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Stage Right presents Southern comedy "Dearly Beloved"

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By Brad Meyer

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The resident theatrical troupe of the Crighton Theatre is busy rehearsing and preparing for the next installment in a trilogy of Southern comedies about life in a small Texas town.

Stage Right Productions will present "Dearly Beloved" April 16 to May 2 at Crighton Theatre, located at 234 N. Main in downtown Conroe. The play is the original script in a trio of Southern comedies by playwrights Jessie Jones, Nicholas Hope and Jamie Wooten.

"The play features many of the same characters from 'Christmas Belles' and 'Southern Hospitality,'" said Carolyn Wong, founder of Stage Right. "The previous productions were well received, so we're anxious to present the original play in the series."



Wade Gonsoulin as Dub looks on as his wife Frankie Futrelle, portrayed by Patrice Kentimenos, prays to her dead mama for support in the Stage Right production of the comedy "Dearly Beloved."

The play features the comedic interrelations of the Futrelle sisters, Frankie, Honey Raye and Twink, in preparation for a "Gone With The Wind" themed wedding in their mythical town of Fayro, Texas. As usual, nothing goes according to plan.

"We're fortunate that many of the same actors have been able to play the same parts throughout the series of productions," Wong said. "The actors are having as much fun as the audience."

Now in its second season as the official theatrical troupe of Crighton Theatre, Stage Right continues to grow. Wong is pleased with the group's progress in creating awareness and growing audiences at the theater. She's also pleased with the response from area actors.

"We've been able to feature several actors that have never performed in Montgomery County," she said. "It's good to provide new opportunities to showcase their talent."

The success of Stage Right's theatrical offerings has not gone unnoticed. Playwrights Jones, Hope and Wooten visited with Stage Right officials in Conroe last month to discuss future productions of their work.

"They are giving us the opportunity to have a world premier of a new comedy they are working on," said Wong. "We don't have all the details worked out, but we anticipate we'll debut it in the fall of 2011."

While she acknowledged there is some public confusion between Stage Right and the Crighton Players, who moved to the new Owen Theatre in 2008, she said relationship between the theatrical groups is good.

"We go to see their shows and they come to see ours," she said. "Two groups means twice as many opportunities for actors and audiences."

For tickets and information, call (936) 441-SHOW or visit www.crightontheatre.org.

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