



PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, May 13, 2009
CONTACT: Patrick Finlon, PR Director
315-443-2636 or pjfinlon@syr.edu

Local Women Photographed for *Syracuse Crowns* In Association with Syracuse Stage Production

"I really think of myself as a conservative when it comes to clothes, but I can become a liberal when it comes to a hat." - Dora Perry, Prince of Peace Missionary Baptist Church of Syracuse

"Our crowns have already been bought and paid for. All we have to do is wear them." - James Baldwin



(SYRACUSE, NY)—*Syracuse Crowns*, by Syracuse-based photographer Brantley Carroll, will feature portraits of African American women from across central New York, donning their finest and most stunning Sunday hats. The exhibit was inspired by the 2000 photography book by Michael Cunningham and Craig Marberry entitled *Crowns: Portraits of Black Women in Church Hats*, which served as the basis for Regina Taylor's music-filled stage adaptation.

The *Syracuse Crowns* exhibit can be viewed publicly in the Coyne Lobby at Syracuse Stage, May 13-June 7 throughout the run of *Crowns* at Syracuse Stage. Following the exhibit at Syracuse Stage, the portraits will be available for travel to other venues.

Photographer Brantley Carroll is a well-recognized portrait photographer based in the Syracuse area. He has won multiple awards including grants from the Ford Foundation and Light Work. Mr. Carroll specializes in fine art portraiture and has a particular interest in visualizing the African American experience. His primary studio is located in the Armory district of Syracuse.

A book based on the *Syracuse Crowns* exhibit may be previewed here:
<http://www.blurb.com/bookstore/invited/475077/084f68dfde306754c934ed7123339be3>

The women whose portraits will be displayed in the *Syracuse Crowns* exhibit are:

- Lady Jahnjae Alex, Victory Temple Fellowship Church
- Deaconess Kathy Hodge Davis, Bethany Baptist Church
- Lorene Dunn, Prince of Peace Missionary Baptist Church
- Mary Floyd, Pentecost Evangelical Missionary Baptist Church
- Thalia Legette, Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church

- Dora Perry, Prince of Peace Missionary Baptist Church
- Nona Sistrunk, New Hope Missionary Baptist Church
- Hattie Stanley, New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church
- Sarah Stokelin, St. Luke Missionary Baptist Church
- Cora Thomas, Second Olivet Missionary Baptist Church - "The Gospel Powerhouse" at WAER & Power 106.9
- **First Ladies of the North Eastern District:** Janice Turner (Bethany Baptist Church), Theresa James (Second Olivet Missionary Baptist Church), Bertha Gilmore (Christ Missionary Baptist Church), Gladys McElroy (Pentecost Evangelical Missionary Baptist Church), Freddie Ann Burton (St. Luke Missionary Baptist Church), Veronica Bell (Bell's Memorial Baptist Church), Valerie Hill (Word of Life Bible Fellowship), Cozette Johnson (Tucker Missionary Baptist Church).
- **Delta Presidents:** Marcella T. Jones, Johnnie Hill Marsh, Theresa Harper, Miranda Askew Brown, Linda Clark, Marsha Senior, Lorraine Merrick, Jean Phillips, Sandra Jones.

CROWNS AT SYRACUSE STAGE

A jubilant hit at theatres across the country, *Crowns* embodies the soul, faith and style of African-American women and their fabulous hats. When a Brooklyn teenager moves south to escape a family tragedy, she is introduced by her grandmother to the "hat queens," and so begins a musical journey of healing, humor and heart. Filled with gospel music and colorful dress, *Crowns* runs May 13-June 7 at Syracuse Stage. Tickets are available at the Syracuse Stage Box Office at 820 East Genesee Street, by telephone at 315-443-3275 or www.SyracuseStage.org.

SYRACUSE STAGE

Syracuse Stage is Central New York's premier professional theatre. Founded in 1974, Stage has produced more than 220 plays in 36 seasons including a number of world, American, and East Coast premieres. Each season 90,000 patrons enjoy an adventurous mix of new plays and bold interpretations of classics and musicals featuring the finest theatre artists. In addition, Stage maintains a vital educational outreach program that annually serves over 30,000 students from 24 counties. Syracuse Stage is a constituent of the Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre, and a member of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT). Syracuse Stage is a non-profit organization and performances are made possible by funds from Syracuse University, the Central New York Community Foundation, the New York State Council on the Arts, The Shubert Foundation, Onondaga County, and corporate, foundation and individual donors.

###

Syracuse Stage | Producing Artistic Director: Timothy Bond | Managing Director: Jeffrey Woodward
820 E. Genesee St. | Main: 315-443-4008 | Box Office: 315-443-3275 | www.syracusestage.org