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A Note About The Wolves

For decades, the competitive and energizing world of sports has been the backdrop for many acclaimed theatrical works. From Clifford Odets’ boxing-themed drama Golden Boy to the baseball-centric Damn Yankees and Richard Greenberg’s Take Me Out, writers use athletics to create high-stakes drama, to build atmosphere and as a metaphor for life’s challenges. Yet these plays, like much of our society’s discourse around sports, focus on male athletes.

Enter The Wolves—Sarah DeLappe’s incandescent new play about a soccer team of 16- and 17-year-old women. These athletes usher us into their realm where daily concerns—in addition to soccer—include the academic and social rigors of high school, familial relationships and, perhaps most crucially, identity formation. Whether you are a teenager yourself, a teacher, a parent or grandparent of teenagers, or simply take an interest in how people are shaped by their youth, The Wolves’ candid rendering of young athletes is likely to provoke questions and memories, painful and uplifting alike. And the real soccer drills and warm-ups performed by this cast of rising young Chicago talents bring the passion and aggression of the game to the stage: a rare experience in the theater.

Sarah is one of many invigorating, forward-thinking female writers making her mark on today’s theatrical landscape—and The Wolves, her first professionally produced play, has quickly become something of a phenomenon. I was thrilled last year when, shortly after we selected this play for our 2017/2018 Season, The Wolves was honored as a Pulitzer Prize finalist. Like any good sports team, The Wolves has found a devoted following, as two encore engagements were held after its initial premiere off-Broadway. The Goodman is incredibly excited to now host the play’s Chicago premiere. Our production is directed by Vanessa Stalling, a former Goodman Michael Maggio Directing Fellow and a director whose work I have admired for years; in particular, I was drawn to her adaptation and direction of United Flight 232 at The House Theatre of Chicago, in which she shaped a complex and haunting human story about the real-life 1989 plane crash in Sioux City. I am excited to watch as she finds similar depth in the characters in The Wolves, with all their adolescent angst and explosive energy.

I hope you will enjoy this exclusively female story, which shines a literal and metaphorical spotlight on young women, who are still rarely portrayed as athletes or protagonists. As Sarah notes, this play is our invitation to see women as fully complex, multidimensional human beings who deserve respect and attention. Here, finally, we see the world from their perspective.

Robert Falls
Artistic Director
Leaders of the Pack: A Conversation with The Wolves Playwright Sarah DeLappe and Director Vanessa Stalling
By Michael Mellini

If there’s a theatrical equivalent to scoring a championship-winning goal, 26 year-old playwright Sarah DeLappe has certainly done it with her soccer-themed play, The Wolves—written as a graduate student at Brooklyn College. DeLappe earned a spot among the 2017 Pulitzer Prize finalists for the New York premiere of her debut play, which received two encore presentations due to popular demand. Shortly before rehearsals began for the Chicago debut, DeLappe joined director Vanessa Stalling—an acclaimed Chicago director and alumna of the Goodman’s Michael Maggio Directing Fellowship—to discuss the play.

Michael Mellini: Sarah, what inspired you to write The Wolves?

Sarah DeLappe: In 2014, I was at the New Museum for an exhibit of contemporary art from the Middle East and North Africa. It was an incredible show, but I kept thinking about the distance between the people taking in the art—you know, New Yorkers on their iPhones drinking cold brew in the middle of summer—and the artists, who made these political works in response to the current or historical situations of their countries. On the subway back to my apartment, I started writing the first scene of a play where these simultaneous conversations are happening about the Khmer Rouge and the efficacy of tampons on a soccer field. That I figured out quickly that these characters were on a soccer field came from a question: What could be further away from those humanitarian disasters than a bunch of American suburbanites on an indoor soccer field warming up for a game? I started thinking of the characters as if they were in a war movie, but instead of young men in the trenches preparing for battle, they were young women on AstroTurf preparing for a soccer game.

MM: The play uniquely combines rapid fire dialogue with the physical demands of soccer. Sarah, can you speak a bit about how you envisioned the performances as you wrote—and Vanessa, how you go about bringing that to life on stage?

SD: I wanted it to be a very physical play, and for the majority of the play to be this synchronized warm-up routine. There was something appealing about showing these girls as strong athletes, not sexualized objects, moving through something with military precision and unity. They’re almost like one organism, yet their dialogue is so scatter shot. I found that notion really exciting.

VS: The physical opportunities really excited me when I read this script because I love complicated staging possibilities. As a director, you really need to balance where the audience’s focus should be. At the same time, there’s the exciting juxtaposition Sarah pointed out, which is that women aren’t often allowed to look strong, be aggressive or take up space. But these women are preparing for a game that asks them to do just that and use their voices. So as the audience watches the players warm up, it’s like being a fly on a wall for their conversations and seeing how they socialize as young women in the midst of forming their own identities.

MM: These characters are in high school, which can be a time of soul searching and self-discovery for anyone. Does your work pull from your own formative years—and with the advent of social media in the last decade or so, do you feel the current teenage experience may be different from your own?
SD: When I was writing the play, I spent a lot of time at my day job tutoring teenage girls, helping them with the SATs, homework and essays, so I felt very close to the current experience of female adolescence. The play is autobiographical though it doesn’t map out my actual experiences—I never played high school soccer—but the characters are an amalgamation of all of the teenage girls I’ve known, loved, hated and admired.

VS: This script is so strong because each of these women has such depth, and you can see the different facets of yourself growing up in each of them. I love the quote Sarah includes at the beginning of the script: “We’re always the same age inside.”

SD: Yes! At the beginning of the play, each character is kind of isolated and operating in their own bubble, even though they’re a team. It takes something big for them to come together. Rather than each saying, “I’m going to be the best that I can be and get into college,” they start to think, “Oh, who is that person across from me?” The distance between the women shortens as they shape their own identities. We get to see them at this really great point where their adult identities are beginning to form. They’re at this tipping point as to who they’re going to become in life, which is why it’s such an interesting age range to explore.

MM: Plays with all-female casts are still fairly rare in theater, and nine of the 10 of actors are making their debut in a Goodman season production, which is quite exciting. Are there similarities between an athletic team and a theatrical ensemble?

VS: Being an ensemble on stage and being on a soccer team aren’t very different. They’re communities you form in order to carry each other through to an end goal. We’re going to hold a workshop with a soccer consultant so the cast will learn the exercises and everything that would be required of a team. You’re definitely working at a different level with this play because of the physical challenges, so everyone is going to be rooting for each other. Chicago is filled with amazing, talented women, so it’s super exiting that this production is providing the opportunity for so many young women to move into the next phase of their careers.

MM: Sarah, in addition to the Goodman production, this play will be staged throughout the country later this year. As a writer, how does it feel once your work begins to be examined and shaped by a whole new group of artists?

SD: I’m so excited about the production at the Goodman. I feel continually astonished and astounded that any of this has happened at all. It’s totally out of my hands now, and that is so thrilling, shocking and really an honor. A lot of colleges are going to be producing it now, too—and even some brave high schools, which is a playwright’s dream come true.

MM: In recent months, stories of sexual assault and the treatment of women, in both professional and personal environments, have dominated the news. Do you see this play being in dialogue with so much of this discourse?

SD: The antidote, or answer, to all of these discussions is to see women as fully complex, multidimensional human beings who deserve respect and attention. In that way I hope the play is involved in the current conversation about sexual harassment of young women. I hope that every audience member will feel that even teenage girls deserve their own stories, and that it’s a worthwhile experience to watch these characters unfold and discover their identities.

VS: The play addresses many of the pressures facing young women, including the pressures put on them to be sexy and to please men. There’s something interesting about those expectations clashing against the notion of these women playing this sport for themselves. It’s nice to be able to see women, complicated women, in a space for 90 minutes examining their goals and
empowering themselves. They’re up against so many things that weaken women, whether it’s self-driven hatred of one another or pressures from men and what they’re “supposed to be.” These sub-storylines are woven in so beautifully that the players’ stories don’t necessarily become all about that, but inherently the compounding effect challenges the team as a whole, as they try to win. It’s a great time to see nine amazing female characters on stage. When they come together as a team for their cheer, “We are the Wolves,” it’s a powerful moment. You can’t walk away without feeling an element of hope.

MAKING THE TEAM: CASTING THE ACTORS AND ATHLETES OF THE WOLVES

In casting The Wolves, the Goodman faced a unique task: find actors who could deliver a compelling story of teenage girls on the brink of adulthood, who have the stamina to remain on stage for the entire 90-minute play and who could perform intricate soccer drills. Associate Casting Director Erica Sartini-Combs and Casting Coordinator Rachael Jimenez reflect on the audition process through which they selected their onstage team.

Michael Mellini: Describe a typical casting process for a show at the Goodman.

Erica Sartini-Combs: Once a show has been selected for our season, we each read the script, and think about actors who could give a voice to each character. We’ll add those actors to our “Ideas List,” which is a “kitchen sink list,” of sorts. The next step is having a conversation with the director and/or playwright to discuss how they’re envisioning the world of the play and what energy, qualities and special skills are needed for each role. From there, we narrow down the list to a pool of actors who best represent the director’s vision, goals and our institutional values.

Rachael Jimenez: Our directors, even those based in Chicago, work across the country, so often we only have a certain amount of time to get everything done while they are in town. With The Wolves, we did everything in a three-week span and saw hundreds of actors, including the preliminary auditions. Director Vanessa Stalling then saw about six to 10 actors for each of the 10 roles in the show.

Michael Mellini: Did the actors need soccer experience to audition?

Erica Sartini-Combs: Two of the nine team roles needed to have more advanced skills than the others, but all the women needed to have a strong sense of physicality and athleticism. It was all about research, reaching out to agents, putting out postings, shaking every tree possible to find those athletic actors. At the preliminary auditions, the actors described their soccer experiences and/or general athletic skills, which helped us determine the actor and role Vanessa would see. We had them share text from the script and then head to a “soccer skills callback” at Chicago Futsal Academy in Edgewater. We hired an audition soccer consultant, Angela Staveskie, to teach them skills and help us evaluate their work. We were in awe anytime Angela showed us a new move! Actors went through warm-ups, skill drills and rotations for about two hours. With Angela’s help, we identified the women who had strong soccer skills, or the potential for skill development. There was one more final soccer callback before the cast was selected. It was so cool to see the women lean into each drill and the support they gave each other. There was such energy, it was electric— and one of my top audition experiences to date.

Rachael Jimenez: We ultimately cast a couple actors who don’t have much previous soccer experience—but they were the ones really having fun on the field and supporting and encouraging each other. It
was like being on a team already. The full team, including their understudies, will be going through a training camp before they get into the rehearsal room.

**MM: Does a process like that change the experience for actors?**

**RJ:** This was definitely a unique experience. It’s not every day actors have to share their soccer skills for a theater project; it certainly raised the energy in the room. We weren’t just sitting behind a table, we were up moving around with the actors. We also were on a soccer field, which is essentially what the play’s set will look like—so moments felt deeper and richer because we were already in the world of the play.

**ESC:** There was also a notable conversation happening during the auditions because, when an actor walked in, she discovered a room of all women: the director, casting team, audition readers and soccer consultant. This is rare. Actor after actor addressed this openly with shock and excitement. It was honestly moving.

**MM: What makes for a successful audition, or what should an actor bring to the experience?**

**ESC:** Presence and being true to yourself. Individuals who know, and own, who they are have a strong presence. It shows when you are confident, prepared and take ownership of space, and that little bit of theater you present won’t feel like an audition. When you have fun, we have fun. Especially with this project, it was important to let go of any nerves over the physical aspects. We made great efforts to be sure actors felt supported and comfortable to make mistakes. Their footwork may have looked a bit wild at first, but seeing an actor who was game and just went for it made a huge difference.

**RJ:** It’s important to bring yourself to the role. We should be able to see the character on you, versus somebody performing a character. Chicago theater artists and audiences like authenticity and reality. You just need to be confident and say, “This is my version of this character and what I bring to them.”

**MM: This cast is comprised of local artists, most whom are making their Goodman debuts. Can you speak a bit about the Goodman’s commitment to Chicago artists?**

**ESC:** It’s no secret Chicago has an incredibly vibrant arts community. We always look first at Chicago actors for every project; our intention is that it’s not until we have exhausted our Chicago pool that we will go out of town. We were confident going into *The Wolves* that we would find our cast locally because of the age range we sought. Our full casting team sees shows weekly, across Chicago, to keep up with the talent pool. Most of that scouting time is spent in the storefront scene and mid-size Equity houses. It’s nice to see people we have long admired in our community now debuting at the Goodman. I can’t wait to see this show on its feet. I’ll be beaming on opening night!
The Goodman Theatre

Presents

THE WOLVES

By

SARAH DELAPPE

Directed by

VANESSA STALLING

Set Design by

COLLETTE POLLARD

Costume Design by

NOËL HUNTZINGER

Lighting Design by

KEITH PARHAM

Original Music and Sound Design by

MIKHAIL FIKSEL

Casting by

ERICA SARTINI-COMBS

ADAM BELCUORE, CSA

Dramaturgy by

KRISTIN IDASZAK

Production Stage Manager

NIKKI BLUE*

ANGELA ALISE* (#00) makes her Goodman Theatre debut. Chicago credits include The House That Will Not Stand (Victory Gardens Theater), Saturday Night/Sunday Morning (Prologue Theatre at Steppenwolf Garage Rep), Hairspray (Drury Lane Theatre), Heaven How I Got Here and The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey (Provision Theater), How We Got On (Haven Theatre), The Wiz (Kokandy Productions), Parade (Boho Theatre), Coming Home (Erasing the Distance, where she is an ensemble member) and understudying The Good Book (Court Theatre), Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane and Mr. Chickee’s Funny Money (Chicago Children’s Theatre) and The Velveteen Rabbit (Marriott Theatre). Regional credits include Black Side of the Moon and Nothing to Lose But Our Chains (The Second City at Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company) and Almost Accurate Guide to America (The Second City at The Kennedy Center). She holds a BA in theater from Loyola University Chicago and is represented by Gray Talent Group.
ISA ARCINIEGAS (#25) makes her Goodman Theatre debut. Chicago credits include Fun Home (Victory Gardens Theater), We’re Gonna Die (Haven Theatre Company), good friday (Oracle Productions, Jeff Award nomination for Best Ensemble), You On The Moors Now and American Idiot (The Hypocrites), The Fly Honey Show VIII (The Inconvenience), Adventures With Aladdin (Lookingglass Theatre Company with Chicago Symphony Orchestra) and Stinky Cheese Man and Letters Home (Griffin Theatre national tour). She received her BFA in acting from the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University.

TAYLOR BLIM (#2) makes her Goodman Theatre debut. Chicago credits include The Crucible and Mary Page Marlowe (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); Love’s Labor’s Lost (Chicago Shakespeare Theater); Sucker Punch (Victory Gardens Theater); Grizzly Mama (Rivendell Theatre Ensemble); A Christmas Carol (Drury Lane Theatre); Assassins, Gruesome Playground Injuries, Anna Bella Eema and Video Galaxy (The Theatre School at DePaul University). Film and television credits include Chicago Med, Hala Forever, The Disposal, The Year That Changed Us and They Wake Up.

AURORA REAL DE ASUA (#14) makes her Goodman Theatre debut. Chicago credits include You On the Moors Now and Dracula with The Hypocrites, Firebirds Take the Field with Rivendell Theatre Ensemble and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead with Metropolis Performing Arts Center. Additional credits include understudying Chicago Shakespeare Theater in the Parks Twelfth Night. She is a graduate of Northwestern University and represented by Gray Talent Group.

MEIGHAN GERACHIS* (Soccer Mom) returns to the Goodman, where she previously appeared in A Christmas Carol and the New Stages production of Blue Skies Process. Chicago credits include Domesticated, Our Town and The House on Mango Street (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); Seven Homeless Mammoths Wander New England (Theater Wit); Solstice (A Red Orchid Theater); Firebirds Take the Field; The Electric Baby; Precious Little; The Walls; Elliot, A Soldier’s Fugue; Indulgences at the Louisville Harem; Factory Girls; My Simple City; Wrens and Ten Tiny Fingers, Nine Tiny Toes (Rivendell Theatre Ensemble); Measure for Measure (Chicago Shakespeare Theater); Cloud Nine (About Face Theatre); Cigarettes and Moby Dick and Che Che Che (Latino Chicago); The Underpants (Noble Fool Theatricals) and The Road to Graceland (Lifeline Theatre). Regional and international credits include Charm (Mixed Blood Theatre); Elliot, A Soldier’s Fugue (Stageworks) and A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Contact Theatre in Manchester, England). Film credits include Batman v. Superman: Dawn of Justice, At Any Price and Virginia. Television credits include Chicago P.D., Crisis,Bobby & Iza, Sirens and Battleground.

NATALIE JOYCE (#7) makes her Goodman Theatre debut. Chicago credits include understudying in Born Yesterday (Remy Bumppo Theatre Company), Deirdre of the Sorrows (City Lit Theater Company), Mary Shelley Sees the Future (Runaways Lab Theatre) and For Annie (The Sound). Regional Credits include Sleeping Beauty, Luna Gale and Love and Information (Ensemble Theatre Cincinnati). Ms. Joyce is a graduate of the Ensemble Theatre Acting Apprenticeship and received her BA in theater from Penn State University. She is represented by Gray Talent Group.

CYDNEY MOODY (#8) makes her Goodman Theatre debut. Chicago credits include the Mary Page Marlowe workshop (Steppenwolf Theatre Company) and she is a company member of The Comrades, where she has appeared in Mary Kate Olsen is in Love, Prelude to a Kiss and was the movement director for Bob: A Life in Five Acts. She has also worked with The Little Things Theatre in The Two Gentlemen of Verona and Chekhov’s Seven Short Farces. Television and film
ERIN O’SHEA* (#46) makes her Goodman Theatre debut. Previous Chicago credits include The Hundred Dresses (Chicago Children’s Theatre), Private Lives (Metropolis Performing Arts Center), Lyle Finds His Mother (Lifeline Theatre), The Other Cinderella (Black Ensemble Theater), The Student Prince (Evaston Light Opera Works), Little Women the Musical (Nightblue Performing Arts Company), Stage Door and No More Dead Dogs (Griffin Theatre), Jake’s Women (Citadel Theatre), The Rocky Horror Show (Awkward Pause Theatre) and For Annie (The Sound). Regionally, she performed at Actors Theatre of Louisville and American Repertory Theater in H.M.S. Pinafore (The Hypocrites). On camera, she has appeared in various independent films, such as No Resolution (produced by Tim Kasher) and Older Children (Wild Mouse Film Productions), as well as in a number of short films and web series. She is represented by Stewart Talent.

SARAH PRICE (#11) returns to the Goodman, where she previously appeared in the New Stages Festival production of Carlyle. Other Chicago credits include Earthquakes in London (Steep Theatre Company), You On The Moors Now (The Hypocrites), Mai Dang Lao (Sideshow Theatre Company), The Sweeter Option (Strawdog Theatre Company), Solstice (A Red Orchid Theatre), Northanger Abbey (Remy Bumppo Theatre Company) and Monstrous Regiment (Lifeline Theatre). Regional credits include A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Indiana Repertory Theatre). Television credits include Chicago Fire. She is a graduate of The Theatre School at DePaul University, the Improv Training Program at iO and Second City’s Conservatory. She is also a company member with A Crew of Patches, performing Shakespeare for high school students in the city and suburbs. She is represented by Grossman & Jack Talent.

MARY TILDEN (#13) makes her Goodman Theatre debut. Chicago credits include Hookman (Steep Theatre Company), The Arrow Cracks (The Neo-Futurists), A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Two Pence Theatre) and Much Ado About Nothing (The Arc Theatre). She performs weekly with the iO Chicago improv team Devil’s Daughter and is a company member and teaching artist with Barrel of Monkeys.

SARAH DELAPPE (Playwright) Ms. DeLappe’s play The Wolves (Clubbed Thumb/Playwrights Horizons Theater School, Great Plains Theater Conference) was a recipient of the American Playwriting Foundation’s inaugural Relentless Award and a finalist for the 2016 Susan Smith Blackburn Prize and the 2017 Pulitzer Prize. She has been a resident artist at Sitka Fellows Program and SPACE on Ryder Farm and was a 2016/2017 Page One playwright at the Playwrights Realm. An alum of Clubbed Thumb’s Early Career Writers Group, she is currently a member of the Ars Nova Play Group and the New Georges Audrey Residency. She received an EST/Sloan commission and a spot on The Kilroys’ 2015 List. She received her MFA in playwriting at Brooklyn College.

VANESSA STALLING (Director) returns to Goodman Theatre, where she was the 2016 Michael Maggio Directing Fellow. Most recently she directed the re-mount of United Flight 232, an award-winning show she adapted and directed for The House Theatre of Chicago from Laurence Gonzales’ book Flight 232. Previously to that, she directed Lauren Yee’s Hookman at Steep Theatre. She is also known for her work as an associate artistic director of Redmoon Theatre, where she directed several pieces including the remount of The Cabinet, which toured
Brazil for the FILO Festival, and roaming performances for President Obama’s White House Halloween celebrations. She was recently named as one of Newcity’s top 50 2018 Players. She is also a company member of The House Theatre and an assistant professor of directing at University of California, San Diego’s Department of Theatre and Dance. She is based in Chicago and San Diego.

**COLLETTE POLLARD (Scenic Design)** returns to the Goodman, where she previously designed *Stoop Stories, Fishmen* and *The Happiest Song Plays Last*. Chicago credits include *42nd Street* (Drury Lane Theatre); *HIR, The Fundamentals, Between Riverside and Crazy, Head of Passes, 1984* and *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); *Chicago Voices* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); *Thaddeus and Slocum* and *In The Garden* (Lookingglass Theatre Company); *The Importance of Being Earnest, The Hunter And The Bear* and *Arcadia* (Writers Theatre). She is a company member at The House Theatre of Chicago, where she has designed 20 plus productions, including *Death and Harry Houdini, The Nutcracker, The Hammer Trinity, Rose & The Rime* and *The Sparrow*, all remounted at The Adrienne Arsht Center, Miami. Regional credits include the upcoming *Sense & Sensibility, Hannah and the Dread Gazebo* and *Great Expectations* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *How I Learned to Drive* (Cleveland Playhouse and Syracuse Stage); *Hamlet* and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (Santa Cruz Shakespeare); *The Oldest Boy* (Marin Theatre Company) and *Geller Girls, Good People* and *The Fairytale Lives of Russian Girls* (Alliance Theatre). She is an artistic associate at TimeLine Theatre Company. She is the recipient of several Jeff Awards, and has joined the faculty at University of Illinois at Chicago as an associate professor of design at the School of Theatre and Music.

**NOËL HUNTZINGER (Costume Design)** returns to the Goodman, where she designed *Pamplona* and *Lottery Day, Twilight Bowl, Blue Skies Process* and *Support Group for Men* at the New Stages Festival. She is an artistic associate at Sideshow Theatre Company (where her credits include *truth and reconciliation, Stupid F**king Bird* and *Antigonick*). Ms Huntzinger is a Resident Artist at Filament Theatre (credits include *The Adventures of Robin Hood, The Van Gogh Café, Pinocchio: A Folk Musical* and others) and has worked extensively with Interrobang Theatre Ensemble (credits include *North Pool, Really Really, Pitchfork Disney* and others). Ms. Huntzinger has also designed shows with Chicago Lyric Opera Unlimited, Boise Contemporary Theatre, About Face Theatre, Pride Arts Theatre, A-Squared, Muse of Fire, Shattered Globe Theatre and Collective Theatre Ensemble. In addition to theater, she has designed pieces for choreographers Ginny Sykes (*Bodies of Memory*), Wendy Clinard (*Watershed*) and the Antony Tudor Trust (*Fandango*). She wrapped her first full-length film design for *Olympia: An Instruction Manual for Everything* last summer. Ms. Huntzinger is from Tulsa, Oklahoma, and is a graduate of Oklahoma University.

**KEITH PARHAM (Lighting Design)** returns to Goodman Theatre, where past credits include *Uncle Vanya; stop. reset; Ask Aunt Susan; Venus in Fur; By the Way, Meet Vera Stark; Teddy Ferrara; Sweet Bird of Youth; Red; Mary; A Christmas Carol* and *The Seagull*. Chicago credits include *The Dumb Waiter, Fulton Street Sessions* and *Baal* (TUTA, where he is a company member) and *The Herd, The Birthday Party, Time Stands Still, The Sunset Limited and Red Light Winter* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company). Broadway credits include *Thérèse Raquin* (Roundabout Theatre Company). Off-Broadway credits include *Between Riverside and Crazy* (Atlantic Theater Company/Second Stage Theatre); *Hit the Wall, Tribes, Mistakes Were Made* and *Red Light Winter* (Barrow Street Theatre); *Through the Yellow Hour* (Rattlestick Playwrights Theater);
Karen O’s *Stop the Virgens* (St. Ann’s Warehouse); *Ivanov* and *Three Sisters* (Classic Stage Company); *A Minister’s Wife* (Lincoln Center Theater); *Adding Machine* (Minetta Lane Theatre) and *Crime and Punishment* and *The Sunset Limited* (59E59 Theaters). Internationally, his credits include *Stop the Virgens* (Sydney Opera House) and *Homebody/Kabul* (National Theatre in Belgrade, Serbia). Mr. Parham has designed lighting for productions at Arena Stage, the Alley Theatre, the Mark Taper Forum and Trinity Repertory Company, among others. He has received Obie, Lucille Lortel and After Dark Awards.

**MIKHAIL FIKSEL** *(Original Music and Sound Design)* returns to the Goodman, where he previously worked on *King of the Yees*, *The Sign in Sidney Brustein’s Window*, *2666*, *Feathers and Teeth*, *The Upstairs Concierge*, *The World of Extreme Happiness*, *Venus in Fur*, *Buzzer*, *Black n Blue Boys/Broken Men*, *Fish Men*, *Massacre (Sing to Your Children)*, *El Grito del Bronx* and the *New Stages* Festival. Chicago credits include *The Old Man* and *The Old Moon*, *Hamlet*, *Hesperia*, *The Real Thing* and *Travels with My Aunt* at Writers Theatre; *Mojada*, *Oedipus El Rey* and *Tree* at Victory Gardens Theater; *Blood and Gifts*, *Concerning Strange Devices from the Distant West* and *Our Kind of Town* at TimeLine Theatre Company; *War with the Newts* at Next Theatre Company; *Awake and Sing!* at Northlight Theatre; *I Will Kiss These Walls*, *Home/Land* and *Feast* at Albany Park Theater Project; *Pirates of Penzance*, *Mikado*, *Woyzcek*, *Frankenstein* and *Oedipus* at The Hypocrites; *Petrified Forest*, *The Master and Margarita* and *Uncle Vanya* at Strawdog Theatre Company; *Pony* at About Face Theatre and *1001* at Collaboration. Mr. Fiksel’s regional and off-Broadway credits include *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* at the Dallas Theater Center, Second Stage Theatre and the Geffen Playhouse; *In the Next Room...or the vibrator play* at the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis and *Mauritus* at Milwaukee Chamber Theatre. He has received seven Jeff Awards, a Lucille Lortel Award, an After Dark Award, nominations for the Henry Hewes Design Award and for the LA Drama Critics Circle Award and was recently honored with the Michael Maggio Emerging Designer Award. Mr. Fiksel is an ensemble member of 2nd Story, an artistic associate with Teatro Vista, Collaboration, Wildclaw and Redmoon Theater and on the faculty at Loyola University Chicago. MikhailFiksel.com

**KRISTIN IDASZAK** *(Dramaturg)* is a Chicago-based playwright, dramaturg and theater artist. A two-time Playwrights’ Center Jerome Fellow, she is currently the Shank Playwright in Residence at the Goodman and is a member of the 2017/2018 Goodman Playwrights Unit. She has received the Kennedy Center’s Paula Vogel Playwriting Award and the Jean Kennedy Smith Playwriting Award. Her play *Another Jungle* received an honorable mention for the Relentless Award and will have its world premiere this spring with Cloudgate Theatre and The Syndicate. As a dramaturg, she has worked with Williamstown Theatre Festival, The Playwrights Center and numerous others. Previously, she served as associate artistic director/literary manager of Caffeine Theatre and associate artistic director of Collaboration. She received her MFA from University of California, San Diego. KristinIdaszak.com

**NIKKI BLUE** *(Stage Manager)* returns to the Goodman, where she production stage managed for *Lottery Day*, *Objects in the Mirror* and *Support Group for Men* in the *New Stages* Festival. Regional credits include production stage manager for *Godspell* with Arkansas Repertory Theatre and 2 Ring Circus, *Piedmont Blues* (tour) and *The Year I Didn’t Go to School* with Chicago Children’s Theatre. She has also worked with Yale Opera, the International Voices Project, the Bienen School of Music, the haunted house “Zombie Mortuary” with Busch
Gardens and Florida Studio Theatre. Ms. Blue was a stage management apprentice at Steppenwolf Theatre Company, a floor manager at the Goodman for two seasons and is a graduate of the University of Central Florida.

**ROBERT FALLS (Director/Goodman Theatre Artistic Director)** Later this season, Mr. Falls will direct a new production of Henrik Ibsen’s *An Enemy of the People* on the Albert stage, and also remount his Lyric Opera of Chicago production of Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* for the Dallas Opera. Most recently, he directed the world premiere of Jim McGrath’s *Pamplona*, starring Stacy Keach as Ernest Hemingway, and a new production of Annie Baker’s adaptation of *Uncle Vanya*. In the 2015/2016 Season, Mr. Falls directed the Chicago premiere of Rebecca Gilman’s *Soups, Stews, and Casseroles: 1976*, and partnered with Goodman Playwright-in-Residence Seth Bockley to direct their world premiere adaptation of Roberto Bolaño’s *2666* (Jeff Award for Best Adaptation). Recent productions also include *The Iceman Cometh* for the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Rebecca Gilman’s *Luna Gale* for the Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles, *Measure for Measure* and the world and off-Broadway premieres of Beth Henley’s *The Jacksonian*. Among his other credits are *The Seagull*, *King Lear*, *Desire Under the Elms*, John Logan’s *Red*, Jon Robin Baitz’s *Three Hotels*, Eric Bogosian’s *Talk Radio* and Conor McPherson’s *Shining City*; the world premieres of Richard Nelson’s *Frank’s Home*, Arthur Miller’s *Finishing the Picture*, Eric Bogosian’s *Griller*, Steve Tesich’s *The Speed of Darkness* and *On the Open Road*, John Logan’s *Riverview: A Melodrama with Music* and Rebecca Gilman’s *A True History of the Johnstown Flood, Blue Surge and Dollhouse*; the American premiere of Alan Ayckbourn’s *House and Garden*; and the roadway premiere of Elton John and Tim Rice’s *Aida*. Mr. Falls’ honors for directing include, among others, a Tony Award (*Death of a Salesman*), a Drama Desk Award (*Long Day’s Journey into Night*), an Obie Award (*subUrbia*), a Helen Hayes Award (*King Lear*) and multiple Jeff Awards (including a 2012 Jeff Award for *The Iceman Cometh*). For “outstanding contributions to theater,” Mr. Falls has been recognized with such prestigious honors as the Savva Morozov Diamond Award (Moscow Art Theatre), the O’Neill Medallion (Eugene O’Neill Society), the Distinguished Service to the Arts Award (Lawyers for the Creative Arts), the Illinois Arts Council Governor’s Award and induction into the Theater Hall of Fame.

**ROCHE EDWARD SCHULFER (Goodman Theatre Executive Director)** started working in the Goodman Theatre box office and became executive director in 1980. Since that time he has overseen more than 350 productions including close to 150 premieres. He initiated the Goodman’s annual production of *A Christmas Carol*, which celebrates 40 years as Chicago’s leading holiday arts tradition in 2017. In partnership with Artistic Director Robert Falls, Mr. Schulfer led the establishment of quality, diversity and community engagement as the core values of Goodman Theatre. During their tenure, the Goodman has received numerous awards for excellence, including the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theater, recognition by *Time* magazine as the “Best Regional Theatre” in the U.S., the Pulitzer Prize for Lynn Nottage’s *Ruined* and many Jeff Awards for outstanding achievement in Chicago area theater. Mr. Schulfer has negotiated the presentation of numerous Goodman Theatre productions in national and international venues. He coordinated the 12-year process to relocate the Goodman to the Theatre District in 2000. To mark his 40th anniversary with the Goodman, his name was added to the theater’s “Walk of Stars.” Mr. Schulfer was a founder and twice chair of the League of Chicago Theatres, the trade association of more than 200 Chicago area theaters and producers. He has been privileged to serve in leadership roles with Arts Alliance Illinois (the statewide
advocacy coalition); Theatre Communications Group (the national service organization for more than 450 not-for-profit theaters); the Performing Arts Alliance (the national advocacy consortium of more than 18,000 organizations and individuals); the League of Resident Theatres (the management association of 65 leading US theater companies); Lifeline Theatre in Rogers Park, the Arts & Business Council and the Board of Theater Wit. Mr. Schulfer is honored to have been recognized with the League of Chicago Theater’s Lifetime Achievement Award; Theatre Communication Group’s Visionary Leadership Award; Actors’ Equity Association for promoting diversity and equal opportunity in Chicago theater; the American Arts Alliance and Arts Alliance Illinois for arts advocacy; the Arts & Business Council for distinguished contributions to Chicago’s artistic vitality; Chicago magazine and the Chicago Tribune as a “Chicagoan of the Year”; the City of Chicago; Columbia College Chicago for entrepreneurial leadership; the Joseph Jefferson Awards Committee for his partnership with Robert Falls; Lawyers for the Creative Arts; Lifeline Theatre’s Raymond R. Snyder Award for Commitment to the Arts; Season of Concern for support of direct care for those living with HIV/AIDS; and Vision 2020 for promoting gender equality and diversity in the workplace. Mr. Schulfer received an Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from North Central College. He taught at the theater school at DePaul University for 15 years and has lectured regularly on arts management at Southern Methodist University and other academic institutions. Mr. Schulfer is a lifelong Chicago area resident and received a degree in economics from the University of Notre Dame, where he managed the cultural arts commission.

End of Program