

TAPROOT THEATRE



C O M P A N Y

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Mary Zimmerman's *The Odyssey* opens Taproot Theatre's 35th Anniversary Season

**Epic yet timeless story—packed with adventure, drama and
comedy—opens on February 4**

SEATTLE – January 6, 2011 – On the heels of its most successful season yet, Taproot Theatre Company opens its 35th Anniversary Season with *The Odyssey*, a mythic tale of epic proportions re-told by playwright Mary Zimmerman with her trademark humor, witty twists and imagination. Homer's ancient Greek epic comes alive with mythological monsters, gods and adventurers and one of the most enduring stories in history. *The Odyssey*—an adaptation based on Robert Fitzgerald's translation of Homer's poem, and directed by producing artistic director Scott Nolte—kicks off the 2011 season with an opening night on February 4. The production runs through March 5, with previews on February 2 and 3.

Voyage across land and sea, through the underworld to the top of Mt. Olympus. Muses and monsters introduce this epic myth of the brave and courageous Odysseus as he valiantly seeks his homeland and the arms of his wife and child. Audiences are sure to recognize themselves in this sometimes comic, sometimes harrowing but always thrilling adventure.

"*The Odyssey* is a classic, epic, timeless story, and the reason we're still drawn to it 3,000 years later is because behind the ancient Greek setting, it's a story we all can relate to," said Nolte.

"Odysseus is a soldier, a husband, a father. He's been away at war and he just wants to see his wife and son again. He's determined, and despite multiple obstacles will let nothing—not even the most cunning of creatures—stop him from reaching his goal."

14 actors portray over 85 characters in this playwright-approved shortened version of Zimmerman's original adaptation. Mark Chamberlin leads the cast as Odysseus and is joined by fellow cast members Nic Beach, Ryan Childers, Solomon Davis, Stephen Grenley, Pam Nolte, Jesse Notehelfer, Nolan Palmer, Sarah Roquemore, Randy Scholz, Josh Smyth, Nikki Visel and April Wolfe. The production team includes scenic designer Richard Lorig, costume designer Sarah Burch Gordon, lighting designer Brian Engel and sound designer Mark Lund.

Anne L. Hitt serves as stage manager, Karin Stevens as choreographer, Sam Vance as music director and Sonja Lowe as dramaturg.

The Odyssey was originally produced at Chicago's Goodman Theatre in September 1999. Zimmerman—a professor of performance studies at Northwest University—has earned a reputation of adapting ancient and classic literature and tales for the stage. She received a MacArthur Fellowship in 1998, won the Tony Award for *Metamorphoses* in 2002, and has won over two dozen Joseph Jefferson Awards.

Following *The Odyssey*, Taproot Theatre presents *The Beams are Creaking* by Douglas Anderson, running March 23 through April 23.

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The Odyssey

**By Homer, adapted and originally directed by Mary Zimmerman, adapted from the translation of "The Odyssey" by Robert Fitzgerald
Directed by Scott Nolte**

WHEN: February 2-March 5 (Wednesday-Thursday, 7:30 p.m.; Friday-Saturday, 8 p.m.; Saturday matinees, 2 p.m.)

Dates to note:

- Previews: February 2 & 3, 7:30 p.m.
- Opening night: Friday, February 4, 8 p.m.
- Pay What You Can: February 9, 7:30 p.m.
- Senior Matinee: February 16, 2 p.m.
- Student Matinees: February 8, 9 & 17, March 1 & 2 (all Student Matinees sold out!)
- Post-play Discussions: Wednesday nights, excluding preview

WHERE: Taproot Theatre Company, 204 North 85th Street, Seattle, WA 98103

TICKETS: Tickets are available online at www.taproottheatre.org/buy-tickets/ and through Taproot Theatre's box office, in person or by phone at 206.781.9707. Tickets range from \$20-35, depending on the performance. Taproot offers a \$3 senior/student discount off regular priced tickets (excludes previews). \$10 tickets are available for ages 25 and under. Tickets for the senior matinee are \$20. Discounts are available for parties of 8 or more through Group Sales; call 206.781.9708. Tickets for the pay-what-you-can performance are available day of show at the box office only; contact the box office for details.

ABOUT: Voyage across land and sea, through the underworld to the top of Mt. Olympus. Muses and monsters introduce this epic myth of the brave and courageous Odysseus as he valiantly seeks his homeland and the arms of his wife and child. Audiences are sure to recognize themselves in this sometimes comic, sometimes harrowing but always thrilling adventure.

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 the 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.

Support for Taproot Theatre's 2011 Mainstage season is generously provided by The Charles Simonyi Fund for Arts and Sciences, The Seattle Foundation, 4Culture, ArtsFund and PONCHO.