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Ouachita's Department of Theatre Arts to present "The Giver" Sept. 25-30

By Rachel Gaddis

September 12, 2014

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

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. -- Ouachita Baptist University's Department of Theatre Arts will present its fall children's play, *The Giver*, with the opening performance on Sept. 25 at 7 p.m. in Verser Theatre. Performances continue Sept. 26-27 and 29-30 at 7 p.m., plus a 2:30 p.m. matinee on Sept. 28. Tickets can be purchased for \$10 each at www.obu.edu/boxoffice.

Based on the award-winning novel by Lois Lowry and adapted by Eric Coble, *The Giver* focuses on Jonas, a boy who receives the gift of memory in a society devoid of emotion, color and choice. Daniel Inouye, assistant professor of theatre arts and director of the show, said Jonas struggles with the burden of these memories.

"As he is receiving these memories and starting to see color and have these experiences again, he has to realize the truth of the situation—that he lives in this society that has taken away choice from everybody else," Inouye said. "Ultimately it provides him with the biggest choice he is going to face, which is what to do about it."

While *The Giver* is Ouachita's children's play for the semester, Inouye recommends the show for children age 12 or older. He added that the show also is "still a message that college students need to deal with, as well, especially as they are transitioning out of college."

For those who may have read the book or seen the movie, Inouye said he believes seeing the play is still beneficial. "One of the great things about theatre and film is that we go to see these productions because we want to see what other people are doing with it," he explained. "How do they approach the issue? How do they talk about this lesson? What are the things they will pull out and focus on?"

Hunter Brown, a junior musical theatre major from Central City, Ark., will play Father. He said the play is unique in the casting. "It's pushing our boundaries as actors compared to what we're used to," Brown said. "None of the roles we play fall in our age range. There are younger, parent-age and older people, so I think it will be interesting to see what we bring to it."

Cami Willis, a senior musical theatre and church media/production arts double major from Flower Mound, Texas, will play Chief Elder. She said she is looking forward to the production, especially its technicality. "It's a very tech-heavy show," she said. "We're dealing with projections, a lot of lighting and colors. I think that will be interesting and different than a lot of other shows."

Tickets are \$10 and may be purchased from the OBU Box Office weekdays from 1-5 p.m. Tickets also may be purchased online at www.obu.edu/boxoffice. Current Ouachita students may receive one free ticket upon presentation of their student ID at the box office. For more information, call the box office at (870) 245-5555 during business hours.

In addition to Brown and Willis, cast members include:

- Tyler Wisdom, a senior musical theatre major from North Little Rock, Ark., as Jonas
- Angela Morgan, a junior musical theatre major from Bryant, Ark., as Mother
- Hannah Hines, a freshman musical theatre major from Russellville, Ark., as Lily
- Will Stotts, a freshman musical theatre major from Jonesboro, Ark., as Asher
- Emily Shull, a sophomore theatre arts major from Little Rock, as Fiona
- Eli Ash, a freshman musical theatre major from Little Rock, as The Giver
- Anna "AJ" Valdez, a freshman musical theatre major from Terrell, Texas, as Rosemary

Other crew members include:

- Assistant director: Kaylee Nebe, a senior musical theatre major from Mesquite, Texas
- Stage manager: Natalie Williams, a junior music and theatre arts major from Little Rock, Ark.
- Assistant stage manager: Kacy Earnest, a freshman theatre arts major from El Dorado, Ark.
- Costume crew head: Tara Clem, a senior musical theatre major from Texarkana, Texas
- Costume crew: Mattie Alexander, a freshman theatre arts and mass communications double major from Midwest City, Okla.; Esther Atkinson, a freshman musical theatre major from Rogers, Ark.; Anna Darr, a freshman musical theatre major from Alexander, Ark.; Lauren Teague, a sophomore art and graphic design major from Jonesboro, Ark.
- Makeup and hair crew head: Blaine Surber, a senior musical theatre major from Sulpher Springs, Texas
- Makeup and hair crew: Marcus Moore, a freshman musical theatre major from Cabot, Ark.
- Props crew heads: Walter Dodd, a junior theatre arts major from Little Rock, Ark.; Hailey Weiner, a sophomore musical theatre major from Maumelle, Ark.
- Props crew: Bethany Gere, a senior musical theatre and communication sciences and disorders major from White Hall, Ark.; Bret Sanders, a sophomore musical theatre major from Jonesboro, Ark.
- Scenery designer, technical director and lighting designer: Eric Phillips, professor of theatre arts
- Shifting and run crew: Caroline Cain, a junior theatre arts and mass communications major from Boise, Idaho; Hope Wakeling, a freshman theatre arts major from Bryant, Ark.
- Projection designer and shop technical director: Marshall Pope, theatre shop technical director
- Projection operator: Kayla Walker, a sophomore musical theatre major from North Little Rock, Ark.
- Light board operator: Dallas Sleeman, a junior sophomore theatre arts major from Kentwood, Mich.

- Sound designer and sound board operator: Ben Stidham, a senior musical theatre major from Dallas, Texas
- House manager: Taylor Ford, a sophomore biology major from Dayton, Texas
- Poster and program designer: Adam Wheat, fine arts administrator
- Front of house crew: Lauren Hutcheson, a sophomore musical theatre and education major from Bossier City, La.