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## **QUILTERS OF GEE'S BEND, AL, VISIT SEATTLE AREA DURING BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

**Appearances at Taproot Theatre Company,  
Greg Kucera Gallery and Tacoma Art Museum starting February 18**

SEATTLE – February 10, 2009 – Quilters from Gee's Bend, AL, an African American community internationally known for its quilts, are visiting the Seattle area February 17-22. Special events will be held at Taproot Theatre Company, Greg Kucera Gallery and Tacoma Art Museum, which are celebrating the history, stories and art of the Gee's Bend community. The people of Gee's Bend have a rich history going back to the days of slavery, when the peninsula was the site of a plantation established by Joseph Gee in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Fast-forwarding nearly two centuries, many residents are descendants of former Gee's Bend slaves. Throughout the years they became sharecroppers and land-owners and marched with Martin Luther King, Jr. (their mules even pulled his casket after he was assassinated). Their quilts have been sold at Bloomingdale's and have been exhibited at museums across the country, including shows in the Puget Sound area.

Taproot Theatre Company is excited to have the quilters speak at post-play discussions following two performances of *Gee's Bend*, the regional premiere of Elyzabeth Gregory Wilder's celebrated play about the courage and hope of the people of Gee's Bend, AL. The quilters will speak after the evening performance on February 18 and the matinee performance on February 21. Ticketholders to any *Gee's Bend* performance are welcome to attend on a space-available basis, but seating priority goes to ticketholders for those performances. *Gee's Bend* runs through February 28; tickets can be purchased through Taproot Theatre's box office at (206) 781-9707 or Ticketmaster at (206) 292-ARTS. More information is available online at [www.taproottheatre.org](http://www.taproottheatre.org).

The quilters will also attend the opening reception of *Quilters of Gee's Bend: Quilts and Etchings* at Greg Kucera Gallery, and then appear for an artist talk at the gallery at noon on February 21. *Quilters of Gee's Bend: Quilts and Etchings* runs from February 19 through March 28. Visit [www.gregkucera.com](http://www.gregkucera.com) for more information.

In addition, Tacoma Art Museum is hosting an afternoon tea with the quilters on February 20 from 3-5 p.m. The tea is open to the public. For more information, visit [www.tacomaartmuseum.org](http://www.tacomaartmuseum.org). The quilters will also be visiting a high school that day; that appearance is closed to the public.

*Gee's Bend* is sponsored in part by the Tacoma Art Museum; their generous support is providing the resources for the women of Gee's Bend to be present at Taproot Theatre's post-play discussions. *Gee's Bend* is staged in partnership with the Northwest African American Museum. Support for Taproot Theatre's 2009 season is generously provided by 4Culture; ArtsFund; The Charles Simonyi Fund for Arts and Sciences; PONCHO; and Washington State Arts Commission. Thanks to Romio's Pizza and Pasta, our Special Thursday Pizza Nights sponsor.

#### **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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#### **Included:**

- Schedule of events

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### Appearances by Gee's Bend quilters:

#### February 18

Post-play discussion after performance of *Gee's Bend* at Taproot Theatre

*Play starts at 7:30 p.m., post-play discussion starts at approximately 9 p.m.*

#### February 19

Opening reception of *Quilters of Gee's Bend: Quilts and Etchings* at Greg Kucera Gallery

*6-8 p.m.*

#### February 20

Visit to local high school

*Morning; closed to the public*

Afternoon tea at Tacoma Art Museum

*3-5 p.m.*

#### February 21

Artist talk at Greg Kucera Gallery

*Noon*

Post-play discussion after performance of *Gee's Bend* at Taproot Theatre

*Play starts at 2:00 p.m., post-play discussion starts at approximately 3:30 p.m.*

### *Gee's Bend* by Elyzabeth Gregory Wilder at Taproot Theatre:

#### Runs through February 28

**ABOUT:** This critically-acclaimed play captures the rich story of the women of Gee's Bend, Alabama, where discarded rags, scraps and bits of thread are pieced into works of art. Their compelling stories, like the spirituals they sing and the quilts they create, form a striking patchwork of the African-American journey of the past century.

**WHERE:** Taproot Theatre, 204 N. 85<sup>th</sup> St. in Seattle.

**TICKETS:** Wednesday and Thursday evenings and Saturday matinees, \$26-28; Friday and Saturday evenings, \$30-33; Student/Senior discount of \$2 off per ticket; ages 25 and under, \$10. For tickets contact Taproot Theatre's box office at (206) 781-9707 or call Ticketmaster at (206) 292-ARTS. Group rates are available. For groups, call (206) 781-9708.

### *Quilters of Gee's Bend: Quilters and Etchings* at Greg Kucera Gallery:

**February 19-March 28** (Gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.)

**ABOUT:** Greg Kucera Gallery hosts its second exhibition of Gee's Bend quilts and related prints. The exhibit will include a number of quilts, including those made by the visiting Gee's Bend quilters, plus etchings of quilts.

**WHERE:** Greg Kucera Gallery, 212 Third Avenue South, Seattle, WA 98104 (in The Lofts building).

### Afternoon tea at Tacoma Art Museum:

**February 20, 3-5 p.m.**

**ABOUT:** Tacoma Art Museum hosts the Gee's Bend quilters for an afternoon tea in the classroom, sponsored by Tacoma Art Museum, The Links and Black Collective.

**WHERE:** Tacoma Art Museum, 1701 Pacific Avenue, Tacoma, WA 98402.