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Photos available upon request

**Rivendell Theatre Ensemble Announces Programming Change:
Catherine Trieschmann's *Crooked* Makes its Midwest Premiere May 17–June 24,
Replaces *The Gray Sisters* by Craig Wright
Press Opening May 20 at 6:00 p.m.**

Chicago, IL, March 23, 2012 – Artistic Director **Tara Mallen** announces the addition of *Crooked* by Catherine Trieschmann to Rivendell Theatre Ensemble's 16th anniversary season, directed by **Sandy Shinner**. *Crooked*, which replaces the previously announced *The Gray Sisters* by Craig Wright, runs May 17 through June 24, 2012, Thursdays and Fridays at 8:00 p.m. and Saturdays at 3:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. (Press Opening is May 20 at 6:00 p.m.) This is Rivendell's first season as the resident company in the new Rivendell Theatre at 5779 N. Ridge Avenue in Chicago's Edgewater neighborhood. Tickets are on sale now; call (773) 334-7728 or visit RivendellTheatre.org.

In *Crooked*, life sucks for fourteen year old Laney, who has a deformed back, a mother in crisis, and an active imagination which she uses to write vividly violent short stories. When she befriends Maribel, the open-hearted daughter of an evangelical preacher, Laney uses her penchant for fiction to reinvent herself with actions as rebellious as they are cries for acceptance. This sensitive story of sexual and spiritual awakening follows Laney as she battles her inner demons in her quest to be loved.

The all-female cast of three joins Rivendell's founder and artistic director **Tara Mallen** with **Rae Gray**, the theatre's newest and youngest ensemble member. "The chance to produce the Midwest premiere of this beautiful play is an opportunity we couldn't refuse," said Mallen. "Catherine is an important voice among American women playwrights, and we are thrilled to include this piece in the inaugural season in our new home."

Associate artistic director of Victory Gardens **Sandy Shinner** returns to Rivendell to helm the production as director. "Every mother and teen-aged daughter will respond to the humor, pain, and truth in Catherine Trieschmann's gem of a play," said Shinner. "And with the new theater open, Artistic Director Tara Mallen can put down her paintbrush and get back onstage. Our collaboration on *Holy Days* by Sally Nemeth was an artistic highlight for me, and I look forward to working with Tara again."

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Crooked was a 2004 Edinburgh Fringe Festival favorite, and was presented Off-Broadway in the 2005 New York Summer Play Festival. It had its British premiere in London's Bush Theatre in 2006 before coming back to New York in a critically acclaimed production at the Women's Project.

To date, the cast and production team for *Crooked* includes:

CAST: Rivendell ensemble members **Rae Gray** (Laney) and **Tara Mallen** (Elise). The role of Maribel is not yet cast.

CREW: Rivendell ensemble members **Megan Carney** (Associate Director and Dramaturg), **Mary Cross** (Associate Producer), **Diane Fairchild** (Lighting Designer), **Patrick Fries** (Production Manager), **Regina Garcia** (Scenic Designer), **Stephanie Hurovitz** (Stage Manager), and **Janice Pytel** (Costume Designer); with guest artists **Joanna Iwanicka** (Props Designer), **Chris Kriz** (Sound Designer), and **Sandy Shinner** (Director).

Rivendell Theatre Ensemble presents *Crooked*, running May 17 – June 24, 2012 at Rivendell Theatre, 5779 N. Ridge Avenue, Chicago, IL 60660. Regular run times are Thursdays and Fridays at 8:00 p.m., and Saturdays at 3:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

- Previews are May 17, 18, and 19 at 8:00 p.m.
- Press Opening is Sunday, May 20 at 6:00 p.m.
- Closes June 24

Free parking is available to Rivendell patrons at Senn High School. For parking details, directions, and neighborhood dining information, visit RivendellTheatre.org. Street parking is also available. Rivendell Theatre is handicapped and CTA accessible (Red Line Bryn Mawr stop, busses).

Ticket prices are \$28.50 for regular single tickets, \$20 for seniors and students (with I.D.), and \$15 for previews. Group rate for 12 or more is available upon request. Tickets may be purchased by visiting RivendellTheatre.org or calling 773-334-7728.

About Rivendell Theatre Ensemble

Rivendell Theatre Ensemble (RTE) is a professional theatre company committed to recognizing and cultivating the talents of women in theatre – from playwrights and actors to set designers and costume artists. Rivendell productions explore the unique female perspectives in everyday stories in an intimate environment.

For the past 16 years, Rivendell has been Chicago's only professional theatre company committed to producing works that integrate and promote the essential female experience. Rivendell has produced nearly 30 plays at venues throughout Chicago, including Steppenwolf, Victory Gardens, Chicago Dramatists, Gallery 37 Storefront Theater and Theatre on the Lake. Rivendell Theatre Ensemble is now the resident theatre company at the new Rivendell Theatre, 5779 N. Ridge Ave., Chicago, IL 60660. For more information about Rivendell's 16th season, visit RivendellTheatre.org.