

oconee youth playhouse

Oconee Youth Playhouse presents “Honk!”

Oconee Youth Playhouse will present the musical “Honk!” April 15-17 and 22-23 at the Oconee County Civic Center. Based on the tale of “The Ugly Duckling,” the musical won the 2000 Olivier Award for Best Musical (beating “The Lion King” and “Mamma Mia”).

“Honk is a personal favorite of ours and we’re please to be bringing it back to the stage for the third time,” says Terra Hannon, who co-directs OYP shows with her husband, Shane. “The show carries a wonderful message that it’s OK to be different.”

Ugly, the main character, is clearly different from the other ducklings from the moment he hatches from his over-sized shell and emits his first “honk!” instead of a quack. Made fun of by the other animals in the farmyard, he runs off and becomes lost, pursued by a sneaky cat with plans for a “duck a l’orange” dinner. When his mother Ida finds he is missing, she goes in search of him, leaving her husband Drake to care for the rest of the family. Ugly has several adventures before being reunited with his mother.

North Oconee High School students Dayne Joyner and Collier Cobb have the lead roles of Ugly and Ida. Collier, a junior, is a “Honk!” veteran, having appeared in OYP’s two previous productions – as a 7-year-old froglet in 2001 and one of the ducklings in 2006.

“Honk is a very special show to me as it introduced me to the world of musical theater,” she says. “It was the very first musical I ever performed in. Now at 17 I get the opportunity to be Ida, Ugly’s loving mother, who I never dreamed I would play 10 years ago.”



Collier Cobb in 2001 Honk!



Collier Cobb in 2006 Honk!



Collier Cobb in 2011 Honk!

Collier has performed in a total of 19 OYP shows over those 10 years and is a finalist for the Governor’s Honors program in theater. The four-week summer program is for intellectually gifted and artistically talented high school students from across the state.

Dayne, a senior at NOHS, was not in OYP's previous productions of "Honk!" but has been in numerous other OYP shows. He and Collier appeared in OYP's "Annie" in January – he was Daddy Warbucks' chief of staff Drake and she was Warbucks' secretary Grace Farrell. Both are members of the musical theater company at Oconee Youth School of Performance and also have been in many NOHS shows. Dayne plans to pursue his studies of musical theater at Brigham Young University.

Other featured performers in "Honk!" include University of Georgia senior Joe McAnulty as the Cat, Athens Academy freshman Andrew Youngerman in dual roles as Ugly's father Drake and a wacky goose named Greylag, and NOHS drama teacher Drew Doss playing both the Rooster and the Bullfrog, who leads the number "Warts and All" surrounded by a stage full of colorful little frogs.

"That has been a show-stopper in our past productions," says Shane Hannon. "It is such a fun number and features our youngest performers, many of them in kindergarten and first grade."

Others in the show include Oconee County high school freshman Rachel Wolfe as Maureen, a friend of Ida's, and Lowbutt, a hen. She plays a comical scene with Anna Cail, a 9th grader at Prince Avenue Christian School, who portrays a cat named Queenie.

Amy Coenen, assistant director for "Honk!," played the Maureen/Lowbutt role in OYP's 2001 production. "It's a wonderful character part and Rachel and Anna are hilarious together," she says.

Also in the cast in multiple roles are Rachel Bonet, Bailey Chastain, Shannon Hodgson, Hunter-Ashley Raye and Antonia Bowen.

Shows are at 7 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, with a 2 p.m. matinee on Sunday, April 17. Tickets, priced at \$12-16, are on sale at Oconee Youth School of Performance from 4-7 p.m. April 11-14 and at the Oconee County Civic Center an hour before each show.

For more information, see www.oypoysp.com/playhouse, call 706-769-2677 or email oconeeyouthplayhouse@gmail.com.