

Entertainment

Hollywood Christmas gifts: A toe-tapping, animated 'Oliver'..

By Judith Trojan

NEW YORK (NC) — If you're looking for a movie that will delight kids from pre-school to post-retirement, don't miss "Oliver and Company" (Disney), the Disney studio's 27th animated feature.

This updated urban twist on the Dickens' classic "Oliver Twist" is a colorful, toe-tapping musical frolic that combines some nifty tunes with a menage of whimsical characters. Set in New York City, "Oliver and Company" follows the plight of a cute orphaned kitten named Oliver (Joey Lawrence) whom no one wants to adopt. Alone and frightened, he is grudgingly taken in by a band of rogue dogs who steal for their lowlife human master, Fagin (Dom DeLuise).

Unlike Dickens' character, the film's Fagin is a tad cowardly and dumb. He also has a heart. While Fagin owes some big bucks to his dastardly human mob boss, Sykes (Robert Loggia), he can't quite cut the mustard as a crook. His dogs don't pilfer enough hockable booty, and Sykes' bodyguards, two ferocious

Dobermans (Taurean Blacque and Carl Weintraub), are drooling to finish off Fagin's motley gang once and for all.

When Oliver is adopted by a rich, lonely girl named Jenny (Natalie Gregory), Fagin thinks his ship has finally come in. Through a series of plot twists, ransom demands and daring rescues, the good guys and gals win out in the end.

Fagin's gang, headed by the savvy terrier Dodger (Billy Joel), is a delight. Dodger opens and closes the film with "Why Should I Worry," a show-stopping song-and-dance number that will surely be a chart-buster for Joel. Among the other gang members are a riotous spitfire Chihuahua named Tito (Cheech Marin) and Francis (Roscoe Lee Browne), a pompous Shakespeare-spouting bulldog. Bette Midler dazzles as the voice of Georgette, a vain, jealous pooch who aims to oust Oliver from Jenny's home and heart at any cost. Midler's dynamite vocals to "Perfect Isn't Easy" immediately place Georgette as a cross between Gypsy Rose Lee and Mae West.

"Oliver and Company" is that rare children's film that adults will enjoy as well. The musical numbers, contemporary characters and humor are attention-grabbing, and the poignant moments — Oliver's initial loneliness and Fagin's ultimate sweetness — are refreshing, not cloying. Director George Scribner and animation screenplay writers Jim Cox, Timothy J. Disney and James Mangold have managed just the right balance between pathos, comedy and action.

The mix of computer-generated and hand-drawn animation does not compare favorably with the classic Disney animations — all hand-drawn and executed. But while there is a cold, flat two-dimensional quality to much of the animation in this new film, the colorful sets and wonderfully defined characters are better and richer than those found in run-of-the-mill Saturday morning cartoons. "Oliver and Company" may not be a landmark example of Disney animation, but it's fun and entertaining, and sure to be a popular children's film for years to come.

Although there is periodic menace from teeth-gnashing Dobermans and some violence and peril on an elevated subway platform, parents will find the execution of this action to be palatable for young children with supervision. The U.S. Catholic Conference classification is A-I — general patronage. The Motion Picture Association of America is G — general audiences.

Kleen Brite

Continued from Page 1

plant in Brockport and is a member of the union's negotiating committee, said the coalition is a sign to management of the community's support for the workers.

"It's letting them know that the community is more aware and would just as soon see them (negotiate with the union)."

Management is "unnecessarily demoralizing the workers," according to Sally McCoy, a member of the Coalition of Labor Union Women and a spokeswoman for the community coalition.

McCoy noted that the coalition was inspired to support the union by community organizations that have supported unions in other parts of the country. She said that the local coalition currently has no plans for further action.

The coalition includes a variety of parishioners, pastors and diocesan leaders from the following:

Holy Family, Immaculate Conception, Most Precious Blood, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, St. Augustine's, St. Bridget's, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Monica's, St. John the Evangelist, St. Peter and Paul and Corpus Christi.

Also: the diocesan offices of the Spanish Apostolate and of Black Ministries, and the Division of Urban Services.

The Mercy and Justice Committee of the Sisters of Mercy of Rochester is also participating.

Pre-publication party planned

A party celebrating the publication of "Nancy Dupree: Selected Writings" will take place Sunday, Dec. 18, from 7 to 9 p.m. at Writers and Books, 740 University Ave.

The book, edited by Jacquelin Dobson, director of the Diocese of Rochester's Office of Black Ministries, marks the first publication of Dupree's poetry in book form. She had performed her poetry on two Folkways albums. Dupree died of cancer in 1980.

... and Bill Murray as a high-gloss television Scrooge

Bill Murray fans and audiences in need of offbeat laughs this Christmas would do well to check out "Scrooged" (Paramount), Hollywood's latest-high-gloss incarnation of Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol."

As the youngest and probably the nastiest network president in the history of television, Frank Cross (Murray) will do anything to win the ratings game. His idea of holiday TV fare is such specials as "Bob Goulet's Old-Fashioned Cajun Christmas;" "The Night the Reindeer Died," featuring a terrorist attack on Santa's North Pole headquarters; and a garish live production of "A Christmas Carol," starring Buddy Hackett as Scrooge, Olympic champ Mary Lou Retton as a tumbling Tiny Tim and the scantily clad Solid Gold dancers as the Scroogettes.

A master meany, Cross sells his Christmas shows with life-threatening promos; he fires an up-and-coming young executive (Bobcat

Goldthwait) on Christmas Eve; gives his poverty-stricken secretary, Grace (Alfre Woodard) a company towel and washcloth in lieu of a Christmas bonus; and will stop at nothing short of murder to get what he wants on the air, no matter how tasteless or tacky.

A true-blue Yuppie Scrooge, Frank Cross is the perfect foil for a modern-day Marley, in this case his long-deceased mentor and boss Lew Hayward (John Forsythe) who shows up on Christmas Eve and warns Frank to mend his ways or else. Frank's next hallucinatory hours are spent with the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future. His comical and poignant trip down memory lane with this wacky trio of ghouls finally jolts him back into humanity and inspires an impromptu climactic appeal to his TV audience to embrace the true meaning of Christmas.

As directed by Richard Donner and penned by "Saturday Night Live" scribes Mitch Glaz-

er and Michael O'Donoghue, "Scrooged" is for much of its first half a technically slick satire of the TV-ratings game and the type of executives who crawl their way to the top of the heap in televisionland. Murray is riotous as he spews Frank's nastiness on any man, woman, child or animal that gets in his way. Murray also makes a believable if slow transition to good guy in the end, as Frank is reunited with his long-lost love (Karen Allen), makes amends with his younger brother (John Murray) and realizes the folly of his crass Christmas programming.

Carol Kane as the ditz, strong-armed Ghost of Christmas Present and David Johansen as the cigar-chomping New York cabby who doubles as the Ghost of Christmas Past are also highlights of a cast that boasts such notables as Robert Mitchum, John Houseman, Lee Majors, Buddy Hackett, Anne Ramsey and Michael J. Pollard, among others.

Although there's no shortage of sardonic humor, "Scrooged" ends with a sentimental production number of sorts that sees Frank Cross as a changed and lovable man.

Due to some locker-room language, much nasty humor laced with vulgarities and sexual innuendos, and a brief flash of female nudity, the USCC classification is A-IV — adults, with reservations. The MPA rating is PG-13 — parents strongly cautioned that some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

Together
we can
make a
difference.



Please help us put food on the tables and toys under the trees of less fortunate Rochester families this holiday season. Donate \$5 in canned foods, toys, or a cash gift and in return for your generosity, Greater Rochester Cablevision will offer you a

FREE CONNECTION
Plus 2 weeks **FREE** service.

Call 987-6300

GRC

Your donations will be distributed through the Salvation Army and the Clown Service Fund, Inc.

Greater Rochester Cablevision Inc.
A Division of ATC

Hurry, offer expires December 22, 1988
Some restrictions may apply.

Make 1989 The Year For Your
Dream Vacation To Come True!
Call us for all your travel needs in the New Year.
Best Wishes for a Holiday Season
filled with the spirit of love and goodwill.

from:

Judy Graper, Sue Sabin, Judy Thornberg;
Joann Kilborn and Mary Bullis
Judy Graper Travel

(716) 385-3820

The Barn Bazaar
Clover Street at Jefferson Road
Pittsford, New York 14534

CELEBRATE
NEW YEARSEVE
AT...
Logan's
PARTY HOUSE
1420 SCOTTSVILLE ROAD

9:00 P.M. - 2:00 A.M. OPEN BAR
9:00 P.M. - 10:00 P.M. Deluxe Buffet
1:00 A.M. - 2:00 A.M. Sandwiches, Danish & Coffee

- SHRIMP COCKTAIL
- Hot Roast Sirloin of Beef
- Hot Baked Ham
- Roast Chicken
- Italian Sausage
- Rigatoni in Sauce
- Meat Balls in Sauce
- Potatoes, Salads, etc.

Wine served with Meal

\$79.00 Per Couple
Includes TAX & GRATUITY

The Great Dinner
LIVE MUSIC BY TIME PRIZE
For Your Dancing
and Dining Pleasure!
9 P.M. - 2 A.M.

Call:
235-6978
RESERVATIONS MUST
BE PAID BY DEC. 27th