

TAPROOT THEATRE



C O M P A N Y

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TAPROOT THEATRE OPENS 2010 SEASON WITH C.S. LEWIS' *THE GREAT DIVORCE*

Regional premiere opens on January 29

SEATTLE – December 30, 2009 – Three months after the fire that caused severe damage to its Greenwood playhouse, Taproot Theatre is thrilled to reopen the theatre with the regional premiere of *The Great Divorce*, the first show in its 2010 Season. The theatrical adaptation of C.S. Lewis' fantastical novel opens on January 29, a night full of celebration and new beginnings. *The Great Divorce*, adapted by George Drance and the Magis Theatre Company (NY) and directed by Scott Nolte, runs through February 27.

“Opening our 34th season would be exciting enough, but this one is extra special,” Nolte said. “After everything that’s happened, everything we’ve been through, these past months, I’m thrilled to be marking this new period in Taproot Theatre’s history with a premiere of C.S. Lewis’ fictional masterpiece.”

In *The Great Divorce*, one drizzly afternoon our author embarks on a supernatural voyage with a cast of eccentric, humorous characters that bear a remarkable resemblance to us. Theatrical, imaginative and thought provoking, it’s a bus ride through hell to heaven that, in the grand C.S. Lewis tradition, leaves you breathless and wanting more.

“I saw the world premiere of this play Off-Broadway in 2007, and was spellbound at how well the story—so full of imagination and a world beyond our own—translated to the stage,” said Nolte. “We often speak about creating productions that are theatrical and imaginative, and this one will demand the best of our actors and designers to tell this story.”

In this production, ten actors portray 25 characters, including C.S. Lewis himself and author George MacDonald, who is Lewis’ guide through the story.

“When the original co-founders of Taproot Theatre were just getting started, we often staged productions—including Lewis’ *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*—with little more than boxes and chairs—and the audiences’ imaginations!” Nolte said. “The artists’

– more –

ability to capture that imagination is where the magic of theatre is, and I'm excited to be directing such a unique play as *The Great Divorce* this winter."

The Great Divorce features David Dorrian as C.S. Lewis and Nolan Palmer as George MacDonald, along with Ryan Childers, Jenny Cross, Nathan Jeffrey, Kim Morris, Pam Nolte, Faith Russell, Candace Vance and Sam Vance. The production team includes scenic and sound designer Mark Lund, costume designer Sarah Burch Gordon and lighting designer Jody Briggs. Anne Hitt serves as stage manager, Kate Forster as dialect coach and Judy Naegeli as dramaturg.

After *The Great Divorce*, Taproot Theatre's 2010 Season continues with the regional premiere of *Brooklyn Boy* by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Donald Margulies (March 17-April 17), Brandon Thomas's *Charley's Aunt* (May 12-June 12), *Man of La Mancha* (a musical play by Dale Wasserman with music by Mitch Leigh and lyrics by Joe Darion; original production staged by Albert Marre; originally produced by Albert W. Selden and Hal James; July 7-August 7), and the regional premiere of *Wedding Belles* by Alan Bailey and Ronnie Claire Edwards (September 22-October 23).

***The Great Divorce* Fact Sheet**

WHAT: *The Great Divorce*, by C.S. Lewis, adapted by George Drance and The Magis Theatre, directed by Scott Nolte

DESCRIPTION: C.S. Lewis' fantastical work springs to life in this electrifying regional premiere. One drizzly afternoon our author embarks on a supernatural voyage with a cast of eccentric, humorous characters that bear a remarkable resemblance to us. Theatrical, imaginative and thought provoking. It's a bus ride through heaven and hell that, in the grand C.S. Lewis tradition, leaves you breathless and wanting more.

WHEN: January 27 through February 27, 2010. Opening Night with Reception: Friday, January 29. Pay-what-you-can (PWYC) performance on Wednesday, February 3.

SCHEDULE: Wednesday and Thursday, 7:30 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 8:00 p.m.; Saturday matinee, 2:00 p.m.

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

TICKETS: Ticket prices are \$20-35. Ages 25 and under, \$10. Senior matinee performance on February 3, \$20.

For tickets contact Taproot Theatre's box office at (206) 781-9707. Group rates are available. For groups, call (206) 781-9708.

Tickets for the pay-what-you-can performance on February 3 go on sale day of show at the box office only. Contact the box office for details.

CALENDAR:

Wed.	January 27	7:30 p.m.	Preview
Thurs.	January 28	7:30 p.m.	Preview
Fri.	January 29	8:00 p.m.	Opening Night with Reception
Sat.	January 30	2:00 p.m.	
Sat.	January 30	8:00 p.m.	
Wed.	February 3	2:00 p.m.	Senior Matinee
Wed.	February 3	7:30 p.m.	Post-play Discussion, PWYC
Thurs.	February 4	7:30 p.m.	
Fri.	February 5	8:00 p.m.	
Sat.	February 6	2:00 p.m.	
Sat.	February 6	8:00 p.m.	
Wed.	February 10	7:30 p.m.	Post-play Discussion
Thurs.	February 11	7:30 p.m.	
Fri.	February 12	8:00 p.m.	
Sat.	February 13	2:00 p.m.	
Sat.	February 13	8:00 p.m.	
Wed.	February 17	7:30 p.m.	Post-play Discussion
Thurs.	February 18	7:30 p.m.	
Fri.	February 19	8:00 p.m.	
Sat.	February 20	2:00 p.m.	
Sat.	February 20	8:00 p.m.	
Wed.	February 24	7:30 p.m.	Post-play Discussion
Thurs.	February 25	7:30 p.m.	
Fri.	February 26	8:00 p.m.	
Sat.	February 27	2:00 p.m.	
Sat.	February 27	8:00 p.m.	Closing Night

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.

Support for Taproot Theatre's 2010 Mainstage season is generously provided by The Charles Simonyi Fund for Arts and Sciences, ArtsFund, 4Culture, PONCHO and The Nesholm Family Foundation. Special thanks to The Upper Crust, our opening night sponsor, and Romio's Pizza and Pasta and Dry Soda, our Pizza and a Play sponsors.

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