

# CSUH Theatre Continues 'Christmas Carol' Tradition

By Alan Dye  
Staff Writer

Every year since '97 the CSUH Theater department produces its own adaptation of Charles Dickens' classic "A Christmas Carol" for young audiences. This year is no exception. Over the years the production has evolved as new students have taken over from those who have gone before. The annual turnover has led to many different approaches to telling the story in wildly different styles.

Originally conceived as a shadow puppet production, it has gone through phases that have

involved music, ballet, and even flying actors over the years.

According to director Michael Ryken, this "generational" aspect is one of the most fascinating parts of the whole experience.

"It's great to see that some of these actors are coming back to this again and again from year to year," he said. "One actor started out working backstage on the show three years ago and now he's Scrooge."

Ryken noted some of the challenges of working on a show with such broad appeal to audiences of all ages.

"With an audience of small children, you have to be pre-

pared for them to react in unexpected ways," he said. "Children will find humor in places where adults won't and vice versa, so it really keeps you on your toes."

Although the production targets a younger audience with a "condensed" version of Dickens' story, older audience members are assured of finding something to their liking as well.

"A Christmas Carol" will open in the University Theater Friday, Dec. 13 at 8 p.m. and shows again Dec. 14 at 2, 4 and 8 p.m. Admission is \$6 for adults and \$3 for children. Those wanting to reserve tickets should contact the box office at (510) 885-3261

# Film Illuminates Artist's Life

By Tuly Martinez  
Staff Writer

Artist Frida Kahlo's suddenly renewed celebrity has made her more than just a trend. Her film biography has brought her back to educate millions of people not just about her personal life and works of art but also about an era filled with political ferment.

The legendary Mexican painter was born on July 6, 1907, and died on July 13, 1954. The movie reveals her uniqueness as an intellectual and a painter whose life was changed after a bus accident that left her severely

injured.

Her life was filled with physical suffering but her belief in independence and rebellion helped her overcome life obstacles. Due to her physical condition Kahlo was unable to do everyday things and spent most her time in bed, which became almost unbearable until her parents provided her with painting supplies and installed a mirror at her canopy style bed so that she could be her own model.

Her self portraits and "disturbing" paintings have been misunderstood for a great deal of time but the purpose of them was to let her express her feel-

ings and thoughts throughout her long and painful recovery.

After she recovered, Kahlo presented her work to Diego Rivera, the renowned Mexican muralist who soon became her comrade, lover and later her husband, whom she married twice.

The two were known for their rebellion against social, political and moral movements, their artistic abilities and their scandalous love affairs.

Salma Hayek and Alfred Molina are the stars of "Frida" (a Miramax Film) which does an extraordinary job at portraying the two artists by capturing vivid scenes that are then transformed into Kahlo's paintings.

# Notable Quotables

Knight Ridder Newspaper

"It's a little strange, because I like dressing like myself and being different. But they are basically saying 'Avril rocks!' and that's really flattering." Singer Avril Lavigne, on fans who dress in her tie-and-tank style, in Seventeen magazine.

"She's charming. She can steal from me any time." An L.A. boutique manager, on actress Winona Ryder, in Entertainment Weekly.

"It was awesome. But every time I scratched my nose, 50 cameras went off. I was a wreck." Actress Geena Davis, on qualifying for the 2002 Olympic trials, in Sports Illustrated.

# Reading Center Holding Children's Book Sale

CSUH News Services

The McHugh Reading Center in the College of Education and Allied Studies is sponsoring its annual holiday children's book fair in the Art and Education Building, Room 143.

The schedule is:  
Today, 1 to 6 p.m.  
Friday, Dec. 6: 9 a.m. to noon  
Monday, Dec. 9: 9 a.m. to noon

and 1 to 6 p.m.  
Tuesday, Dec. 10: 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 6 p.m.  
Wednesday, Dec. 11: 10 a.m. to noon

On sale will be children's books, activity books, posters, stocking stuffers, and more. The preferred method of payment: personal check or credit card.

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# A Day With Dad



Hey Pops!: Joe Quigley and his daughter Isabella say cheese.

Photo/Will Cabrera

# Reviews of Releases from Jennifer Lopez, Grant Green and More

Knight Ridder Newspapers

JENNIFER LOPEZ "This Is Me ... Then" (Epic) Grade: D

If you believe the record label hype, Jennifer Lopez's third studio CD, "This Is Me ...Then," is her "most personal album yet." Those are empty words, just like most publicity slogans. By personal, Lopez means an album filled with sickening lyrics about her man-of-the-moment, actor Ben Affleck.

The worst of the lot is "Dear Ben," a quasi-hip-hop ballad that features such nauseating lines as "I think I'm addicted to the way you like to touch me/I don't think they understand/Why I love at your command." Ugh, do we really need to hear this? It gets worse. The song titles say it all: "The One," "Loving You," "Baby I Love U" and "You Belong to Me." As if we don't get enough of J. Lo and Ben in the tabloids and the entertainment news shows. Now we have a musical manifestation of the slobbery romance.

That's hardly the biggest problem behind "This Is Me ...Then." You could ignore the lyrics without effort. Lopez's voice is so thin she barely makes them resonate. The disc's stylistic shortcomings, however, are glaringly obvious. From the onset, the Bronx native attempts to get in touch with her roots. Much of the album aims for the old school, '70s and '80s-era R&B sound she heard when she was growing up.

She almost succeeds, albeit in

a deceptive way. The best groove comes early via the second track, "Loving You." Immediately the slinky, percussive rhythm works its way into your consciousness, transporting you back to an era when beats came naturally, not processed. Then the letdown: a perusal of the song credits reveals that cool vibe belongs to Mtume's 1985 R&B gem, "Juicy Fruit."

The sampling frenzy continues. "Still" borrows from Teddy Pendergrass' "Set Me Free" while "The One" chops up the gorgeous melody of The Stylistics' 1971 soul ballad "You Are Everything." Even Lopez's cover of Carly Simon's "You Belong to Me," a great song that needs no tacky modern touches, is obliterated by distorted percussion loops.

Later, during "Jenny From the Block," the set's first hit single, there's a throwaway hook (repetitive, simplistic) surrounded by generic R&B/hip-hop thumps. Add the superfluous rapping of Styles and Jadakiss to get a calculated, radio-ready track.

But this is Lopez's personal, sensual album, right? So there's "Again," with its swishy keyboards, and "I've Been Thinkin'," with its slow-burn combination of bass and strings. A Spanish guitar is thrown in to capture a little bit of the star's Latina heritage.

Nothing rings true. J. Lo is neither seductive nor authentic. As an actress, she's hit and miss. As a singer, she progressively gets worse. In retrospect, her uneven debut, 1999's "On the 6," stands as her most palatable record. At

least then she wasn't mired in the celebrity slush. Mario Tarradell

GRANT GREEN "Retrospective: 1961-66" (Blue Note) Grade: A-

Like Charlie Christian — another jazz guitarist feted recently with a 4-CD box set — St. Louis-raised Grant Green (1931-1979) influenced scores of jazz players with his smooth but substantial licks.

"Retrospective" rounds up his finest sessions at Blue Note, both as a bandleader and as a sideman backing rising stars such as Stanley Turrentine and Herbie Hancock.

At his best, Green was a midwife to the '60s organ-jazz boom, adding simmering funk guitar to the frantic Hammond B-3 solos of Jimmy Smith and Big John Patton.

He was also a hard bop pioneer with a knack for staccato riffs. Some of his speed-demon solos on Disc Two sound dated, but on most of "Retrospective," Green's playing is the definition of liquid soul. Thor Christensen STARS OF THE LID "Avec Laudenum" (Kranky Records) Grade: B+

Stars of the Lid is of the same ambient scene in Austin that spawned Windsor For the Derby (with whom the Stars once shared a member). The Stars are a duo now and live in Austin no longer; they haven't released anything new since 2001, when their 2-disc epic "Tired Sounds Of" came out.

"Avec Laudenum" is a re-issue of a disc that used to be available only as an import (from Belgian label Sub Rosa). It's such a pretty album, sounding almost like classical music, but very minimalist and s-l-o-w. If you're someone who can find melody in the sound of a train passing by or an alarm going off in the distance, then you'll find yourself humming right along to infinitely long, tragically beautiful tracks such as "Dust Breeding" and "The Atomium, Part One." Teresa Gubbins

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