

Portland Center Stage at

THE **ARMORY**

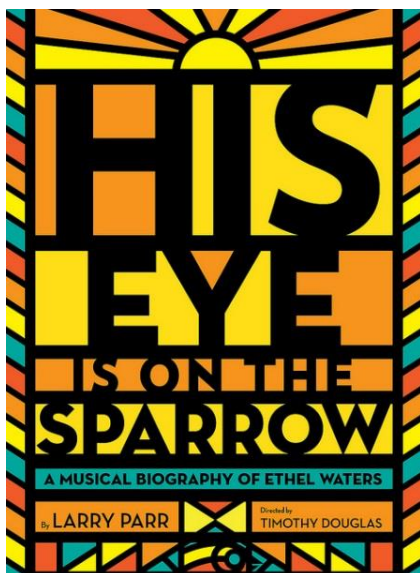
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M E D I A R E L E A S E

***His Eye is on the Sparrow*, the musical biography of groundbreaking artist Ethel Waters, opens at The Armory starring Maiesha McQueen**

Previews Begin Feb. 4 | Opening Night is Feb. 10 | Closes March 19

TICKETS STARTING AT \$25



January 19, 2017 – PORTLAND, OR. *His Eye is on the Sparrow*, Larry Parr’s stirring one-woman musical that celebrates the life of groundbreaking artist Ethel Waters, opens at The Armory on February 10, with previews beginning February 4 and performances running through March 19. Timothy Douglas returns to The Armory to direct the production and Darius Smith makes his debut as music director and accompanist. Maiesha McQueen returns after making her debut at The Armory last season in *Ain’t Misbehavin’* to take on the role of Ethel Waters.

Regular tickets start at \$25. Tickets may be purchased at www.pcs.org, 503.445.3700, or in-person from the box office (128 NW Eleventh Avenue, Portland, OR). Rush tickets are \$20. Students and patrons who are 30 or younger can purchase \$30 tickets for all dates/times. Showtimes are Tuesday through Sunday evenings at 7:30 p.m. (excluding February 19 and March 5, 7, 14 and 19); Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. (excluding February 4, 5, 11, 25 and March 11) and Thursday matinees at noon (excluding February 9 and March 16). Recommended for ages 14 and up. Contains mature content and language. More information at <https://www.pcs.org/sparrow>.

ABOUT THE PLAY

After a rough and spirit-breaking childhood, Ethel Waters became a Vaudeville success, a recording sensation and crossed racial barriers to emerge as a Broadway and Hollywood star. But a reputation for being difficult and her own distrust of those who might employ her or love her — partly a response to the horrors of Jim Crow America — caused her to lose everything and become a recluse, until she found new strength as a gospel performer. Through it all, there were the songs — the ones that gave her solace and the ones that made her a legend. *His Eye is on the Sparrow* tells her remarkable story, filled with the greatest hits of a lifetime, including “Stormy Weather,” “Heatwave,” “This Joint is Jumpin’” and “Am I Blue?” *His Eye is on the Sparrow* premiered at Florida Studio Theatre in 2005 and has since received rave reviews at houses across the country. *The Washington Post* said, “Thanks to Parr, we are able to bask in the presence of yet another nearly forgotten treasured artist,” and *The Washington Examiner* noted that “Larry Parr’s one-woman musical is more than just sheer biography or melodic revue — it’s a rare and intimate portrait of the great Harlem Renaissance in microcosm, pairing one singer’s endless struggles with those of an entire generation ...”



MAIESHA MCQUEEN (ETHEL WATERS)

Atlanta-based artist Maiesha McQueen returns to The Armory after the 2015 production of *Ain’t Misbehavin’*. Her regional credits include *’Da Kink in My Hair* (Horizon Theatre); *Sirens of Song* (Milwaukee Repertory Theater); *Chasin’ Dem Blues* (True Colors Theatre); *Black Nativity* (Dominion Productions); *In the Red and Brown Water* (PG Entertainment); and *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Show Boat*, *Man of La Mancha* and *Guys and Dolls* (Forestburgh Playhouse). Her film credits include *DayBlack* (ArtistDirector Media) and *Down to Earth* (Paramount Pictures). Maiesha has traveled the globe as a leading ensemble member and musical composer for the touring company Progress Theatre, whose work has been presented at The Public Theater, 14th Street Playhouse, The Kennedy Center, The Apollo Theatre and World Music Festival in Amsterdam. She holds a B.F.A. in Musical Theatre from New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts, a master’s in education from Fordham University, and has also spent over a decade teaching in both the public and private sectors.

LARRY PARR (PLAYWRIGHT)

For *His Eye is on the Sparrow*, Larry Parr received a Florida Individual Artist Fellowship, The Sarasota County Arts Council's John Ringling Fellowship Grant and the Daytony Award for Best Overall Production. Parr's other plays include *Hi-Hat Hattie* (Kansas City's Drama Desk Award for Best Musical, Florida Individual Artist Recipient, American Cinema Foundation's First Prize for Screenwriting); *My Castle's Rockin'* (Southern Appalachian Repertory Theatre's ScriptFest, National Black Theatre Festival); *Invasion of Privacy* (1999 Gold Coast Players Best Play Award, The National Arts Club's Playwrights First Award in Manhattan, Ashland New Play Festival, Theatre Conspiracy's New Play Competition, Florida Individual Artist Recipient, DeZart Performs Audience Favorite+); *Sundew* (Southern Appalachian Repertory Theater's Annual Play Competition); and *Shunned* (Southern Appalachian Repertory Theater's ScriptFest Winner, Utah Shakespeare Festival, New American Playwrights Project, Julie Harris Playwright Award Finalist).

THE CREATIVE TEAM

Director **Timothy Douglas** returns to The Armory after directing *Anna in the Tropics* and *A Feminine Ending*. Douglas' Off-Broadway credits include *BRONTE: A Portrait of Charlotte* and the new translation/adaptation of Ibsen's *Rosmersholm*. Douglas also directed the world premieres of Keith Josef Adkins' *Safe House*, August Wilson's *Radio Golf*, Rajiv Joseph's *The Lake Effect* and *Dontrell, Who Kissed the Sea*, among many other credits. **Darius Smith**, whose credits include the Off-Broadway productions of *Futurity* and *Three Little Birds*, makes his company debut as music director and accompanist. The designers are all familiar to audiences of The Armory: Scenic Designer **Scott Bradley** (August Wilson's *Seven Guitars* and *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* on Broadway) returns after designing *Fences*; Costume Designer **Alison Heryer** most recently designed costumes for *The Oregon Trail* and *Ain't Misbehavin'*; Lighting Designer **Peter Maradudin** most recently designed lighting for *Great Expectations* and *Threesome* (Maradudin also designed the lighting for The Armory lobbies); and Resident Sound Designer **Casi Pacilio** most recently designed *The Oregon Trail* and *Little Shop of Horrors*. Stage Manager **Kelsey Daye Lutz** and Production Assistant **Kristen Mun** complete the creative team.

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TICKET AND PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

When: February 4* – March 19, 2017

*Opening Night/Press Night: Friday, February 10 at 7:30 p.m.

Preview Performances: February 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9 at 7:30 p.m.

Where: In the Ellyn Bye Studio at [The Armory](#)
128 NW Eleventh Ave., Portland, Ore., 97209

To Purchase: Regular tickets range from \$25 to \$55. \$25 tickets are available on Tuesday and Sunday night performances only, in select quantities, first-come, first-served. Rush tickets are \$20. Students and patrons who are 30 or younger may purchase tickets for \$30 (available for all dates/times). Discounts for groups of 10+. *Prices vary by date and time, and are subject to change.*

Online: www.pcs.org

By Phone: 503.445.3700, 12–6 p.m.

In Person: The box office is at 128 NW Eleventh Avenue
12 p.m. to 8 p.m. on performance days
12 p.m. to 6 p.m. on non-performance days

Groups: Discounts available for groups of 10+ by calling 503.445.3794.

More Info: <https://www.pcs.org/sparrow>

Showtimes: Showtimes are Tuesday through Sunday evenings at 7:30 p.m. (excluding February 19 and March 5, 7, 14 and 19); Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. (excluding February 4, 5, 11, 25 and March 11) and Thursday matinees at noon (excluding February 9 and March 16).

Please Note: Recommended for ages 14 and up. Contains mature content and language.

Accessibility: Learn about our accessibility options at <http://www.pcs.org/access/>.

PORTLAND CENTER STAGE AT THE ARMORY

[Portland Center Stage at The Armory](#) is the largest theater company in Portland and among the top 20 regional theaters in the country. Established in 1988 as a branch of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the company became independent in 1994 and has been under the leadership of Artistic Director Chris Coleman since May, 2000. Around 160,000 visitors attend The Armory annually to enjoy a mix of classical, contemporary and world premiere productions, along with a variety of high quality education and community programs. 11 productions are offered each season, in addition to roughly 400 community events created — in partnership with 170+ local organizations and individuals — to serve the diverse populations in the city. As part of its dedication to new play development, the company has produced 21 world premieres and presents an annual new works festival, JAW: A Playwrights Festival. Home to two theaters, The Armory was the first building on the National Register of Historic Places, and the first performing arts venue, to achieve a LEED Platinum rating.

2016-2017 SPONSORS

The [2016-2017 season](#) is funded in part by Season Superstars Tim and Mary Boyle, and Lead Corporate Champion Umpqua Bank. Further support comes from Season Sponsors the Regional Arts and Culture Council, The Wallace Foundation and Oregon Arts Commission, a state agency funded by the state of Oregon and the National Endowment for the Arts. Support for *His Eye is on the Sparrow* comes from The Shubert Foundation. Mark Spencer Hotel is the official hotel partner. Portland Center Stage at The Armory was selected as a participant of the Wallace Foundation's [Building Audiences for Sustainability Initiative](#), a four-year effort with a nationwide cohort of 26 performing arts organizations.

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