

Obtain some culture over Christmas

By **TRICIA PARKER**
 Staff Writer

If A&M is a cultural desert, Houston is an oasis. So whether your favorite is photography or films, the Houston Museum of Fine Arts offers enough culture to quench a semester's worth of deprivation.

Over Christmas, the museum will be sponsoring enough activities to interest anyone, says Lainie Gordon, director of the museum's information center.

"We'll have films and concerts here which should be interesting," she says, "and we'll also have several workshops and collections visiting from all over the world."

The museum's contribution to the performing arts this Christmas includes films by Luis Bunuel throughout the month of December, as well as a special presentations of well known movies such as "A Star is Born", "Lolita" and "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea".

There will be music at the museum too, with a series of free concerts by a brass quintet. The Choralis Brass Arts will perform traditional holiday music and classical selections on Dec. 9 and 20.

But the highlight of the museum's Christmas schedule will be an open house at Bayou Bend from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Dec. 9, Gordon says. Bayou Bend, the former home of Houston philanthropist Ima Hogg, was donated

to the museum when she died. It is filled with antiques and decorative art from 1650 to 1850. The collection is usually open to the public by special arrangement only.

"Most of the time you have to call and make reservations to see it," she says. "And even then they can only take four people through at a time because everything is out in the open."

Not so for the open house. For the day, the first floor of the house and the 14 acres of land

can buy jewelry, clothing, craft items and furniture made by Houston area artists.

"We're trying to stay with objects that are more utilitarian," Gordon says. "But there are a lot of funky things. For example, one guy made a table out of spray-painted bowling balls. And it's all for sale."

The museum will also host several visiting collections during the Christmas season. One is a collection of woodblock prints by 19th century Japanese artist,

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surrounding it, will be open to everyone. The house will be decorated for Christmas, with games and puppet shows for children.

"It's kind of an old-fashioned Christmas," Gordon says.

While they're there, patrons can do a little shopping as well. The museum's own art school, the Glassell school, will host "Buy Products," an exhibition and show, from Dec. 4 to Dec. 10. For \$20 to \$2,000, patrons

Konishi Hirosada. Woodblock prints are a form of ancient Japanese art where prints are made by carving intricate scrollwork and figures across the grain of woodblocks, sanding them down and dipping them in ink to make prints. They are rich in history as well as design.

The Kabuki theater, the popular theater of Japan, relies on brilliant costuming and make-up to help tell Japanese history and legend. Hirosada's subjects for

the 75 pieces in the collection were brilliantly designed portraits of Kabuki actors between 1848 and 1853. Hirosada's work is unique in that he recorded not only the rich textures, colors and patterns of the costumes, but the discrepancies between the personality of the actor and the character he portrayed.

Gordon says the museum doesn't host Oriental collections such as the Hirosada collection often.

"We try to show exhibits from

will be at the museum until January 29.

If ancient Chinese art isn't your bag, a collection of photographs by Ray K. Metzker might be. The collection, the first comprehensive exhibit of Metzker's work, will be on display in the museum's Wiess and Upper Jones Galleries from Nov. 17 through Jan. 29. The Wisconsin-born photographer created pieces ranging from almost miniature pictures to large composites, some of which have never been seen in exhibit before. The collection contains 189 photographs which chronicle the changes in Metzker's art over 25 years.

"He does exclusively black and white," Gordon says. "You will not see what you expect in photography."

Another collection visiting the museum through the Christmas season is an exhibition of abstract art by artist such as Picasso, Leger, Delaunay and Brancusi. The exhibit presents pieces from most major schools of abstraction, from its beginning at the start of the century to the '60's and '70's. The collection will be at the museum until the end of February.

All in all, the museum is offering a whirl of cultural events this Christmas and the variety is enough to keep anyone from becoming bored. Specifics of all events can be obtained by contacting the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

'Annie' to be in Houston

By **TRICIA PARKER**
 Staff Writer

Christmas will be a happier time this year for some Houston area children. When the curtain goes up on Theatre Under the Stars production of "Annie", 2,500 Houston children will be in the audience watching for free.

"This all started last year," says Tammy Gilbert, assistant marketing director for the theater. "We had several groups interested in coming to see the show but there are just some groups you don't feel right about charging."

Gilbert says the "Christmas Angels" show gives children who wouldn't otherwise have the opportunity, a chance to see the show. Children from organizations such as the American Heart Association, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, Boys Country and Harris County Child Welfare will attend the benefit. But this year, the theater will try to include senior citizens from nursing homes and shut-ins as well.

"They are either from homes where the children are on probation, or they're from an orphanage," she says. "We try to find shut-ins as well."

The show, which will be financed by Atlantic Richfield

Foundation, Tenneco, Texas Eastern Corporation, and Transco Energy Corporation as well as private Houston contributors, will cost about \$60,000 to put on.

"We need \$60,000 and we're



Carrie Heikkila

still collecting," Gilbert says. "I don't know how far we are from the goal but the show's going on anyway."

"Annie" is an appropriate show for these children, Gilbert says, because it is a show about hope and optimism.

"We do this for the children and the older people who couldn't otherwise get in to see it. We try to do it at least once a year for the holidays."

The show, set during the Depression, tells of the orphan Annie's efforts to escape the orphanage and the evil Miss Hannigan. She acquires her dog Sandy and meets billionaire Oliver Warbucks as she searches for her real parents.

The Theatre Under the Stars production is the 92nd production of the musical. It is directed by Frank Young, founder and artistic director of the Theatre Under the Stars, and stars Carrie Heikkila. Heikkila, a veteran of childhood roles, has appeared in Houston area productions of "Gypsy" and "The Sound of Music", as well as a Fort Worth production of "Annie".

Other cast members include David Wasson, as Daddy Warbucks, Ann Peck as Grace Farrell, and Marijane Vandivier as Miss Hannigan. The show runs from Dec. 20 to Dec. 30 and tickets cost from \$5 to \$25.

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