



Meaning, Mayhem and Milestones

ACU THEATRE 2025-26 SEASON



Welcome back to ACU Theatre and a season of “Meaning, Mayhem and Milestones.”

Whether through fairytale misfits, a young woman’s journey to self-acceptance, the backstage mayhem of theatrical absurdity, or the quiet heartbreak of missed connections, this season you’ll encounter the beautiful chaos of being human. Each story – fantastical, heartfelt

or poignantly surreal – reminds us of the meaning found through transformation, connection and the courageous pursuit of love.

Thank you for your ongoing support of ACU Theatre through the years. We can’t wait for you to discover this season’s hallmark productions! Our program is nothing without an audience, and we value you. Step into our 2025-26 season celebration as we experience meaning, mayhem and milestones together.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dawne Swearingen Meeks".

Dawne Swearingen Meeks ('95)
Chair, ACU Department of Theatre

P.S. Visit acu.edu/theatre today to reserve your tickets!

The logo for "Shrek The Musical" is centered on a dark blue background with a bokeh effect of light blue dots. The word "SHREK" is in large, bold, green 3D letters. Above the "H" is a small logo of a dragon breathing fire. To the right of the dragon logo is the "DREAMWORKS THEATRICALS" logo. Below "SHREK" is the word "The" in a smaller, gold, serif font, and below that is "MUSICAL" in large, bold, gold 3D letters.

 DREAMWORKS
THEATRICALS

SHREK

The
MUSICAL

10/30-11/2

2 p.m. Sunday matinee

8 p.m. Thu, Fri, Sat

**BOONE FAMILY
THEATRE**

 \$50

 \$25 Age 12 and younger

 \$15 Student Rush

 Ages 9+

Book and Lyrics by David Lindsay-Abaire

Music by Jeanine Tesori

Direction by Joey Banks

Musical direction by Dr. Chris Hollingsworth

Choreography by Teri Wilkerson

Conducted by Dr. Steven Ward

“Once upon a time, there was a little ogre named Shrek...” Thus begins the tale of an unlikely hero who finds himself on a life-changing journey alongside a wisecracking donkey and a feisty princess who resists her rescue. Throw in a short-tempered bad guy, a cookie with an attitude and over a dozen other fairy tale misfits, and you’ve got the kind of mess that calls for a real hero. Luckily, there’s one on hand... and his name is Shrek.

LIGHTS UP

Cabaret

*Direction by Dawne Swearingen-Meeks and
Dr. Chris Hollingsworth*

Musical direction by Dr. Chris Hollingsworth

11/15

7:30 p.m.
FULKS THEATRE

 **\$45** Includes Curtain
Call Reception

 **Open seating**

 **All ages**

Join us for an unforgettable night where Broadway meets West Texas, as select area high school theatre students – chosen through a rigorous audition process– take the stage alongside ACU Theatre students. Guests will enjoy live performances in a cabaret-style setting featuring charcuterie boards, conversation and community. Dessert will be served during intermission. *Lights Up!* is a celebration of talent, mentorship and community through song.

Proceeds support ACU Theatre through guest artist residencies, scholarships and continued program excellence. Sponsorship levels range from Silver (\$500) to Diamond (\$2,500), each including tables, swag bags, season ticket packages and program recognition.



ONE NIGHT ONLY

12/06**7:30 p.m.**
FULKS THEATRE **\$40** Includes Curtain
Call Reception **Open seating** **All ages**

ACU Theatre welcomes Jeremy Varner and Abigail Gatlin-Varner as guest choreographers. Jeremy has worked at Atlanta's Tony Award-winning Alliance Theatre and now leads Varner Creative. Abigail is a former Radio City Rockette and has toured internationally with Beauty and the Beast, and serves on the precision dance faculty at Broadway Dance Center, NYC.

Step into an evening of storytelling through dance as ACU Theatre students take the stage for *One Night Only* – a dynamic dance concert celebrating traveling stories. Featuring original choreography and powerful collaborations, students work alongside a distinguished industry guest artist each year to bring inspiring performances to life on the stage. Whether lyrical, contemporary or rhythmically charged, each piece shares a narrative that speaks to the beautiful complexity of the human experience – without a single word spoken.


02/19-22*
2 p.m. Sunday matinee

7:30 p.m. Thurs, Fri, Sat

FULKS THEATRE

■	\$30
■	\$10 Student Rush
■	\$40 Dinner
👤	Ages 13+

Book by Brian Crawley
Music by Jeanine Tesori
Lyrics by Brian Crawley
Direction by Dawne Swearingen-Meeks,
assisted by student Laci Jackson
Musical direction by Dr. Chris Hollingsworth
Choreography by student Kendall West

Set in 1964, *Violet* follows a young woman on a journey across the South in search of healing and hope. Scarred from a childhood accident, she dreams of transformation through a TV evangelist's prayer but discovers something deeper along the way. Through unexpected friendships and the power of love, Violet begins to see herself– and her worth – with new eyes.

*Student-only performances Sept. 22-24.

**Student Rush Tickets available one hour before curtain.



this Random world

02/08

7:30 p.m.
SEVEN AND
ONE BOOKS
downtown Abilene

 \$15

 Open seating

 All ages

Written by Steven Dietz
ACU BFA Theatre student director

We want to believe that serendipity brings us together, but is that just a myth? Mining the comedy of missed connections, *This Random World* asks the serious question of how often we travel parallel paths through the world without noticing. From an ailing woman who plans one final trip, to her daughter planning one great escape and her son falling prey to a prank gone wrong, this funny, intimate and heartbreaking play explores the lives that may be happening just out of reach of our own.

The 25th Annual
PUTNAM COUNTY

**DINNER
OPTION
APRIL
25!**



04/23-26*

2 p.m. Sunday matinee
7:30 p.m. Thu, Fri, Sat
FULKS THEATRE

\$40

\$10 Student rush**

\$40 Dinner tickets***

Ages 15+

*Music and Lyrics by William Finn
Book by Rachel Sheinkin
Conceived by Rebecca Feldman
Additional Materials by Jay Reiss
Direction by Joey Banks
Musical Direction by Dr. Chris Hollingsworth*

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee is a heartfelt musical comedy that follows an eclectic group of six teens who compete for the spelling championship of a lifetime. While candidly disclosing hilarious and touching stories from their home lives, the tweens spell their way through a series of (potentially made-up) words, hoping never to hear the soul-crushing "ding" of the bell that signals a spelling mistake. A riotous ride, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* is a delightful den of comedic genius.

*Talkback, Saturday, April 24. **Student Rush Tickets available one hour before curtain.

***Dinner, Saturday, April 25.

Tickets

To order tickets for individual shows or ticket packages, visit acu.edu/theatre, mail in the form at right or call the box office a **325-674-ARTS**. For best value, consider one of the season ticket packages below.

SHOWSTOPPER PACKAGE: \$155 (\$25 savings) – All five show

Includes seats for the entire season: Homecoming Musical, Cornerstone, Dance Premiere, Winter Musical and Spring Play.

FAB FOUR: \$130 (\$20 savings) – Your selection of four shows

Choose four of the five shows: Homecoming Musical, Cabaret, Dance Concert, Winter Play and Spring Musical.

OPENING NIGHT: \$110 (\$70 savings) – Be the first to see the show

Best savings of all packages for opening nights (or Sunday matinee) of all shows. If you need to switch your ticket to another night, you pay the full price difference .

ADD ONS:

- Add three-course dinners at a price of \$40 each for Feb. 21 (*Violet*) or April 25 (*Spelling Bee*).
- Add tickets for the Lights Up! fundraiser for \$45 each.
- Add student-directed production tickets for \$15 each.

			Show-stopper	Fab 4	Opening Night
		Full price	All shows	Choose 4	All shows
Lights Up!	<i>Cabaret</i>	\$45	included	<input type="checkbox"/>	included
Homecoming Musical	<i>Shrek The Musical</i>	\$50	included	<input type="checkbox"/>	included
Dance Show	<i>One Night Only</i>	\$40	included	<input type="checkbox"/>	included
Winter Musical	<i>Violet</i>	\$30	included	<input type="checkbox"/>	included
Spring Musical	<i>Spelling Bee</i>	\$30	included	<input type="checkbox"/>	included
Your price per package		\$180	\$155	\$130	\$110
Savings			\$25	\$20	\$70



Save the dates:

Abilene Shakespeare Festival

The Winter's Tale and The Comedy of Errors
June 10-14, 2026

Order Form

CONTACT

NAME	ADDRESS
HOME OR CELL PHONE	CITY, STATE, ZIP
WORK PHONE	EMAIL

PAYMENT

Type of payment: ☐ Check ☐ MasterCard ☐ VISA ☐ Discover ☐ Am. Express

CARD NUMBER	EXP. DATE	CSV
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_____ Number of **Showstopper** packages @ \$155 each = \$ _____

_____ Number of **Fab 4** packages @ \$130 each = \$ _____

For your **Fab 4** package, place an "X" on the show you DON'T want included

- ☐ Cabaret
- ☐ Shrek The Musical
- ☐ One Night Only
- ☐ Violet
- ☐ Spelling Bee

_____ Number of **Opening Night** packages @ \$110 each = \$ _____

_____ Number of dinner add-ons @ \$40 each for Feb. 21 (*Violet*) \$ _____

_____ Number of dinner add-ons @ \$40 each for April 25 (*Bee*) \$ _____

_____ Number of fundraiser tickets for *Lights Up!* Nov. 14 @ \$45 each = \$ _____

_____ Number of student-directed *This Random World* @ \$15 each = \$ _____

TOTAL DUE = \$ _____

Detach and mail to ACU Theatre Box Office at:

Abilene Christian University
ACU Box 27843
Abilene, Texas 79699-7843



ACU THEATRE
transforming artists

Abilene Christian University
ACU Box 27843
Abilene, Texas 79699-7843

acu.edu/theatre • Box office: 325-674- TS
Audition info: app.getacceptd.com/acutheatre

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Abilene Christian
University

Freaky Friday



BFA THEATRE AUDITIONS:

September 26, 2025
in person audition

December 5, 2025
in person/virtual audition

January 23, 2026
virtual audition

February 20, 2026
in person audition

March 20, 2026
in person/virtual audition

The Realistic Joneses

