

Broadway musical makes central Ohio debut July 5

The delightful Broadway musical "Baby" makes its central Ohio premiere Friday, July 5, at 8:30 p.m., when it opens at Otterbein College Summer Theatre for a two-weekend run in the air-conditioned Campus Center Arena Theatre.

The musical, enjoying its first tour, explores the joys, pains, and comedies of three

very different couples and their journeys to parenthood.

Danny (Jeff Kin) and Lizzie (Sherrie Puderbaugh) are a pair of lovable, however immature, college 20-year-olds living together in a basement apartment. Alan (David Caldwell), a respected college administrator, is 48 and his wife Arlene (Laura Stitt) is 43. Their

children are grown and they have just returned from a romantic anniversary trip. Nick (Tim Gregory), track coach at the college, and Pam (Catherine Randazzo), also athletic and both of them 30, have been desperately trying to conceive. All three women meet for the first time in the obstetrician's office.

"Baby" covers nine months, beginning in cold, grey March, and ending in brown/grey November: a full cycle.

The show is about ordinary life; the use of an abstract set helps make it bigger than life. But what is really bigger than life in "Baby" will not be found in the events of the scenes, but in the characters' own hearts.

The play explores the issues of continuity, change, and growth that are all raised by the issue of having a child. The characters meet these challenges every day with bravery, resilience, humor, love, and however begrudgingly, with a willingness to compromise, change, and grow.

What may seem to be an innocuous cover for a major internal battle, with something crucial at stake in that character's life. In the play, for instance, Nick is devastated that the fertility problem is his; Arlene is unhappy about her pregnancy; and Lizzie is nowhere near as confident about her life choices as she would like people to think she is.

With Nick and Pam, her weakness is that as an athlete she doubts her femininity. Their story is how they come to give up their "roles" when a situation arises in which Nick has a weakness and Pam is strong.

Arlene and Alan's story is about how they come to confront what is terrifying to them: intimacy after 20 years of marriage.

Lizzie and Danny's story is how they grow up into a unified couple. The "lie" they live before the baby is born is that being grown-up enough to live together makes them ready to deal with all the adult issues that arise when two separate lives are combined.

"Baby," climaxing with the birth of Lizzie and Danny's baby, promises to

be an intimate and humorous night of musical theatre about how lives and relationships change with the onset of a baby. Audiences should have a good time and be moved.

The Tony award-nominated score with music by David Shire and lyrics by Richard Maltby Jr. includes "At Night She Comes Home to Me," "Fatherhood Blues," "Baby, Baby, Baby," "We Start Today," and "Two People in Love."

Other supporting characters include Dean Webber (Roy Woods) and Professor Weise (Steve Salyer), two members of the college faculty softball team who tease Alan about becoming a father again at his age, and who "advise" childless Nick. Marc Foster, Cathy Collins, Liana Peters, Jodie Silk, and Allison Dixon round out the cast as chorus members.

Directed by Robert Hetherington, an accomplished director from the Dayton area in his first appearance at Otterbein, "Baby" will be choreographed by Joanne VanSant, Otterbein's vice president of student affairs and dean of students.

Lyndee Stover, who two summers ago served as musical director for "I Do! I Do!" is musical director. Fred Thayer, Otterbein designer-technical director, has created the abstract set; Michael Slane, Otterbein technical director, will fulfill that role in "Baby," and assistant technical director for the production is 1980 graduate Ile Haggins.

"Baby" will run Friday and Saturday, July 5 and 6, at 8:30 p.m., with a Sunday, July 7, matinee at 2:30 p.m. The musical resumes again for five more 8:30 p.m. performances on Tuesday, July 9, through Saturday, July 13.

Tickets are available from the Campus Center box offices from 12:30-9 p.m. Monday through Saturday.



CAN'T WAIT 'TIL WE HAVE ONE OF OUR OWN—Pam and Nick (Catherine Randazzo and Tim Gregory) are obsessed with the idea of becoming first-time parents in Otterbein College Summer Theatre's upcoming production of the delightful musical "Baby," set for a central Ohio premiere July 5 and 6 and July 9-13 at 8:30 p.m., in the air-conditioned Campus Center Arena Theatre.



'Baby' at Otterbein

The Broadway musical *Baby*, that explores the joys, pains and comedies of these three very different couples in Otterbein College Summer Theatre's upcoming production, is set for a two-weekend run in the Campus Center Arena Theatre. The cast includes (left to right): "doubting" Arlene (Laura Stitt) and Alan (David Caldwell), "anxious" Pam (Catherine Rnadazzo) and Nick (Tim Gregory), and "surprised" Danny (Jeff Kin) and Lizzie (Sherri Puderbaugh). *Baby* will be presented Friday and Saturday at 8:30 p.m. and July 9-13 at that time. A matinee will take place Sunday, July 7 at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are available from the Campus Center box office 890-3028, open Monday-Saturday, from 12:30-9 p.m.