

# Fine cast stars in dullish mystery

Performances of "Whodunnit" by Anthony Shaffer continue at 8:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday at St. Dunstan's Playhouse in Bloomfield Hills. For ticket information, call 644-0527 anytime.

By Barbara Michals  
special writer

"Whodunnit?" the current offering by St. Dunstan's Guild of Cranbrook, is a murder mystery that seeks to spoof itself in the classic eight-character, closed-circle, 1930s British country house, "You

While St. Dunstan's provides an appropriate cast of period types, "Whodunnit?" is not funny enough to make it strictly as a spoof and not clever enough to make it as a serious mystery. The only appropriate response to "Whodunnit?" is "who cares?"

Seven invited guests and their host assemble at an English country house on a stormy night. The hostess who ostensibly did the inviting never does appear. The police are called in after the first murder, and a second murder occurs right under their noses as they try to reconstruct the first crime.

Thomas Peterson III does an outstanding job as Andreas Cupidostros, billed as "an oily Levantine." With an uncanny ability for blackmailing everyone he meets, Peterson positively oozes across

**Barbara Michals**

the stage like a primordial slime. In his wake he leaves a trail of victims with both motive and opportunity to do him in.

Bill Everson is wonderful as Perkins, the doddering old butler who likes to clip at his master's whiskers and lord his class consciousness over the likes of Cupidostros.

Barry Walker as the lawyer-host and Ron Wheeler as a rear admiral are both eminently respectable, with Wheeler blustery as well. Pat O'Malley plays Lady Tremurra, the snooty, bitchy aristocrat, to

archaeologist.

In the second act, the seven surviving characters do a complete change of personas, and all acquit themselves well. They are joined by Michael Lipman, serviceable as a "stolid copper," and David Butler as Inspector Bowden. Admitting a fondness for 1930s detective fiction, Bowden decides to play the unconventional fictional detective. Merely slipping on a cape, however, does not create characterization.



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