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Ouachita to host Trio di Risata in concert Dec. 7

By Clair Childers & Chelsea Whelpley

November 23, 2015

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 Trio di Risata in a flute, clarinet and percussion concert on Monday, Dec. 7, at 7:30 p.m. in Mabee Fine Arts Center's McBeth Recital Hall. The recital is free of charge and open to the public.

The trio includes Adrienne Conklin, a flute player and music educator in Texas; Dr. Heather Gozdan-Bynum, former Ouachita instructor of clarinet; and Dr. Ryan Lewis, OBU assistant professor of percussion. Lewis and Bynum performed together in several chamber music concerts while she was teaching at Ouachita, later conceiving the idea to form a group with Conklin, one of Bynum's colleagues.

In founding the chamber music group, "we decided that the unusual instrumentation of flute, clarinet and percussion would be an interesting undertaking and began searching out repertoire for the combination," Lewis said.

This concert will be the first public performance of Trio di Risata and will feature four of the performers' own arrangements of the following pieces: "Trio for Flute, Clarinet and Harp" by English composer Blake Howard; "Eight Chamber Pieces" by Italian composer Andrea Nacci; "Pennillion," a piece based on the Welsh tradition of group singing, by Howard; and American composer Eric Ewazen's "Wildflowers," a piece in three movements that are inspired by actual wildflowers called Dense Blazing Star, Missouri Primrose and Mexican Hat.

"We found very few suitable pieces for flute, clarinet and percussion," Lewis noted, "which was at once discouraging because we would have to search hard for pieces to adapt to our instrumentation and exciting because we would have to start commissioning composers for new pieces for us to premiere and, thus, carve out a unique niche for ourselves in the music world."

Emphasizing that "music is inherently good and is a terrific way to bring joy to so many," Lewis said, "Our uncommon instrumentation makes the pieces on the concert at once beautiful, quirky and enjoyable."

Conklin teaches music at Hyer Elementary in Dallas, Texas. In 2010, she was recognized as a Highland Park Independent School District Teacher of the Year. She earned degrees in music education and performance from Louisiana State University and a master's degree in performance from the University of Iowa. During this time, she studied flute with Katherine Kemler, Tadeu Coelho and Robert Dick. Conklin also is a private flute instructor who has worked with students from Mesquite, Garland, Highland Park and Melissa ISDs.

Gozdan-Bynum is a freelance clarinetist and teacher in the Athens, Ga., area. She is an active teacher and performer, balancing roles as soloist, chamber musician and private instructor. A graduate of the

University of Iowa, the University of North Texas and Bowling Green State University, she also performs with the University of Georgia Modular Ensemble.

Lewis serves as assistant professor of percussion at Ouachita, where he teaches applied percussion, percussion techniques and music history courses. Lewis also directs OBU's Percussion Ensemble, Tiger Marching Band Drum Line and Tiger Steel. A devoted chamber musician and collaborator, Lewis also performs with the piano-percussion group Duo Matre.

For more information, contact OBU's School of Fine Arts at (870) 245-5129.