



he show is billed as the musical theater of the next millennium and a high-tech odyssey through time and space. The MGM Grand Hotel's "EFX" is a show that lives up to its billing and delivers a unique, exciting and thoroughly entertaining experience for showgoers.

The highly popular production show takes its name from the stage and film industries' use of the term "EFX" in scripts to denote special effects, the technical tricks that give a production a seemingly magical personality.

Like any successful Las Vegas stage spectacular, "EFX" includes many diverse entertainment elements, ranging from Gregorian chants, traditional Irish music and Broadway-style ballads to modern rock. There is more to it, though, than even stage, screen and music studio. "EFX" is the first production show of its size to integrate technology from the film and theme park industries," explained Richard Sturm, senior vice president of entertainment at the MGM Grand. "It has set a new standard in the industry."

The technology Sturm refers to is truly wondrous. Throughout the 90-minute "EFX" journey, performers soar across the stage on a flying saucer, survive a teeth-rattling earthquake and escape a cave-in that would impress even Indiana Jones. Powered by more than 220 separate motors, dragons come to life, breathing flames that give audience members a toasty warm feeling, mountains move and the earth shakes. Flying seems to be second nature to almost everyone in the cast.

All of these computerized thrills cost the MGM \$45 million on the production and another \$30 million on the Grand Theatre, where the show takes place. The theatre has 6,000 lights, 85,000 watts of stereo sound, and computer technology borrowed from NASA. Each performance requires enough electricity to power 1,440

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By Pete Mikla

"EFX"