

“Funny Dramatic Comedy” – Simon

“The script is wonderfully built...” – Cole

“It’s hilarious” – Pam

“It’s a great show.” – Jeff

I had a chat with the four policemen of *Arsenic and Old Lace* (opens June 3 – 11), I’m sorry Pam, I meant policepersons. I wanted to know why I should come see it next weekend. And I wanted to know more about the four who took these roles.

Pam Shank plays Officer Brophy. She is an Insurance Agent and lives in the Caledonia area. Pam has been involved with the Caledonia Players for the past 10 years, but she is not new to Master Arts, you might remember her from *Sense and Sensibility* as Mrs. Thomason, or from her role in *A Little Princess*.

Walt: How did you get involved in theater?

Pam: I took my daughter to an audition and looked at the script. I said to myself, Hey, I can do this.

Simon Gommesen plays Officer Klein. Simon is from Howard City and just graduated from High School. You probably will remember him as Al Lynch in *Belles on Their Toes*.

Simon: This is the first show I’ve been in, where I haven’t been surrounded by my family.

Simon’s father played Lord Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet*, his mother played Mrs. Bailey, in *It’s a Wonderful Life*, his brother Andrew was the director’s assistant in *Belles on Their Toes*, his brother James was in *The Invisible Man*, two more of his brothers, Phillip and Bartholomew were in *Romeo and Juliet* and Simon’s brother Matthew played Pa in *Little House on the Prairie*. Just to name a few roles filled by a Gommesen.

Jeff Kellogg plays Officer O’Hara. He lives in Grand Rapids and is a full time student. This isn’t the first time Jeff has played an officer at Master Arts Theatre; he was an officer in *Trap for a Lonely Man* summer of 2006. He has also performed with Home School Performing Arts (HPA) in *Titanic* and as Marcellus in *The Music Man*.

Jeff: I love the historical aspect of theater. Being someone else in a different time period.

Cole Groot plays Lieutenant Rooney. He lives in Alto and calls himself a Theater Instructor. He teaches acting classes and directs for a number of organizations including HPA for the last six years. He will also be directing Master Arts’ season opener, *The Miracle Worker* Sept 15 – Oct 8 (tickets go on sale, August 15<sup>th</sup>). You may remember him as Hein in *Things We Couldn’t Say*, fall of 2007.

Cole: Seeing the show with a live audience, makes it an even greater experience.

I asked each of them, “Why you took the role?”

Jeff: To get back into theater, because of school, getting married and having a child, I haven't been in a show for the last four years.

Simon: I just like doing theater.

Cole: It's a Great Show. Lieutenant Rooney is a phenomenal character, no matter how small.

I loved Pam's response.

Pam: It's the closest I'm going to get to Cary Grant.

Walt: What do you enjoy about theater?

All four mentioned the relationships that you build as a cast. Working with a cast for 6 to 10 weeks you become...

Jeff: The cast becomes family.

I guess Pam summed up the feelings of so many actors when she said:

Pam: It's just that I have to do it. I believe if God gives you a talent, you have to use it.