

Children and animals cast in 'Heidi'

By Christle Welninger

"This is a strong basic story about the relationship between a girl and her grandfather," Petie Dodrill said of "Heidi," the Children's Theatre production she is directing.

Children's Theatre is different from other productions because of its simple style, said sophomore Chris Corts, who plays Sebastian, the butler. "It's more physically expressive; there is a lot of movement. The scenery is also more elaborate," he said.

This play differs from the other Children's

Theatre productions in that it has four children with speaking parts and nine other children in a chorus, said Dodrill.

"I do a lot more teaching along with directing," said Dodrill. "However we are learning from each other."

Dodrill noted that none of the children have ever been in a major production, but are working very hard to learn their lines. "They are really doing their homework," she said.

Ten-year-old Bronwynn Hopton brings the character of Heidi to life. "Bronwynn is so natural and spontaneous. She's very focused," Dodrill said.

"As Heidi, the weight of the show falls on her (Bronwynn's) shoulders and she can carry it," said junior Kim Butterweck, who plays Tinnette, the maid.

"I'm having a lot of fun, but I'm nervous, too. During the rehearsals I get really shaky," said Lynley Carey, a child who portrays Clara.

"It's (the play) real fun, but it takes lots of practice," said Ben Isler, another child who plays Peter.

Other cast members who are new to the stage are some kittens, a goat and a turtle.

"The turtle is supposed to scamper across the stage, but I don't think it will do that," Carey said.

"Now that the kids have gotten used to the cast, we'll have to get them comfortable with the animals. This is my third time directing 'Heidi' and we've used animals before. It really adds to the show," said Dodrill.

The story unfolds in the Swiss Alps, where the audience will find Heidi unexpectedly sent to live with her grandfather, played by junior James Minter. The beginning of their relationship is difficult. However, they begin to develop a wonderful relationship, until Heidi is taken to Frankfurt to be a companion for a wealthy, crippled child named Clara.

Carey said, "My character hates to be in a wheelchair, but I'm having lots of fun with one."

Heidi becomes very homesick when she is taken away from the grandfather and the mountains she has come to love. Here enters Fraulein Rottenmeier to add conflict.

"I am the evil governess," said Susan Dickerson, who plays Fraulein Rottenmeier. "I'm mean, tough and severe. Basically, I make problems for Heidi."

Others in the household are not as cruel as the governess and try to make Heidi's adjustment easier for her.

Sebastian, the butler, and Tinnette, the maid, hide the girls' kittens from Fraulein Rottenmeier and even demonstrate the polka for them.

"We just get to have lots of fun," said Corts.

"Heidi" will be shown to high school students in matinees beginning Wednesday, Nov. 20.

The performance is open to the public on Friday, Nov. 22 at 7:30 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 23 at 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. and Sunday, Nov. 24 at 1:30 p.m.

Tickets are available at the box office Monday through Friday, 1-4:30 p.m. Tickets are free to students with an i.d.



Ten-year-old Bronwynn Hopton and junior James Minter prepare for the Children's Theatre production of Heidi. Photo by Ed Syguda

Otterbein College Theatre Presents Heidi for Children

Children and animals both take to the stage when Otterbein College Theatre presents *Heidi* in late November. About a dozen area children will perform in the show and two will have leading parts.

The children will be joined on stage by live animals including a goat, kittens and a turtle. This is the first time Otterbein College Theatre has featured live animals on stage and a veterinary medicine major has volunteered to be an "animal wrangler" during the production. In fact, the goat will be a guest at her sorority house during the week of the production.

With children and animals, the production could contain some surprises but is sure to delight as Otterbein presents this childhood classic. One of the best-loved children's stories of all time, *Heidi* is the moving tale of a little orphan girl, who, through her sincerity, brings new hope to everyone her life touches.

The way Heidi brings her gruff, old hermit grandfather back into the world and helps Clara, a disabled child, find health and happiness portrays the charming sentiment of the old world. Poignant episodes, humorous scenes and a fascinating glimpse at Swiss and German folklore will keep audiences of all ages spellbound. Don't miss this annual theatrical event for the entire family.

This charming children's story will be performed in Cowan Hall on Nov. 22 at 7:30 p.m., Nov. 23 at 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. and Nov. 24 at 1:30 p.m. For tickets, call the box office at ext. 1109 between 1 and 4:30 p.m. weekdays.

Faculty, staff and administrators are asked to purchase tickets for this play. The cost is \$4.

The Columbus Dispatch
Nov. 22, 1991
The Arts

phone at 1-800-
Execution of Justice, OSU Studio Series, 8 p.m., Mount Hall Studio Theatre, 1050 Carmack Rd., West Campus. Tickets: \$5.25. Call 292-2295.

Michael Feinstein, 8 p.m., Palace Theatre. Tickets: \$19.50-\$23.50. Call 469-0939.

Heidi, Otterbein College Theatre, 7:30 p.m., Cowan Hall, 30 S. Grove St., Westerville. Tickets: \$4. Call 898-1109.

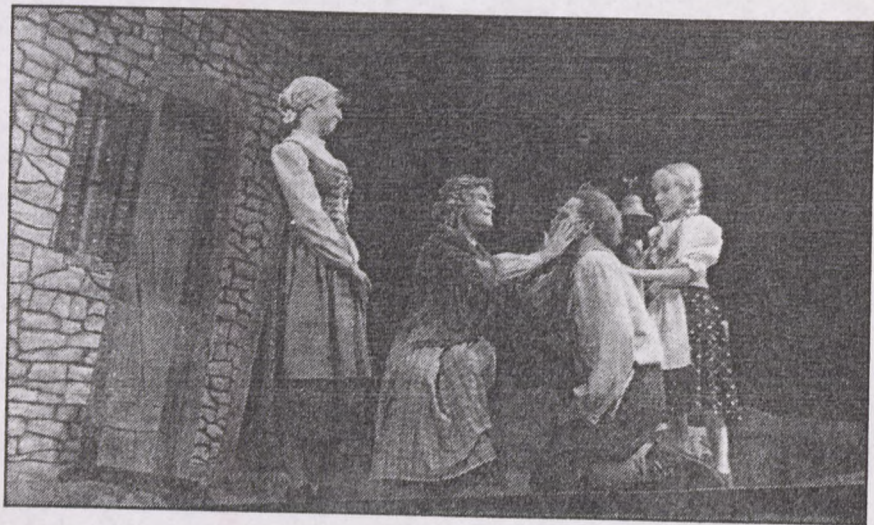


Heidi's Tirezah Wise, standing, and, from left seated, Bronwynn Hopton, 10, James Minter and Ben Isler, 9.



On Campus

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'Heidi' opens

The cast of "Heidi" opened the Children's Theatre production yesterday as they performed matinee shows for high school students. They will be performing the show through Sunday. Photo by Robin Mobley

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Otterbein theater opened their production of Heidi to community children. Browynn Hopton (left) plays Heidi and Lynley Carey (right) plays Clara (below). Photo by Robin Mobley



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Hixson in production of 'Heidi'

James Hixson, son of Ms. Karen Susick, 4448 Speedo Lane, Green, will be appearing as "Minister" in Otterbein College Children's Theatre production of "Heidi" Nov. 22-24 at Cowan Hall on the Otterbein campus in Westerville, OH.

"Heidi", one of the best-loved children's stories of all time, is a moving tale of a little orphan girl, who through her sincerity brings new hope to everyone her life touches.

Hixson, a 1988 graduate of Green High School, is a senior at Otterbein majoring in theater. He has also appeared in "Sweeney Todd", "Alice in Wonderland" and "Romeo and Juliet".

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Call 645-7047.

THEATER NEWS

Otterbein College's *Heidi* will be performed at 7:30 p.m. Friday; 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Saturday; and 1:30 p.m. Sunday in Cowan Hall on the Westerville campus. Call 898-1109 from 1 to 4:30 p.m. weekdays for tickets. . . .

The Contemporary American Theatre Company's family science-fiction comedy, David Mamet's *The Revenge of the Space Pandas* ends Sunday at the theater, 512 N. Park St. Performances are at 7:30 tonight, Friday and Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday. Call 461-1382. . . .

Theatre will hold auditions for

Arts Notes



'Heidi' opens to general public

The Children's Theatre performance of "Heidi" is open to the public beginning tomorrow and ending Sunday.

Show times are tomorrow at 7:30 p.m., Saturday at 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. and Sunday at 1:30 p.m.

Tickets are available at the theater box office today and tomorrow, 1-4:30 p.m.

Tickets are free to students with an i.d.

CHILD STARS

Players Theatre Columbus gave two students a break by casting them in its current Equity production of *Wait Until Dark*.

Hillery Bronwynn Hopton and Tracy Woodall are making the most of it, judging from the audience's squirming, gasping and laughing response to the well-staged suspense thriller.

Hopton, of Worthington, and Woodall, of Clintonville, are sharing the role of Gloria, a curious little girl who helps a blind woman foil three thugs searching for a heroin-filled doll in her New York apartment.

Hopton, a fifth-grader at Evening Street Elementary School, recently played the title role in Otterbein College's *Heidi*. She has studied with BalletMet for three years and played two roles (Angel and Valet) in BalletMet's *Cinderella*.

Woodall, a fifth-grader at Immaculate Conception School, appeared in her school play *Three We Kings*.

Performances of *Wait Until Dark* continue through Sunday in the Riffe Center's Capitol Theatre, 77 S. High St. Call 431-3600 or 644-8425.

Michael Grossberg is Dispatch theater critic.

arts briefs

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Westerville News 11/6/91

Children, animals featured in 'Heidi'

Otterbein College Theatre will present *Heidi* at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 22, 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Nov. 23 and 1:30 p.m. Nov. 24. Worthington resident Bronwynn Hopton will play Heidi and Westerville resident Ben Isler will play Peter.

The children will be joined on stage by animals including a goat, kittens and a turtle.

For more information call the theater box office at 898-1109 between 1 and 4:30 p.m. weekdays.

'Heidi' auditions scheduled

Otterbein College Theatre will hold auditions for the children's play "Heidi" Sept. 21 between 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. in the Campus Center Theatre, 100 W. Home St.

Girls ages 8 to 10 may audition for the role of Heidi and boys ages 9 to 12 may audition for the role of Peter. Minorities are encouraged to audition.

Children should be prepared to sing a brief song a cappella. Rehearsals will be held in the evenings and on weekends beginning Oct. 15. Performances of "Heidi" will be held Nov. 20 through 24.

For further information and to schedule an audition, please call the Otterbein College Department of Theatre and Dance at 898-1657 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays.

HEIDI COMING, PANDAS HERE

Otterbein College's children's theater production of *Heidi* will be staged at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 22; 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Nov. 23; and 1:30 p.m. Nov. 24. Call the box office, 898-1109, between 1 and 4:30 p.m. weekdays, for tickets . . . CATCO's *The Revenge of the Space Pandas*, a family science-fiction comedy, continues through Nov. 24 at 512 N. Park St. Call 461-1382.

Nancy Gilson is a Dispatch entertainment reporter.

Westerville student cast in area play

Ben Isler, will appear as "Peter" in Otterbein College Children's Theatre production of *Heidi*, at 7:30 p.m. Friday, 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Saturday, and 1:30 p.m. Sunday at Cowan Hall on the Otterbein Campus.

For ticket information
call 898-1109.

11-20-91

Westerville News