

The Gleaner

Charles Hyatt takes final bow



HYATT

Howard Campbell

Gleaner Writer

CHARLES HYATT, the goggle-eyed comedian whose antics thrilled Jamaican theatre for over 40 years, died yesterday in Palm Bay, Florida.

A relative said Hyatt died from lung cancer, three weeks after he was diagnosed with the disease. The relative said the cancer had spread to his kidney and liver. Hyatt was 75.

In a 1996 interview, the Kingston-born Hyatt said he was bitten by the acting bug after watching a cousin perform in a school play at Mullery Hall at St. George's College.

"I was so enthralled by what I saw that I knew that was what I wanted to do," he said.

Hyatt appeared in many pantomimes at the Ward Theatre, including **Busha Bluebeard** and **Bedward**.

Playwright Trevor Rhone said he first met Hyatt while he was performing in **Busha Bluebeard**.

"He was a formidable talent – a good actor and an extraordinarily gifted comedian," Rhone told **The Gleaner**.

Hyatt appeared in Rhone's play, **Smile Orange**, while living in London. Later, he worked with Rhone in the hit productions, **Old Story Time** and **Two Can Play**.

PERFECTIONIST

His last acting job was in last year's **Hot Spot** by playwright Basil Dawkins. He played Mr. Greg up until September in Atlanta, Georgia.

"Charlie was a perfectionist. He always wanted each show to be his best," said Dawkins who directed Hyatt in several plays.

Hyatt was also a stalwart journalist who worked at the Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation (JBC), KLAS FM and the **Jamaica Record**.

While living in England, he worked with the British Broadcasting Corporation's Caribbean Service. He was one of 120 workers who were axed from the JBC in 1981, reportedly because of their ties to the People's National Party. At the time, he hosted the music programme, **Here Comes Charlie**.

Hyatt, who married twice, is survived by wife Marjorie, four children, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.