

Mark Twain At UNLV

The irreverent humor of Mark Twain comes to life at UNLV in a one-man show titled "Mark Twain Himself," starring actor and Mark Twain scholar Bill McLinn. McLinn brings his Twain impersonation to the stage of UNLV's Judy Bayley Theatre for one night only, March 19 at 8 p.m.

The free program, open to the public, is being offered by UNLV's College of Arts and Letters, with funding by the Lady Luck Casino and Hotel.

The UNLV performance subtitled "Reminiscences of His Time in Virginia City," will feature many of the stories made famous by the great American humorist during his years in Nevada's mining towns. McLinn, who has made a career out of his Twain portrayal, was recently offered his own newspaper column in the "Territorial Enterprise," Nevada's first newspaper, and the publication where Samuel Langhorne Clemens adopted the pen name of Mark Twain.

McLinn, a former congressional aid who holds advanced degrees in international relations, law, and theology, began performing as the "sage of Hannibal, Missouri" in 1975. Since then he has done more than 1,000 performances and established himself as the most prolific performer of the vast Twain repertoire, only "out-Twained" by actor Hal Holbrook. During the celebration of Twain's 150th birthday in 1985, McLinn was named the official Mark Twain for the event.

With more than 15 hours of Twain material committed to memory, McLinn's style is to walk, talk, and breathe the persona of one of America's most beloved and controversial men of letters. His performance always include a question-and-answer session with his audience, and without breaking character Twain (McLinn) answers questions in the inimitable, pithy style -- poking fun at the pomposity of humankind, commenting on the problems of the day, and always getting in a few good digs at politics. Occasionally McLinn finds himself correcting widely held misperceptions about the great author, lecturer and commentator.

One such misconception is the idea that Twain always wore a white suit and smoked a fat cigar. Not so says McLinn, who notes that Twain always wore black tails on the lecture circuit and never smoked on stage. The white suit was a trademark Twain adopted in later life, but one that stuck.

McLinn has even gone so far as to toss Twain's hat into the ring as a presidential candidate representing the Anti-Doughnut Mugwump Party during the 1984 campaign. After holding a convention in a Washington, D.C. pub, McLinn announced his party platform quoting Twain, "I have come to purify the political atmosphere. I am in favor of everything and anything anybody is in favor of. There could be no broader platform than mine."

Heritage: Civilization And The Jews - Sunday, March 23rd At 1 P.M. On KLVX Channel 10



In the second of three HERITAGE CONVERSATIONS With Bill Moyers, the award-winning journalist interviews Gerson Cohen (top), Chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary, and Rabbi Saul Berman (bottom), of New York's Lincoln Square Synagogue. The hour-long program, amplifying key themes raised by the public television series HERITAGE: CIVILIZATION AND THE JEWS, will be aired locally on Sunday, March 23rd at 1 P.M. on KLVX - Channel 10. Don't miss it!

VIENNA (WMS) — The Austrian Parliament unanimously adopted an amendment to the penal code that will make it easier for the authorities to enforce laws against the dissemination of neo-Nazi and anti-Semitic propaganda.

McLinn has been featured in articles in the USA Today as well as the Los Angeles Time, New York Times, Washington Post, and Newsweek. He has also appeared on ABC's "20/20," "World News Tonight," and the NBC "Today Show." His travels have taken him on three tours to China; he has also performed in Japan, Hong Kong, Israel, Italy, Egypt, England, Ireland, India, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, and the Soviet Union, where Twain is considered a favorite American author.

Syria's Economic Crisis Poses Threat To Israel

JERUSALEM (WNS) — Premier Shimon Peres said that Syria is in the throes of a major economic crisis which, he implied, posed a danger for Israel should Damascus try to divert the public from mounting hardships at home by military adventurism abroad.

Peres, briefing the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security committee, cited the cessation of Iranian oil deliveries as one cause of Syria's economic woes. On the other hand, he said, the crisis could provide an impetus for Syria to abandon its traditional hardline policy and possibly even participate in the Middle East peace process. In any event, Peres said, referring to a threatening speech by Syrian President Hafez Assad last week, Israel should not be drawn into a sabre-rattling contest with Damascus.

But other Israeli political and military leaders pointed to Syria as the primary military threat to Israel and held Damascus responsible for the upsurge of terrorist activity in south Lebanon.

This was made clear in remarks by Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Chief of Staff Gen. Moshe Levy and Maj. Gen. Yossi Peled, who will shortly succeed Gen. Ori Orr as commander of the northern area. Rabin, who just returned from Europe, was quoted by a Defense Ministry spokesman as having told Swiss Foreign Minister Pierre Aubert

that the threat of war against Israel comes from Syria.

Levy told an Israel Television interviewer that it was irrelevant whether or not Syria actually orders terrorist groups to try to infiltrate into Israel. It is sufficient that the Syrians shelter Palestinian rejectionist groups and provide them with an infrastructure. He noted that Lebanese Shiite extremists nurtured by Iran have their headquarters in Damascus, train terrorists there and receive the wherewithal to attack Israel. "It is very comfortable for the Syrians to keep us busy (in south Lebanon) and if they want to attack us they just have to make sure there is no quiet there," Levy said. He said the same applied to the various terrorist splinter groups active in recent weeks. He noted that the main problem in the north is that Israel has a border with a country (Lebanon) whose government has no control and there are many elements which exploit that fact.

Peled warned that Syria is preparing for an all out military confrontation with Israel. They now have long-range weapons that enable them to strike further inside Israel than ever before, he said, and an Israeli counterattack would have to overcome minefields, anti-tank ditches and other dug-in emplacements not encountered in previous conflicts.

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