

Andrew College

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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Andrew College's Nate Gross plays role in Springer production *Of Mice and Men*

CUTHBERT, GA. – The stage version of Steinbeck's legendary masterpiece opened in the Springer Opera House in Columbus on January 19 and features Andrew College's Nate Gross who plays the part of Curley. Gross, an assistant professor, is the director of the theatre program and division coordinator of fine arts at Andrew.

Steinbeck's legendary masterpiece is the saga of George and Lennie's pursuit of independence and the American dream in the world of itinerate farm workers during the Great Depression.

The story unfolds as the two homeless men arrive on a large commercial ranch in the Salinas Valley of California to work as field hands bringing in the barley harvest. Living in a bunkhouse with other desperate farm hands, the men are flung into the brutal politics of Depression work teams where jealousies, fears and secrets threaten lives and futures.

The Boss (Brian Luedtke) has given his volatile son, Curley (Nate Gross), foreman status on the ranch but Curley can barely keep his mind on his work as his flirtatious young wife (Maddie Tweed) seeks the attentions of ranch hands in a bunkhouse where Lennie and George are lodged.

A grizzled old laborer, Candy, lives in the bunkhouse with his equally ancient dog (Shasta) along with the princely mule-skinner, Slim (Nate Wasson), the gregarious Carlson (Jim Pharr) and the gossipy Whit (Brian Jordan). Another character, the educated black stable hand, Crooks (Keith McCoy), lives a solitary life of study away from the other laborers.

Producing artistic director Paul Pierce has staged the production with a keen focus on the human desire to form family bonds when in crisis. "*Of Mice and Men* is an astonishing tale that has many parallels current world conditions," says Pierce.

"This is classic, 180-proof story-telling," Pierce continued. "Steinbeck's words ring like a bell and the stakes just couldn't be higher for these characters. They are us. They are all of the people who work their tails off every day to create families and carve out a little dream to call their own."

Of Mice and Men runs January 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28 at 7:30 p.m. & January 22 and 29 at 2:30 p.m. in Emily Woodruff Hall at the Springer Opera House, the State Theatre of Georgia.

Tickets are \$14-\$37. Please call the Springer Box Office at (706) 327-3688 for seats or visit springeroperahouse.org

Photo: Andrew College faculty member Nate Gross (back row, center) is playing the part of Curley in the Springer Opera House production Of Mice and Men.

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Established in 1854, Andrew College is a two-year College related to The United Methodist Church and is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. Situated in the rural southwest Georgia community of Cuthbert, Andrew College offers the Associate of Art, Associate of Music, and Associate of Science degrees.