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**TAPROOT THEATRE'S 30th ANNIVERSARY SEASON CONTINUES WITH
JOHN OLIVE'S *THE VOICE OF THE PRAIRIE***

Taproot Theatre Company continues its 30th Anniversary Season with John Olive's tender, romantic comedy, *The Voice of the Prairie*, March 24 through April 22. Unlikely radio celebrity David Quinn captures the heart of the Midwest with his tales of adventure and young love with a blind girl named Frankie. Will the magic of the airwaves re-ignite lost love? Performances are held at Taproot Theatre at 204 N. 85th Street in Seattle. Audience members are invited to participate in special anniversary promotions throughout the run of the show. Taproot Theatre's 2006 season partners include Arts Fund, The Nesholm Family Foundation, KUOW, The Charles Simonyi Fund for Arts and Sciences, and The Seattle Foundation.

Young Davey and Frankie develop an extraordinary friendship on their thrilling adventures during the summer of 1895. They ride the rails and travel the midwestern countryside until a run-in with trouble tragically separates them. In 1923, New York radio salesman Leon Schwab discovers unlikely storyteller, David Quinn. "The Voice of the Prairie" is born as the tales of Davey and 'Frankie the blind girl' are broadcast throughout the Midwest. Set in the early days of radio this heartwarming, romantic comedy is a theatrical journey to a place where anything and everything is possible.

"The production evokes a fondness and delight in essential Americana." The Seattle P.I. (1994).

"...it's fun, it has a knowing heart and a voice which should delight all within earshot." The Los Angeles Times

Taproot Theatre first produced the six-person version of *The Voice of the Prairie* in 1994 to critical acclaim. The 2006 revival is being produced with a three-person cast under the direction of Producing Artistic Director, Scott Nolte. His production team includes scenic and sound designer Mark Lund, costume designer Sarah Gordon, lighting designer Andrew Duff and properties designer Charity Parenzini. Jenny Schmidt serves as stage manager and Nicholas Hubbard as dramaturg.

The cast for *The Voice of the Prairie* features Jeff Berryman as David Quinn, Timothy Hornor as Davey and Marianne Savell as Frankie. All three actors will play the additional twelve supporting roles throughout the production.

The Voice of the Prairie opens Friday, March 24 and runs Wednesday through Saturday through April 22. Midweek performances begin at 7:30 PM, Saturday matinees at 2:00 PM and Friday and Saturday evenings at 8:00 PM. Low cost previews are offered Wednesday, March 22 and Thursday, March 23 at 7:30 PM. There is a special pay-what-you-can performance on Wednesday, March 29. Tickets for that performance go on sale the day of performance at noon at Taproot Theatre's box office. A dessert reception with the cast and director follows the opening night performance on Friday, March 24. Post-play discussions follow all Wednesday evening performances except the preview. As part of Taproot's 30th Anniversary celebration, birthday cake will be served following every performance.

Tickets for *The Voice of the Prairie* are \$23 - \$25 for midweek performances and Saturday matinees, and \$27 - \$30 for Friday and Saturday night performances. Wednesday and Thursday preview performances are \$19 - \$21. Individuals 25 or under can purchase \$15 tickets to all performances with photo ID. Full-time students and seniors receive a \$2 discount off all general tickets. Half-price student/senior rush tickets are available fifteen minutes prior to performance, subject to availability. Group discounts are available for parties of eight or more. Tickets may be ordered by phone by calling the TTC box office at (206) 781-9707 or Ticketmaster at (206) 292-ARTS. Ticket buyers with

a birthday between March 22 – April 22 can receive a free ticket with the purchase of a second. The offer is only valid on orders placed through Taproot's box office and may not be combined with any other offer.

The Voice of the Prairie was first produced in 1986 by Artreach, a Minneapolis based professional touring company. It was produced under the direction of Steven Dietz and toured throughout the Midwest with a company of three actors. In 1988 *The Voice of the Prairie* received the American Theatre Critic's Association New Play Citation. Hartford Stage Company produced the production as part of their 1987 – 1988 season and expanded the cast to six actors. *The Voice of the Prairie* is currently produced with either a three or six person cast.

Award-winning playwright John Olive is a resident playwright at Actors Theatre in St. Paul, MN and a founding member of the playwright's lab in Minneapolis. Along with six mainstage adaptations for Seattle Children's Theatre, his play *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*, was first produced as part of their 2003 season. *The Summer Moon*, *And With the Echoes it Begins to Rise* and *I Clap My Hands* were first produced by ACT in Seattle. His play *The Summer Moon* received the Minnesota State Arts Board Grant and the 1997 Kennedy Center Drama Award. His other plays include *Careless Love*, *Clara's Play*, *Evelyn and the Polka King*, *God Fire*, *Into the Moonlight Valley*, *Killers*, *Minnesota Moon*, and *Standing On My Knees*. His plays have been widely produced nationwide at playhouses including the Guthrie Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club, Steppenwolf, Actors Theatre of Louisville, South Coast Repertory, the Old Globe, Oregon Shakespeare Festival and the Royal Theatre Copenhagen. He has written screenplays and teleplays for Disney, Amblin Entertainment, Yorktown Productions, MGM/UA and Lorimar. Mr. Olive received his B.A. and M.A. in Theatre Arts from the University of Minnesota.

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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TAPROOT THEATRE FACT SHEET

WHAT: *The Voice of the Prairie* by John Olive. Directed by Scott Nolte.

WHEN: Previews March 22 and 23. Opens March 24 and then runs Wednesday through Saturday through April 22.

WHERE: Taproot Theatre, 204 N. 85th Street in Seattle

TICKETS: Wednesday and Thursday evenings and Saturday matinees, \$23 and \$25; Friday and Saturday evenings, \$27 and \$30; Wednesday and Thursday previews, \$19 and \$21; Student/Senior discount of \$2 off per ticket. Tickets are \$15 for individuals 25 and under. Group rates are available. Ticket buyers with a birthday between March 22 – April 22 can receive a free ticket with the purchase of a second. * Offer only good when purchased at Taproot's box office.

SCHEDULE: Wednesday and Thursday 7:30 PM, Friday and Saturday 8:00 PM, Saturday Matinee 2:00 PM

CALENDAR: ***Anniversary celebration birthday cake served following each performance***

Wed.	March 22	7:30 PM	Preview
Thurs.	March 23	7:30 PM	Preview
Fri.	March 24	8:00 PM	Opening Night with Reception
Sat.	March 25	2:00 PM	
Sat.	March 25	8:00 PM	
Wed.	March 29	7:30 PM	Pay What You Can, Post play discussion
Thurs.	March 30	7:30 PM	
Fri.	March 31	8:00 PM	
Sat.	April 1	2:00 PM	
Sat.	April 1	8:00 PM	
Wed.	April 5	7:30 PM	Post play discussion
Thurs.	April 6	7:30 PM	
Fri.	April 7	8:00 PM	
Sat.	April 8	2:00 PM	
Sat.	April 8	8:00 PM	
Wed.	April 12	7:30 PM	Post play discussion
Thurs.	April 13	7:30 PM	
Fri.	April 14	8:00 PM	
Sat.	April 15	2:00 PM	
Sat.	April 15	8:00 PM	
Wed.	April 19	7:30 PM	***No performance***
Thurs.	April 20	7:30 PM	
Fri.	April 21	8:00 PM	
Sat.	April 22	2:00 PM	
Sat.	April 22	8:00 PM	Closing Night

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