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### **Southern Appalachian Repertory Theatre Presents Play by GWU Associate Provost**

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# Southern Appalachian Repertory Theatre Presents Play by GWU Associate Provost

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Office of University  
Communications

July 24, 2018

*Written by Dr. Doug Bryan, 'I-YA-I-YA-O' Explores Importance of Mother Figures*

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—A comedy written by Dr. Doug Bryan, associate provost for Student Success at Gardner-Webb

**I-YA-I-YA-O poster**

University, will be presented in August by the Southern Appalachian Repertory Theatre (SART). Directed by Jim Thomas, SART founder and former dean of the GWU School of Performing and Visual Arts, performances are in Owen Theatre on the campus of Mars Hill University, 44 College St., Mars Hill, N.C.

The play, titled “I-YA-I-YA-O,” is based on Bryan’s experiences living and teaching in such places as Nigeria, Hong Kong, Lithuania, Romania and India. “Reflection has always been a part of those places that I saw and the people whom I met,” he shared. “I am grateful for the mother and father figures that I have observed in these diverse parts of the world. If this play is true to my intentions, you will laugh and you will reflect on the perennial and sometimes comical adventures in truth, love and self-discovery.”

The play explores the importance of mother figures who love and nurture their families. “Good mothering and fathering includes the freedom to explore, the freedom to question, the freedom to choose, but also the responsibility to be honest with self and others,” Bryan reflected. “The word ‘Iya’ is the Yoruba word for mother. This play is the story of three retired missionaries who continue to ‘mother’ their adopted nieces and nephews (sons and daughters of fellow missionaries). Once a mother, always a mother; once an iya, always an iya.”

Bryan began writing plays three years ago after auditing a playwriting class taught by Thomas. During the class, Bryan wrote “Rummaging for Will,” which was produced by GWU Theatre in 2013. “I-YA-I-YA-O” was presented at GWU in 2015. “Doug wrote the best play in the course,” Thomas remarked in 2015. “This play, ‘I-YA-I-YA-O,’ is even better. It’s just funny. Doug’s strength as a playwright is writing plot twists, and the audience will see that in this production.”

Photo of Doug Bryan

Performances are Aug. 2, 3, 9 and 10 at 7:30 p.m.; Aug. 4 and 11 at 2:30 and 7:30 p.m.; and Aug. 5 and 12 at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are \$25 and \$30, and may be purchased on the SART website, <https://www.sartplays.com/shows>. For more information, call 828-689-1239.

*Located in the North Carolina foothills, Gardner-Webb University is a place where Christian compassion meets critical thinking. A private, Christian, liberal arts university, Gardner-Webb emphasizes a strong student-centered experience and rigorous academics to prepare students to become effective servant-leaders within the global community. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.*

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