

# 'The Curious Savage' opens at Playhouse

By Heather Panetta  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Some people consider the biggest challenges in life to be getting into college or finding a job.

But for one local actress, her current challenge is playing a 60-year-old woman.

Penn State alumna Rhiannon McClintock, Class of 2003, plays Mrs. Ethel Savage, the title character in "The Curious Savage," which opens today at the Boal Barn Playhouse, 300 Old Boalsburg Rd.

The play closes The State College Community Theatre's 2010 season, theater president David Price.

"The audience will find that it's a fun, uplifting play that recog-

nizes some aspects, although some not good, of human nature," Price said. "It's a great way to close the season."

The play is set in the 1950s in an upscale Massachusetts mental institution, The Cloisters, where patients are referred to as "guests," director Bruce Fleischer said.

The comedy focuses on Savage, who is committed to the asylum by her three stepchildren because they believe she is spending her late husband's money irresponsibly.

"On the surface it's about guests' on how normal the 'guests' at the sanatorium are as opposed to the 'normal' family," Fleischer said.

"If you dig deeper it's about the

things that make us human... Everyone has quirks and wonderful eccentricities."

Stephanie Baker (senior-music education), who plays Miss Wilhelmina — the nurse at the asylum — said the play centers around defining sanity and insanity.

"Are the people here insane or are the children of Mrs. Savage really insane and out of touch with reality?" Baker said.

Despite the comedy, the play is also very touching, Baker said.

"Every character really has endearing moments and hopefully at the end of the play the audience will connect with the characters and feel like they really know them," she said.

Savage is one of those charac-

ters, McClintock said, even though her character is much older than she is.

"I could see myself being like her in 30 to 40 years," she said. "She's a kind-hearted person who's also quick and witty."

Both McClintock and Baker said one challenge was adjusting to playing characters in a different time period.

"The way they would have acted and responded in that time period is different than how I would have," Baker said.

But Baker said she hopes the audience has been filled with tons of laughter — which the performers have had at every rehearsal.

"The larger the audience, the funnier it is because we all feed off

### If you go

**What:** The Curious Savage  
**When:** September 7-11, 14-18 at 8 p.m.  
**Where:** Boal Barn Playhouse  
**Details:** Tickets- Adults: \$12 Seniors and Youth: \$10

the laughter," she said. And Price hopes the audience will just simply be entertained.

"I don't go to the theater to have my life changed," he said.

"I go to be entertained and I think people will find 'The Curious Savage' entertaining."

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## Clooney's 'American' grosses \$16M

By the Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — George Clooney's hitman tale "The American" has captured the top spot at the box office with a \$16.4 million debut over the long Labor Day weekend.

Since opening Wednesday, the Focus Features release has taken in \$19.5 million.

The 20th Century Fox revenge romp "Machete" and Sony's heist thriller "Takers" were in a duel for second place.

"Machete" led with \$14 million from Friday to Monday. "Takers" followed with \$13.5 million, though the two movies were close enough that rankings could change once final numbers are released today.

"Takers," which had been the No. 1 movie the previous weekend, raised its 10-day total to \$40 million.

The weekend's other new wide release, Drew Barrymore's romance "Going the Distance" from Warner Bros., opened at No. 5 with \$8.6 million.

It was a typically quiet Labor Day period for Hollywood, a transition weekend as summer blockbuster season ends and young audiences

prepare for the start of the school year.

Hollywood closed its busiest season with record revenue of \$4.35 billion, about \$100 million more than the previous high set last summer, according to Hollywood.com, which tracks box office. Yet because of higher ticket prices, movie attendance slipped to about 552 million, the lowest since summer 2005, said Dergarabedian.

"This is a perfectly unspectacular end to a perfectly unspectacular summer," Dergarabedian said.

"If you look at how low the attendance figure dropped, that's the audience telling Hollywood this crop of movies was good, but not good enough to get us out in huge numbers."

"The American" stars Clooney as a hitman who finds unlikely friendship and romance while trying to lay low in Italy before doing one last job.

"Machete" features a cast including Robert De Niro, Jessica Alba, Steven Seagal and Lindsay Lohan in a bloody tale of a former Mexican federal cop (Danny Trejo) taking on crooks, dirty politicians and thugs by the score.

"Going the Distance" stars Barrymore and Justin Long as a couple trying to maintain a coast-to-coast long-distance relationship.

With Clooney's appeal to adult audiences, "The American" dominated older crowds, while "Machete" was a hit with Hispanics, who accounted for 60 percent of the movie's viewers.

"The whole marketing campaign was thrust at the Latino audience, and they have clearly responded and embraced the movie," said Chris Aronson, head of distribution for 20th Century Fox. "I would go so far as to say Danny Trejo is the first Latino superhero."

With \$3.9 million over the long weekend, Universal's animated hit "Despicable Me" raised its haul to \$241.3 million, surpassing the \$238.4 million take of DreamWorks Animation's "Shrek Forever After," which failed to catch the same box-office fire as the franchise's earlier installments.

Summer's top hit, Disney's animated blockbuster "Toy Story 3," pulled in \$2.7 million to lift its total to \$408.8 million, second only to "Shrek 2" at \$436 million on the domestic chart for animated features.



Associated Press file photo

Singer Kanye West takes the microphone award during Taylor Swift as she sweeps the "Best Female Video" award at the MTV Video Music Awards in New York last year.

## Kanye: Still dealing with repercussions

Nekesa Mumbi Moody  
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

NEW YORK — Hip-hop star Kanye West is still feeling the pain over his ambush of Taylor Swift last year — and he's expressing his pain all over Twitter.

West unleashed a torrent of emotions on his official Twitter account Saturday, acknowledging once again that he was wrong for jumping on stage, grabbing the microphone from Swift at the MTV Video Music Awards and saying her trophy should have gone to Beyonce.

But the rapper-producer said that he has experienced enormous pain, been the subject of death wishes and suffered tremendous scars to his career.

"How deep is the scar ... I bled hard ... cancelled tour with the number one pop star in the world ... closed the doors of my clothing office," he tweeted.

The multiplatinum, Grammy-winning superstar had been one of the decade's most successful and critically acclaimed stars, despite sometimes boorish behavior and meltdowns at other awards shows when things did not go his way.

However, when he upstaged Swift — the then-teenage darling of pop and country music worlds — the public had had enough. There was tremendous backlash against West — even President Barack Obama was caught calling him a "jackass."

At the time, he went on Jay Leno's prime-time show to apologize and said he still had not recovered from his mother's death two years prior. He said he would be taking time off from the public eye. That time off came sooner than expected. He canceled a joint tour with Lady Gaga that fall, apparently due to low ticket sales.

## DioGuardi leaves 'American Idol'

By Lynn Elber  
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

LOS ANGELES — Kara DioGuardi is following Ellen DeGeneres and Simon Cowell out the door at "American Idol."

Her departure leaves Randy Jackson, who's been with the singing contest from the start, the last judge standing, for now. Steven Tyler and Jennifer Lopez are the reported front-runners for the panel.

Entertainment mogul Simon Fuller, creator of the British show "Pop Idol" that was the template for the U.S. series he produces, called DioGuardi a standout songwriter whom he produced and worked in music "for many years to come."

DioGuardi, whose exit had been rumored, is a hit machine whose songs have been recorded by Gwen Stefani, Faith Hill, Marc Anthony and others, including past "Idol" winners.

"I felt like I won the lottery when I joined 'American Idol' two years ago, but I feel like now is the best time to leave 'Idol,'" DioGuardi said in a statement Friday, calling her experience as a judge on the show "amazing."

Her statement, issued by Fox, didn't elaborate on her reasons for leaving. Her contract reportedly had a

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Kara DioGuardi  
former "American Idol" judge

one-year option remaining that the network could have exercised.

Although she offered informed critiques on "Idol," observers faulted her for lacking the pizzazz — and unpredictability — that ex-judge Paula Abdul had provided.

DioGuardi's departure comes as the top-rated show continues auditions for its 10th season, which starts airing in January. Tryouts have been held in six cities, with a seventh announced this week for Los Angeles on Sept. 22.

The final decision on which would be pop stars make it on the show rests with the judges, who are likely to begin filming their audition segments this month.

Cowell started the exodus from "American Idol" earlier this year, when he announced he was leaving to launch another talent show for Fox, "The X Factor," based on the hit British program he created.

In July, DeGeneres, who was

brought in to replace Abdul, said she was leaving after a single season. The talk show host said she felt uncomfortable criticizing young talent.

Some critics had complained DeGeneres was more of a cheerleader than an incisive critic in the fashion of Cowell, who was consistently blunt in his remarks.

The judges' turnover gives "American Idol" a chance to recapture the Cowell-Abdul chemistry that helped make the show a hit, along with, crucially, its ability to launch such top-selling artists as Carrie Underwood and Kelly Clarkson.

While the show has long been No. 1 in the ratings, it has to stem a slide in viewership to remain there.

A total of 24.2 million viewers watched the ninth season's final duel between Lee DeWyze and Crystal Bowersox, compared to the nearly 29 million viewers who saw Kris Allen win over Adam Lambert last year.

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