

FORT SMITH LITTLE THEATRE



SPOTLIGHT

401 North 6th Street

September 8, 2018

www.fslt.org

Dates: Opening Night Gala of FSLT's production of *Night of the Living Dead* will be September 20. Regular evening performances will be September 21-22, and 26-29. A Sunday Matinee will be offered on September 23.

Times: All evening performances begin at **7:30 p.m.** Patrons may be seated after 6:45 p.m. The matinees begin at **2:00 p.m.** Patrons may be seated after 1:15 p.m.

New Box Office Hours: Box office will be staffed, and tickets can be picked up, from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Monday-Friday and on Saturdays during the run of the show. Additionally, box office volunteers will return phone calls regarding reservation requests during variable daytime hours Monday-Saturday.

Reservations: Reservations can be made by calling 479-783-2966 (extn: 2). Calls will be returned in the order they are received. Reservations will be held until 15 minutes before the show. Gala Tickets \$27 / All other shows \$12.

Season Ticket Holders: Regular season ticket patrons are encouraged to call September 8-12 for preferred seating. They can also reserve a General Admission seat for every Season Ticket they have. General Admission reservations will not be filled until September 13.

Reminder: When you call to make a reservation, Dial 2.

NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD

"They're coming to get you, Barbara"

~ Johnny, *Night of the Living Dead*

"We're going for creepy, not gory," promises co-director Rikkee Black, of FSLT's September offering - *Night of the Living Dead*. This science-fiction horror-story is written by Lori Allen Ohm, and is based on the classic 1968 movie by George Romero and John Russo. Rikkee and her husband, Scott Black, are collaborating as co-directors of the play which runs September 20 through 29. The production will feature creative makeup and staging to recreate the feel of an old horror film.

The original film is considered a classic and solidified Romero's reputation as a filmmaker. Originally made with a \$114,000 budget, the movie went on to earn \$12 million domestically and \$18 million internationally. More significantly Romero created the modern conception of the zombie as seen today in t.v. shows and films such as *28 Days Later*, *Shaun of the Dead*, *World War Z*, and *The Walking Dead*. Romero's film is considered culturally significant with its references to 1960s civil rights movement and its use of an African-American hero.

A space probe returns to earth carrying deadly radiation that causes the dead to rise and attack the living. Siblings Barbara (Ashleigh Mathews) and Johnny (Tyler Basham) visit a cemetery to visit their father's grave. A strange silent man in the graveyard (John Faulkner) attacks the siblings. Barbara escapes to an abandoned farmhouse where she hides with other survivors – brave and resourceful Ben (Randall Marks), young

See *Night of the Living Dead* on page 3



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Director's Letter

As a first time director at FSLT, I jumped at the chance to direct with my best friend – my wife, Rikkee. When we found the script for *Night of the Living Dead*, we knew it would be a very different production for our theatre. However, we were excited at the thought of it coming to life on stage.

We are proud to have many veteran FSLT actors involved, and excited for all the new talent we've had join us. The cast and crew have been wonderful, as they bring their passions and ideas to this production.

We hope the audience enjoys the experience as much as we are enjoying it, as we bring this show together.

- Scott Black, Co-Director



Night of the Living Dead opens Sept. 20

local couple Tom (John Hall) and Judy (Summer Robinson), and the Cooper family including angry Harry (Wayne Mathews) with his wife Helen (Tina Dale) and their young, gravely injured daughter Karen (Lakyn Forrester). The farmhouse is no safe haven; the seven survivors encounter a woman's corpse inside the house (Micki Voelkel) and a hoard of ghouls that relentlessly attack. As they fight off the threats from outside, the uneasy group members slowly begin to turn on each other inside. Will they make it out alive?

Supporting characters include Brad Nance as Chief McClellan, Chuck Howard as the deputy, Brandon Bolin as a radio announcer, Erin Boyd as a news anchor, and Suzanne Thomas as scientific expert, Dr. Grimes. The zombie ensemble features Ron Watson, Adeena Thomas, Sonya Hiatt, Madeline Partain, Caitlin Mathews, Clayton Hartwig, Riley Posey, Sarah Koval, Austin Nguyen, Margaret Clymer, Jerry Novak, and Taelyn Novak.

Crew members include producer-Melissa Vitale, assistant producer and properties mistress-Jamie Lambdin, stage manager and costumer-Meghan Partain, makeup coordinator-Summer Robinson, lighting designer-Jeremy Marston, and set designer-Scott Black.

Co-director Scott Black says, "When Rikkee and I were dating we watched this movie, and since then, we've seen a number of 'zombie' movies. It's a genre that we really enjoy, because it's an escape from reality. No one really fears that a zombie will come and grab you, but it still has enough realism to be creepy. So when we saw this script available, we were excited to see it come to life on stage."

Spouses as co-directors have their own set of challenges according to Rikkee Black. "Though we have worked on many shows together, this is my husband Scott's first time directing at FSLT. So, unlike in the past when I've had the final say as a solo director, it is rather different now (in a wonderful way) to have another point

of view along with mine. We both have different strengths and know when to defer to the other on certain questions."

Randall Marks as the hero Ben is finding the theatre space to be a new experience, "I love the way the FSLT stage is set up. It's very close to the audience, which allows for them to feel as if they are also a part of the story. It makes the experience more real and exciting for them, and for us."

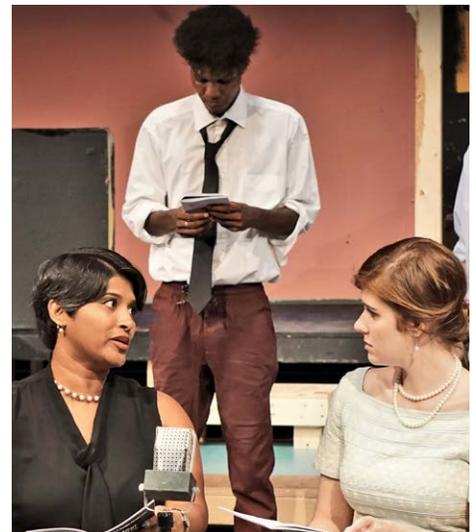
Southside Senior, Ashleigh Mathews, is a veteran of numerous FSLT shows. "I really like Zombies, and *Night of the Living Dead* is what started the craze. So, to be a part of this show is ironically fabulous – especially because the iconic line "He's coming to get you Barbara" is actually directed at me (well, at the character I get to play)..."

FSLT veteran Micki Voelkel is enjoying playing the undead. "I'm really excited to play a zombie. Though it is a small role, it is super creepy, and it's nice not to have to think about the character's psychological state - *I just want brains!*"

Many new performers are part of the show. John Faulkner recently moved to Fort Smith and is enjoying getting back into theatre. "Having performed in a high school production fifty-five years ago, I am giving the stage another try!"

There are seven strangers in a lonely farmhouse surrounded by the living dead. Can anyone survive? To find out, reserve your seat, call 479-783-2966 (beginning Saturday, September 8 for season ticket holders and Thursday, September 13 for non-season ticket holders). The Gala Opening performance is September 20, followed by other evening performances September 21-22 and 26-29. A Sunday matinee is scheduled for September 23 at 2 p.m.

Night of the Living Dead will set the mood for Fall and Halloween when this cult classic movie takes the stage. Are you ready for some Zombies?



Shout Outs

We greatly appreciate these locally owned businesses for their donation/discounting of goods and services. Bravo for their generous support of FSLT!

Alfords Carpet One
new Green Room carpet

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Checking in at FSLT

When you come to FSLT, check in on social media to let your friends know where you are. Posting a selfie taken in our lobby, a picture of the set, or a snapshot with the actors after the show, etc. will help spread the word about our production.



Fort Smith Little Theatre
SPOTLIGHT

P.O. Box 3752, Fort Smith, AR 72913
www.fslt.org

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From the Top...

FSLT has been consulting with theatre professionals from across the country researching a possible upcoming project. In those conversations, persons with years of community theatre experience have expressed astonishment at the range of top-notch selections included in our season of shows. For instance, FSLT went from a big production musical, *My Fair Lady*, to a story of local lore celebrating our city's bicentennial, *Belle Starr by Herself*, and will now offer a modern macabre vibe, *Night of the Living Dead*. They were impressed that FSLT offers something for everyone, including productions that highlight the versatility, skill, and imagination of directors, actors, costumers, lighting, and technical crews. This wide range stretches the imagination and enjoyment of the audience, even though patrons may occasionally feel that some selections fall out of their comfort zone.

In keeping with that theme, our production committee has finalized the offerings for 2019. We hope you find our choices to your liking and will consider purchasing one of two types of season passes, both of which offer many benefits including discounted pricing and preferred seating selection. Remember, season tickets also make wonderful Christmas gifts or a thank you to a special friend, teacher, business associate, etc.

Please join me in applauding Valerie Valentine and George Mann, along with the amazing cast and crew of *My Fair Lady*. The show was beautifully done and enjoyable from overture to finale. Congratulations also to Jim Moody and Cindy Clark for their very successful off-season presentation, *Belle Starr by Herself*. Now to begin the Fall Spooky Season, broaden your horizons and join us for the cult classic, *Night of the Living Dead*.

- Carole Rogers, *President*

Next Up

Auditions for *Noises Off*, directed by Summer Robinson, will be held at 7 p.m. at the theatre on Monday, October 1; with Callbacks on Tuesday, October 2. The cast calls for 5 males and 4 females between the ages of 20 and 60+. Production dates will be November 8-17. For more information, go to fslt.org.

Season Ticket holders are urged to call before September 12 for reservations.