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**DALLAS THEATER CENTER**  
**Announces Cast of World Premiere of**  
***The Trinity River Plays***  
**by Regina Taylor**  
***A Co-Production with The Goodman Theatre***

Directed by Ethan McSweeney

Dee and Charles Wylie Theatre • AT&T Performing Arts Center • 2400 Flora Street  
**Previews:** Nov. 5-11 • **Opening Night: Friday, Nov. 12, 8 p.m.** • **Full Run:** Nov. 5-Dec. 5  
**Tickets:** 214-880-0202 or [www.dallastheatercenter.org](http://www.dallastheatercenter.org)

**DALLAS (October 11, 2010)** – Dallas Theater Center and The Goodman Theatre proudly present the world premiere of *The Trinity River Plays*, written by Oak Cliff native Regina Taylor, directed by Ethan McSweeney.

*The Trinity River Plays* is comprised of three separate plays – *Jar Fly*, *Rain* and *Ghost(story)* – all set in Oak Cliff. The plays follow Iris Sparks' journey from teenage innocence to the sometimes harsh realities of adulthood. In *Jarfly*, a young Iris discovers that not everybody is worthy of her trust, including some family members. She keeps these struggles to herself but finds them resurfacing when she returns to her some twenty years later in *Rain*. During her search for solace at her mother's home in *Ghost(story)*, Iris is faced with the impact of a startling announcement from her mother.

"Dallas Theater Center is thrilled to partner with The Goodman Theatre to bring to life this very special and intensely personal body of work. After the phenomenal success of Regina's last production at DTC, *Crowns*, we could not be more excited to host the world premiere of a playwright who considers Oak Cliff and the Dallas community her home," says DTC artistic director Kevin Moriarty.

Leading the ensemble cast is Karen Aldridge as Iris Sparks. "Karen has been playing Iris in almost every workshop and reading of the play since its inception, so she and the role are growing together in a way that I think is going to be quite phenomenal," says director Ethan McSweeney. Karen's credits at the Goodman include *The Cook* as Gladys and *Proof* as Catherine. *The Trinity River Plays* is her Dallas Theater Center debut.

"I'm spectacularly proud of the cast. It's a real ensemble piece, so every actor has to be very, very strong. The demands of the play are also quite challenging because most of the characters start out in 1978 and then we see them again seventeen years later in 1996," says McSweeney. "This group is more than up to the task."

Also making Dallas Theater Center debuts are Christiana Clark as Jasmine, Penny Herald Johnson as Iris' mother Rose, and Jacqueline Williams as Daisy. The cast is also joined by Samuel Ray Gates as Jack and Jefferson A. Russell as Ray Earl and Frank.

"We spent a long time carefully casting this group of actors and I feel like we've really put together a truly stellar ensemble," says McSweeney.

All performances of *The Trinity River Plays* will be held in the Dee and Charles Wylie Theatre at the AT&T Performing Arts Center, located at 2400 Flora St., where it runs Nov. 5-Dec. 5. Preview performances are

Nov. 5-11. Opening night is **Friday, Nov. 12, at 8 p.m.** Performance times are Tuesday through Thursday evenings at 7:30 p.m.; Friday and Saturday evenings at 8 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2 p.m.; and select Sunday evenings at 7:30 p.m. Ticket prices are \$15-\$85 and are available by calling the box office at 214-880-0202 or by visiting [www.dallastheatercenter.org](http://www.dallastheatercenter.org).

## **CAST:**

### **KAREN ALDRIDGE**

(*Iris*) Chicago credits include: Corinne in *The Good Negro*, Gladys in *The Cook* (Jeff Award nomination - Best Actress), and Catherine in *Proof* (BTAA Ruby Dee Award) at Goodman Theatre. Olivia in *Twelfth Night*, Lady Macbeth in *Macbeth*, Isabella in *Edward II*, and Princess in *Love's Labor's Lost* at Chicago Shakespeare Theatre. She originated the role of Tamyra in Tracy Letts's Pulitzer Prize-nominated *Man from Nebraska* at Steppenwolf Theatre Company. Other notable Chicago roles include Nina in *Seagull* at Writers' Theatre; Joan in *Far Away*, and Hester in *In the Blood* (Jeff Award nomination - Best Actress) at Next Theatre. She also starred in the international tour of *Le Costume*, a French-language production directed by Peter Brook. Other Regional credits include productions with: Indiana Repertory Theatre, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, American Conservatory Theatre, Magic Theatre, Aurora Theatre Company, Marin Theatre Company. Film: *The Dilemma* directed by Ron Howard.

### **CHRSTIANA CLARK**

(*Jasmine*) City Pages' Best Of Actress '09, recipient of the Ivey Award for Emerging Artist of 2006, Associate Company Member of Pillsbury House Theatre is a native Chicagoan trained at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in Hollywood, Ca. She's thrilled make her inaugural production with The Goodman and Dallas Theater Center in *The Trinity River Plays*. She's recently made her off Broadway debut in the Mixed Blood production of *Pure Confidence* at 59E59 Theatre in NYC. Her work onstage in and around the Twin Cities includes *Othello* and *Endgame* w/Ten Thousand Things Theatre; Jon Ferguson's production of *Animal Farm* at the Southern Theatre; Pillsbury House Theatre's *Bulrushers*; *BLUE* with Penumbra Theatre; the History Theatre's *Lutfisk Champ & Other Frozen Holiday Tales*; starring roles in *Chicago* and *Wait Until Dark* at Paul Bunyan Playhouse in Bemidji, MN; *Left Hand Singing*, *Constant Star*, and *You Can't Take it With You* with Park Square Theatre; *A Raisin in the Sun* with Starting Gate; and *Women of Troy* and *F\*cking A* both with Frank Theatre; also has worked w/ Pillsbury House Theatre's Breaking Ice Company and Chicago Avenue Project, and as an actor/educator for CLIMB Theatre and Youth Performance Company among other stage and commercial credits.

### **SAMUEL RAY GATES**

(*Jack*) Off-Broadway: *Aunt Dan and Lemon* (The New Group); *Three Seconds in the Key* (New Georges); *Electra* (Classical Theatre of Harlem); *Nelson* (Partial Comfort); *A Wife's Tale* (Summer Play Festival). Regional: *The Brother/Sister Plays* (McCarter Theater); *McReele* (Wellfleet Harbor Actors Theater); *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, *Fences* (Swine Palace); *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Coriolanus*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare & Company). TV/Film: *The Men Who Stare At Goats*, *Kings, Law & Order*, *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*, *Rescue Me*.

### **PENNY JOHNSON JERALD**

(*Rose*) After two A-list cinematic releases—Tina Turner's biopic *What's Love Got to Do With It* and gangsta rap satire *Fear of a Black Hat*—Jerald carved a permanent niche for herself on four number-one television series, sequentially *The Larry Sander's Show*, *Star Trek: DS9*, *ER*, and *24*. Penny can also be found directing and/or writing as Artistic Director for her theatre group, OcTc (Outreach Christian Theatre Company). Having directed over 45 plays including *Vagina Monologues* and *Moist*, and performing her one-woman show *Not My Child*, the Cable Ace, NAACP Image, SAG nominated and Juilliard graduate is delighted to return to the stage in *The Trinity River Plays*.

### **JEFFERSON A. RUSSELL**

(*Ray Earl/Frank*) is pleased to be making his DTC debut. Previous credits include: Hangar Theatre, *The Piano Lesson* (Avery); Woolly Mammoth Theatre Co, *Clybourne Park* (Kevin/Albert); Everyman Theatre, *The Soul Collector* (Cedric), *Gem of the Ocean* (Citizen Barlow), *Blues For An Alabama Sky* (Leland); Round House, *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* (Scanlon); African Continuum Theatre, *Blood Knot* (Zachariah), *A Raisin in the Sun* (Walter Lee), *A Lesson Before Dying* (Grant Wiggins); TV: HBO's *The Wire*; NBC's *Homicide*. Other: BA (Sociology/Criminal Justice) Hampton University, former Baltimore Police Officer.

## **JACQUELINE WILLIAMS**

*(Daisy)* Chicago and Goodman highlights include: *The Brother/Sister Plays*; *Blues For An Alabama Sky*; *The Story*; *Amen Corner*; *Crowns*; *Oo-Bla-Dee*; *Caroline, Or Change*; *Fences*; *Electra*; *Gee's Bend*; *The Miser*; *Yellowman*; *The Taming of the Shrew*; *Othello*. Broadway: *Young Man From Atlanta*. Off-Broadway: *From the Mississippi Delta*; *Mill Fire*; *Talented Tenth*. Jacqueline has performed at numerous regional theaters and is a national voice-over artist. TV: *Ride-Along*; *Turks*; *ER*. Film: *The Breakup*; *The Lake House*; *Hardball*; *Meet the Browns*. Awards/ Nominations: Ten Chimneys Fellow; American Arts Council; Helen Hayes; Jeff; Black Theatre Alliance.

## **ABOUT DALLAS THEATER CENTER:**

*One of the leading regional theaters in the country, Dallas Theater Center (DTC) performs to an audience of more than 90,000 North Texas residents annually. DTC is a resident company of the AT&T Performing Arts Center and presents its mainstage season at the Dee and Charles Wylie Theatre. DTC also presents at its former residence, the Kalita Humphreys Theater, the only freestanding theater designed and built by Frank Lloyd Wright. DTC engages, entertains and inspires a diverse community by creating experiences that stimulate new ways of thinking and living by consistently producing plays, educational programs and other initiatives that are of the highest quality and reach the broadest possible constituency.*

*The mission of DTC is to engage, entertain and inspire our diverse community by creating experiences that stimulate new ways of thinking and living. With the leadership of Artistic Director Kevin Moriarty and Managing Director Mark Hadley, DTC is committed to consistently producing plays, educational programs and other initiatives that are of the highest quality and reach the broadest possible constituency.*

## **ABOUT GOODMAN THEATRE:**

*Named the country's Best Regional Theatre by Time Magazine (2003), Goodman Theatre has been internationally recognized for its artists, productions and educational programs since 1925. Artistic Director Robert Falls and Executive Director Roche Schulfer's leadership has earned unparalleled artistic distinction and garnered hundreds of awards, including the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre (1992). Chicago's oldest and largest non-for-profit producing theater, the Goodman is celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in a state-of-the-art two-theater complex in Chicago's downtown theater district, and has experienced unprecedented success over the past 10 years in its new facility, earning more than 90 awards for its productions and producing 25 new-work commissions.*

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