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Baldwin Players’ Production Will Commemorate End of Civil War

TIFTON—When General Robert E. Lee surrendered to General Ulysses S. Grant on April 9, 1865 at the Appomattox Court House, lives changed across the country as the long, bloody Civil War was finally at an end.

The Baldwin Players of Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College will examine three of those lives in a special presentation of “The Whipping Man” on March 5-7 at 7 p.m. each night at the Peanut Museum of the Georgia Museum of Agriculture and Historic Village at ABAC.

“This play is an intimate look into the lives of three Jews during Passover, 1865,” Dr. Brian Ray, director of the ABAC theatre troupe, said. “The Civil War is over, and the annual celebration of freedom from bondage is being observed in Jewish homes across the country.

“One of these homes belongs to the DeLeons of Virginia. Confederate officer Caleb DeLeon has returned from the war to discover his family missing and only two former slaves remaining. Caleb is badly wounded and the two men, Simon and John, are forced to care for him.”
Ray said “The Whipping Man” is intended for mature audiences. He said the three characters in the play are challenged by the war’s ravages and must improvise the Passover celebration of their shared faith as they struggle with their shared past as master and slave.

“The result of their time together is the revelation of long-buried family secrets, along with new ones,” Ray said. “Slavery and war, they discover, distort even good men’s souls.”

The ticket cost for the play by Matthew Lopez is $7 per person. Tickets are available at www.purplepass.com/abac or by calling (229) 391-4895. The tickets are available at no charge to ABAC students, faculty, and staff.

Ray said members of the community as well as ABAC students will be a part of the production. Cast members include Todrick D. Webb as Simon, Ryan Norton as Caleb, and Tre’mon Mills as John.

Webb is a member of the Tifton community; Norton is a recent ABAC graduate and a member of the Tifton community; and Mills is an ABAC speech communications major from Blakely.

“The Whipping Man” was first produced in 2009, with the play becoming bi-coastal in 2010. The play won the 2011 John Gassner New Play Award from the New York Outer Critics Circle and was nominated in the “Best New Play” category for the inaugural Off-Broadway Alliance Awards in the same year. The show closed at the Manhattan Theatre Club in New York City after three months, 101 performances, and three extensions.

For more information on the Baldwin Players’ performance of “The Whipping Man,” interested persons can contact Ray at (229) 391-4969 or via e-mail at bray@abac.edu.