

Oconee Youth School of Performance presents Spring Showcase

Oconee Youth School of Performance will present its annual Spring Showcase May 7-9 at The Classic Center Theatre in downtown Athens. The Friday performance will feature all members of OYSP's dance and musical theater companies – students who train at an advanced level. They will present numbers that were performed at the Access Broadway regional talent competition in Atlanta last February, where OYSP won the “Best Studio” title for the fifth year in a row.

Among the pieces will be production numbers from popular Broadway musicals, as well as dance performances in a wide variety of styles – from hip hop to tap to contemporary.

One dance piece – which earned a first-place award at the Access Broadway competition – has particular meaning for OYSP co-directors Shane and Terra Hannon. Choreographed by Terra and titled “Come Home,” it's a lyrical dance about autism.

“It's about our son, Jack, who is almost five and was diagnosed on the autism spectrum three years ago,” she says. “I wanted to choreograph a piece about what we have experienced with him. It was a way to share that with the members of the senior dance company and for them to then share it with a wider audience.”

Besides the company showcase on Friday, shows on Saturday and Sunday will include performances by all students at Oconee Youth School of Performance, which is based in Watkinsville and has been offering classes in all areas of the performing arts since 1998.

Graduates of the school have gone on to prestigious programs such as New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, the University of Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, and the Ailey School at Fordham University. Others have continued their studies of vocal performance, theater or dance at in-state schools including Brenau, Shorter College and the University of Georgia.

Former student Laura Slade Wiggins has launched a career in film and TV, and recently was cast as a regular in a new Showtime series with William H. Macy and Allison Janney. Another former student, T.C. Carter, now performs with the boy band Varsity Fanclub, while India Bolds is dancing with the Elisa Monte Dance Company.

Tickets for the Spring Showcase are \$16 adults, \$14 students and seniors, and \$12 for age 12 and under, and will be sold in the lobby of the Classic Center Theatre an hour before each performance. Shows are at 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 3:30 on Sunday.

For more information, see www.oypoysp.com/school or call 706-769-2677.