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OUACHITA
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NEWS

For immediate release

Ouachita alumnus Aaron Harp to present guest artist recital Sept. 17

By Cimber Winfrey & Matthew Ablon

September 11, 2015

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at newsbureau@obu.edu or (870) 245-5208

ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Ouachita Baptist University alumnus Aaron Harp will return to Arkadelphia on Thursday, Sept. 17, to perform a guest recital at McBeth Recital Hall in Ouachita's Mabee Fine Arts Center at 7:30 p.m. The recital is free and open to the public.

"Aaron possesses a voice of great beauty and flexibility," said Dr. Jon Secrest, Addie Mae Maddox Professor of Music. "His musical gifts are extraordinary, making the extremely difficult early music genre a natural match for his skillset."

The Dallas Morning News has praised Harp for his "appealingly rich baritone" and "sensitive singing," which has gained him national recognition as a stylistic performer of early music. Some of his recent solo engagements include a performance of J.S. Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* with Dallas Bach Society, Mozart's *Requiem* with Frisco Chorale and a program of Purcell music with Seicento Baroque Ensemble. He also was the baritone soloist for the OBU Concert Choir's April 2015 presentation of G.F. Handel's *Messiah*.

Harp has also performed with many esteemed ensembles, including the Santa Fe Desert Chorale, the Dallas Bach Society, the Denton Bach Society and the Orchestra of New Spain.

After graduating from Ouachita in 2007 with a Bachelor of Music degree, Harp went on to earn a Master of Music degree in vocal performance at North Texas University, studying under Jennifer Lane and Stephen Morscheck. He currently works as the director of high school and middle school choirs at Northland Christian School in Houston, Texas.

Harp will collaborate with oboist Shannon Clardy, associate professor of physics and adjunct instructor of oboe at Henderson States University. Clardy has been a principal oboist of the Little Rock Wind Symphony since 2004 and regularly performs in chamber ensembles. Phyllis Walker, OBU staff accompanist, also will accompany Harp on the piano.

"My program explores themes of life and death through some of the most beautiful compositions by Bach, Fauré and Finzi," Harp noted. "The recital closes with three spirituals that point us toward our ultimate hope in both life and death that Christ will return and make all things new."

"I consider it an honor to have been Aaron's vocal instructor during his time at Ouachita, and I am so pleased that he has been fortunate enough to become a viable professional performer as well as a respected teacher," Secrest added. "I hope the Ouachita and Arkadelphia communities will be present to experience this combination of talent and expertise on the evening of the recital."

In addition to the concert, Harp will teach a two-hour baritone master class for Ouachita voice principals on Sept. 18 at 3 p.m. in McBeth Recital Hall. For more information, contact Dr. Jon Secrest at secrestj@obu.edu or (870) 245-5134.

PHOTO OF HARP AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD AT <http://www.obu.edu/news/2015/09/11/ouachita-alumnus-aaron-harp-to-present-guest-artist-recital-sept-17>.