

AUCTION

Celebrities set their hand to cause Doodles draw bucks for theater charity

By Danielle Roter

Special to the Daily News

Celebrity doodles were on the auction block Saturday afternoon, as theater supporters gathered to stargaze and raise money for the Back Alley Theatre in Van Nuys.

More than \$7,000 was raised at the auction, which was held at the Magnolia, the Spanish Colonial Revival mansion in Sherman Oaks restored to mint 1929 condition by current owners and occupants Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Berns.

Jerry Berns claimed Bob Hope's doodle-greeting for \$90: 'He's part of the Valley, and I like him'

Prospective bidders from among the crowd of 300 studied the display of donations by such doodlers as Mayor Tom Bradley (rough draft of inauguration speech partially obscured by autograph)

of lipstick titled "Kiss"), Charlton Heston (whose artistic gift was evident in his sketches of people titled "Ethiopia Dec. '84") and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar (whose outlined hand was titled "Big Hand").

Auctioneer Jim Goodman opened the bidding at \$100 for "Clown and Fish Looking at Ball" by Dom DeLuise. Gone for \$125. Next was "Desi Desi Desi," an ink on letterhead by (you guessed it) Desi Arnaz. "Where are all you Babaloo fans?" wondered Goodman. After the laughter, the doodle went for \$30.

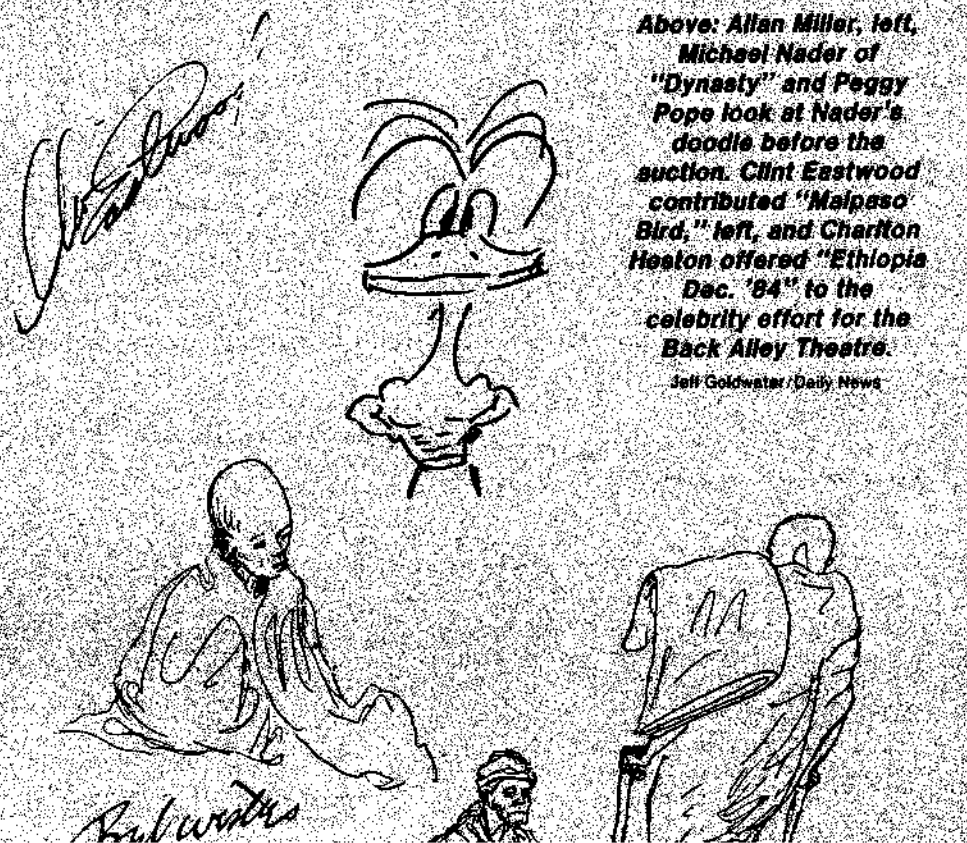
Charlton Heston's sketches of Ethiopia tied for highest bid (\$650) with an original 19th-century sketch of characters from "Pickwick Papers" by Charles Dickens illustrator Hablot K. Browne. Jerry Berns claimed Bob Hope's doodle-greeting for \$90. "He's part of the Valley, and I like him," said Berns. Cartoonist Mell Lazarus, of "Momma" cartoon-strip fame, watched his portrait of "Momma" go for \$350. Lazarus later outbid the competition to walk away with "Cosmic Dog" by Patty Duke for \$45.

Michael Nader (from "Dynasty") left with a sketch by Paul Newman that he won after some hot bidding for \$125.



Above: Allan Miller, left, Michael Nader of "Dynasty" and Peggy Pope look at Nader's doodle before the auction. Clint Eastwood contributed "Malpaso Bird," left, and Charlton Heston offered "Ethiopia Dec. '84" to the celebrity effort for the Back Alley Theatre.

Jeff Goldwater/Daily News



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Prospective bidders from among the crowd of 300 studied the display of donations by such doodlers as Mayor Tom Bradley (rough draft of inauguration speech partially obscured by autograph), Katherine Hepburn (autograph only), Cher (autographed photo plus script of "Mask"), Julie Harris (watercolor self-portrait on typing paper), Bob Hope (who wrote "Thanks for the Memory" on his stationery), Lesley Ann Warren (a blotting

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Michael Nader (from "Dynasty") left with a sketch by Paul Newman that he won, after some hot bidding, for \$425. Nader said he used to study acting in New York with Back Alley artistic director Allen Miller 15 years ago. Asked how he felt, watching his doodle go on the block (it went for \$85), Nader smiled: "At least it wasn't a buck twenty-five."



celebrity effort for the Back Alley Theatre.

Jeff Goldwater/Daily News

FILM

Christie proves a real 'Ordeal' for audience

By Kirk Honeycutt

Daily News Film Critic

The pleasures of reading Agatha Christie are a greater mystery to some of us than any whodunit the queen of crime fiction has ever concocted. But those who adore her writing invariably praise her rogue's gallery of characters, the dynamics of their relationships and the amazing difficulty one has in picking who among them is the murderer.

In effect, these are cerebral pleasures, literary puzzles which — with the exception of the four Margaret Rutherford-Miss Marple films of the '60s — do not transfer well to the cinema

Review

screen. Movies demand broader action in order to avoid what Alfred Hitchcock always referred to as pictures of people talking.

Yet, producers continue to bring Christie to the screen because of her best-selling status among the reading public. The latest film, "Ordeal by Innocence," is an ordeal, all right — a dreary prod through a who-cares whodunit.

The real crime occurs at the box office, where the unsuspecting purchase tickets under the impression they will see a

movie with an all-star cast of Donald Sutherland, Sarah Miles, Christopher Plummer, Ian McShane and Faye Dunaway. McShane appears alive in only one scene. Dunaway, whose character has already been dead two years when the movie begins, is seen in brief black-and-white flashbacks that should have taken two days to shoot. Plummer and Miles have limited roles covering a bare handful of scenes. It falls to Sutherland and several workmanlike British actors to carry the film.

Alexander Stuart's humorless script focuses on Sutherland's intensely dull American paleontologist.

Guilt drives him to obsessive lengths to

solve the 2-year-old crime. Yet Sutherland's manner remains so dour that even the potentially interesting emotion of guilt fades away quickly. Desmond Davis' direction similarly lacks any pep or verve.

On the positive side, the film does feature exquisite pictures of people talking, as that fine cinematographer, Billy Williams, works in cool yet elegant color harmonies.

Ordeal by Innocence
Stars: Donald Sutherland, Sarah Miles, Christopher Plummer, Ian McShane and Faye Dunaway
Director: Desmond Davis
Rated PG-13, 88 minutes
Playing: Citywide

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