

Meeting The Professional

# The Play's The Thing With Walter Abel

26



## Makes His Point

Broadway actor Walter Abel will portray the role of Judge Danforth in the Otterbein Theatre production of Arthur Miller's "The Crucible" at Cowan Hall tonight, Friday and Saturday. Curtain time is 8:15 p. m. and tickets are still available at the box office or at Jensen's downtown.

By BECCY BERRY

One gets the impression of "all business" when chatting with Walter Abel. He arrived promptly at Cowan Hall for a half hour interview and terminated it just as promptly when director Chuck Dodrill announced that rehearsal was to start.

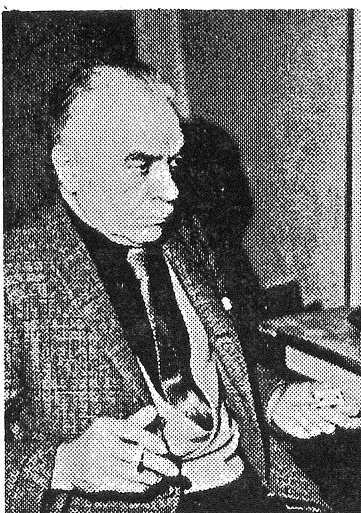
His natty appearance and vigorous personality belie his age. In fact, he was quite adamant about the desire and right of man to continue working beyond an arbitrary number of years.

"If a person is to remain vital, alive, he must continue to 'grow' with each new demand that life brings." This was part of the answer Walter Abel gave when questioned about his favorite roles. He said that "each new role brings forth a demand for such perfection that only the immediate part an actor is working on

can be considered a favorite."

Having been a professional actor since the age of twenty, he has had ample opportunity to experience this growth in all the entertainment media. His list of credits fills two closely typed pages. He has just finished an appearance on Broadway this season and voiced the opinion that he will be on stage in New York whenever a part is available. However, he does hope to continue doing at least one play a year with college theaters.

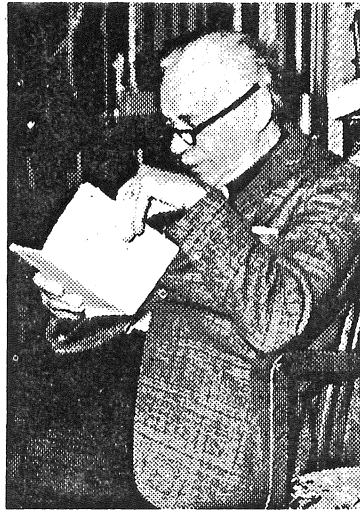
This led to a discussion of the problems involved in working with young college actors. "The professional is always out to sell entertainment--the whole play, whereas the college student with his many other responsibilities can only be concerned with his individual role."



Movies are strictly a director's medium.



Miller's plays require strict attention.



Lines to learn. Study them at all times.

His professional attitude was reflected in his preparation for the role of the unrelenting Judge Danforth in "The Crucible". He had been studying the part for three weeks before his arrival in Westerville. He admitted that the role is quite demanding and that "Miller is never an easy playwright to interpret." This, however, is not his first experience with this playwright as he has played the lead role in "Death of a Salesman."

In addition to his continuing role as an actor, he is currently president of the American National Theatre and Academy. Although an honorary position, it requires much correspondence. However, when, and if, he has any free time, he and his wife leave

their home in New York for a few days on their farm--an hour's drive from the city. He is an avid gardener and admitted to a "constant battle with nature to keep the fifteen acres cleared."

The executive suite at Howard Johnson's motel has become his Westerville home. He stated that the accommodations were among the best he has ever had. However, he hastened to say he is looking forward to a vacation on the "farm" as soon as he leaves Westerville.

Perhaps as interesting as the interview was the thrill of watching a professional at work. I remained at Cowan Hall for an additional half hour to observe him in action. Although the memorization of lines lacked per-

fection at this early rehearsal, the intensity with which Mr. Abel attacked the characterization of his role was apparent.

We in Westerville are privileged to have a man of this caliber appear at Cowan Hall. I'm sure his interpretation of Judge Danforth will remain in our memories as well as contribute to his continuing "growth."

Tickets are available at Cowan Hall Box Office, 882-3601, from 1 to 4 p.m. weekdays and at Jensen's Jewelry. Curtain time is 8:15 for "The Crucible" which starts tonight and continues through Saturday. Other members of the cast will be played by the Otterbein Theatre group.

## Attractive Theatre Schedule

Theatre-goers will have a lot of top theatrical attractions this month.

Tonight, Friday and Saturday, noted Broadway actor Walter Abel is appearing in the Otterbein Theatre production of Arthur Miller's "The Crucible" at Cowan Hall. The curtain time is 8:15 p.m.

Curtain Players are presenting "Sunday In New York" at the Westerville Armory tonight, Friday and Saturday with an 8:30 p.m. curtain time.

Other attractions on their way are the French National Dance Company Friday, March 15 at Cowan Hall and the National Players production of Shakespeare's "Much Ado About Nothing" on Friday, March 22.

Stories of these attractions are on Pages 10 and 11.

## Otterbein Professional Guest Artist

# Walter Abel In "The Crucible"

The Otterbein College Theatre announced today that this season's Professional Guest Artist will be well-known stage and screen star, Walter Abel. Currently President of the American National Theatre and Academy, Mr. Abel has made numerous guest star appearances at colleges and universities around the country. He will appear in the role of Judge Danforth in the Otterbein production of "The Crucible" March 7-8-9.

Mr. Abel is the seventh Professional Guest Artist in as many years to appear in an Otterbein Theatre production. Previous shows starred Hans Conried, Ed Begley, Arnold Moss, Kim Hunter, Viveca Lindfors and Albert Dekker.

Born in St. Paul Minnesota, in 1898, Abel studied for the stage at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts. He made his first professional appearance at the Manhattan Opera House December 20, 1919, in "Forbidden," followed in 1922 with the role of Acis in "Back to Methuselah." Mr. Abel has played in almost

all the major New York theatre houses, both on and off-Broadway in a wide variety of scripts since his Manhattan debut. Some of his most popular roles were in "Mourning Becomes Electra," "Punch and Judy," and "The Sea Gull."

The two theatrical experiences Mr. Abel prizes most were with the Philadelphia Orchestra, conducted by Eugene Ormandy, in Honegger's "King David," and Aaron Copeland's "Portrait of Lincoln." For fourteen months Walter Abel appeared on Broadway in "The Pleasure of His Company" with Cyril Ritchard and Cornelia Otis Skinner.

Entering the film world in 1935, Abel first appeared on the screen in "The Three Musketeers," and numbers among his film efforts parts in "Rue Madeleine" and "Raintree County."

TV shows to Mr. Abel's credit include appearances on "Gaslight," "The Enchanted," "The Defenders," and "East Side/West Side."

The Otterbein College Theatre production of Arthur Miller's



WALTER ABEL

"The Crucible" will feature a fine sales will open February "town and gown" cast. Box Of- 26.





Guest Artist Walter Abel will appear in "The Crucible."

## Walter Abel Is Guest

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Continued on Page 6

## Artist

Continued from Page 1

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## Names Cast For "Crucible" Drama

The Otterbein College Theatre announced today the all-student cast for the March 7-9 production of "The Crucible." Tickets for this production, which will feature professional guest star **Walter Abel**, will go on sale at the Cowan Hall Box Office on Monday, Feb. 26, from 1 to 4 p.m. students present ID card).

"The Crucible is a dramatic re-telling of the historic witchcraft trials in Salem, Mass., in 1692, that won the Pulitzer Prize for author Arthur Miller. The author has declared that every one of the 22 characters in his play had a similar role in the terrible episodes in Salem when 19 persons were hanged as witches on the hearsay evi-

dence of hysterical accusers.

Playwright Miller focuses attention on a young farmer and his wife, John and Elizabeth Proctor (played by **Greg Sabatino** and **Teri Hiatt**), and their attempt to extricate themselves from the hysteria caused by the accusations of a young girl and frightened minister, Abigail Williams and Rev. Parris (played by **Stephanie Lewis** and **Mike Metzel**). Walter Abel will appear as the unctuous over-bearing deputy-governor of the colony who presides over the trial, **Jim Granger** will portray the truth-seeking Rev. Hale who becomes appalled at the hysteria that overcomes the colonial village, and **Linda Grznar** will create the frightened

servant girl, Mary Warren.

Others in the large cast include the following: **Rusty Bolin** as the 80 year old farmer Giles Corey; **John Waddingham** as the militant Judge Hathorne; **Debbie Bowman**, **Pat Spreng**, and **Linda Dugan** as the frightened schoolgirls; **Ed Vaughan** and **Mary Furniss** as the richest Salem landholders, Thomas and Ann Putnam; **Larry Evans** and **Rita Sellers** as the fine Christian people, Francis and Rebecca Nurse, who refuse to capitulate and confess to lies; **Dennis Romer** and **Glenn Plum** as clerk and deputy, Cheever and Willard; **Pam Stine** as the slave from Barbados who starts it all; and **Linda Sharpless** as the pipe-smoking Sarah Good.

## Hold Tryouts For Town-Gown Play

Tryouts for the Otterbein College Theatre production of Arthur Miller's award-winning play, "The Crucible," will be held on Sunday, Feb. 4 at 1:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. in Cowan Hall. The play will be presented on March 7-9.

According to **Dr. Charles Dodrill**, Director of Theatre, negotiations are still proceeding for a male guest star to play the role of Proctor in this production. The College Theatre has annually contracted a major guest star to appear in one of the productions. Past guests include **Hans Conreid**, **Ed Begley**, **Arnold Moss**, **Kim Hunter**, **Viveca Lindfors**, and **Albert Dekker**.

The cast includes 12 male and 10 female roles. Scripts are available in the library for interested persons.

## Controversial "The Crucible" March 7, 8, 9

Ticket sales open Monday, Feb. 26, for the Otterbein College Theatre production of Arthur Miller's "The Crucible." One of the most controversial plays of our time, "The Crucible" is a dramatic re-telling of the historic witchcraft trials in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1692. Tickets will be on sale at both the Cowan Box Office, 882-3601, and at Jensen's Jewelry for all three performances of the show, slated to run March 7-8-9 in Cowan Auditorium.

Stage and screen star Walter Abel will arrive in Westerville February 28 to begin rehearsals with the cast in his role as Judge Danforth. Abel is the seventh professional guest artist to appear in an Otterbein Theatre production.

"The Crucible" opened in New York in 1953 and was greeted by a massive ovation on its opening night, which included 19 curtain calls at the end. The play became an item of great interest not only because it was the first new work by the author of the unforgettable "Death of a Salesman," but also the subject of great controversy due to its theme. It was impossible not to associate Miller's story about a mass hysteria in 1692 with the uproar over political heresies in the headlines of the 1950's. It was without doubt the most talked-about and argued-about play in many seasons and won the Antonette Perry Award as the best play of the season.

Miller has declared that every one of the twenty-two characters in his play had a similar role in the terrible episodes of 1692 in Salem when 19 persons were hanged as witches on the heresy of hysterical accusers and others saved themselves only by "confessing" their having made pacts with the Devil.

## The Morning After...

# 'The Crucible' Is Ready And Abel

By **GENE GERRARD**  
Citizen-Journal Staff Critic

With a generous burst of confidence, Charles Dodrill started his dress rehearsal for Arthur Miller's "The Crucible" on time—promptly at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday night.

Having served an apprenticeship on the working side of the footlights (before going over to the enemy), I remembered it was practically unheard of that a final rehearsal should begin as scheduled.

So I resisted the temptation to play Russian roulette with loaded traffic on I-71 in order to make the scene in Cowan Hall on time. I figured if I got there a half hour late, I'd still be early. Not so. I was six minutes late.

I ALSO SHOULD have recalled that old pros like Dodrill are always prepared; that they leave very little to chance. That's why his contribution to the growth of interest in theater at Otterbein is inestimable.

Then I shouldn't have been at all surprised that the dress rehearsal was as smooth as most opening nights. There was no last minute setting of lights; the set was finished; costumes were complete and, miracle of

miracles, there were no short tempers or long faces. Dodrill himself was as calm as the proverbial cucumber.

ON STAGE MILLER'S stark dramatization of the Salem witch hunts at the end of the 17th century, unfolded like the wings of a great, black bird of prey.

Dodrill is fortunate in that he has several rather remarkable young actors playing key roles, in addition to the authoritative presence of guest artist Walter Abel. Abel is able to indeed.

PARTICULARLY IMPRESSIVE are Jim Granger, Greg Sabatino, Teri Hiatt, Pam Stine, Stephanie Lewis and Linda Grznar.

Although Abel hasn't had the advantage of an intensive rehearsal period, there was every indication that he would have a steel-like grip on Deputy-Governor Danforth by opening night Thursday.

EVEN SO, HE DOMINATED every scene in which he appeared with quiet dignity and the kind of supreme confidence which come only after years of mellowing in the theater.

I was also very pleased to learn that Otterbein is planning a second year of operation for its summer theater, beginning June 25 and continuing through July 27. Their inaugural season played to nearly 85 per cent of capacity for the five productions.



Gerrard

## STAR LOOKS BACK

By SARA WISEHART  
Of The Dispatch Staff

Distinguished character actor Walter Abel will be professional guest star of Otterbein College Theater when they present "The Crucible," Thursday through Saturday in Cowan Hall. Veteran of 50 years stage

experience, he recalls, "I studied at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts and made my first professional appearance at the Manhattan Opera House in 1919.

"I HAVE been active in the theater ever since. I did several plays in New York for the next few years and in 1924 became associated with the Provincetown Players."

Other theatrical personages who were pioneers with this group were Kenneth McGowan, Robert Edmund Jones and Eugene O'Neill.

According to Walter, "The Provincetown Players and the Greenwich Village Playhouse were the 'pot that brought all the great talent of the time to boil.'"

"WE HAD some great times in those days. We didn't



WALTER ABEL

tor was not too perturbed about the demise of morality.

A student of Greek philosophers, he is currently appearing in Washington D.C. doing a series of dramatic readings from Plato for the Smithsonian Institute.

"One has but to be familiar with Plato or Aristotle to realize that what we are witnessing today is not really new. Probably a different form of revolt, yes . . . but new? Not at all."

AT THE HEIGHT of the depression, he left the stage to go to Hollywood. "We all went," he said, "actors, writers, producers. It was a mass exodus. Talking pictures were then all the rage and had really come into their own. And that's where the money was.

"And it was exciting to venture into a new medium. Some of us succeeded, some didn't. And many who succeeded, financially, weren't too successful in their personal lives.

"But, believe it or not, great financial success is hard to cope with. Sometimes, as I look back and compare the exaggerated life that we lived there to the one I live now, it's as though I spent several years in a complete vacuum.

"YOU HAVE to have your feet on pretty solid ground not to let it go to your head."

Considering that he is a successful husband, father and grandfather of long standing and in view of his not inconsiderable status as star in over 80 films, it would seem safe to assume that the well-known performer has kept his feet firmly planted on the ground.



Walter Abel

## Abel Guest Artist At Otterbein

The Otterbein College Theatre will present its seventh Professional Guest Artist in as many years March 7-8-9 when well-known stage and screen personality Walter Abel appears in the Otterbein "town and gown" production of "The Crucible."

Abel, who will play the role of Judge Danforth in Arthur Miller's tale of the Puritan witchcraft trials, is currently president of the American National Theatre and Academy.

HE HAS MADE numerous guest star appearances at colleges and universities around the country and will add his talents to Otterbein's previous guest artists including Hans Conreid, Ed Begley, and Kim Hunter.

Abel has played in almost all the major New York theater houses, both on and off-Broadway in a wide variety of scripts since his Manhattan debut in 1919.

The Otterbein Production of "The Crucible" will be in Cowan Auditorium. Box office sales open Feb. 26,

## ENTERTAINMENT Columbus Dispatch 7 SUN., MARCH 3, 1968



### OTTERBEIN SLATES DRAMA

Greg Sabatino, Teri Hiatt and Stephanie Lewis are shown in rehearsal for "The Crucible," which Otterbein College Theater will present in Cowan Hall, March 7, 8, 9 at 8:15 p.m. Walter Abel will be featured as professional guest artist in the Arthur Miller drama.

### 'Crucible' Cast Chosen At Otterbein

Otterbein College Theater has announced the all-student cast for the March 7-8-9 production of "The Crucible," to be presented at Cowan Hall starring guest artist Walter Abel as the overbearing deputy-governor who presides over the trial.

Leading roles will be played by Greg Sabatino, Teri Hiatt, Stephanie Lewis, James Granger, Michael Metzel, and Linda Grznar.

Others in the large cast include Rusty Bolin, John Waddingham, Debbie Bowman, Pat Spreng, Linda Dugan, Ed Vaughan, Mary Furniss, Larry Evans, Rita Sellers, Dennis Romer, Glenn Plum, Pam Stine and Linda Sharpless.

### Opening Night For 'Crucible'

The Otterbein College Theater will open a three-night run of Arthur Miller's "The Crucible" Thursday at 8:15 p.m. in Cowan Hall.

The seventh consecutive guest artist production, this year's show will feature guest star Walter Abel in the role of Judge Danforth who presides over the reenactment of the 1692 Salem witch trials.

Tickets may be reserved by calling 882-3601.

## Otterbein Presents Stark Miller Drama

The March 7-9 production by the Otterbein College Theatre has been described as one of the most controversial plays of our time. The play is the "Crucible" by Pulitzer Prize winner Arthur Miller, and is a drama of the historic witchcraft trials in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1692.

"The Crucible" opened in New York in 1953 and was greeted by a massive ovation on its opening night, which included 19 curtain calls at the end.

The play became an item

of great controversy because it was impossible not to associate Miller's story about a mass hysteria in 1692 with the uproar over political heresies in the headlines of the 1950's. It was without doubt the most talked-about and argued-about play in many seasons and won the Antoinette Perry Award as the best play of the season.

Professional guest artist Walter Abel will appear in the Otterbein production of "The Crucible" with a cast of twenty-one college students. Tickets are now on sale.

### Tickets on Sale For Production At Otterbein

The Cowan box office will open Monday for ticket sales to the Otterbein College Theater production of Arthur Miller's award-winning play, "The Crucible," to be presented March 7, 8, 9 at 8:15 p.m.

## Otterbein Guest Is Very Able

Tickets for the March 7-8-9 Otterbein College Theatre production of "The Crucible" are now on sale. For reservations phone the Cowan Box Office, 882-3601, between 1 and 4 p.m.

The Otterbein show will star this year's professional guest artist, Walter Abel, as the vengeful, self-righteous, venal Judge Danforth.

As the overbearing deputy-governor who presides over the witchcraft trials in Arthur Miller's award-winning play, Abel must project a harsh, avenging and unrelenting magistrate, extremely jealous of his authority.

That he is capable of portraying convincingly a character so opposite of his own personality is a credit to Abel's almost 50 years of stage experience. With a career which began in 1919 and has spanned successfully the media of stage, screen and TV, Abel is a well-known and much lauded performer, and has made a number of other college and university guest artist appearances.



## Famed Star Will Guest At College

Walter Abel will star as professional guest artist in Otterbein College Theater's town and gown production of "The Crucible," to be presented March 7-8-9 in Cowan Hall Auditorium. Tickets go on sale Monday.

The play, by Pulitzer Prize-winner Arthur Miller, is a dramatic account of the historic witchcraft trials in Salem, Mass. in 1692.

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Miller has declared that every one of the 22 characters in his play had a similar role in the terrible episodes of 1692 in Salem when 19 persons were hanged as witches on the hearsay of hysterical accusers.

## College Again Imports Star

The Otterbein College Theater will bring a professional guest artist to Westerville for the seventh consecutive year to the March 7-8-9 production of Arthur Miller's drama, "The Crucible."

Season tickets for the four major stage shows and four foreign films are currently on sale. For reservations phone the Cowan Box Office.

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## VIEW AND REVIEW

# 'Crucible' Stunning

By JIM McCAFFERTY  
Entertainment Editor

Otterbein College Theater's 200th production, a stunning revival of Arthur Miller's tragic drama, "The Crucible," opened a three-performance run Thursday in Cowan Hall and left its audience as emotionally drained as it was physically exhausted.

Miller's tautly detailed probe into the infamous witchcraft trials in Salem, Mass. in 1692 is a long play. Its two acts take more than three hours.

BUT BY THE time the viewer begins to be aware of his weariness, his sense of involvement has become so great that he can merely acknowledge discomfort and accept it.

Ordinarily, this is Otterbein's annual town-and-gown production, wherein townspeople and students are selected in open casting to work with a guest artist of major stature.

This year, however, director Charles Dorrill chose to go with his students in every

## "THE CRUCIBLE" At Cowan Hall

Otterbein College Theater production of a play by Arthur Miller. Directed by Charles Dorrill. Design and technical direction by Fred Thayer.

Characters	Players
Petty Parris	Linda Duan
Reverend Samuel Parris	Michael Metzel
Tituba	Pam Stine
Abigail Williams	Stephanie Lewis
Susanna Wallcott	Pat Soren
Mrs. Ann Putnam	Mary Furniss
Thomas Putnam	Ed Vaughan
Mercy Lewis	Debbie Bowman
Mary Warren	Linda Grzmar
John Proctor	Greg Sabatino
Rebecca Nurse	Rita Sellers
Giles Corey	Russell Bolin
Reverend John Hale	Jim Graner
Elizabeth Proctor	Teri Hiatt
Francis Nurse	Larry Evans
Ezekiel Cheever	Dennis Romer
John Willard	Glenn Plum
Judge Hathorne	John Waddingham
Deputy-Governor Danforth	Walter Abel
Sarah Good	Linda Sharpless

role except the one assumed by the visiting dignitary.

IT WAS a gamble, especially in a work of such staggering proportions, but Dorrill has won and the results are almost incredible.

The unity of ensemble effectiveness cannot but have provided the individual performer with an experience to treasure for the rest of his life, and that memory may be safely enshrined in the sure and certain conviction that the same factors have afforded an audience a profound evening in the theater.

This is not to imply that the performance was perfect and without flaw, but the irony was that the muffed lines and occasional hesitations so consistently occurred in the right places that the human element in portrayed confusion was rather enhanced than diminished. Few were guiltless, but none need apologize.

GUEST STAR Walter Abel, for example, displayed just enough uncertainty as the supreme judge brought in to preside after the trials had gotten hopelessly out of hand, to be dreadfully convincing in the role of a man who must rely on false flourishes and vocal thunder to properly dominate strangers.

Greg Sabatino, who achieved stellar stature in the monumental role of the victimized farmer, turned moments of bumbling inflection into rare and welcome comedy while running the gamut

## WALTER ABEL GUEST ARTIST AT OTTERBEIN

"The Crucible," with professional guest artist Walter Abel, opens a three-night run at 8:15 p.m. Thursday in Cowan Hall as the seventh consecutive guest artist production by Otterbein College Theater. "The Crucible" recreates the horror of the Salem witchcraft trials in 1692.

For reservations phone 882-3601 from 1 to 4 p.m. daily, or stop at the Cowan Hall Box Office. Tickets also available at Jensen's Jewelry, 20 N. State Street. Students present I.D. card for free tickets.

Reserved Seats \$1.50  
COWAN HALL, 8:15 p.m.  
MARCH 7-8-9, 1968  
Thurs., Fri., Sat.

by ARTHUR MILLER

# THE CRUCIBLE

presents



Professional Guest Star

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Walter Abel

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Greg Sabatino, who achieved stellar stature in the monumental role of the victimized farmer, turned moments of bumbling inflection into rare and welcome comedy while running the gamut of virtually every demand that can be levied against an actor. His was a casting of pure genius on anybody's stage.

His wife, the innocent soul whose honesty ended in disaster, was played with drama and poignancy by Teri Hiatt. If these two performances alone were all the play had to offer, it would be well worth the seeing.

OTHERS in the large cast who contributed mightily included Stephanie Lewis as the siren whose vengeful desire sparked the proceedings and fanned them to infamy; Linda Grznar, whose whining hysteria provided the perfect foil; and Jim Granger, as the stiff-necked minister whose devotion to doctrine blinded his basic humanism until it was too late.

Everyone else, without exception, deserves praise for his work. Costumes were especially effective and looked authentic. The set, while simple, added to the sense of starkness and relentlessness.

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Reserved Seats \$1.50

COWAN HALL, 8:15 p.m.

MARCH 7-8-9, 1968

Thurs., Fri., Sat.

by ARTHUR MILLER

THE CRUCIBLE

presents



Westerville, Ohio 43081

Otterbein College Theatre

Otterbein College Theatre

Westerville, Ohio 43081

Professional Guest Star



Walter Abel  
Star of Stage, Screen & TV  
as "Judge Danforth"

presents



THE CRUCIBLE

by ARTHUR MILLER

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## Otterbein Guest Arrives

Professional Guest Artist, Walter Abel, arrived in Westerville last Wednesday to begin rehearsals with the 21 member Otterbein College Theatre cast of students scheduled to present "The Crucible" in Cowan Auditorium Thursday through Saturday, March 7-9.

Tickets for the show are currently on sale at the Cowan Box Office, 882-3601, from 1 to 4 p.m. weekdays.

A dramatic tale of the historic witchcraft trials in Salem, Mass., in 1692, "The Crucible" won the Pulitzer Prize for author Arthur Miller.

In the Otterbein production Greg Sabatino will have the leading role of a colonial farmer whose stubborn demand for justice during the mass hysteria of the witch hunts aroused the hostility of the bigoted persecutors who excluded any evidence in the trials that ran counter to their own accusations and condemned to be hanged everyone who raised a voice in opposition.

Guest Artist Abel will appear as the self-righteous, vengeful deputy-governor of the Massachusetts colony who presides over the trials.

# At Cowan Hall March 7-8-9 Guest Artist, Students Rehearse "The Crucible"

Professional guest artist, Walter Abel, arrived in Westerville yesterday morning to begin rehearsals with the 21 member Otterbein College Theatre cast of students scheduled to present "The Crucible" in Cowan Auditorium Thursday through Saturday, March 7-8-9.

Tickets for the show are currently on sale at the Cowan Box Office, 882-3601, from 1 to 4 p.m. weekdays, and at Jensen's Jewelry.

A dramatic tale of the historic witchcraft trials in Salem, Mass., in 1692, "The Crucible" won the

Pulitzer Prize for author Arthur Miller. The Otterbein production will feature Greg Sabatino in the leading role of a colonial farmer whose stubborn demand for justice during the mass hysteria of the witch hunts aroused the hostility of the bigoted persecutors who, to justify themselves, had to exclude any evidence that ran counter to their own accusations and to condemn to be hanged anyone who raised a voice in opposition.

Teri Hiatt will be seen as the farmer's wife, irresponsibly accused of witchcraft by a wanton

girl -- to be played by Stephanie Lewis -- who hopes that with the wife out of the way, she can have the farmer's affections for herself.

Walter Abel will appear as the self-righteous, vengeful deputy-governor of the Massachusetts colony who presides over the trials. Other major roles include Michael Metzel as an obsequious minister willing to send to the gallows for witchery anyone who opposes him;

Linda Granar as an intimidated servant girl who reneges on her testimony at the trial, only to return to her wild charges under pressure of fear; James Granger as a clergyman who is horrified by the hatreds and injustices that blaze up at the trials.

Others in the cast include Rusty Bolin as Giles Correy; John Waddingham as Judge Hathorne; Debbie Bowman, Pat Spreng, and Linda Dugan as frightened schoolgirls; Ed Vaughan and Mary Furniss as the richest Salem landholders, the Putmans; Larry Evans and Rita Sellers as Francis and Rebecca Hurse who refuse to capitulate and confess to lies; Dennis Romer and Glenn Plum as clerk and deputy; Pam Stine as the slave from Barbados who starts it all; and Linda Sharpless as the pipe-smoking Sarah Good.

Because parallels between the days of Salem and the relentless investigations of our own 1950's were almost inescapable, "The Crucible" aroused a storm of controversy when it was first produced in New York. Despite, or perhaps because of, the up roars that swirled about its presentation, this melodramatic revelation of the technique of witch-hunts achieved a run of nearly six months. Playwrite Miller drew his story for "The Crucible" from the letters, the trial records, and certain tracts written at the time, which are still in the archives of Salem.

THURS., JAN. 25, 1968 \*\*\*\* Columbus Dispatch 35A

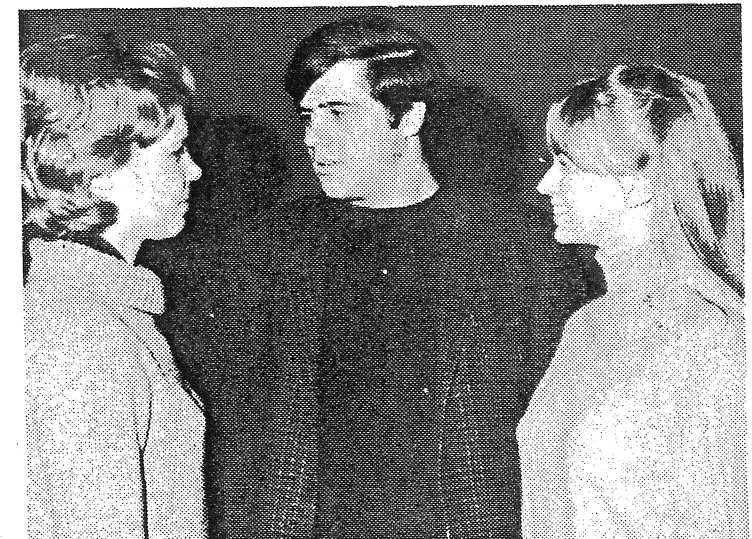
## College Theater Slates Tryouts In Cowan Hall

Director Charles W. Dorrill announced today that the Otterbein College Theater will hold tryouts for its version of Arthur Miller's "The

Crucible," Sunday, February 4, at 1:30 and at 7:30 p.m. in Cowan Auditorium.

Several male and female roles are available. Only persons over thirty years of age are asked to audition.

The show will also feature a Professional Guest Artist. Production dates are set for March 7-8-9.



In "Crucible" Cast

Greg Sabatino as John Proctor is caught between his wife, Teri Hiatt, and the girl who accuses her of witchcraft, Stephanie Lewis, when the Otterbein College Theatre presents Arthur Miller's drama of the Salem witch trials, "The Crucible", March 7-8-9 in Cowan Hall. Curtain times for the show, which features professional guest artist Walter Abel as the Judge, are 8:15 p. m.

## Veteran Actor Abel Prefers Stage Work Over Movies, TV

By BETTY DeBOLD  
Citizen-Journal Staff Writer

Walter Abel is an actor of the old school.

That is to say, he knows his craft inside out — from Euripides to Neil Simon — and he's not the least above being hammy.

As handsome a character actor as leading man — now sporting wisping gray hair and frost on his famous moustache — Abel uses Victorian sentence structures, has a resonant, stentorian delivery that seems to rise from his



'Town And Gown'  
Tryouts Slated

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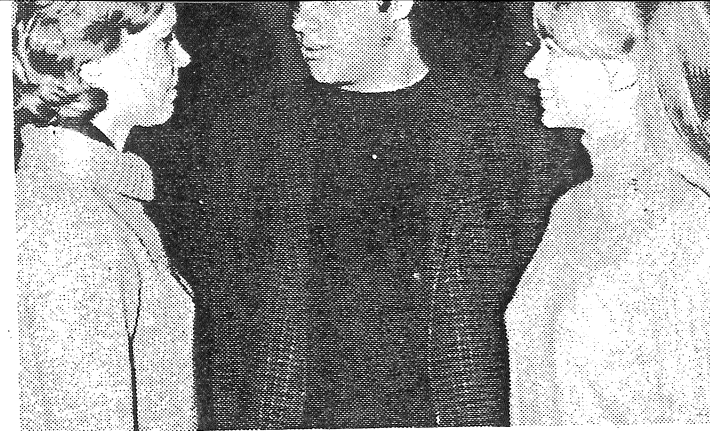
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That is to say, he knows his craft inside out — from Euripides to Neil Simon — and he's not the least above being hammy.

As handsome a character actor as leading man — now sporting wisping gray hair and frost on his famous moustache — Abel uses Victorian sentence structures, has a resonant, stentorian delivery that seems to rise from his shoe polish, and frequently exclaims "Ohmigawd!"

THE MOCK despair is occasioned by the task facing him as artist in residence at Otterbein College. Just arrived last Wednesday, he'll appear in a campus production of Arthur Miller's "The Crucible" this Thursday, Friday and Saturday. ("God help us.")

One of three pillows from the king-size bed in his suite at a Howard Johnson's motel has been thrown onto an emperor-length sofa, and Abel uses it "like a psychiatrist's couch" to "hammer this play" about the Salem witchhunts into his consciousness.

"IT'S AN AWFUL PART, the judge . . . this judge who condemned the witches. A bit like playing a district attorney. I once did 10 district attorneys in a row, but that was in pictures, which are considerably easier.

"I wanted to do this particular play, no matter what the part, because it's the most stunning piece of dramaturgy I've ever encountered. Miller's construction is fantastically subtle."

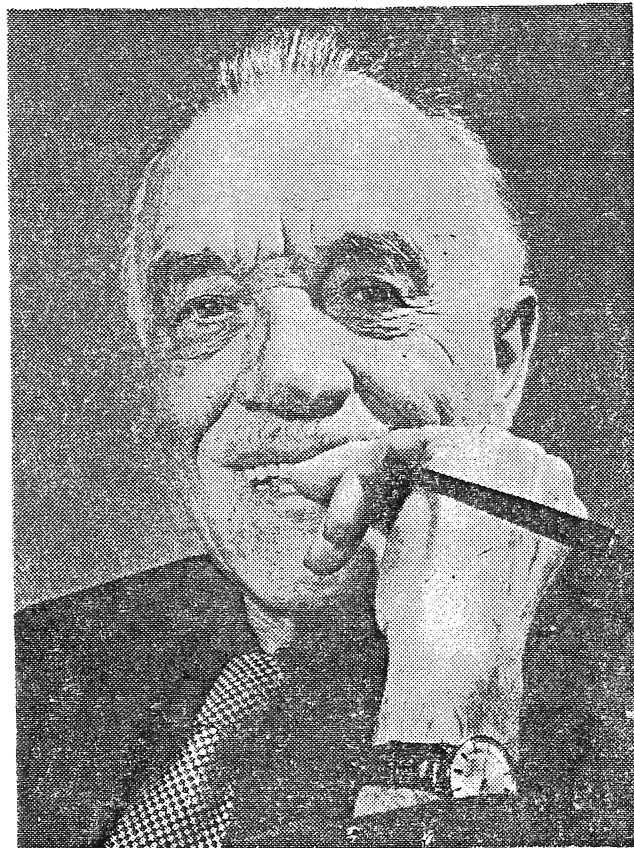
ABEL WON'T SAY HOW long he's been in show business, but it's been longer than his most recent marriage. "My wife is a harpist. We have separate careers, but she'd be here with me except I need solitude to absorb all this. We have a very comfortable marriage . . . not a matter of endurance at all. Endurance is easy. Comfort is harder to come by."

Also a gentleman of the old school, he refuses to say which of the leading ladies in the approximately 80 movies he's essayed is his "favorite."

ABLE LEFT CALIFORNIA right after the war and "went back to God's city, New York" because "Hollywood was finished . . . IS finished. The old Hollywood, that is. It's a sad place. I haven't gone back since I did Raintree County some years ago. It was awful, by the way."

REFUSING TO WATCH his own old movies on television — "I can't stand that fatuous leading man, and he's a reminder I'm no longer young" — Abel tried the live medium himself.

"I did some of the very first television. I particularly recall doing 'Gaslight' with Betty Field in 1948. The



Walter Abel, star of stage, screen, television and Howard Johnson's. (Photo by Dick Garrett)

medium was still absolutely primitive. They had a stationary camera and incandescent lights.

"MIGAWD, HAVE YOU any idea how hot that was? I've done more recent TV too. Incredible work. Television's like movies now, only more gruesome."

Eventually Able returned to the stage and is now president of ANTA, American National Theater Academy.

"TO GET ON THE boards, to be up there for three hours," he mused, "that's real acting."

"Pictures belong to the director; you never know how or where they'll cut. But in the theater, bang! there it all is and there you are. You're not facing a glass eye, as you do in a studio. You can see the white's of people's eyes . . . and that's precisely the way I want it."

## 'Town And Gown' Tryouts Slated

The Otterbein College Theatre will hold tryouts for its "town and gown" version of Arthur Miller's "The Crucible" Sunday, Feb. 4, at 1:30 and at 7:30 p.m. in Cowan Auditorium, according to an announcement by director Charles Dodrill.

Several male and female roles are available for "town" cast members. Only persons over thirty years of age are asked to audition.

## Tryouts For The Crucible February 4

The Otterbein College Theatre will hold tryouts for its "town and gown" version of Arthur Miller's "The Crucible" Sunday, February 4, at 1:30 and at 7:30 p.m. in Cowan Auditorium.

Several male and female roles are available for "town" cast members. Only persons over thirty years of age are asked to audition.

The show will also feature a Professional Guest Artist. Production dates are set for March 7-8-9.

## Curtain Call *by Jean Ann Weaver*

If I had a son or daughter interested in "theater" on a collegiate level I would rather see them enrolled at Otterbein College than any other college or university in the Central Ohio area. And might I add that this statement is being made by an O.S.U. graduate.

Otterbein has a theater department pulsating with excitement and vigor, due in large part to the leadership of Dr. Charles Dodrill. Keen interest in theater is not only shown by students majoring in this area but also by students in other fields.

One factor responsible for this student interest is the yearly visit by a professional actor or actress who takes a role in a student production. This year the professional is Walter Abel and the student production is Arthel Miller's "The Crucible."

What an experience for those members of the cast! Not only a once in a lifetime chance for some of them to work with a professional, to appear on stage with them, to learn from them, to observe these professionals at their daily job, but also a chance to meet and talk with them off stage, to ask questions, to get to know them as individuals—as well as actors or actresses.

"The Crucible" which opened in New York in the early 1950's was greeted by a massive ovation on its opening night culminating in 19 curtain calls. The play produced much controversy as it was impossible not to associate Miller's story about a mass hysteria in 1692 with the uproar over political heresies in the headlines of the 1950's. While the 1950's are now also part of our American history there is much that can still be learned from the dramatic tale of the historic witchcraft trials in Salem, Massachusetts.

The production, with guest star Walter Abel, may be seen March 7, 8 and 9th in the Cowan Hall Auditorium on the Otterbein campus in Westerville at 8:15 p.m. Tickets may be reserved by calling 882-3601 from 1 to 4 p.m. I'll be looking for you in the audience.

Thursday, March 14, 1968

## Curtain Call *by Jean Ann Weaver*

"The Crucible," guest star production of the Otterbein College Theater, presented last week end in Westerville was without reservation the finest collegiate production this writer has ever seen.

An exceptionally strong student cast was not overshadowed by guest star Walter Abel, but instead the cast helped to strengthen his fine performance.

The real star of the show was Greg Sabatino as John Proctor. He played a difficult role with a maturity and depth of understanding that was spell-binding for the audience. Mr. Sabatino is a graduating senior and I'm sure his leaving will be a great loss to the theater department, as well as the theater audiences of Otterbein. Other outstanding student performers were Stephenie Lewis as Abigail Williams, Jim Granger as Reverend John Hale and Jeri Hiatt as Elizabeth Proctor.

Congratulations to Dr. Charles Dodrill, the show's director, for his forceful and beautifully balanced production.



## The Morning After ...

# 'The Crucible' Is Ready And Abel

By GENE GERRARD  
Citizen-Journal Staff Critic

With a generous burst of confidence, Charles Dodrill started his dress rehearsal for Arthur Miller's "The Crucible" on time—promptly at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday night.

Having served an apprenticeship on the working side of the footlights (before going over to the enemy), I remembered it was practically unheard of that a final rehearsal should begin as scheduled.

So I resisted the temptation to play Russian roulette with loaded traffic on I-71 in order to make the scene in Cowan Hall on time. I figured if I got there a half hour late, I'd still be early. Not so. I was six minutes late.

I ALSO SHOULD have recalled that old pros like Dodrill are always prepared; that they leave very little to chance. That's why his contribution to the growth of interest in theater at Otterbein is inestimable.

Then I shouldn't have been at all surprised that the dress rehearsal was as smooth as most opening nights. There was no last minute setting of lights; the set was finished; costumes were complete and, miracle of



Gerrard

miracles, there were no short tempers or long faces. Dodrill himself was as calm as the proverbial cucumber.

ON STAGE MILLER'S stark dramatization of the Salem witch hunts at the end of the 17th century, unfolded like the wings of a great, black bird of prey.

Dodrill is fortunate in that he has several rather remarkable young actors playing key roles, in addition to the authoritative presence of guest artist Walter Abel. Abel is able to indeed.

PARTICULARLY IMPRESSIVE are Jim Grainger, Greg Sabatino, Teri Hiatt, Pam Stine, Stephanie Lewis and Linda Grznar.

Although Abel hasn't had the advantage of an intensive rehearsal period, there was every indication that he would have a steel-like grip on Deputy-Governor Danforth by opening night Thursday.

EVEN SO, HE DOMINATED every scene in which he appeared with quiet dignity and the kind of supreme confidence which come only after years of mellowing in the theater.

I was also very pleased to learn that Otterbein is planning a second year of operation for its summer theater, beginning June 25 and continuing through July 27. Their inaugural season played to nearly 85 per cent of capacity for the five productions.

## VIEW AND REVIEW

# 'Crucible' Stunning

By JIM McCAFFERTY  
Entertainment Editor

Otterbein College Theater's 200th production, a stunning revival of Arthur Miller's tragic drama, "The Crucible," opened a three-performance run Thursday in Cowan Hall and left its audience as emotionally drained as it was physically exhausted.

Miller's tautly detailed probe into the infamous witchcraft trials in Salem, Mass. in 1692 is a long play. Its two acts take more than three hours.

BUT BY THE time the viewer begins to be aware of his weariness, his sense of involvement has become so great that he can merely acknowledge discomfort and accept it.

Ordinarily, this is Otterbein's annual town-and-gown production, wherein townspeople and students are selected in open casting to work with a guest artist of major stature.

This year, however, director Charles Dodrill chose to go with his students in every

## "THE CRUCIBLE" At Cowan Hall

Otterbein College Theater production of a play by Arthur Miller. Directed by Charles Dodrill. Design and technical direction by Fred Thayer.

Characters	Players
Betty Parris	Linda Dugan
Reverend Samuel Parris	Michael Metzel
Tituba	Pam Stine
Abigail Williams	Stephanie Lewis
Susanna Wallcott	Pat Sorenson
Mrs. Ann Putnam	Mary Furniss
Thomas Putnam	Ed Vaughan
Mercy Lewis	Debbie Bowman
Mary Warren	Linda Grznar
John Proctor	Greg Sabatino
Rebecca Nurse	Rita Sellers
Giles Corey	Russell Bolin
Reverend John Hale	Jim Granger
Elizabeth Proctor	Teri Hiatt
Francis Nurse	Larry Evans
Ezekiel Cheever	Dennis Romer
John Willard	Glenn Plum
Judge Hathorne	John Waddingham
Deputy-Governor Danforth	Walter Abel
Sarah Good	Linda Sharpless

role except the one assumed by the visiting dignitary.

IT WAS a gamble, especially in a work of such staggering proportions, but Dodrill has won and the results are almost incredible.

The unity of ensemble effectiveness cannot but have provided the individual performer with an experience to treasure for the rest of his life, and that memory may be safely enshrined in the sure and certain conviction that the same factors have afforded an audience a profound evening in the theater.

This is not to imply that the performance was perfect and without flaw, but the irony was that the muffled lines and occasional hesitations so consistently occurred in the right places that the human element in portrayed confusion was rather enhanced than diminished. Few were guiltless, but none need apologize.

GUEST STAR Walter Abel, for example, displayed just enough uncertainty as the supreme judge brought in to preside after the trials had gotten hopelessly out of hand, to be dreadfully convincing in the role of a man who must rely on false flourishes and vocal thunder to properly dominate strangers.

Greg Sabatino, who achieved stellar stature in the monumental role of the victimized farmer, turned moments of bumbling inflection into rare and welcome comedy while running the gamut of virtually every demand that can be levied against an actor. His was a casting of pure genius on anybody's stage.

His wife, the innocent soul whose honesty ended in disaster, was played with drama and poignancy by Teri Hiatt. If these two performances alone were all the play had to offer, it would be well worth the seeing.

OTHERS in the large cast who contributed mightily included Stephanie Lewis as the siren whose vengeful desire sparked the proceedings and fanned them to infamy; Linda Grznar, whose whining hysteria provided the perfect foil; and Jim Granger, as the stiff-necked minister whose devotion to doctrine blinded his basic humanism until it was too late.

Everyone else, without exception, deserves praise for his work. Costumes were especially effective and looked authentic. The set, while simple, added to the sense of starkness and relentlessness.



# Otterbein College Theatre

Westerville, Ohio 43081

Professional Guest Star



**Walter Abel**

Star of Stage, Screen & TV  
as "Judge Danforth"



presents

## THE CRUCIBLE

by ARTHUR MILLER

Thurs., Fri., Sat.  
**MARCH 7-8-9, 1968**  
COWAN HALL, 8:15 p.m.

Reserved Seats \$1.50

For reservations phone 882-3601 from 1 to 4 p.m. daily, or stop at the Cowan Hall Box Office.  
Tickets also available at Jensen's Jewelry, 20 N. State Street.  
Students present I.D. card for free tickets.

# THE CRUCIBLE

Otterbein's 1968  
production of  
The Crucible  
featured guest artist  
WALTER ABEL .

