A FRESH SLATE OF NEW PLAYS BY CONTEMPORARY VOICES TAKES THE STAGE
IN GOODMAN THEATRE’S 13TH ANNUAL NEW STAGES FESTIVAL, SEPTEMBER 21 – OCTOBER 9

**FESTIVAL LINEUP INCLUDES NEW WORK BY KRISTIANA RAE COLÓN, FRANCES YA-CHU COWHIG, ELLEN FAIREY, LINDSEY FERRENTINO, KIRSTEN GREENIDGE AND ABE KOOGLER**

***SPECIAL WEEKEND FOR INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS OFFERED OCTOBER 7-9***

(Chicago, IL) Goodman Theatre announces the lineup of its 13th annual New Stages festival—a celebration and discovery of new work by some of the finest established and emerging playwrights. Over the course of three weeks, the annual festival offers Chicago theatergoers a first look at six new plays, offered completely free-of-charge. The festival features three developmental productions (fully staged and performed in repertory), including: **Blue Skies Process** by Abe Koogler, a comic dive into workplace civility and politics; **Support Group for Men** by Ellen Fairey, a topical examination of how gender functions in an increasingly non-binary world; and **The King of Hell’s Palace** by Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig, a story inspired by true events exploring the impact of for-profit blood banks on rural villages in China. Three staged readings appear during the final weekend of the festival (“Professionals Weekend”), including: **Fiorissant & Canfield** by Kristiana Rae Colón, an honest depiction of the harsh realities of Ferguson, Missouri, in the early days of the burgeoning Black Lives Matter movement; **Amy and the Orphans** by Lindsey Ferrentino, a story of estranged siblings seeking reconciliation after their father’s death; and **And Moira Spins** by Kirsten Greenidge, about a family clashing when long simmering tensions boil to the surface over the course of what was meant to be an idyllic vacation. New Stages runs September 21 – October 9 in the 400-seat flexible Owen Theatre; tickets are free, but reservations are required: call 312.443.3800, visit GoodmanTheatre.org/NewStagesFestival or the box office (170 N. Dearborn). For more information about ‘Industry Professionals Weekend,” visit GoodmanTheatre.org/Professionals.

“Each year the New Stages Festival offers us the opportunity to work with some of the most distinctive storytellers working in the theatre today. I’m excited to share and celebrate this diverse, innovative lineup of new plays with Chicago audiences,” said Tanya Palmer, Director of New Play Development. “From the devastating impact of for-profit blood banks on rural villagers in China, to a comic look at a group of lonely middle-aged men from Chicago struggling with their masculinity in an increasingly gender-fluid landscape—the topics explored in this year’s series offer compelling and timely insights into a rapidly shifting and uncertain world.”

Since its 2004 inception, more than 70 plays have been produced as a developmental production or staged reading. Nearly half of these plays were authored by playwrights of color and/or authored by female playwrights. More than one-third of all plays developed in New Stages have received a world premiere production at the Goodman or another leading U.S. theater. The Goodman’s upcoming season features four world premieres of plays that originated in New Stages: **The Magic Play** by Andrew Hinderaker (October 21 – November 20, in the Owen); **King of the Yees** by Lauren Yee (March 31 – April 30, in the Owen); **Objects in the Mirror** by Charles Smith (April 29 – June 4, in the Albert); and **Lady in Denmark** by Dael Orlandersmith (May 19 – June 18, in the Owen).

The Goodman is grateful for the generosity of its New Work sponsors, including: the Time Warner Foundation, Lead Support of New Play Development; the Davee Foundation, Major Support for the Expansion of New Stages; the Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation and The Pritzker-Pucker Foundation, Major Support of New Play Development; The Glasser and Rosenthal Family and the Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust, Support of New Work Development; and The Joyce Foundation, Principal Support for Diverse Artistic and Professional Development.
About the 2016 New Stages Festival Lineup

Blue Skies Process  
By Abe Koogler, directed by Henry Wishcamper  
A Developmental Production; appears in repertory (September 21 – October 8)

To make something new. That's the task facing co-workers Amy, Peter and Kenny. To bolster their efforts, the team’s visionary leader has mandated a “blue skies process”: no hierarchy, everything is on the table and everyone is equal. Except they're not. Underneath the veneer of workplace civility, an epic power struggle is taking place. Hilarious, absurd and sometimes menacing, Blue Skies Process pokes fun at office politics but takes the process of creation very, very seriously.

Support Group for Men  
By Ellen Fairey, directed by Kimberly Senior  
A Developmental Production; appears in repertory (September 23 – October 9)

Four men meet every Thursday night in an apartment on the border of Wrigleyville and Boystown. Instead of letting off steam at a Cubs game, they've formed a make-shift support group—complete with invented Native American nicknames, a baseball bat/talking stick, and most importantly a ‘no women’ policy that is strictly enforced. When a gender non-conforming visitor abruptly crashes their party, the guys' notions of masculinity are upended. This topical comedy examines the many ways gender functions in an increasingly non-binary world—and proves help can sometimes be found in the most unlikely places.

The King of Hell's Palace  
By Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig, directed by Tea Alagić  
A Developmental Production; appears in repertory (September 25 – October 9)

When the Henan Ministry of Health begins paying citizens for blood plasma, impoverished farmers in the province's remote villages sell blood to buy fertilizer, mend their houses and create new opportunities for their children. As corrupt health officials cut costs to maximize the plasma products sold to pharmaceutical companies, safety standards are ignored, bringing catastrophic health implications to China's most vulnerable population. Inspired by true events, this new drama by the author of The World of Extreme Happiness (2014) explores the conflicts that arise when a community's greatest source of capital becomes their own bodies.

And Moira Spins  
By Kirsten Greenidge (director TBA)  
A Staged Reading: Saturday, October 8 at 10:30am

Determined to have a perfect vacation with her sisters. Lavinia has dropped off her kids at camp and rented a summer house. Her siblings, however, bring along their own baggage that threatens to ruin Lavinia’s meticulously planned week. And when their long-estranged stepmother shows up out of the blue, dormant tensions boil to the surface, forcing the women to face their cherished notions of family and how far they will go to preserve those beliefs.

Florissant & Canfield (developed as part of the 2015/2016 Playwrights Unit)  
By Kristiana Rae Colón (director TBA)  
A Staged Reading: Saturday, October 8 at 2pm

Colliding in the unlikely arena of a civil rights renaissance, a newly formed alliance of protesters is forced to put their nascent ideologies to the test in the quest for new visions of justice. Located at the intersection of tear gas and teddy bear memorials, police officer Darren Wilson and teenager Michael Brown, looting and liberation, Florissant & Canfield refracts the realities of Ferguson, Missouri, in the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement.
Amy and the Orphans
By Lindsey Ferrentino, directed by Scott Ellis
A Staged Reading: Sunday, October 9 at 10am

When their 85-year-old father dies, sparring siblings Maggie and Jake must break the news to their sister Amy, who has Down syndrome and lives in a state care facility. As they travel to their father’s memorial service with Amy and her straight-talking caregiver in tow, Jake and Maggie try to save the family by reintegrating Amy back into their lives. But they are forced to confront the truth about how truly far apart they’ve all grown.

About Goodman Theatre

Called America’s “Best Regional Theatre” by Time magazine, Goodman Theatre has won international recognition for its artists, productions and programs, and is a major cultural, educational and economic pillar in Chicago. Founded in 1925 by William O. Goodman and his family in honor of their son Kenneth (an important figure in Chicago’s cultural renaissance in the early 1900s) and represented today by descendant Albert Ivar Goodman and Suzette “Suki” Dewey, Goodman Theatre has garnered hundreds of awards for artistic achievement and community engagement, including: two Pulitzer Prizes, 22 Tony Awards (including “Outstanding Regional Theatre” in 1992), nearly 160 Joseph Jefferson Awards and more. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Robert Falls and Executive Director Roche Schulfer, the Goodman’s artistic priorities include new plays (more than 150 world or American premieres in the past 30 years), reimagined classics (including Falls’ nationally and internationally celebrated productions of Death of a Salesman, Long Day’s Journey into Night, King Lear and The Iceman Cometh, many in collaboration with actor Brian Dennehy), culturally specific work, musical theater (26 major productions in 20 years, including 10 world premieres) and international collaborations. Diversity and inclusion have been primary cornerstones of the Goodman’s mission for 30 years; over the past decade, 68% of the Goodman’s 35 world premieres were authored by women and/or playwrights of color, and the Goodman was the first theater in the world to produce all 10 plays in August Wilson’s “American Century Cycle.” Each year, the Goodman’s education and engagement programs serve thousands of students, teachers and life-long learners. In addition, for nearly four decades A Christmas Carol has led to the creation of a new generation of theatergoers in Chicago.

Goodman Theatre’s leadership includes the Artistic Collective: Brian Dennehy, Rebecca Gilman, Henry Godinez, Dael Orlandersmith, Steve Scott, Chuck Smith, Regina Taylor, Henry Wishcamper and Mary Zimmerman. Joan Clifford is Chair of Goodman Theatre’s Board of Trustees, Swati Mehta is Women’s Board President and Gordon C.C. Liao is President of the Scenemakers Board for young professionals.