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Ouachita Percussion Ensemble to present “global journey” in Nov. 3 concert



By Dalaney Thomas

October 24, 2014

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 the OBU Percussion Ensemble in concert Monday, Nov. 3. The recital, which is free and open to the public, will be held at 7:30 p.m. in McBeth Recital Hall on Ouachita's campus.

“We try to always include a standard composition as well as potential ear-turning compositions,” said Dr. Ryan Lewis, director of the ensemble and assistant professor of music. “This year our pieces should hopefully reach out to everyone in the audience.”

This semester's concert mixes classic and contemporary pieces and contrasting styles from around the world to take listeners on a global journey.



The concert will open with American composer Christopher Rouse's "Ku-Ka-Ilimoku." Composed in the 1980s, this piece is based on the Hawaiian god of war. Lewis described this piece as "exhilarating" due to its lack of pitched instruments and its use of drum hits. The Hawaiian inspiration will be conveyed through the use of wood blocks and small drums.

From Hawaii, the program will transition to Sweden with the piece "Norrskan" by Anders Astrand. Astrand drew his inspiration for this piece from the aurora borealis and sought to depict the many colors he saw. Lewis expects this piece to be atmospheric as the sounds will mimic the rhythms of the lights in that they never repeat, increase in intensity and die down as the lights would.

As the program continues, a suite of Mexican marimba street pieces will be featured as well as an American ragtime xylophone jazz piece. China will be represented by the composition "Terra-Cotta Warriors," and a world fusion piece, "Warthog Number 3," will be performed using drums from all over the world. The program will close with the Japanese taiko drumming piece, "Hoo-Daiko."

"The most enjoyable part is when students come off the stage and a piece has gone better than it ever has before," Lewis noted. "Joy is found in exposing the audience to the many things percussion can do."

Members of the Percussion Ensemble include: Aaron Breeding, a junior instrumental music education major from Springdale, Ark.; Judd Cochran, a freshman instrumental music education major from Texarkana, Texas; Chris Crutchfield, a sophomore Christian studies major from Bauxite, Ark.; Drew Ervin, a senior music major from Springdale, Ark.; Nick Gibson, a freshman instrumental music education major from Teague, Texas; Carter Harlan, a junior instrumental music education major from Arkadelphia, Ark.; Chris Hogan, a senior instrumental music education major from Bartlesville, Okla.; Van O'Rorke, a sophomore instrumental music major from Hot Springs, Ark.; Abby Tipps, a sophomore instrumental music education major from Sulphur Springs, Texas; Zack Willis, a sophomore performance major from Redfield, Ark.; and Weston Wills, a sophomore instrumental music education major from Norphlet, Ark.

For more information on the percussion ensemble, visit www.obu.edu/percussion or contact Dr. Ryan Lewis at lewistr@obu.edu or (870) 245-5421.