

Regina Taylor's *Crowns* graces Taproot Theatre's Jewell Mainstage

SEATTLE, WA – February 21, 2018 – Faith Bennett Russell will direct Taproot Theatre's production of *Crowns* by Regina Taylor, adapted from the book *Crowns: Portraits of Black Women in Church Hats* by Michael Cunningham and Craig Marberry. This "delightfully celebratory" (*New York Times*) play weaves song and story into a transformative journey through a family's history. Single tickets are available online at taproottheatre.org, by phone 206.781.9707 or in person at 204 N 85th St. Discounts are available for groups of 8 or more by calling 206.781.9708 or by visiting taproottheatre.org/group-sales.

Gospel music and storytelling come together to surprise, delight and remind us all of the unique and diverse ways we express ourselves. When a young woman from Brooklyn struggles to find her place in the world, she is surrounded by a community of women that transcend place and time to infuse her with stories of faith, fortitude and pride.

Bennett Russell makes her Jewell Mainstage solo directorial debut, following her co-direction of Paula Vogel's *A Civil War Christmas* with Taproot Theatre's Associate Artistic Director, Karen Lund. Bennett Russell has directed *The Lion King*, *Hairspray*, *Godspell*, *13 the Musical* and *Footloose* for Village Theatre's KIDSTAGE and *Into the Woods*, *Seussical the Musical* and *Once On This Island* for Studio East.

The cast features **Bretteney Beverly** (Taproot Theatre's *A Charlie Brown Christmas*) as Wanda, **Marlette Buchanan** (Village Theatre's *Newsies*) as Mabel, **Tracy Michelle Hughes** (New Century's *Bright Half Life*) as Mother Shaw, **Kristen Natalia** (Asolo Repertory Theatre's *Clybourne Park*) as Velma, **Vincent "VJ" Orduña** as Man, **Be Russell** (Taproot Theatre's *Godspell*) as Jeanette and **Bethanie Willis** (Village Theatre's *Dreamgirls*) as Yolanda.

Following *Crowns* is Oscar Wilde's *Lady Windermere's Fan* playing May 16 – June 23, 2018. Karen Lund directs.

SPECIAL DATES FOR THE AUDIENCE

Post-Play Discussions: TTC staff and cast members will join the audience to discuss the play and its production process. Post-play discussions are held after every Wednesday performance and after the Midweek Matinee performances on March 27 at 2:00 PM (*limited availability*), April 4 at 10:30 AM and April 18 at 2:00 PM.

Pay What You Can (PWYC): March 28 at 7:30 PM; a limited number of \$10 tickets are available at noon, tickets may be purchased in person or by phone (card fees may apply). Beginning at 5:00 PM, tickets are name-your-own-price; these tickets may be purchased in person only. Limit 4 tickets per person. Seating for PWYC performances is General Admission,

there is no reserved seating. If you have accessible seating needs please call the Box Office directly.

Intergenerational Matinee: April 4 at 10:30 AM (*guided post-play discussion*); With \$10 student/chaperone tickets, play guides and a guided post-play discussion, our Intergenerational Matinee enhances student education, providing theatre as a tool and springboard for learning, growth and communication.

Senior Matinees: March 27 (*post-play discussion, limited availability*) & April 18 (*post-play discussion*) at 2:00 PM; Our Senior Matinee program provides anyone aged 62 and older with an affordable way to participate in live theatre in convenient daytime performance.

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CROWNS FACT SHEET

WHAT: Taproot Theatre Company presents *Crowns* by Regina Taylor, adapted from the book by Michael Cunningham and Craig Marberry. Gospel music and storytelling come together to surprise, delight and remind us all of the unique and diverse ways we express ourselves. When a young woman from Brooklyn struggles to find her place in the world, she is surrounded by a community of women that transcend place and time to infuse her with stories of faith, fortitude and pride.

WHEN: March 21 – April 28, 2018 • Wed/Thur, 7:30 PM; Fri/Sat, 8:00 PM; Sat matinee, 2:00 PM

Dates to note:

Previews: March 21 & 22, 7:30 PM

Opening Night: March 23, 8:00 PM

Pay What You Can: March 28, 7:30 PM

Midweek Matinees: March 27 at 2:00 PM (*limited availability, post-play discussion*), April 4 (*guided post-play discussion*) at 10:30 AM and April 18 at 2:00 PM (*post-play discussion*).

Post-Play Discussions: Wednesday nights following performances, excluding Preview.

WHERE: Taproot Theatre Company's Jewell Mainstage Theatre, 204 N 85th St, Seattle, WA 98103

TICKETS: Single tickets are available online at taproottheatre.org, by phone at 206.781.9707 or in person at 204 N 85th St. Tickets range from \$27-50, depending on the performance. Taproot offers a \$5 senior/student discount off regularly priced tickets (excludes previews or specially priced performances). Tickets for the Midweek Matinees are \$20. Discounts are available for groups of 8 or more by visiting taproottheatre.org/group-sales/ or by calling 206.781.9708. Tickets for the PWYC performance are available day-of-show at the Box Office window; contact the Box Office for additional details.

AGE RECOMMENDATION: 12+

CAST (in alphabetical order)

Bretteney Beverly	<i>Wanda</i>
Marlette Buchanan	<i>Mabel</i>
Tracy Michelle Hughes	<i>Mother Shaw</i>

Kristen Natalia	<i>Velma</i>
Vincent "VJ" Orduña	<i>Man</i>
Be Russell	<i>Jeanette</i>
Bethanie Willis	<i>Yolanda</i>

PHOTOS: Press photos are available online at <http://taproottheatre.org/for-the-press/> > Jewell Mainstage Theatre > Crowns. *This link is not to be published.*

PR: Isaiah Custer, Communications Manager, 206, 529.3666, isaiahc@taproottheatre.org

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Taproot Theatre Company is a professional, non-profit theatre company with a multi-faceted production program. Founded in 1976, Taproot Theatre serves the Pacific Northwest with Jewell Mainstage Productions, Isaac Studio Theatre Productions, Touring Productions and the Acting Studio. Taproot Theatre Company creates theatre experiences to brighten the spirit, engage the mind and deepen the understanding of the world around us while inspiring imagination, conversation and hope. Taproot Theatre Company is a member of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), Theatre Puget Sound (TPS) and Phinney Ridge Neighborhood Association (PNA).

Scott Nolte, Producing Artistic Director | Karen Lund, Associate Artistic Director
204 N 85th St | Seattle, WA 98103
206.781.9705 | taproottheatre.org

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