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NEWS

For immediate release

Ouachita's All Night Theatre: Ten-Minute Play Festival hits the stage March 12

By Rachel Gaddis

March 3, 2016

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

ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Ouachita Baptist University will present the 14th annual All Night Theatre: Ten-Minute Play Festival on Saturday, March 12, beginning at 7:30 p.m. in Verser Theatre. The festival, hosted by Ouachita's chapter of Alpha Psi Omega national theatre honor society, is run entirely by students—plays are student-written, directed and performed. The event is free and open to the public.

Auditions for student actors will be held on Thursday, March 10, from 6-8:30 p.m. in McBeth Recital Hall, but the festival does not begin until student directors receive a script on Friday, March 11. Directors have roughly 30 minutes to familiarize themselves with the contents of the play before meeting their cast. Rehearsal begins at 7:30 p.m., and performances take place a mere 24 hours later.

"Putting anything thing together in 24 hours is hard," said Bethany Gere, a senior musical theatre and communication sciences and disorders double major from White Hall, Ark. She noted that the cast "will not only learn a script, but the director will have to come up with a set design, lighting plot, costume designs, props and music for their shows. There is a lot that goes on in these productions, and when most of us are used to putting a show together in a month it's really a challenge to try to do all of these things in 24 hours."

Gere is a member of the festival's leadership team, known as the triumvirate, along with Shelby Spears and Nadalie Gill. Spears is a senior English and Spanish double major from El Dorado, Ark., and Gill is a sophomore theatre arts major from Price, Texas.

While members of Alpha Psi Omega participate by writing, directing, performing or working backstage, the same roles are open to all Ouachita students who would like to participate.

"The festival was started by a student," said Gere. "We do so many other things that are directed by professors and written by playwrights that it's nice to be able to showcase the talent our school has within the different departments."

Students may submit anonymous, original works to be considered for the festival. A panel consisting of multi-disciplinary faculty, staff and students judges the submissions, and those receiving the highest scores will be performed. Writers may submit more than one work for consideration, and group authorship is also permitted, but the duration of each play must be no more than 10 minutes. Writers whose plays are accepted may also direct or perform in the festival, but they are not allowed to direct or act in their own play.

"Because the plays are student-written, oftentimes they deal with OBU issues," said Spears. "Last year there was a play about how dating at OBU can be weird because of odd granola Baptist rituals, and the year before that there was a play dealing with the stress of being a theatre major."

There will also be a question-and-answer session after the performance of each play to allow for discussion among the playwrights, directors and audience. The audience may also cast their vote for best

actor, actress, playwright and show. Gere said this is unique to the play festival and provides an opportunity to involve the audience.

"It's all about bringing people together," Gere said. "We love that we get to share our love of theatre with non-majors who may not have time to commit to a full-length production. And it's a way for non-majors to see what we do all semester long."

For more information, contact the OBU Box Office at boxoffice@obu.edu or (870) 245-5555.