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Award-winning 'Harvey' opens Otterbein's 22nd season

The Pulitzer Prize play *Harvey* last week opened the Otterbein Summer Theatre's 22nd year of producing plays for audiences in Central Ohio.

For the first time, each production will have a two-week run. Ed Vaughan, Otterbein Theatre faculty member, is serving as producer of the Otterbein Summer Theatre for the sixth consecutive season. Vaughan is also director of *Harvey*.

Guest artist Michael Hartman who graduated from Otterbein in 1970 returns to the Otterbein Summer Theatre for the fourth time. Hartman made his Broadway debut in *Sherlock Holmes*. He has performed regionally at the Kennedy Center, Equity Library Theatre, GEVA Playhouse and, the list goes on and on. Presently he is the radio and TV spokesman for the Hershey Co., in a national campaign for the Mr. Goodbar candy.

Hartman has the job of both creating the character of Elwood P. Dowd, and also creating Harvey, his six-foot rabbit friend and

act II

Jean Ann Wolfe-Weaver

companion. Hartman made both Dowd and Harvey quite real and in a nice, gentle, warm way.

Sister, Vita Louise Simons, was played by Cathy Collins. Her understanding of the character was fine, however, she looked too young to have a daughter the age of Myrtle Mae Simons, played by Lori Schubeler. Myrtle Mae does all she can to convince her mother to have Uncle Elwood "put away." Then Myrtle Mae meets a "man". Duane Wilson, played by Ralph Scot who works at the "Chumley's Rest." For Myrtle Mae, Uncle Elwood has finally helped her find "a man."

At Chumley's Rest, we meet Ruth Kelly, RN, played well by Meg Williamson. We also meet young Dr. Sanderson (Steve Geyer) and his superior Dr. William R. Chumley (Joshua Wank) along with Betty

Chumley (Cheryl Gay-sunas).

In this reviewer's opinion *Harvey* is one of the warmest comedies ever to be seen on a stage. However, there was little warmth unless Elwood or Harvey were on stage in this production.

Harvey plays through July 3. Reservations may be

made by calling 898-1109.

The following is for the kid in us all. July 8 through July 30 there is going to be a Columbus Mime/Clown Festival at the Drake Union on the Ohio State University campus. A "cosmic clown" Stanley Allan Sherman will bring his Flying Fool paper airplane workshop for the opening public performances July 8, 9 and 10.

Sherman describes his show as "...innocent, enjoy-

able perversion investigating nothing while delving into much more than aerodynamics, prayer and patriotism." His performance features over 50 paper model airplanes and the use of his hand-made leather masks.

Sherman encourages his audience to "bring paper for airplane-making."

Performances are at 8 p.m. July 8 and 9 and at 2 p.m. on Sunday, July 10.

The festival also features other public performances

including: The Lufkugel Lectures with Andre Baer and James Calder plus "Bharata Natyam" with J. Edmond Daly July 15 and 16 at 8 p.m.; "Kings, Knights and Nonsense" with the Madcap Puppets July 17 at 2 p.m.; Avner "The Eccentric" Eisenberg on July 22 at 8 p.m.; and "Woman in a Suitcase" with Julie Goell and "On the Line Improvisation" with Thomas Reese. David Krohn and E. Reid Gilbert on July 29 and 30.

'Harvey' charms on stage

THEATER

JANET FOLEY

A 6-foot-2 invisible rabbit and lovable Elwood P. Dowd team up to charm the audience into their separate world in the Otterbein Summer Theatre's season opener "Harvey."

The Pulitzer Prize-winning play by Mary Chase centers around Elwood P. Dowd, who travels with his invisible friend, Harvey.

Elwood's belief in the rabbit accompanies his different outlook on life. Elwood believes all of life's little quirks can be settled over a drink.

He also takes every opportunity to get to know total strangers, giving everyone he meets his card.

It's hard to imagine anyone else

playing Elwood after Jimmy Stewart's performance in the movie version of the play. But Michael Hartman brings his own style to this character and makes the audience fall in love with Elwood all over again.

Hartman, who made his Broadway debut in "Sherlock Holmes," portrays Elwood with such charm that by the end of the performance the audience wants to take him home.

ELWOOD and Harvey live with Elwood's uptight sister Veta and her daughter Myrtle Mae, who are struggling to make it into the society page.

Cathy Collins, who portrays Veta, is funny as the hard-nosed sister who turns soft at the end when she realizes that she loves her brother just the way he is.

Lori Schubeler is extremely convincing as a bratty niece with a drooping corsage and crooked stocking seams, as she trails behind her mother.

Elwood's preoccupation with

whiskey, along with his insistence on carrying around a fedora with two holes cut in it for his friend's ears, make Elwood an embarrassing skeleton in the closet of his sister and niece.

"PEOPLE GET run over everyday by trucks. Why can't something like that happen to Uncle Elwood?" suggests Myrtle Mae.

Veta finally decides to have Elwood put into a sanitarium, but when she admits to the psychiatrist that she has seen this white rabbit a few times herself, she is committed instead.

Completely unaffected by the situation, Elwood continues to tip his hat to all of the ladies and frequent Charlie's Place with Harvey.

THE MOST LAUGHS go to Ralph Scott who plays the zany assistant Duane Wilson at the sanitarium. His deranged faces and quick comments on the situation provide a perfect aside to the story.

This charming play, which views life from the eyes of an innocent, imaginative man who is not sinister like those around him, leaves the audience wondering whether reality is really the best way to go.

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