M*A*S*H Opens This Friday

Wednesday, 16 October 2013

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Brianna Gibbs/KMXT

This weekend folks can have a look at what life might have been like in a mobile army surgical hospital during the Korean War. Friday is the opening night for M*A*S*H, a play directed by Mike Wall and Jared Griffin, and featuring more than 46 local thespians.

M*A*S*H may sound familiar to those who watched the TV series, which originally aired in the 1970s. That series was inspired by the movie M*A*S*H, based on the book. Wall said the play, which will show all weekend, is most like the book, but people shouldn’t come in trying to compare it to anything.

“This show is about the insanity of war, the people who are involved in it. You know it’s about small MASH troop in the middle of North Korea during the middle of war and all they do is deal with causalities and try to save lives all the time. So what do you do in that environment to make friends, to try to sort of, because I mean you’re in the middle of blood and guts and gore and there’s a connection with the Korean community because they use Koreans in the facility and there’s some kids who help out. It’s kind of like how did humanity emerge from the midst of an insane situation.”

Griffin said he and Wall chose M*A*S*H because they wanted to do play that could feature a large cast, but also didn’t want a musical.

“Something with very little music or no music at all, very little choreography. I think as we read the show M*A*S*H there is some singing and some choreography involved, to our chagrin, but we wanted to do a show that reflected the Kodiak community also. You know one of the ones I looked at was No Time for Sergeants, but that one was too, it was a lot of male roles.”

Wall said the play is comedy and drama, which is different from productions in Kodiak over the past few years.

“There used to be a tradition here of doing drama and doing comedy, musical theater. And then years back when Gerry Wilson left us, we stopped the comedy drama piece and the musical theater kept going, because there weren’t enough people to actually pull off a show on the big stage. So we’ve always wanted to bring that back.”

Both Wall and Griffin said it’s been cool to see cast members of all ages and experiences come together for a production like this and fill the larger number of roles needed.

M*A*S*H will open this Friday at 7 p.m. at the Gerald C. Wilson Auditorium. It will show at the same time on Saturday and at 3 p.m. on Sunday. Tickets range in price from $22 to $25 and are available through the Kodiak Arts Council online, or at the box office before the show.