

2009-2010 SEASON

Press release # 2

For immediate release

TARRAGON THEATRE PROUDLY PRESENTS THE TORONTO PREMIERE OF THE
AWARD WINNING THE DROWNING GIRLS

The Drowning Girls

Toronto Premiere

by Beth Graham, Charlie Tomlinson, Daniela Vlaskalic
A Bent Out of Shape Production

Starring: Beth Graham, Natascha Girgis, Daniela Vlaskalic

Director: Charlie Tomlinson

Set and Costumes Designer: Bretta Gerecke

Lighting Designer: Narda McCaroll

Sound Designer: Peter Moller

Stage Manager: Lindsay Marriner

The Drowning Girls opens in the Extra Space on Wednesday, October 14, 2009 at 8:00 pm. Previews from Tuesday, October 6, 2009.

As *The Drowning Girls* opens, Bessie (**Daniela Vlaskalic**), Alice (**Beth Graham**) and Margaret (**Natascha Girgis**) emerge from bathtubs full of water to relive their romance with George Joseph Smith, the man who married each one of them, and offered them reprieve from the lonely life of a spinster. Unfortunately, George Joseph Smith was far from the loving husband these women hoped for. Instead, he was an Edwardian opportunist – a notorious scoundrel – who drowned his three wives in their baths to collect their insurance policies. As the women make their case against their murderous husband, it becomes clear what an unscrupulous man will do for money, and what a desperate woman will do for status. Full of rich images, a myriad of characters, and lyrical language, *The Drowning Girls* is both breathtaking fantasia and social critique.

Daniela Vlaskalic and **Beth Graham** met at the University of Alberta while completing their Bachelor of Fine Arts Degrees in acting. After graduating from the program in 1998, Daniela and Beth teamed up with **Charlie Tomlinson**, to create *The Drowning Girls*.

The original version of the play premiered at the 1999 Edmonton Fringe Festival. It was nominated for five Elizabeth Sterling Haynes Awards, and received four: Outstanding Production, Outstanding Director, Outstanding Actress and Outstanding New Play. This

original version of **The Drowning Girls** went to the On the Waterfront Festival in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

In 2007, Beth, Daniela and Charlie approached Alberta Theatre Projects with their wish to revisit and reinvent **The Drowning Girls**. **Bretta Gerecke** (set & costume), **Narda McCarroll** (lighting) and **Peter Moller** (sound) became the production designers and a new full-length version of the play was created. After its premiere at ATP's 2008 playRites festival in Calgary, Bent Out of Shape Productions produced a successful run at Edmonton's Catalyst Theatre. That year, the play received four Betty Mitchell awards and was nominated for two Elizabeth Sterling Haynes Awards. Tarragon Theatre is thrilled to bring such a celebrated production to Toronto. After their run at Tarragon, **The Drowning Girls** will be touring to Richmond (Gateway Theatre), Victoria (Belfry Theatre), Saskatoon (Persephone Theatre) and Edmonton (Citadel Theatre).

The Drowning Girls previews in Tarragon's Mainspace on Tuesday, October 6, opens Wednesday, October 14 and runs until Sunday, November 15, 2009.

Previews: Oct. 6 – 13

Regular run: Tuesday through Saturday at 8 pm
Saturday & Sunday matinee at 2:30 pm

Prices start at \$19; seniors' and students' prices are available. Friday night rush are \$10.

Tickets for **The Drowning Girls** are available online tickets.tarragontheatre.com.

BOX OFFICE & INFORMATION: 416- 531-1827

MEDIA CONTACT KIRK THOMSON: phone 416-536-5018, x231 / fax 416-533-6372 / e-mail kirk@tarragontheatre.com

September 21, 2009