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Ouachita to host alumna Samantha Rhea Parrish in guest artist recital Feb. 25

By Michael Burge

February 14, 2020

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



ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Ouachita Baptist University's Division of Music will host New York performer and producer Samantha Rhea Parrish, a 2010 Ouachita alumna, in a guest artist recital on Tuesday, Feb. 25, in Ouachita's McBeth Recital Hall in Mabee Fine Arts Center. The recital will begin at 7:30 p.m. and is free and open to the public.

Following her graduation from Ouachita in 2010, Parrish went on the road with the national tours of Missoula Children's Theatre's *The Frog Prince* and *The Little Mermaid* and Dallas Children's Theater's *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs*. Currently based in Queens, New York, Parrish has performed and produced new musical theatre works in venues throughout the city, including Public Theatre, Greenroom 42, The West End, The Metropolitan Room and The Duplex, among others.

"Sammy is a vivacious performer, with a voice that is capably flexible and able to perform numerous styles of music," said Dr. Jon Secrest, Addie Mae Maddox Professor of Music and Parrish's former voice teacher. "Her personality is infectious, making her the ideal choice for a program that will primarily be aimed at pleasing the student population here, but thoroughly enjoyable for any music lover."



To begin her recital, Parrish will perform "Rolling in the Deep" by Adele and Paul Epworth, "Mona Lisas and Mad Hatters" by Elton John and Bernie Taupin, followed by "Fool That I Am" by Etta James and Floyd Hunt. Next, she will perform Cole Porter's "So In Love" from *Kiss Me Kate* and Carner and Gregor's "I'll Take It All," "So Far From Pennsylvania" and "TMI" from *Island Song*. Parrish will conclude with

Lindsay Mendez's "Pretty Funny" from *Dogfight* and "Let Me Be Your Star" by SMASH, Marc Shaiman and Scott Wittman.

"I hope I can bring a fresh perspective of what the world of musical theatre looks like in New York City right now," Parrish said. "So many doors are opening up for all kinds of performers. There's space being made for new voices.

"Ouachita means so much to me, and to be asked back to perform is such an honor," she added.

In addition to writing and directing her most recent work, *Finsta*, which premiered at Alchemical Theatre in April 2019, Parrish is passionate about arts education and runs two free musical theatre programs to foster a culture of musical theatre for those who lack access to the arts in public education. She partners with the Schubert Foundation and works with Musical Theatre International and Broadway Jr.

"I think Ouachita gave me a place to become grounded," Parrish said. "I was able to perform in roles that the outer theatre world may not have considered me for, but Ouachita allowed me to explore range, be confident in my ability and go forward unapologetically. It also kept me well-rounded in all aspects of theatre – of education, of technical theatre and of directing. Those skills have kept me employed since graduation. And finally, I was able to be grounded in who I was as a person."

Parrish's collaborative pianist for the evening will be Phyllis Walker, staff accompanist for the Division of Music.

For more information, contact Dr. Jon Secrest at secrestj@obu.edu or (870) 245-5134.

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