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NEWS

For immediate release

Ouachita theatre arts to present “Shrek the Musical” April 16-19

By Anna Hurst

April 2, 2015

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ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Ouachita Baptist University's Department of Theatre Arts will present “Shrek the Musical” April 16-19 as its annual spring musical for the 2014-2015 theatre season. Performances will be held in Jones Performing Arts Center at 7:30 p.m. on April 16-18 as well as a 2:30 matinee on Sunday, April 19. Tickets are \$12 each.

“Shrek the Musical’ tells the story of Shrek, everyone’s favorite ogre, who embarks on a quest to save his swamp. Joined by loyal and wisecracking Donkey, this unlikely hero rescues the beautiful and feisty Princess Fiona from her tower guarded by a fire-breathing, love-sick dragon,” explained Daniel Inouye, associate professor of theatre arts and director of the production.

“Through his adventure Shrek learns the value of true friendship and love, and that some fairy tales should really be updated,” Inouye said. “Add to this the diminutive Lord Farquaad, a gang of fairytale misfits and a cookie with a serious attitude problem, and you have got a must-see musical comedy!”

The production is a two-act adaptation of the children’s book *Shrek!* by William Steig and the DreamWorks Animation motion picture *Shrek*, with music by Jeanine Tesori and book and lyrics by David Lindsay-Abaire.

“We wanted to do a modern musical that has lots of audience appeal,” Inouye noted. “Everyone is familiar with the animated films, and when we got a chance to produce this musical it just seemed like a great fit for our students and a show that our audiences would love to see.”

Serving alongside Inouye are Musical Director David Stanley, OBU instructor of music; Choreographer Grace Whitaker, a 2011 Ouachita graduate; and Technical Director Eric Phillips, professor of theatre arts and chair of OBU’s Department of Theatre Arts.

Will Stotts, a freshman musical theatre major from Jonesboro, Ark., will play the lead role of Shrek. “I am looking forward to presenting this hilarious, but also beautiful, story to the audience. It has such a great message, with a whole lot of laughter here and there,” he stated. “I am also pretty excited to sing and dance as a big green ogre in front of my peers. ... It is the most fun I have ever had putting together a show. The same goes for a lot of my castmates, and that will show through our performance.”

All ages are encouraged to attend the production. “This is a show for absolutely everyone. It has a beautiful message, an incredible score and we might also have a life-size dragon puppet,” said Stotts. “Come for one of the most fun theatrical experiences of your life!”

Other principal cast members include Kenderick Scorza, a senior musical theatre major from North Little Rock, Ark., as Donkey; Benjamin Stidham, a senior musical theatre major from Dallas, Texas, as Lord Farquaad; and Cami Willis, a senior musical theatre and church media/production arts double major from Flower Mound, Texas, as Princess Fiona.

Tickets may be purchased at the OBU Box Office on weekdays from 1-5 p.m. or online at www.obu.edu/boxoffice. For more information, call the box office during business hours at (870) 245-5555 or email boxoffice@obu.edu.

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