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NEWS

For immediate release

Ouachita to host poet George Drew for reading April 4

By Rachel Gaddis

March 21, 2016

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

ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Ouachita Baptist University's Department of Language and Literature will host poet George Drew on Monday, April 4, for a reading beginning at 6 p.m. in Hickingbotham Hall's Young Auditorium. The event is free and open to the public.

Drew is an author and poet originally from Mississippi whose work has been published in journals across the country. His poetry has recently been anthologized in "The Southern Poetry Anthology, II: Mississippi," and his collection "American Cool" won the Adirondack Literary Award for the best poetry book of 2009.

Dr. Johnny Wink, Ouachita's Betty Burton Peck Professor of English, said he feels Drew's visit to Ouachita is a chance for those who attend to explore something new.

"As Ophelia says of Hamlet, 'We know what we are, but know not what we may be,'" Wink said. "I know what I'm passionate about now, but I don't know what new things may be coming my way tomorrow."

Wink explained that as an English major in his undergraduate studies, he did not like poetry. He considered poetry a "necessary evil" until a graduate school professor taught him to appreciate its sound.

"He really got me to hear the poetry, not just look at poems and try to suck up their meanings," Wink said. "Then poetry became as sensuous a thing to me as music is to all of us. It was something I heard, and once I heard it, I got the bug. Who knows? Maybe one of these students, by attending the reading, will have the kind of experience that I had when Jim Whitehead chanted poetry to me and the rest of the class."

Drew has received a number of other awards, including the 2010 X.J. Kennedy Poetry Prize from Texas Review Press, the Paumanok Poetry Award, the Baltimore Review Poetry Prize and the South Carolina Review Poetry Prize. He also has been nominated twice for the Pushcart Prize, an honor that recognizes the best essays, poetry and short fiction published by small presses each year.

Drew's other works include "The Hand that Rounded Peter's Dome," "The Horse's Name Was Physics," "Toads in a Poisoned Tank" and "So Many Bones (Poems of Russia)," which was published in a bilingual edition by a Russian press in 1997.

For more information, contact Dr. Johnny Wink at winkj@obu.edu or (870) 245-5556.