



'Shaft' cast members Alfredo Villarreal, Peggy Leonard, Tim Bugh and Vonda Nichols, left to right, offer old time melodrama.

Theater offers humor with family-style fun

Hyde Park Showplace premieres "Trapped in the Shaft, or The Mystery of the Mine" 8 tonight, serving up a raucous evening of entertainment family-style.

In fact, the Showplace plans a night of melodrama and hijinks that include sing-alongs of Gay 90s tunes like "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" and "That Old Time Religion," as well as the production of its newest dramatic offering.

It may be less filling than a night at the local pizza parlor, but there's a vintage plot to round out the bargain.

"IT'S REALLY some of the most wholesome entertainment you can find anywhere in Austin," says Linalice Carey, founder of the theater. "There's music and dance, and enough for everyone to keep kids and their parents interested at the same time."

After the play, "Otto" acts will close out the show.

Otto, Carey explains, was a turn-of-the-century game given to the fire curtain that separated the audience from the players while they changed costumes or sets. The people who provided these intermission bits were called Otto acts.

Before the Otto actors, Carey's Bilubert Players (translated from the French, the word means jewel, or exquisitely wrought trinket) will perform their melodrama just like audiences first saw it in the 1930s.

"WE HOKE it up a bit here and there," she admits, "but for the most part, it's strictly authentic."

With all the overplaying and wodeville routines, says Carey, "it's a show that really appeals to children, too. They love to boo the villains and cheer the hero, and who doesn't?"

"Trapped in the Shaft" will play at Hyde Park Showplace, 511 W. 43rd St., on most Fridays and Saturdays through June 25. For reservations, call 452-8883.

Friday, May 27, 1983

Austin American-Statesman

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[Image of three performers]

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