



For immediate release

October 29, 2009

**WHAT: *Christmas Belles***

By Jessie Jones, Nicholas Hope, and Jamie Wooten

Directed by Jessica Jacob

**WHEN: November 20 – December 6, 2009**

Fridays & Saturdays, 8:00 pm

Sundays, 3:00 pm

**WHERE: UAA Mainstage Theatre, Fine Arts 220**

ANCHORAGE PREMIERE OF A NEW HOLIDAY CLASSIC

The University of Alaska Anchorage Department of Theatre and Dance is delighted to present *Christmas Belles*, a new holiday classic and part of the wildly popular Futrelle sister trilogy of plays by playwrights Jessie Jones, Nicholas Hope and Jamie Wooten.

Set in Fayro, Texas (population 3,003), *Christmas Belles* tells the tale of a Christmas Pageant gone wild and is suitable for all ages. In this play, a well-intentioned holiday program spins out of control when squabbling siblings, a vengeful sheep, family secrets, a surly Santa and a reluctant Elvis impersonator collide – and food poisoning suddenly “Decks the Halls.” This hilarious but heartwarming struggle over a misadventure-filled Christmas Eve brings “Joy to the World” to more than 100 live theatres across the nation this holiday season. And for good reason according to reviewer Dick Kerekes, “...if you enjoy frivolity and hilarity, and want something to bail you out of the Christmas blues, *Christmas Belles* will punch your ticket” and playwright Wooten says, “Unless you are dead, you’re gonna laugh.”

In *Christmas Belles* the Futrelle sisters try to maintain a festive mood as they prepare for the town Christmas Pageant. Frankie is overdue with her second set of twins, Honey Raye is a bundle of nerves, and Twink has been doing time in jail for a little mishap with a bonfire and her newly ex-boyfriend’s collectibles. Add to the mayhem an ailing Santa, a vengeful sheep, a reluctant Elvis impersonator, and a family secret that emerges that just might derail the entire production. On top of everything else, for the first time in Fayro history, the pageant will be shown live on cable access television. Hope and Jones were both raised in Texas and all three co-writers grew up in communities with disastrous church pageants that everyone pretended were “great!” Combining real personalities and real life pageant disasters, they elevate their tale to a gut busting drama that you can’t help but watch, relate to, and enjoy.

Jones, Hope and Wooten are enjoying the reputation of the most widely produced living comedic playwrights in America as well as the “dynamic new comedic voices of the American theatre.” Their reputation is well deserved: Wooten’s credits include writing and producing more than 400 episodes aired on network television, including four seasons of the classic series “The Golden Girls”; Hope is an award winning playwright; and Jones co-authored both *Dearly Departed* the play, and its adaptation for screen *Kingdom Come*. All three cherish their Southern heritage, through their works recalling the Southern lifestyle before the immigration of big box stores like Wal-Mart and Target and America’s relative homogenization.

Jones, Hope and Wooten visited Alaska this summer. Before Wooten became the casting director for 75% of all regional theatres in America, including the Alaska Repertory Theatre of days gone by, he spent time as a Cruise Director on a ship that terminated the season in Alaska ports. Twenty three years and multiple careers later, he returned to Alaska with his co-writers of *Christmas Belles*.

For media information/interviews, please contact director Jessica Jacob at 786-1798 or via e-mail at [afjjj@uaa.alaska.edu](mailto:afjjj@uaa.alaska.edu) .

Friday/Saturday 8 pm Shows

General Admission \$13.00

Reserved Seating \$18.00

Sunday 3 pm Shows

General Admission \$10.00

Reserved Seating \$13.00

Discounts for students, seniors, military, and groups of 15+ are available.

Call the UAA Theatre Box Office at 786-4849 for more information, or go to [Centertix.net](http://Centertix.net)

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