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# SEATTLE REP

The Gospel of Rock, The Spirit of the Blues  
Seattle Rep Produces Seattle Premiere of Local Playwright Cheryl L. West's  
**SHOUT SISTER SHOUT!**

By Cheryl L. West

Co-Created by Randy Johnson & Cheryl L. West

Directed by Randy Johnson

*November 8 - December 22, 2019 - tickets on sale now*

**SEATTLE, Wash. (October 23, 2019)** -- Long before 'women in rock' became a media catchphrase, Sister Rosetta Tharpe proved in spectacular fashion that women rocked. It is with great excitement that Seattle Rep prepares to present the Seattle premiere of ***Shout Sister Shout!***, a new musical production from Broadway veteran and local playwright Cheryl L. West, based on the life of legendary gospel singer, Sister Rosetta Tharpe. *Shout Sister Shout!* is directed by Broadway writer and director Randy Johnson (*A Night With Janis Joplin*) and runs November 8-December 22 (opening night is November 13) on the Bagley Wright stage. Single tickets are on sale now (starting at \$17) and are available through Seattle Rep Patron Services Office at 206.443.2222 or online at [SeattleRep.org](http://SeattleRep.org).

Based on the Rosetta Tharpe biography by Gayle F. Wald published in 2007, *Shout Sister Shout!* is over 10 years in the making. "I had a copy of Gayle Wald's book, *Shout Sister Shout!*, when it was first published around 2007 and I immediately thought it would make a great theatrical project," Cheryl L. West said. "I mentioned it to a few theaters but didn't get any takers. Fast forward to 2015. I was doing another workshop at Arena Stage where I met [director] Randy Johnson. I learned that he had recently acquired the theatrical rights to Gayle's book! I had to mention how I loved the Rosetta Tharpe story. A few weeks later, he called and asked, 'Do you want to work on a *Shout* musical with me?' So, in a sense, it took a decade, but I finally got the opportunity to write the Rosetta story."

*Shout Sister Shout!* enjoyed its world premiere at the Pasadena Playhouse in July, 2017. After a workshop at Seattle Rep in March of 2018, Seattle Rep is putting on stage a revitalized rendition of the work.

"Rehearsals are in session at Seattle Rep and it's a thrill to see this material come to life in this new production. We've taken the experience of our Pasadena production to heart, and while the script isn't much changed, we've retooled many elements of the production experience to create

something very fresh. I hope Seattle audiences are ready to shout! This is a story of a true rock n' roll pioneer and we are here to celebrate her joyous spirit," said West.

## **ABOUT THE CAST**

The cast of *Shout Sister Shout!* features Lawrence Clayton (Reverend Tharpe/Ensemble), **Joseph Anthony Byrd** (Praise Brother/Cab Calloway/Ensemble), **Christin Byrdsong** (Praise Brother/Little Richard/Ensemble), **Carrie Compere** (Sister Rosetta Tharpe), **Darryl Reuben Hall** (Understudy), **Nehemiah Hooks** (Stage Manager/Ensemble), **Jason Kappus** (Richie/Red Foley/Ensemble), **Shaunyce Omar** (Understudy for Sister Rosetta Tharpe), **Chaz Rose** (Praise Brother/Dizzy Gillespie/Lucky Millinder/Ensemble), **Allison Semmes** (Marie Knight/Ensemble), **Porscha Shaw** (LeeAnnie/Ensemble), **Alexis Tidwell** (Ensemble), **Timothy Ware** (Praise Brother/Pastor/Russell Morrison/Ensemble), **Carol Dennis** (Katie Bell Nubin/Mahalia Jackson/Ensemble), and a six-piece band.

## **ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM**

The creative team for *Shout Sister Shout!* includes **Cheryl L. West** (Playwright and Co-Writer), **Randy Johnson** (Director and Co-Creator), **Tyler Rhodes** (Associate Director), **William Carlos Angulo** (Choreographer), **Sheilah V. Walker** (Music Director), **Brendan Milburn** (Orchestra/Arranger), **GW Skip Mercier** (Scenic Designer), **Emilia Sosa** (Costume Designer), **Robert Wierzel** (Lighting Designer), **Joanna Lynne Staub** (Sound Designer), **Kwame Braun** (Projection Designer), **Emma Weiss** (Associate Music Director), and **Emily Madigan** (Assistant Choreographer).

## **ABOUT CHERYL WEST (Playwright)**

Cheryl L. West's plays include, *Last Stop on Market Street* (composed by Motown great, Lamont Dozier and son, Paris Dozier), *Shout Sister Shout*, a new adaptation of *The Watsons Go to Birmingham, 1963*, *Pullman Porter Blues*, *Jar the Floor*, *Before It Hits Home*, and *Akeelah and the Bee*. Her plays have earned Ms. West several awards, including the Helen Hayes/Charles MacArthur Award, the Susan Smith Blackburn prize, the Beverly Hills/Hollywood NAACP Best Playwright Award, the National Endowment for the Arts Playwriting Award, the American Alliance For Theatre & Education Chorpenning Award, an award which acknowledges her body of work writing for children. Ms. West's plays have been produced in England, off-Broadway, on Broadway (*Play On!*), and in numerous regional theaters around the country, including Seattle Rep, The Goodman, Indiana Rep, Minneapolis Children's Theatre, Seattle Children's Theatre, Seattle Rep, Arena Stage, Old Globe, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Bay Street Theatre Festival, Syracuse Stage, Cleveland Play House, South Coast Rep, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, and Off-Broadway's Manhattan Theatre Club, Second Stage and Atlantic Theater Company. She has written TV and film projects at Disney, Paramount, MTV Films, Showtime, TNT, HBO, CBS, BET and is the Webby-nominated writer for the original web series *Diary of a Single Mom*, directed by Robert Townsend. Ms. West is currently working on commissions for Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Chicago Children's Theater, Seattle Children's Theater, and a co-commission with Seattle Rep and the Goodman Theatre.

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