

# Toy Story from page E1

favorite. He likes Buzz, and tries to keep order with the other toys.

"Everyone was a kid once and played with a toy or a lot of toys. They come to the show and relive their childhood," said Horowitz. "A lot of us believed that when we closed the door to our room our toys came to life."

"Toy Story's" cast of characters includes a lot of childhood favorites such as Mr. Potato Head, green army men, and Slinky Dog.

"Adults bring their kids. It's a great time to relax, and the kids will be happy for two hours. The skating is incredible and very creative."

When Horowitz glides on the ice at Joe Louis Arena on Wednesday, she will have performed the show 1,200 times.

"Toy Story" hasn't lost its charm yet for Horowitz or, she believes, the audience.

"In rehearsal we put little twists in so it's still interesting for us," she said. "We have to be as excited the 1,000th time as

the first time. The audience is very special."

Horowitz, an award-winning figure skater, grew up in Minnesota. She joined Feld Entertainment Inc., which produces "Disney on Ice presents," in 1990 after completing high school.

After two years performing the role of Cleopatra in "Disney on Ice presents Time Machine," she joined "Disney on Ice presents Beauty and the Beast" as the understudy to Belle.

"I met my husband Craig in 'Beauty and the Beast,'" she said. "I joined 'Toy Story' in 1996. My husband was Mr. Potato Head in the show."

They performed in the show when it visited Detroit in 1997, and although Craig is in Louisiana skating in "Grensel," Horowitz is looking forward to returning to the Motor City.

"Figure skating is a small world," she said. "We have friends here. Anywhere we go we know people. It's really fun to get together."

There are 49 skaters in "Toy Story" who range in age from 17 to 32. Olympic Gold Medalist Robin Cousins choreographed the action-packed story about friendship, which features colorful costumes, car chases, and daring rescues.

The international cast features Eddie Gornick as Woody and Alexandr Klimkin as Buzz Lightyear.

The sequel to "Toy Story," "Toy Story 2" is scheduled to open Wednesday, Nov. 24, at metro Detroit movie theaters. Andy goes to summer camp and leaves the toys behind. An obsessive toy collector kidnaps Woody, who doesn't know he is a highly valued collectible. Then it's up to Buzz Lightyear and the gang to save Woody from being a museum piece.

Horowitz doesn't think the movie sequel will affect the popularity of "Disney on Ice presents Toy Story."

"We're number one," she said. "They're number two."

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## Avon Players meet the challenge of 'Wait Until Dark'

Avon Players presents "Wait Until Dark," 8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, Nov. 11-13 at the theater, 1185 Tienken Road, 1 1/4 miles east of Rochester Road in

Rochester Hills. Tickets \$13, call (248) 608-9077. BY JOHN O'DONNELL SPECIAL WRITER

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The second production in the 1999-2000 season at the Avon Players theater, Frederick Knott's "Wait Until Dark" is an ambitious undertaking for the company and a bold directorial debut for Jeff Stillman.

Set in the Greenwich Village basement apartment, the story centers on the efforts of three con-men to trick a blind woman into revealing the whereabouts of a doll they believe is stuffed with contraband. It's a mystery that relies heavily in the first act on the intrigue of changing identities, misplaced trust, and empathy for the seemingly vulnerable sightless woman, Susy Hendrix. After intermission, Susy emerges as formidable opposition for the trio — dup-

less and resourceful. Her ability to use her lack of vision to her advantage is the play's unbeatable hook.

Avon Players veteran Lesa Bydalek does an appealing job in her role as Susy, capably making the transition from prey to predator and retaining the strength of her character when the script suggested helplessness or craftiness. Bydalek was clearly well prepared for a demanding role.

There may be no greater challenge than a suspense drama for a theater company, because it depends greatly on the flawless execution of many elements. This production makes the most of Kim Garr's outstanding set design, which not only had the feel of a modest New York apartment, but accommodated the

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