

OTTERBEIN

C O L L E G E

Department of Theatre and Dance

NEWSLETTER

Spring 1989

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"Best Plays"

1989 Otterbein



Summer Theatre

OCT MUSICAL THRILLER PROMISES LAUGHTER, EXCITEMENT, ADVENTURE

Comedy, melodrama, adventure and the excitement of the chase—all set to unforgettable music—will come to the Otterbein College Theatre (OCT) Cowan Hall stage with the May 3-7 production of "Sweeney Todd—The Demon Barber of Fleet Street." "Sweeney..." is a work of such scope and vision and daring that it dwarfs every other Broadway musical that even attempts to invite comparison," according to a New York Daily News review.

The Victorian musical thriller, written by Stephen Sondheim, one of the musical theatre's greatest composers, is co-produced by OCT and the department of music and will be directed by Ed Vaughan, theatre artistic director who last year directed the College's smash hit production of "A Chorus Line."

Guest artist Roger Stephens, who will be featured in the title role in the production, agrees with critics that "Sweeney..." is a unique production. "It's not a normal musical," he says. "It calls for an entire cast that can sing, act and move well. It's a very different and demanding piece—that also has some wonderful light moments. That Otterbein College can produce something of this magnitude is a real tribute. There is a lot of meat there. You can't carry it off with three or four people. A lot of people are needed and they all need to be pretty uptown. I'm impressed that the group is doing everything from the singing to the scenery."

The strenuous role of Todd is one Stephens has tackled before. Several years ago he played Todd in a Players Theatre Columbus production and received critical acclaim. "Vocally and physically—it really wears you out. The character is not off stage very much. There's no spoken dialogue, it's all singing, so it's important to have a vocalist. With a non-musician in the part, you'd have an awfully long

learning process. I'm really excited about it.

"Sweeney..." is an ensemble show—very integrated in nature. And it is a very different kind of story—not an opera, but different than a musical."

Stephens has directed The Ohio State University Opera/Music Theater program since 1980. A native of Springfield, Ohio, he is an alumnus of Capital University and completed his graduate work in voice and opera at East Carolina University and North Texas State University. Prior to joining the faculty at Ohio State, Stephens was director of Opera Theater at the University of Nebraska and Washington State University.

Professionally, Stephens is active as a singer and stage director. He has appeared in Opera/Columbus productions as Masetto in "Don Giovanni," the Marquis in "La Traviata," and Spalanzani in "Tales of Hoffman." As a stage director, his production of "La Boheme" with Opera/Columbus won critical acclaim. Last season, he directed the Orlando Opera production of "Amahl and the Night Visitors," "Madame Butterfly" for the Shreveport Opera and "Street Scene" for the University of Nebraska.

Stephens spent two summers teaching acting for the lyric stage at the American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz, Austria, and for the past two summers has directed the Columbus Light Opera productions of "Pirates of Penzance" and "H.M.S. Pinafore."

Other VIPs in the upcoming production include scenic designer Rob Johnson, who most recently designed the outstanding set for the OCT production of "Romeo and Juliet," and John Gutknecht as costume designer. Gutknecht's work received much attention this season during the run of "Quilters."

Tickets will be available from the box office, 898-1109, beginning April 19.

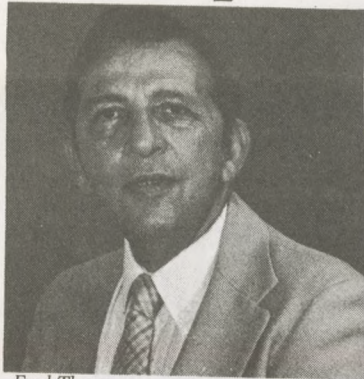


Roger Stephens
guest artist in
"Sweeney Todd"

Once Sweeney Todd was known as Benjamin Barker. But that was before he was wrongly convicted of a crime and carted off to prison at the hands of cruel Judge Turpin whose design was to have Barker's young wife for himself.

Now, 15 years later, Sweeney Todd claims to be a barber and rents the room above Mrs. Lovett's meat pie shop. He learns from her that the wife he wants back is dead and his daughter (now grown into a beautiful young woman) is the captive ward of the evil judge. Seeking revenge, he devises a plan to lure the judge and his companions into his barbershop. Using his "friend" the steel razor, Todd plans to give his customers—the ultimate in service...

Search Narrows For New Department Chair



Fred Thayer

According to interim department chairman Fred Thayer, Otterbein's nationwide search for a new chairperson for the Department of Theatre and Dance is nearing an end. "We've gone through 50 candidates," he says, "and are down now to a few highly qualified people."

Dr. Charles W. Dodrill stepped down for health reasons last year after serving as department chairman for 30 years. Dodrill, who is credited with leading the College's program to a position of national

prominence, remains with the department as director of the professional actor training program. Until the department could realign its administrative structure, professor of theatre Ed Vaughan assumed a temporary chairmanship for several months. It was decided during the transition period, Thayer says, to separate academic and artistic responsibilities with himself and Vaughan, presiding over the respective areas while the search was initiated.

"During this phase," Thayer notes, "we took the opportunity to redefine the obligations relegated to both areas." Familiar with the ins and outs of Otterbein College Theatre as the head of the design/technical area for 29 years, Thayer says his tenure as interim department chairman still held a few surprises. "Even though I've been here a long time, I didn't realize all the nuts and bolts involved in chairing the department. I'm glad for the experience. I found it fun, challenging and hard work." Following the arrival of the new chairman, Thayer will resume his position as professor of theatre and director of the design/technical area.

Dodrill led the search committee, assisted by Thayer and instructor of theatre Rob Johnson. The committee reviewed and recommended a select number of candidates. Qualifications required, Thayer says, included a Ph.D. along with extensive experience in administrative and artistic direction of a theatre program.

The new chairperson is expected to assume his/her position by July 1, 1989.

'A Play You Will Never Forget' Opens In May

Three-time Tony award winner "Children of a Lesser God" is "a play you will never forget," according to the New York Post. Newsweek called it "A compassionate and moving play, written with high intelligence and deep feeling." This emotionally charged, spirited play focuses on the romance and marriage of a young deaf woman and a teacher (who is hearing) she meets at a school for the hearing impaired. Under the direction of Teri Devlin, "Children of a Lesser God" will be presented by Otterbein College Theatre May 24-28 and May 31-June 4 at the Campus Center Theatre.

"What's really interesting about this play," Devlin says, "is that it is a well-written exciting piece of drama about relationships—about people not being able to communicate with each other as strongly as they'd like to. It's not only about a man and a woman, but transcends to all levels of relationships—mother-daughter, etc., in its message about human communication. The play's author (Mark Medoff) has given it the medium of a non-hearing world—perhaps as a metaphor."

Intelligent, headstrong Sarah views her silent world on an equal to that of the hearing—not defective. Although she has tested high academically at the school for the deaf which she attended and is now employed as a janitor, she disdains much of its training as a "sell-out" to the hearing world. Sarah refuses to deal with her self-imposed isolation and sees learning to speak as an admission of inferiority. James, a new teacher at the school, senses her depth and is excited by the prospect of expanding Sarah's horizons. He makes slow, but steady, progress with her stubborn attitudes and a love match is born. A beautiful beginning for the pair is followed

by frustrations and the hardcore reality of their situations.

"It's a very strong play about two people just trying to understand each other and get together. I told the cast that as a relationship progresses, we become close and really want to know the other person—maybe even want to become that other person—there's always that 'inner core' we always sort of miss. This play poses the question, 'Once we discover that unavoidable problem, how do we work it out?' It's really a beautiful, beautiful love story."

The Otterbein Department of Theatre and Dance believes the production is important for its students academically. Within the liberal arts framework, students are involved with producing plays that study different aspects of human-kind. They are encouraged to move away from themselves and experience the world of the character. Although "Children..." is predominantly a play about relationships and written for a hearing audience, it brings students to the examination of a world with which they are unfamiliar—that of the hearing impaired. It serves as a significant learning experience.

A 1970 alumna, Devlin has done graduate studies in directing at The Ohio State University and has completed additional studies in acting, directing, voice, dance and theatre administration in New York. She has done numerous industrials and national commercials, served as resident artist with the New York Repertory Company and been a guest artist with the New York and touring companies of American Dance Machine. Currently, she is drama director at the Leo Yassenoff Jewish Center in Columbus.

Tickets for "Children of a Lesser God" will be available from the Cowan Hall box office, 898-1109, beginning May 15.

Otterbein Hosts Regional Theatre Festival

On Jan. 14, Otterbein hosted the Region IV Ohio Theatre Alliance High School Play Festival. Participating high school drama department participants prepared theatrical scenes to be judged.

Regional chairman for the event was Otterbein's Fred Thayer, interim chairman of the department, and adjudicators included Dana Snyder of Cuyahoga Community College, E. Reid Gilbert of The Ohio State University and James Zvanut of Denison University.

Participating high schools and their ratings included Gahanna Lincoln, superior; Linden McKinley, excellent; South, good; Rutherford B. Hayes, excellent; Athens, good; Fort Hayes Metro Education Center, excellent.

The Gahanna Lincoln students, under the direction of Petie Dodrill, performed a scene from "Crimes of the Heart" and were selected to go to the State OTA Festival.

THE 1989 OTTERBEIN SUMMER THEATRE

OUR 23RD CONSECUTIVE SEASON

Featuring Six Professional Artists
And Two Tony Award Winning "Best Plays"

Summer Theatre Box Office:
898-1109



Susan Diol as the beautiful
Marguerite in the Summer 1988
production of "Camille".

**Back by Popular Demand!
One Week Only!**

A Moving American Musical

QUILTERS

Book by Molly Newman and Barbara Damashek
Music and Lyrics by Barbara Damashek
Directed by Pamela Hill

June 20, 21, 22, 23, 24*, 25

Tues.-Sun. Matinee

*Special Saturday Matinee Performance

*The hit of the 1988-89 winter season
returns to open Summer Theatre '89!*

One of the most popular and successful shows we've ever produced returns for a special one week engagement to open our 23rd summer theatre season. A joyous and moving celebration of America womanhood, "Quilters" combines music, dance, movement, and scenes of vivid dramatic intensity to pay tribute to the courage and spirit of our nation's pioneer women. Out of old letters and diaries, as well as recollections of aged pioneers still living, comes a ritual play which moves affectingly through a variety of touching incidents. "Just as every quilt maker has a scrap bag full of light, dark and neutral patches, "Quilters" ranges the spectrum of emotions."—Jay Weitz, *The Columbus Dispatch*. "Quilters" is a thing of beauty, comfort and joy! Go—Wrap yourself up in it!"—Marilyn Stasio, *N.Y. Post*.

A Bittersweet Comedy!

BILOXI BLUES

by Neil Simon

with Equity guest artist Michael Hartman
directed by guest professional Dennis Romer**

June 28, 29, 30, July 1, 2; 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

Wed.-Sun. Matinee; Wed.-Sun. Matinee

Winner of the 1985 Tony Award for "Best Play", this sensitive, engaging comedy recounts the journey to manhood of one Eugene Morris Jerome, alter ego of the adolescent Neil Simon. A young army recruit at boot camp in Biloxi, Mississippi in 1943, Eugene and five other enlisted men struggle under a hardnosed D.I. (guest artist Michael Hartman), confront the daily "mess" served up in the mess hall, join together in a visit to a local "lady of the evening" and, it is here, for the first time, that Eugene falls in love. "Joyous and unexpectedly rewarding."—*N.Y. Times*. "A play that rings with a newer, deeper, sweeter truth."—*N.Y. Magazine*. This poignant auto-biographical comedy will be directed by guest professional Dennis Romer.

An Uplifting Comedy!

I'M NOT RAPPAPORT

by Herb Gardner

with Equity guest artist Ed Vaughan
and another Equity guest artist
To Be Announced**

**July 12, 13, 14, 15, 16;
18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23**

Wed.-Sun. Matinee; Tues.-Sun. Matinee

A recent Broadway hit and Tony award winning play, "I'm Not Rappaport" is "Rambunctiously funny."—*N.Y. Post*. Set in a secluded spot in New York's Central Park, the play is about two octogenarians determined to fight off all attempts to put them out to pasture. Talk about an odd couple! Nat (Ed Vaughan) is a lifelong radical determined to fight any injustice (real or imagined) who is also something of a spinner of fantasies. The other half of this unlikely partnership is Midge (guest artist TBA), an apartment superintendent who spends his days in the park hiding out from angry tenants who want him to retire. A delightful portrait of two eccentrics, "I'm Not Rappaport" is "A warm and entertaining evening."—*W.W. Daily*.

A Mystery/Thriller

THE UNEXPECTED GUEST

by Agatha Christie

*directed by guest professional
R. Sebastian Russ**

**July 26, 27, 28, 29, 30;
August 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6**

Wed.-Sun. Matinee; Tues.-Sun. Matinee

*Join us as we celebrate the return of the
Agatha Christie mystery!*

This newly discovered Agatha Christie mystery is a must for all would-be sleuths! Set in a foggy estate in Wales, "The Unexpected Guest" opens as a stranger walks into a house to find a man murdered and his beautiful young wife standing over him with a gun. But this mystery is far from solved and a thrilling evening of suspense and intrigue has only just begun. "The impact is tremendous...just when the murder seems solved, all the ends tied up, and you are groping for your hat, Miss Christie pulls her almighty knock-out punch."—*London Evening News*. "That last-minute twist defies detection."—*London Evening Standard*. Once again, we'll give you a chance to solve this mystery and win free tickets by voting for your favorite suspect at intermission. Order tickets now! Past mysteries have played to 101% capacity.

*Note: All professional guest artists are subject to change pending final availability.



*Above: Guest professional **Michael Hartman** brought warmth and humor to last season's "Harvey." Left: A company shot from the '88 Summer season's "Something Afoot" which starred Equity guest artist **Tonye Patano**, left. Below: Non-stop laughter shook the theatre during last year's Summer production of "The Nerd."*

Summer Theatre Box Office: 898-1109

The Summer Theatre Box Office is located in the Campus Center and will open on Monday, June 12. Regular summer box office hours are from 12:30 to 9 p.m., Monday through Saturday. The box office is open on Sundays only during scheduled matinees from 12:30 to 3:00 p.m.

The box office number is 898-1109. For more information before June 12th, please call 898-1657.

The air-conditioned Campus Center Theatre seats 250. Reduced rates are available for groups of 25 or more.

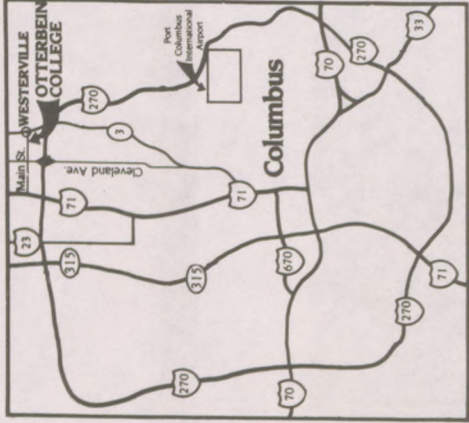
Subscriber Benefits

Season ticket subscribers enjoy these benefits:

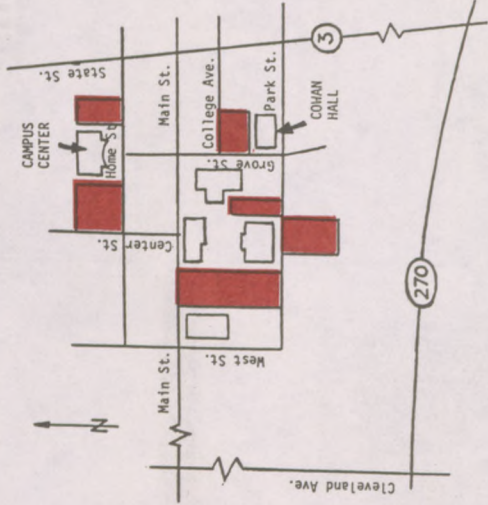
- Savings of 15 to 29% over the cost of individual tickets
- Guaranteed Preferred Seating
- Free Parking
- The right to exchange your tickets with 24 hours notice
- Priority renewal in subsequent seasons, ensuring the best seats available.
- Quarterly newsletters, featuring news of Otterbein College Theatre, including ticket order forms and updates on our alumni in the business.



Easy To Reach



Free Parking



Patron Fund Drive Categories Established

To help support our ambitious 23rd summer theatre season, the following categories have been established for our 1989 Patron Fund Drive (contributions are tax deductible):

Director: \$150.00 or more

Star: \$100.00 to \$149.00

Featured Player: \$50.00 to \$99.00

Cameo: \$10.00 to \$49.00

Current theatre patrons will be listed in the program by category, and those who are season ticket holders will have the option of purchasing four extra tickets for each production at the reduced season ticket rates.

During the past 22 years, almost 200 families, groups, businesses, and individuals have contributed each season to the Summer Theatre Patron Fund. Without this support, Otterbein Summer Theatre would not exist. Thank you in advance for your continued support.

Armand (*Tim Gregory*) confronts his "father," the Marquis, played by *Dennis Romer* in last season's "Camille."



-----Cut here and mail to Otterbein College Summer Theatre, Westerville, Ohio 43081-----

1989 Summer Theatre Season Ticket Order Form

Individual Ticket Prices (Save 15-29%)

Option 1
Fri.-Sat.

Option 2
Wed.-Thur.

Option 3
Opening Nite
Club

Option 4
Nite Matinees Only

QUILTERS

A Moving American Musical

BILOXI BLUES

A Bittersweet Comedy

I'M NOT RAPPAPORT

\$9.75

\$8.75

\$8.75

\$9.75

\$8.75

\$8.75

\$7.75

\$8.75

\$8.75

\$9.75

\$8.75

\$8.75

\$7.75

QUILTERS

A Moving American Musical

I'M NOT RAPPAPORT

QUILTERS

(June)

BILOXI BLUES

(June/July)

\$9.75

\$8.75

\$8.75

\$9.75

\$8.75

\$8.75

\$7.75

\$8.75

\$8.75

\$9.75

\$8.75

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\$7.75

QUILTERS

A Moving American Musical

I'M NOT RAPPAPORT

QUILTERS

(June)

BILOXI BLUES

(June/July)

\$9.75

\$8.75

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\$9.75

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\$8.75

\$7.75

Season Ticket Availability Dates

Season Tickets are available only during the first week of each production. Circle desired date for each play and underline your second choice in case the first is not available. Opening Nite Club must circle Tuesday for "Quilters" and Wednesdays for the remaining shows. Option 4 must circle all Sunday matinees. Do not circle "Quilters" if you are purchasing the three show season ticket option.

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Thurs.

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OTTERBEIN

C O L L E G E

Otterbein College Theatre
Westerville, Ohio 43081

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Box Office Information

Tickets for 'Sweeney Todd' go on sale at the Cowan Hall box office Wednesday, April 19. Tickets for the Wednesday, May 3, Thursday, May 4 and Sunday, May 7 shows are \$8.50, while tickets for the Friday, May 5 and Saturday, May 6 performances are \$9.50.

The box office will be open for "Children of a Lesser God" on May 15. Ticket prices for the Wednesday, May 24, Thursday, May 25, Sunday, May 28, Wednesday, May 31, Thursday, June 1 and Sunday, June 4, shows are \$7.00. Tickets for the Friday (May 26 and June 2) and Saturday (May 27 and June 3) performances are \$8.00.

Box Office number is:

898-1109

Center for the Arts Spring Term Calendar of Events

- | | | | |
|------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| April 21 | Opus Zero in concert, "Pizazz '89", Battelle Fine Arts Center, 7 and 9 p.m. | May 20 | Westerville Civic Symphony and Otterbein Choirs, Cowan Hall, 8 p.m. |
| May 3-7 | "Sweeney Todd—The Demon Barber of Fleet Street", Cowan Hall, opening night, 7:30 p.m.; Sun. matinee, 2 p.m.; all other performances, 8 p.m. | May 24 | Percussion Ensemble, Battelle Fine Arts Center, 8 p.m. |
| May 7 - June 11 | Student and Alumni Exhibitions, Dunlap Gallery, Battelle Fine Arts Center | May 24-28 May 31 - June 4 | "Children of a Lesser God", Campus Center Theatre, opening night, 7:30 p.m.; Sun. matinee, 2 p.m.; all other performances, 8 p.m. |
| May 10 | Chuck Davis African-American Dance Ensemble, Cowan Hall, 7:30 p.m. | May 31 | Morton Achter and Michael Haberkorn, duo-pianos, Battelle Fine Arts Center, 8 p.m. |
| May 13 | Student Dance Workshop, Cowan Hall, 6 p.m. | June 4 | Outdoor Band Concert, Cowan Hall, 7 p.m. |
| May 17 | Jazz-Lab Band, Battelle Fine Arts Center, 8 p.m. | June 10 | Alumni Choir, Battelle Fine Arts Center, 4:30 p.m. |
| May 19 | Jocelyn McDonald, soprano, and Craig Johnson, baritone, Battelle Fine Arts Center, 8 p.m. | June 11 | Alumni Band Commencement concert, Rike Center, 11:30 a.m. |