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NEWS

For immediate release

Ouachita's School of Fine Arts to present "Footloose the Musical" April 21-24

By Rachel Gaddis

April 8, 2016

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

ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Ouachita Baptist University's School of Fine Arts will present *Footloose the Musical* by Dean Pitchford and Walter Bobbie as its spring musical beginning Thursday, April 21, at 7:30 p.m., in Jones Performing Arts Center. Performances will continue April 22-23 at 7:30 p.m., with a matinee Sunday, April 24, at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are \$12 each.

Footloose the Musical, an adaptation of both Paramount Pictures' 1984 film and its 2011 musical remake, revolves around a city slicker teen named Ren who moves to a small town and finds dancing has been outlawed. Ren challenges the law and the clergyman who helped initiate it, Rev. Shaw Moore, while also falling for Moore's daughter, Ariel. The adaptation by Pitchford and Bobbie is based on the original screenplay by Pitchford with music by Tom Snow, lyrics by Pitchford and additional music by Eric Carmen, Sammy Hagar and Kenny Loggins.

"Both Rev. Moore and Ren have felt dragged down, whether it's from depression or repression, and they can't quite live the life that they want to," said Drew Hampton, Ouachita's assistant professor of theatre arts and director of the musical. "*Footloose* is definitely about both of these guys going through a change that allows them to live a more free life mentally, emotionally and—in terms of being footloose—physically, as well. Ariel goes through her own version of this journey."

Whether or not the audience has seen one or both films, Hampton said he thinks the musical's appeal will span several generations.

"It has the fun, the big laugh-out-loud stuff, but it also has some very still, dramatic moments," Hampton said. "For me, it's a very rounded theatre experience."

Scotty Scott, a freshman musical theatre major from Russellville, Ark., who plays Rev. Moore, said he hopes the underlying message will resonate with the audience. He described *Footloose* as "a story of perseverance through adversity and grief."

"Many characters in this show have experienced pain at a high level, and they work to overcome all obstacles put in front of them in order to do what they believe is best for the people around them," Scott said. "I'm hoping that people will leave this show inspired, because while there are times where all hope may seem lost for the people living in Bomont, there is always a glimmer of hope at the end of the tunnel."

While the characters and themes in *Footloose* are relatable, Garrett Sayers, a senior musical theatre major from Greenwood, Ark., who plays Ren, said that the production itself—and notably the choreography—should be exciting for the audience.

"It is going to be so much fun," Sayers said, "and it won't matter whether you're a student, faculty member or from the community, there will be something in *Footloose* you will most definitely connect with and love."

In addition to Hampton, other lead production team members include: Music Director Dr. Jon Secrest, Ouachita professor of music; Choreographer Grace Hampton, OBU alumna; Co-Stage Managers Jess Elliff, a freshman musical theatre major from Maumelle, Ark., and Walter Dodd, a senior theatre arts major from Little Rock, Ark.; Co-Dance Captains Hannah Fender, a junior musical theatre major from Maumelle, Ark., and Stacy Hawking, a senior musical theatre major from Sherwood, Ark.; and Accompanists John Briggs and Susan Monroe.

Tickets may be purchased at the OBU Box Office in JPAC 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.