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GENERAL ENTERTAINMENT

57

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"Quilters," a musical diorama depicting the unique drama of America's pioneer women as they faced the challenges of moving and settling West, will be presented by Otterbein College Theatre Jan. 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31 and Feb. 1-5. The Broadway hit, termed a "living lithograph" by the New York Daily News, was described as a "tender and moving theater work, a human patchwork rippling with the breeze of memory" by Newsweek magazine.

An important part of the women's lives, quilting filled much more than a practical need by not only becoming a forum for communication among the women, but an art form and family legacy as well.

Guest professional director for "Quilters" will be Pamela Hill, a 1975 alumna of Otterbein. Hill is excited by the upcoming production which has just begun rehearsals. Not only are the frontier music (directed by Otterbein's Jeff Pappas) and choreography (by guest artist Cavin Bodouin) lively enhancements to the play, she notes, but the set design by Otterbein junior John Gutknecht allows a feat seldom physically accomplished in a "Quilters" production -- the fire sequence.

"I'm trying to capture the vitality of the women as well as the closeness that was formed between them during this patriarchal time period," Hill says. "The quilt blocks themselves also are interesting and meaningful to the play because they were one of only three ways that a frontier woman had of leaving something of herself behind.

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Photographs were rare -- not only expensive, but it was difficult to find someone to take them, and letters were easily lost or destroyed. Quilts were the most lasting."

Appearing in "Quilters" will be Shane Frampton of Zanesville as the mother. Daughters will be played by Rachael Harris and Colby Paul of Worthington, Patricia Cockburn of Gahanna, Lisa Walton of Stow, Laura Hagan of Columbus and Katy Bowers of Oxford, Ohio.

The play will be presented in the Campus Center Theatre, 100 W. Home St., Westerville. Opening night will begin at 7:30 p.m., Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. and all other performances at 8 p.m. Advance tickets will be available from the box office, (614) 898-1109, beginning Jan. 16. The box office is open 1-4:30 p.m. weekdays and Saturdays of performance weeks, at 6:45 on performance evenings and 12:45 during matinees.