

SBU STUDENTS RECEIVE AWARDS AT KENNEDY CENTER THEATRE FESTIVAL

BOLIVAR, Mo. – Southwest Baptist University theatre students recently were honored at the 52nd annual Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, which celebrates work by colleges and universities in the eight-state region during 2019, on Jan. 19-24, 2020, in Sioux Falls, S.D.



The festival honored SBU theatre with several meritorious achievement awards, including nine meritorious achievement awards for the production of "For Such a Time as This," an original play by SBU student Bethany Vermillion. The production received commendation for Sophia Marsh for directing; Brittany Davis for choreography; Maura O'Brien for properties; Jessica Paxton for dramaturgy; Ashton Hensley for performance; Joel Walley and Daniel Stucky for original composition and sound design; and Vermillion for playwriting. The cast, crew and production team also earned recognition for excellence in collaboration of original work and theatre advocacy. SBU theatre also received commendations for Alexa Bell for her set design for

"Tartuffe" and Abigail Andrews for scenic painting for "Steel Magnolias."

As part of the festival, SBU junior Christina Foltz directed a concert reading of a 10-minute play selected for the National Playwriting Program. Foltz was paired with a mentor from the theatre industry who worked with her throughout the process.

"I learned about conducting professional auditions and about developing new plays and made great connections in the professional theatre world," Foltz said. "I appreciate what this experience adds to what I have done at SBU."

Eight SBU students, including Ali Oldweiler, Tayler Bates, Alexa Bell, Daniel Stucky, Lauren Wineinger, Abigail Wilken, Caleb Mooney, and Elizabeth Coulter, competed along with their partners in the Irene Ryan Acting Competition. The competition is an event where nominated students audition for a scholarship established by the late Irene Ryan, famous for playing Granny on "The Beverly Hillbillies." This year's festival had 315 nominees from more than 80 colleges and universities in the region competing for the scholarship. Alexa Bell and Max Stoner, as well as Tayler Bates and Haley Gill, were two of 68 teams to advance to the semifinal round.

The festival features the presentation of 12 selected costume designs from the region, and this year, SBU was invited to present costumes from Rebecca Foltz's design for "Tartuffe." The presentation took place during the closing ceremonies for the festival, which included a parade of all of the nominated costumes from the region.

"It was an honor to have my design in KCACTF's costume parade," Foltz said. "Hearing the reactions of an audience full of other designers and creators as they saw each piece for the first time helped validate all the hard work that was put into 'Tartuffe.'"



In the design/tech expo, Hannah Mayfield entered costume designs for "You're a Good Man Charlie Brown," and Maura O'Brien submitted properties designed for "For Such a Time as This." Other entries included: Abigail Andrews, who entered her set design for "For Such a Time as This," as well as a scenic painting for "Steel Magnolias;" Daniel Stucky presented his lighting design for "Tartuffe," sound design for "For Such a Time as This," and properties construction for "You're a Good Man Charlie Brown;" Alexa Bell submitted her lighting design

for "For Such a Time as This," and set design for "Tartuffe;" Rebecca Foltz entered poster designs for "Tartuffe," and "Steel Magnolias" as well as her costume design for "Tartuffe."

SBU participates in the festival every year by entering their productions for review by a respondent from another institution in the region and by attending the annual festival. Next year the festival will be in Des Moines, Iowa.

PHOTO 1: SBU Theatre students prepare for the costume parade at the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival. From left: Ali Oldweiler, Maura O'Brien, Max Stoner, Daniel Stucky and Lauren Wineinger.

PHOTO 2: SBU Theatre students attend a performance at the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival. From left: Kate Bloom, Daniel Stucky, Maura O'Brien, Lauren Wineinger, Abigail Andrews, Hannah Mayfield, Elizabeth Coulter, Allison Swetnam, Ali Oldweiler, Joel Walley and Caleb Mooney.

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