REGINA TAYLOR MARKS 20 YEARS AT GOODMAN THEATRE WITH A PLAY FOR THE DIGITAL AGE, STOP. RESET., PREMIERING IN CHICAGO MAY 23 – JUNE 21

***THEMATICALLY-LINKED ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS FOR STOP. RESET. MELD TECH AND THEATER, SPARK CROSS-COMMUNITY CONVERSATION ACROSS CHICAGO***

(Chicago, IL) Goodman Theatre congratulates Artistic Associate Regina Taylor, who celebrates her 20th season at Chicago’s flagship theater this spring. The Chicago premiere of stop. reset.—Taylor’s 12th Goodman production, which she authors and directs—centers on the shifting ground of the digital age, asking: what do we need to fight for in terms of what we believe in and know? What do we need to release? Taylor is the only member of the theater’s esteemed Artistic Collective to generate work in all three creative capacities as playwright, director and actor. The Golden Globe and NAACP Image Award winner and two-time Emmy Award nominee currently stars in DIG, a new television series on USA Network. She was the first African American to play Romeo and Juliet’s title young lover on Broadway, and gained wide public recognition for her performance on the television series I’ll Fly Away. Her newest work, stop. reset, appears May 23 – June 21 (opening night is Monday, June 1) in the Owen Theatre. Tickets ($10 - $40; subject to change) are on sale now by phone at 312.443.3800, at GoodmanTheatre.org/StopReset or at the box office (170 N. Dearborn).

“Uniquely gifted, fearless and boundlessly curious, there is no other artist with the vision, scope and perspective of Regina Taylor,” said Artistic Director Robert Falls, who invited Taylor to join the Collective in 1995 following the premiere of her original work The Ties that Bind. “Regina has made invaluable contributions as a member of our Artistic Collective with eloquent, provocative works that explore tradition and probe the depths of the human experience. I am grateful Regina has chosen to spend her life in the theater with the Goodman, and I am excited to continue our collaboration with stop. reset.”

In stop. reset., e-books and digital technologies are transforming the literary world, and Chicago businessman Alex Ames (Eugene Lee) must try to save his long-standing African American book publishing company from extinction. While his employees Jan (Jacqueline Williams), Chris (Eric Lynch), Deb (Lisa Tejero) and Tim (Tim Decker) fret over losing their jobs, Ames finds unlikely inspiration from a mysterious teenager, J. (Edgar Sanchez), who seems to be plugged into the future. The aging Ames is forced to discover how far he’s willing to go to survive.

Taylor is innovative and provocative in how she emphasizes the ways in which theater unites communities through a curated series of collaborations and live events—dinner conversations, symposia and artist presentations—around the themes of the play. The content generated will appear on a special microsite giving audiences the opportunity to engage with the play prior to attending, while they are at the theater, and post-show.

To complement the play, Taylor developed a series of beyond-the-stage events/collaborations with Chicago individual artists/institutions. The first was a March 3 dinner party themed “Soul Food for a New Century,” at the Currency Exchange Café in Washington Park. Three featured speakers discussed changes in methods of communications and transmitting information/stories—Dr. Haki Madhubuti, Founder and President of Third World Press; Frank Sennett, Director of Digital Strategy for Crain’s Chicago Business; and Ytasha Womak, author of Afrofuturism: The World of Black Sci-fi and Fantasy. Guests included Michelle T.Boone, Commissioner of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events; Genevieve Thiers, entrepreneur and founder of Sittercity.com; Miguel Aguilar, of the Arts and Public Life initiative at the University of Chicago housed at the Arts Incubator; Dr. Carol Lee, Northwestern University professor of education in the School of Education and Social Policy and in African American Studies; Dr. Tracey Lewis-Elligan, associate professor of DePaul University’s Department of Sociology; Rap Brown, arts and culture journalist, former gallery owner; and Elysabeth Alfano, TV and stage producer and host, moderated the discussion.

Events to come include two more dinner parties, symposia and collaborations with DuSable Museum, WVON Radio, the Arts Incubator, Columbia College, DePaul University, Illinois Institute of Art and Lake Forest College. Details TBA.
Regina Taylor’s Work at Goodman Theatre and Beyond

1995/1996 – Escape from Paradise (Playwright/Performer; Goodman Studio)
1996/1997 – Transformations (Curator/Co-director; Goodman Studio)
1998/1999 – Oo-Bl-Dee (Playwright) (American Critics Association Award)
1999/2000 – Millennium Mambo (Curator/Co-writer/Performer; Goodman Studio)
2001/2002 – Drowning Crow (Playwright; Albert Theatre and on Broadway)
2003/2004 – Crowns (Playwright/Director; Albert Theatre) (Helen Hayes Award)
2005/2006 – The Dreams of Sarah Breedlove (Playwright/Director; Albert Theatre)
2008/2009 – Magnolia (Playwright; Albert Theatre)
2010/2011 – The Trinity River Plays (Playwright; Albert Theatre) (Edgerton Foundation Award)
2011/2012 – Crowns (Playwright/Director; Albert Theatre)
2014/2015 – stop reset. (Playwright/Director; Owen Theatre)

stop. reset. made its world premiere in 2013 at Signature Theatre Company in New York, where Taylor is a Residency Five playwright. Her film credits include The Negotiator, Courage Under Fire, A Family Thing, The Keeper, Clockers, Losing Isaiah and Lean on Me. She appeared in the CBS hit drama The Unit, for which she won a NAACP Image Award. Taylor has also received a Hope Abelson Artist-in-Residence Award, 2012 Chicagoan of the Year from Chicago magazine and an Oscar Micheaux Award.

Production Sponsor Support

The 2014/2015 season would not be possible without sponsor support. Edelman Worldwide is the Major Corporate sponsor for the Owen Theatre season. Baxter if the contributing sponsor and HSBC North American Holdings is the Opening Night sponsor for stop. reset. The Joyce Foundation is the principal support of Diversity Initiatives.

About the Artistic Collective

The Goodman’s commitment to contemporary American theater artists—including the Artistic Collective, playwright-in-residence and the commissioning and production of new plays—has resulted in more than 50 world premieres over the past decade, nearly half of which were penned by playwrights of color. The Collective, established by Robert Falls in his first year as Artistic Director, has directly contributed to this success, with projects including its members actor Brian Dennehy, playwright Rebecca Gilman, director Henry Godinez, director Steve Scott, director Chuck Smith, actor/playwright/director Regina Taylor, director Henry Wishcamper and director/playwright Mary Zimmerman.

About Goodman Theatre

The Goodman’s 2014/2015 Season features nine productions on its two stages—six in the 856-seat Albert Theatre and three in the 400-seat flexible Owen Theatre, plus the annual New Stages Festival that includes additional developmental productions, and partner productions with The Second City and Albany Park Theater Project. On stage now: Two Trains Running by August Wilson, directed by Chuck Smith, in conjunction with a citywide celebration of August Wilson (March 7 – April 19, in the Albert); The Upstairs Concierge by Kristoffer Diaz, directed by KJ Sanchez, a world premiere co-commission with Teatro Vista (March 28 – April 26, in the Owen). Still to come: The Little Foxxes by Lillian Hellman, directed by Henry Wishcamper (May 2 – June 7, in the Albert); stop, reset, written and directed by Regina Taylor, a Chicago premiere (May 23 – June 21, in the Owen); Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike by Christopher Durang, directed by Steve Scott, a Chicago premiere (June 20 – July 26, in the Albert); and Albany Park Theater Project’s Feast (July 24 – August 16, in the Owen). In addition, Henry Godinez directs A Work of Art by Elaine Romero, produced in association with Chicago Dramatists (June 19 – July 19 at Chicago Dramatists).

Now celebrating its 90th year as Chicago’s flagship theater, Goodman Theatre is an artistic and community institution dedicated to the art of theater and to civic engagement in the issues of the contemporary world. The Goodman has transformed over the past 35 years into a world class theater and premier Chicago cultural institution distinguished by the quality and scope of its programming and its culturally and aesthetically diverse creative leadership; artistic priorities include new plays, reimagined classics, culturally specific works, musical theater and international collaborations. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Robert Falls and Executive Director Roche Schulfer, achievements include the Goodman’s state-of-the-art two-theater complex in the heart of the downtown Theatre District. Over the past three decades, the Goodman has generated more than 150 world or American premieres, and nearly 30 new-work commissions. 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. American Airlines is the Exclusive Airline of Goodman Theatre.

“A mainstay of Chicago and beyond” (Chicago Sun-Times), the Goodman is internationally acclaimed for its “fresh work of magnitude and ambition (and) bold, risky theatrical choices” (Chicago Tribune). From new plays to “first-class revivals” (The New York Times), the Goodman has earned numerous awards for its productions: two Pulitzer Prizes; 22 Tony Awards, including Outstanding Regional Theatre (1992); and nearly 160 Joseph Jefferson Awards.

The 90th Anniversary “Season to Celebrate” programming is rooted in the same spirit that launched the Goodman in 1925—an array of dramatic fare, from classics to noteworthy contemporary works, innovative and often controversial, embracing genres from farces to searing social dramas—honoring the theater’s past and envisioning its future. The nine-play season began with an All-New Fall of works fostered and developed in the Goodman’s new play development programs followed by the August Wilson Celebration in spring 2015, the 10th anniversary of the playwright’s death and the 70th anniversary of his birth. This city-wide Celebration honors the longstanding collaboration between Wilson and the Goodman, the first theater in the world to produce all 10 works in his “American Century Cycle.”

Visit the special anniversary website, GoodmanTheatre.org/90, to see famous faces who’ve worked at the theater, browse photos of classic productions and read interviews with noted artists.

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