artists is apparently trying to prove that rewinding the clock back to the 70s is the way to go. Why use the latest equipment available when you can go to a swap market and buy used parts? This type of thinking quickly ruins the wonderful experience of watching a film unfold on the big screen.

Amazingly, a few problems occur before even stepping into the lobby of the cozy air-conditioned facility located next to the MGM.

As if paying \$4 for a bargain matinee isn't bad enough, the Showcase Cinemas demand your hard-earned money to park in their enclosed garage.

However, they do have a gracious policy that allows patrons to get their parking tickets validated for two hours.

But what if the movie you plan to see lasts longer than two hours?

Tough luck!

They charge \$2 an hour to park in their new garage. Imagine how much cash it would take to watch all five movies at this theater in one day. If you are a mathematician and guessed \$16, you're right!

A main reason why this establishment is charging for using their garage is because they will soon unveil a shopping mall. But they apparently aren't kind enough to wait for the mall to be completed.

If this theater maintains these policies, people will likely find another place to frequent when looking to catch a film on its opening weekend.

Unfortunately, there are many more reasons to avoid the tight grip of this theater.

For a complex that opened its doors less than a month ago, you'd expect all the equipment to be in fine working condition.

Well, that's not so with the fine folks at United Artists. At about 2:00 P.M. Friday, the butter machine wasn't working.

To fix this problem, melted butter was placed into a dixie-cup, and then poured over the popcorn.

When asked how long the butter had been out in the open, a female employee said "five minutes," making it sound like that wasn't a long time.

When something like butter must be heated to remain fresh, five minutes can be an eternity.

After encountering all these frustrations, it was finally time for the 2:05 showing of the lackluster gangster film *City of Industry* to begin.

If you're hard of hearing, forget about visiting the Showcase Cinemas.

The movie was so quiet, you could hear a pin drop and fluctu-

ate on the floor before coming to a complete stop.

In hindsight, the disclaimer on the screen that asks for complete silence before every film begins makes sense. If a person dares to whisper, no one in the theater would be able to decipher any of the spoken lines.

This could have easily been resolved if all the speakers were in use. Unfortunately, the only speakers operating were near the screen. Eight speakers on the sides and two in the back were turned off, demolishing any dreams of experiencing surround sound.

When *City of Industry* began, the projector was clearly out of proportion.

The image that beamed onto the screen was too wide, making characters look fat and compact cars look as long as Cadillacs.

In an effort to make things right, a patron quickly rushed out of her seat to inform management of this problem.

Although the film's proportion was corrected, something went wrong in the back room, causing the movie to get slightly out of focus. This obstruction was never corrected.

New theaters, even if they are cheaply made, should have screens that aren't on the brink of repair. Apparently, things aren't always as they seem.

Located in the upper-middle section of the screen in this auditorium is a patch.

These types of things are common place in beach-balls, but in a spiffy new theater complex, it's unacceptable.

For the folks at United Artists to open a theater in need of repair is unthinkable. They must really



safe and enjoyable place to see a first-run flick.

Other establishments throughout the city have one thing in common, they feature modern theatrical equipment and a nice clean atmosphere you can take your family to without thinking twice.

By all means, I suggest you boycott the United Artists Showcase Cinemas. You'll be happy you did.

undermine the standards set by the paying public.

With all the disturbances and foul play taking place at the United Artists Showcase Cinemas, it's become painfully clear this isn't a

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