

Columbus Dispatch

■ SUNDAY

Hercule Poirot returns

Guest Equity actor Ed Vaughan, who has played Hercule Poirot before for Players Theatre, returns as Agatha Christie's perceptive detective in *Black Coffee*. Otterbein Summer Theatre's 30th-season finale will be performed at 8 tonight through Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday in the Campus Center Theatre, 100 W. Home St., Westerville. Tickets cost \$10 to \$14. Call 823-1109.



Doral Chenoweth III/Dispatch

Ed Vaughan and Emily Cotton in Otterbein Summer Theatre's production of *Black Coffee*

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389 Otterbein theater showing Christie

WESTERVILLE — The Otterbein Summer Theatre 30th anniversary season ends with the Agatha Christie mystery *Black Coffee* being presented July 31 through Aug. 11.

Black Coffee is a little-known mystery that should surprise and delight all Christie fans. Written in 1934, the story concerns a physicist named Sir Claude Amory who has created a formula for an atom bomb.

Sir Claude is surrounded by his devoted family, an efficient private secretary, a loyal though mournful butler and a polite Italian visitor. When Sir Claude is poisoned, in his coffee, of course, it turns out all of them had a motive to devise his demise.

The audience is treated to a tankful of

motives liberally stocked with red herrings. The family was not so devoted after all. Most of them needed Sir Claude's money and the formula for the new explosive. And there was a black-mailer at work.

Christie's famed detective Hercule Poirot, played by Ed Vaughan, is called in to sift through the facts and solve the case.

Vaughan, an Equity actor, opened the summer season as Frank in *Educating Rita*. An associate professor of theatre at Otterbein, Vaughan's recent acting credits include roles in Grandparents Living Theatre's production of *Our Town* and CATCO's production of *Loman Family Picnic*. At Otterbein he appeared in *A Few Good Men* and *King Lear*.

Black Coffee will be directed by De-

partment of Theatre and Dance Chairperson John Stefano. At Otterbein, Stefano has directed the musicals *Big River*, *Sweet Charity*, the drama *Top Girls* and the children's play *Robin Hood*.

Black Coffee will be presented July 31-Aug. 4 and Aug. 7-11 in the Campus Center Theatre, 100 W. Home St. The opening night performance will begin at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday matinees are at 2 p.m. All other performances begin at 8 p.m.

Tickets are \$10 for Sunday matinees and opening night; \$12 for Wednesday and Thursday and \$14 for Friday and Saturday. To reserve tickets, call the Otterbein Summer Theatre box office at (614) 823-1109. The box office will be open 1-8:30 p.m. weekdays.

'Toad: The Musical' features Westerville cast member

"Toad: The Musical" is the latest offering of A Premiere Playhouse.

Artistic Director Darryl Bojanowski's adaptation of the "Toad" chapters of Kenneth Grahame's classic book "The Wind In The Willows" will be presented at 10 and 11:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Thursday and Friday, and at 1:30, 3 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday at the Playhouse theater at the New Market Mall.

Several area children will be appearing in the production as Weasels and Stoats. They are Lauren Sabatka of Worthington; Kelli Searfos of Westerville; Hilary Nelson of Powell; and Allison Principe of Dublin. All but Principe, in her first performance, have appeared in many productions at the Playhouse. Also featured is Angela Arnett of Columbus in the role of the jailer's daughter. Arnett recently appeared in the Playhouse production of "Snow White."

Tickets are \$4.50 per person and available only at the door. For further information, call the Playhouse box office, 798-8537.

OST presents classical farce

Otterbein Summer Theatre will present "Charley's Aunt," one of the most popular comedies in the English language.

First presented in 1892, "Charley's Aunt" has been performed almost continuously since then. This summer marks the third time Otterbein Summer Theatre has staged this popular farce.

The revival puts Otterbein alumnus and Equity guest actor Tim Gregory in the lead role of the Oxford undergrad impersonating an aunt from Brazil in order to provide the proper chaperone for a young lady visitor. The action grows fast, furious and hilarious as the real aunt unexpectedly arrives.

Gregory was the first Otterbein student to ever win the prestigious Irene Ryan National Scholarship. His career

has included work at Chicago's Shakespeare Repertory and Apple Tree Theatre as well as Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C., and the Contemporary American Theatre. He has appeared in the films "The Prodigy" and "Small Talk," as well as on television programs and in commercials.

Otterbein Summer Theatre founder Charles Dodrill will return to direct the farce.

Since his retirement from Otterbein in 1991, Dodrill, a Westerville resident, has remained a vital component of the theatre scene in Columbus. Most recently he directed "Our Town" for Grandparents Living Theatre.

"Charley's Aunt" will be presented Wednesday through Sunday and July 24-28 in the Campus Center Theatre, 100 W. Home St. The opening night performance will begin at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday matinees are at 2 p.m. All other performance begin at 8 p.m.

Tickets are \$10 for Sunday matinees and opening night; \$12 for Wednesday and Thursday; \$14 for Friday and Saturday.

Reservations may be made by calling the Otterbein Summer Theatre box office at 823-1109. The box office will be open from 1 to 8:30 p.m. weekdays.

Christie work to be staged at OC

The Otterbein Summer Theatre 30th anniversary season ends with the Agatha Christie mystery "Black Coffee" July 31 through Aug. 11.

"Black Coffee" is a little-known mystery that will appeal to Christie fans. Written in 1934, the story concerns a physicist named Sir Claude Amory, who has created a formula for an atom bomb. Sir Claude is surrounded by his family, secretary, butler and a visitor. When his coffee is poisoned, it turns out they all had motives to kill him. Many, of course, are

red herrings.

One of Christie's best-known detectives, Hercule Poirot (played by Ed Vaughan), is called in to solve the case.

Vaughan, an Equity actor, opened Otterbein's summer season as Frank in "Educating Rita." An associate professor of theater at Otterbein, Vaughan's recent acting credits include roles in Grandparents Living Theater's production of "Our Town" and CATCO's production of "Loman Family Picnic." At Otterbein, he appeared in "A Few Good Men" and "King Lear."

"Black Coffee" will be directed by Director of Department of Theater and Dance Chairman John Stefano. At Otterbein, Stefano has directed the musicals "Big River" and "Sweet Charity," the drama "Top Girls," and the children's play "Robin Hood."

"Black Coffee" will be presented July 31-Aug. 4 and Aug. 7-11 in the Campus Center Theater, 100 W. Home St. Opening night performance will begin at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. All other performances begin at 8 p.m.

Ticket information is available by calling the OST box office at 823-1109 weekdays between 1 and 8:30 p.m.

Curtain Players earn OCTAFest honors

The 1996 Central Region OCTAFest was held June 15 at the Davis Discovery Center.

Six excerpts were presented by local theaters. Two of the excerpts were invited to represent the Central Region at the State OCTA Competition in Toledo, Ohio, over Labor Day weekend, including "Talking With" by Westerville Curtain Players.

Curtain Players's production of "Talking With" also received specialty awards for their performance. Excellence in Acting awards were presented to Di Felice and Cynthia Meade, and John Falkenbach earned Excellence in Directing honors.

Whodunit? Otterbein Summer Theatre will end its 30th-anniversary season with *Black Coffee*, an Agatha Christie murder mystery, at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, 8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday and 2 p.m. next Sunday — and through Aug. 11 — in the Campus Center Theatre, 100 W. Home St., Westerville. Tickets cost \$10-\$14; call 823-1109.

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7/28/96

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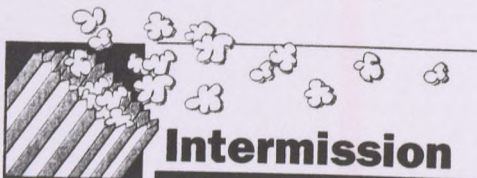
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AUG-18-96



Intermission

GOOD POINT

389

An NBC News reporter, reminding New Jersey Gov. Christine Todd Whitman of her status as the only female governor, asked, "So is it a burden or an asset?"

Her reply: "I think it's a shame."

— Julia Keller

AMATEUR SLEUTHING

Actress Susan Diol, an Otterbein College graduate, and her husband, actor-writer Shaun Cassidy, recently returned to her alma mater to see Agatha Christie's *Black Coffee*.

During intermission, Otterbein Summer Theatre invited audience members to solve its August whodunit.

Cassidy, who once played one of the teenage Hardy Boys on television, proved himself hardly a real-life detective.

Also guessing wrong was Otterbein graduate Gordon Jump, an actor (the original *WKRP in Cincinnati*) who was visiting the campus to speak at an event sponsored by the Alumni Relations Office.

— Michael Grossberg

SOUND TEST