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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Two Fall Plays Slated at Harding Fine Arts Academy**

Oklahoma City- Harding Fine Arts Academy's drama department is doing something crazy this year, according to drama teacher and fine arts department chair Brenda Williams. The Oklahoma City public charter school is working double-time to put on two theater productions at once.

"I couldn't decide between two shows I wanted to produce at the school," Williams said. So she opted to do both.

The plays will have two performances each; "Crimes" will play Friday, November 13th at 7:00 pm and Saturday, November 14th at 2 pm, while "Boys" will play Saturday, November 14th at 7 pm and Sunday, November 15th at 2 pm.

"I have directed both shows before, when I taught at Classen School for Advanced Studies," Williams said. "They are near and dear to me, but one is heavy on men and the other is heavy on women. The kids really loved the shows - we read them in classes last year - so I thought, 'why not?' Both appear on the same basic set, with different furniture."

"HFAA has a reputation for outstanding productions," she said. "Every show we have produced since I came here has been extremely well-received and attended. These are also two pieces of really lovely theater - both heartwarming comedies with great characters and story lines."

Pulling off two shows at once would be daunting for adults, Williams said, but her students are embracing the challenge.

"They have sports, cheerleading, after-school jobs, their studies, and their home lives taking their time and attention. But they are working harder than I have ever seen."



She said the kids are committed to the projects because they are serious about the art form.

"I think what sets us apart is the fact that our school has an arts-integrated curriculum. We're inclusive and encouraging of our kids and their art discipline."

*Boys Next Door* tells the story of Arnold, Norman, Lucien and Barry - four mentally challenged young men living together in an apartment, and their social worker, Jack, who is leaving them to pursue another career. Mingled with scenes from the daily lives of these four, where "little things" sometimes become momentous (and often very funny), are moments of great poignancy where we are reminded that the "challenged," like the rest of us, want only to love and laugh and find meaning and purpose in life.

*Crimes of the Heart* is a story of family dynamics, loyalty, and love, as three Southern sisters deal with old wounds and family skeletons, including the arrest of the youngest for shooting her husband because she "didn't like his looks." Their troubles, though grave, are yet somehow hilarious, as these young characters escape their collective pasts to seize their futures. Henley herself has been described by critics as "skillful at serving us pain as though it were a piece of cake."

The plays will be presented at Harding Fine Arts Academy auditorium, 3333 N. Shartel Avenue in Oklahoma City. Tickets will be sold at the door and are \$5 for adults, \$3 for senior citizens and military, and \$2 for students. Reservations are not required.

For more information, visit [hardingfinearts.org](http://hardingfinearts.org) or call 405-702-4322.

Harding Fine Arts Academy is an Oklahoma City charter school that prepares high school students for college in an academically challenging, arts-integrated environment and has recently been named a 2015 Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education.

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