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New Christmas play a runaway success; *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Christmas Carol* sells out entire run, with weeks to go

World premiere play by Seattle's John Longenbaugh generates record sales, achieves financial goal by end of opening weekend

SEATTLE – January 13, 2011 – Theatre audiences looking for something fresh among the typical holiday trappings have found it with *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Christmas Carol* by John Longenbaugh. Making its world premiere at Seattle's Taproot Theatre Company this past November and December under the direction of Scott Nolte, this literary mashup brought in unprecedented sales. Exceeding its already-ambitious revenue goals by 27 percent, the theatre sold out the entire run on December 3, with three and a half weeks to go.

"smart, witty and fun, and has the makings of an annual event — the sort of family holiday diversion that many regional theaters, overdosed on seasons-past repeats of "Christmas Carol," "Tuna Christmas," et al., have on their wish lists." – Misha Berson, [Seattle Times](#) (bold added)

"It's elementary, really. ... it works seamlessly. ... Holmes aficionados will find numerous delights." - Mabelle Allman, [Seattle's Child](#)

*"*****" (four stars) – Jerry Kraft, [SeattleActor.com](#)*

Best Theatre of 2010 – Queen Anne/Magnolia News

Best Theatre of 2010 – Miryam Gordon, [Seattle Gay News](#)

Underscoring the anticipation for this premiere, tickets sold fast; two performances were already sold out a month before opening, and Taproot had to add an additional performance to keep up with demand (and would have added more had the cast and crew been available).

In *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Christmas Carol*, these then are the facts: The year, 1894. The date, Christmas Eve. The location, 221B Baker Street. After being presumed dead for three years, a hardened Sherlock Holmes resurfaces, turning his back on the people who need him most. Three unexpected callers arrive on Christmas Eve uncovering clues from the detective's past, present and

future. Can they save Holmes and his world from a dire end? They must "do it all in one night" to accomplish the task.

"Taproot's got good news: a brand new mashup of the Dickens classic." – Mark D. Fefer, [Seattle Weekly](#)

"a funny and surprising concoction that's just right for the holiday season." - Meredith Pechta, [Examiner.com](#)

"I am quite confident that it will be a popular holiday production for many years to come." - Jerry Kraft, [SeattleActor.com](#)

Longenbaugh—a director and playwright with over 20 years of theatre experience—conceived the idea for *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Christmas Carol* out of a desire to see a holiday production that offers all the joys of classic stories such as Dickens' oft-produced *A Christmas Carol*, but with some surprises mixed in. Having worked with Taproot Theatre in the past for the premiere of his play *The Man Who Was Thursday* (2002), Longenbaugh approached Nolte in 2007 about sitting in on a reading of the play. From there the two worked out a plan for getting the script ready to premiere at Taproot Theatre.

Taproot Theatre's 2010 cast featured acclaimed actor Terry Edward Moore as Sherlock Holmes and Stephen Grenley as Watson, along with David Dorrian, Aaron Lamb, Pam Nolte, Jesse Notehelper, Eric Riedmann and Alex Robertson. The production team included scenic and sound designer Mark Lund, costume designer Sarah Burch Gordon and lighting designer Jody Briggs. Britney Smallwood served as stage manager, Shanna Ridenour as dialect coach and Judy Naegeli as dramaturg.

Theatres interested in producing *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Christmas Carol* should contact Karen Lund at karen@taproottheatre.org or (206)529-3665.

ABOUT TAPROOT THEATRE COMPANY

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 Mainstage Productions, Touring Productions and Acting Studio. Taproot exists to create theatre that explores the beauty and questions of life while bringing hope to our search for meaning. Taproot Theatre Company is a member of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), Theatre Puget Sound (TPS), and the Greenwood-Phinney Chamber of Commerce.

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