

# D *Starkville* DAILY NEWS

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## SCT presents performances of winning play

By Carrie Michelle Pharr  
For the Daily News

Starkville Community Theatre is hosting two benefit performances of its award-winning "Catfish Moon," and they are hoping the public will "take the bait" and join in on the fun.

The funds raised during the performances — which will be staged at 7:30 p.m. on Monday and Tuesday at SCT's Playhouse on Main — will assist the cast and crew in their upcoming competition during the Southeastern Theatre Conference in Birmingham, Ala., March 5-8.

"SCT's Catfish Moon is a perfect example of the quality work we produce here at our local community theatre," said Terry McDowell, fund-raiser co-chair.

"Kris Lee [director] has done an outstanding job bringing this poignant story of enduring friendship to the stage — make that a pier! The four cast members are simply amazing," she added.

"It is our honor to have been chosen to represent the great state of Mississippi at the Southeastern Theatre Conference this year. We hope everyone comes out to lend us a hand, but mostly we want people to see this heart-felt, award-winning production," McDowell said.

For a minimum donation of \$15, theatre goers can enjoy the production, which runs just under one hour to fit the competition guidelines, and a picnic-style celebration afterward with the cast and crew.

Catfish Moon — written by Mississippi native Laddy Sartin — advances to the SETC festival after winning seven awards —



Submitted photo/SDN

Above, the cast of Starkville Community Theatre's award-winning production of Laddy Sartin's "Catfish Moon" is staging two benefit performances of the show early next week to raise money to help defray expenses involved in taking the show to the Southeastern Theatre Conference regional competition in Birmingham, Ala., next weekend. Pictured, clockwise from left, are Paul Ruff, Gabe Smith, Marcus Vowell and Krista Vowell.

including the top honor, the J. Warren McDaniel Community Theatre Award for Best Production — during the 2009 Mississippi Theatre Association Festival in January.

Director Kris Lee thinks he understands why the show made such an impact on the adjudicators.

"I think it's because it's such an accessible story," Lee said. "The characters are easily relatable, and the play has a truly universal appeal.

"The story affects each and every audience, and the cast is

amazingly gifted at telling these characters' stories," Lee said.

In addition to helping raise funds for the upcoming competition, McDowell said, next week's performances are a great opportunity for SCT's patrons to catch this non-season production.

"Only a handful of people caught a one-night performance of Catfish Moon before we went to MTA, and having the opportunity to perform here at home is wonderful," McDowell said.

The cast and crew are excited to return to a show they love, after taking some well-deserved

time off following MTA. Lee said preparing for a regional competition takes "a lot of patience" and, of course, hard work.

"Over a month has passed since we staged this production, and some company members have moved into new projects and productions, but being able to revisit these characters is such a joy that we are picking up right where we left off," Lee said.

Lee said he speaks for more than just the cast and the crew when he offers thanks to the SCT supporters.

"I think any SCT director, actor, and stage manager could write a book about the love and support we get from our SCT family," he said. "They are somehow always a step ahead, eager to assist, wanting to reach out.

"It is because of our SCT family that we are able to take quality productions to MTA and, for the second time in three years, advance to SETC," Lee added.

SCT's box office is currently accepting reservations for the benefit performances of "Catfish Moon" and for the remaining performances of "Doubt," which closes Saturday.

To make a reservation for either show, email [sct@dixie-net.com](mailto:sct@dixie-net.com). This e-mail address is being protected from spam bots, you need JavaScript enabled to view it, call 323-6855, or stop by the Playhouse.

McDowell said that if anyone cannot attend one of the performances but would still like to help, donations may be mailed to Starkville Community Theatre at P.O. Box 1254, Starkville, MS 39760.