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Rotary Centre for the Arts Marks Black History Month with Screening of New Documentary, *John Ware Reclaimed*

(Kelowna, BC) - The Rotary Centre for the Arts (RCA) is proud to celebrate Black History Month with a screening of Cheryl Foggo's stirring new documentary, *John Ware Reclaimed*. Following the screening, the RCA will also present a special talk-back and performance session featuring Kenny "Blues Boss" Wayne, co-host of the RCA's long-running School of Blues community program. This unique event will take place Friday, Feb. 25 at 7:00 PM in the Mary Irwin Theatre.

John Ware Reclaimed follows acclaimed Canadian screenwriter, playwright, author, and filmmaker Cheryl Foggo as she re-examines the story of John Ware, the famous Black cowboy who settled in southern Alberta after fleeing racial persecution in the US south prior to the turn of the 20th century. Foggo's research uncovers who this iconic figure might have been, and what his legacy means in terms of anti-Black racism, both past and present.

Colleen Fitzpatrick, Executive Director of the RCA, says, "We are thrilled to present this unique Black History Month event. Foggo's film blends powerful storytelling and stirring original music to reclaim the memory of John Ware. We are especially humbled to have the opportunity to connect her work with a live performance from Kenny Wayne, one of the most beloved members of the RCA community, and a cornerstone of the Kelowna music scene."

Elana Bizovie, the RCA's Community Engagement & Events Coordinator, adds, "*John Ware Reclaimed* tells such an important and complex story about the history of Black life in the Canadian west, as well as across international borders." Through reenactment, song, archaeological research, and personal reflection, "Foggo not only reclaims the memory of John Ware from racist misconception, but also critically reframes familiar stories about Canada as a welcoming, inclusive place for all."

This event is free and open to the public, but those who wish to support the RCA, including community programs like School of Blues, may purchase tickets on a sliding scale from \$10-\$20. On-site cash donations are also warmly welcomed. Tickets are on sale now at rotarycentreforthearts.com. This event is made possible with the support of New Country 100.7.

Hi-Res Press Photos Available on Request: Please contact Tyler Morgenstern at marketing@rotarycentreforthearts.com.

About Kenny Wayne: Wayne, an ex-pat American, has been a beacon of the Canadian music scene for decades. His smooth yet robust piano playing, and cool and soulful vocals are injected into a canon of original tunes and perfectly matched covers, and the combination can take his audience on quite the journey. With Wayne, it's always about preparing for a multi-faceted ride, as the musical terrain can shift just as quickly as lyrical inspiration. The abbreviated version of Wayne's musical journey began with him soaking up the sounds of gospel music, as his dad was a preacher. From there it was into jazz and Latin music, before the doors opened to R&B and soul. In Los Angeles, and long before he moved north, Wayne continued to wade into a variety of genres and styles including swing, bebop, standards and dance music. He's won seven Maple Blues Awards, a Juno, and three keyboard awards from Living Blues Magazine. He was inducted into the Boogie Woogie Piano Hall of Fame in Cincinnati in 2017. With Sherman "Tank" Doucette, Wayne is co-host of the long-running RCA community program, School of Blues. For more information, visit kennybluesboss.com

About Cheryl Foggo: Cheryl Foggo is an award-winning author, playwright, and filmmaker whose work over the last 30 years has focused on the lives of Western Canadians of African descent. She directed the short film *Kicking Up a Fuss: The Charles Daniels Story* and is a recipient of the Sondra Kelly Award from the Writers Guild of Canada, as well as the 2015 Alberta Literary Award for Drama from the Writers' Guild of Alberta. A well-known author, she has been published in dozens of anthologies. Her books include the recently released 30th-anniversary edition of *Pourin' Down Rain: A Black Woman Claims Her Place in the Canadian West*; the young adult novels *One Thing That's True* and *I Have Been in Danger*; and a children's picture book, *Dear Baobab*.

About the Rotary Centre for the Arts

Located in the heart of Kelowna's Cultural District, the [Rotary Centre for the Arts](http://RotaryCentrefortheArts) is a multidisciplinary visual and performing arts centre. The RCA continually strives to improve the economic, cultural, and social quality of life in the community by fostering participation in, and appreciation of the arts. As a world-class venue celebrating creative expression through diverse art forms and disciplines, the Rotary Centre for the Arts is a unique City of Kelowna facility in which individuals of all ages and backgrounds come together to share in the excitement of strengthening art and culture in the Okanagan. The Rotary Centre for the Arts respectfully acknowledges that it is located on the unceded, traditional territory of the Syilx (Okanagan) people.