

NEWS RELEASE

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USM Theatre Delves into Dark Comedic Themes with Student Production of ‘The Pillowman’

7:30 p.m. Feb. 16, 17 & 18, Xavier Theatre

(Leavenworth, Kan.)—The University of Saint Mary theatre program explores the heavy themes of artistic responsibility, justice, and totalitarianism in the darkly comic *The Pillowman* with performances at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 16, through Saturday, Feb. 18, in Xavier Theatre on the Saint Mary Leavenworth campus at 4100 South 4th Street. The play deals with mature issues, and is not recommended for children.



Tickets are \$10 for adults and are available at the door. Call (913) 758-6152 or go to www.stmary.edu/tickets to purchase advance tickets.

The Pillowman is a 2003 play by Martin McDonagh and is a past Tony Award winner for “Best Play.” The USM production opens in an interrogation room set in a fictional totalitarian police state where an author is being questioned in connection with a series of gruesome child murders that resemble her stories.

“The play poses questions about the responsibility an artist bears for his audience’s actions, among other topics,” said Van Ibsen, head of USM’s theatre program. “Justice is also an over-arching theme of the play, and one of the university’s core values.”

The Pillowman is the 2012 entry in USM’s annual tradition of student productions. The student productions are unique within the Saint Mary theatre season because the students produce the play themselves. They select which work they will perform and choose a director from among their ranks, who in turn selects the cast, a set designer, and other technical positions. The play was chosen for its challenging themes, as well as the technical hurdles it poses in execution.

“The students get to practice their skills in collaboration, producing as well as acting,” Ibsen said. “This play offers them real-world experience designing all aspects of the production, working within a budget, and shouldering responsibility.”

The students are offering a 10 minute “talk-back” session immediately following the performance on Friday night, Feb. 17. Audience members who would like to discuss the play or ask questions of the cast, crew, director or designer may remain in their seats after the play.

The production stars USM’s Patrick Peterson as Tupolski, Alyssa Dunning as Katurian, Mitchell Ludwig as Ariel, and Briana Janas as Michelle. Student Sadie Vetter served as director.

Call (913) 758-6152 for tickets or for more information.

The University of Saint Mary is a Catholic co-educational applied liberal arts university founded and sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. The University of Saint Mary is located at 4100 South 4th Street, Leavenworth, Kan., with additional locations in Overland Park and Kansas City, Kan. Visit www.stmary.edu for more information