

SWOSU to Present Theatrical Production *The Laramie Project*

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Tickets are now on sale for Southwestern Oklahoma State University's theatrical production of *The Laramie Project* written by Moisés Kaufman and Members of Tectonic Theater Project.

The SWOSU Hilltop Theatre Box Office is selling tickets and taking reservations from 4-7 p.m. on Mondays through Fridays. Admission for the production is \$5 for adults, \$3 for non-SWOSU students and free for individuals with a valid SWOSU ID. For more information or to make reservations, call the SWOSU Hilltop Theatre Box Office at 580.774.6046.

Performances of *The Laramie Project* are scheduled for 7:30 p.m. nightly on October 6-8 during SWOSU Homecoming Week. On Tuesday, October 6, a talk-back session will immediately following the performance. A panel of professionals will invite a discussion of the subjects raised in the play—specifically with the hope of trying to end violence, bigotry and hate crimes in society.

The Laramie Project is centered on the murder of Matthew Shepard. In October 1998, he was a 21-year-old student at the University of Wyoming. He was kidnapped, severely beaten and left to die, tied to a fence in the middle of the prairie outside Laramie, Wyoming. His bloody, bruised and battered body was not discovered until the next day, and he died several days later in an area hospital.

He was the victim of the assault because he was gay.

Moisés Kaufman and fellow members of the Tectonic Theater Project made six trips to Laramie over the course of a year and a half in the aftermath of the beating and during the trial of the two young men accused of killing Shepard. They conducted more than 200 interviews with the people of the town. Some people interviewed were directly connected to the case, and others were citizens of Laramie.

The breadth of their reactions to the crime is fascinating, according to SWOSU's production director Steve Strickler. Kaufman and Tectonic Theater members have constructed a deeply moving theatrical experience from the interviews and their own experiences.