GOODMAN THEATRE RAISED MORE THAN $300,000 FOR PRODUCTIONS, EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS AT ITS SEASON OPENING CELEBRATION HONORING THE ESTEEMED ARTISTIC COLLECTIVE

***JULIE AND ROGER BASKES AND MARCY AND HARRY HARCZAK CO-CHAILED THE EVENT AT THE STANDARD CLUB FOLLOWED BY THE OPENING NIGHT PERFORMANCE OF DISGRACED AT THE GOODMAN***

(Chicago, IL) “Big. Bold. Brilliant.”, the theme of Goodman Theatre’s 2015/2016 Season, infused the evening of the Season Opening Celebration on September 21 honoring the company’s Artistic Collective—a group of world-class artists who call the Goodman their creative home. Individually and collectively, these artists’ contributions to the Goodman provide a diverse scope of theatrical style and vision. The Artistic Collective includes Robert Falls, Brian Dennehey, Rebecca Gilman, Henry Godinez, Steve Scott, Chuck Smith, Regina Taylor, Henry Wishcamper and Mary Zimmerman. 300 guests gathered at The Standard Club for cocktails and dinner followed by the opening night performance of Disgraced by Ayad Akhtar directed by Kimberly Senior at Goodman Theatre. The event, co-chaired by Julie and Roger Baskes and Marcy and Harry Harczak, raised more than $300,000 for the Goodman’s Productions, Education and Community Engagement programs.

The Goodman is grateful for the support of its Event Sponsor Partners: Abbott, American Airlines, Julie and Roger Baskes, Joan and Robert Clifford, Ruth Ann M. Gillis and Michael J. McGuinnis.

The event began at 5pm at The Standard Club, where guests enjoyed cocktails and a three-course dinner before proceeding to Goodman’s 856-seat Albert Theatre for the sell-out opening night performance of Disgraced, Akhtar’s Pulitzer Prize-winning “daring...hard-hitting drama” (Chicago Tribune). After the show, approximately 300 guests continued the celebration at an after-party at River Roast generously hosted by Chicago’s Levy Restaurants and James Beard Award-winning chef Tony Mantuan. River Roast also offers a special perk for those who dine prior to performances of Disgraced. Goodman Patrons who show their ticket stubs or Subscriber cards can purchase a whole roasted chicken and house bottle of sparkling white or red wine for $50.

“When I became the Artistic Director of the Goodman Theatre nearly three decades ago, I knew that the creation of an artistic vision for a truly great theater could not depend on the ideas and talents of one person alone,” explained Falls to the attendees. “If the Goodman were going to be, as I hoped it would, a theater for all of the residents of Chicago, it needed to reflect the enormous diversity of the city in its artistic leadership.”

The first artists invited into this group were directors with whom Falls had enjoyed a close creative relationship during his years as artistic director of the Wisdom Bridge Theatre: Frank Galati and Michael Maggio. Within a few years, the group had expanded to include new voices (directors David Petrarca and Mary Zimmerman) and established talents (Chuck Smith, whose decades of work in Chicago had made him the unofficial dean of the city’s African American theater community, and triple-threat actor/playwright/director Regina Taylor). Other associates—including actor/educator Cheryl Lynn Bruce and actor/director Harry Lennix—would soon join the Collective, contribute to the evolution of the Goodman’s diverse aesthetic, then move on to pursue careers in other performance arenas, leaving an indelible impact on the distinctive identity of the Goodman.

Today’s Artistic Collective is widely regarded by critics, audiences and theater professionals as the most accomplished of its kind in the American theater, and has contributed immeasurably to the depth and breadth of the work presented at the Goodman each season. Largely through their continuing work at the Goodman, the artists have become recognized as national and international visionaries. The Season Opening Celebration honored the
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Thirty-year anniversary of the formation of the Artistic Collective, and the nine extraordinary artists and current Collective members whose work forms the core of the Goodman’s commitment to quality, diversity and community.

GOODMAN THEATRE’S ARTISTIC COLLECTIVE

- **ROBERT FALLS, Artistic Director**
  The Goodman’s Artistic Director since 1986, Falls has been lauded for his visionary interpretations of American and world classics (*Death of a Salesman* (Tony Award for Best Director), *Long’s Day’s Journey into Night, The Iceman Cometh, King Lear*) and outstanding new works (most recently Rebecca Gilman’s *Luna Gale*). This season, he will stage (with co-adaptor and co-director Seth Bockley) his most ambitious work yet: his own adaptation of Roberto Bolaño’s epic novel of the horrors and triumphs of the 20th century, *2666.*

- **BRIAN DENNEHY, Artistic Associate**
  Dennehy is among the country’s most esteemed film and stage actors. His frequent collaborations with Falls have resulted in some of the Goodman’s most honored productions, including *Death of a Salesman, Long Day’s Journey into Night* (both of which earned him Tony Awards in their New York transfers), *Hughie* and *The Iceman Cometh*, revived last season to critical plaudits at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

- **REBECCA GILMAN, Artistic Associate**
  Gilman is among the most produced playwrights in Goodman history. Her award-winning work, including *Spinning into Butter, Boy Gets Girl, Dollhouse* and *Luna Gale* has been seen in theaters across the country and abroad. This spring will see the Chicago premiere of *Soups, Stews, and Casseroles: 1976*, staged by frequent collaborator Falls.

- **HENRY GODINEZ, Resident Artistic Associate**
  Esteemed director (*The Cook, Boleros for the Disenchanted*), actor (*Pedro Paramo*), educator and producer of the Goodman’s periodic Latino Theatre Festivals, Godinez’s directing skills are on view in Goodman’s world premiere production of *Feathers and Teeth.* Later this season he will appear in the premiere of Falls’ *2666.*

- **STEVE SCOTT, Producer**
  Longtime Goodman Theatre producer and educator and one of Chicago’s pre-eminent freelance directors and teachers; his Goodman directing credits include six seasons of *A Christmas Carol, Wit, Rabbit Hole* and last summer’s comic hit *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike.*

- **CHUCK SMITH, Resident Director**
  A national leader in African American theater and culture, Smith’s many Goodman hits include *A Raisin in the Sun, Ain’t Misbehavin’, Race* and last season’s *Two Trains Running*, the centerpiece of a massive city-wide celebration of the works and life of August Wilson; upcoming projects include the *New Stages* production of Charles Smith’s *Objects in the Mirror,* as well as a series of events honoring the legacy of playwright Lorraine Hansberry.

- **REGINA TAYLOR, Artistic Associate**
  Iconic playwright, director and actress, noted for such plays as *Oo-Bla-Dee, The Dreams of Sarah Breedlove, The Trinity River Plays* and *Crowns,* one of the most produced plays of this century; last season she celebrated her 20th anniversary as a Goodman Collective member with her futuristic view of identity and evolving culture, *stop. reset.*

- **HENRY WISHCAMPER, Artistic Associate**
  Wishcamper is the newest member of the Collective. His Goodman directing credits include the antic Marx Brothers musical *Animal Crackers,* Horton Foote’s poignant *Talking Pictures,* Seth Bockley’s world-premiere work *Ask Aunt Susan,* last season’s much praised revival of *The Little Foxes,* and three productions of *A Christmas Carol.* This season will feature his new production of Thornton Wilder’s classic *The Matchmaker.*
MARY ZIMMERMAN, Manilow Resident Director
Tony Award and MacArthur Fellowship-winning creator of such luminous adaptations as The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci, The Odyssey and Journey to the West, as well as inventive restagings of classic operas for the Metropolitan Opera and La Scala. Her landmark productions of such musicals as Candide and The Jungle Book have paved the way for her next Goodman project, Bernstein’s classic Wonderful Town.

About Goodman Theatre

The Goodman’s 2015/2016 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, including three development productions; a world premiere special event production of 2666; and partner productions with The Second City and Albany Park Theater Project. The 2015/2016 Season starts with Disgraced by Ayad Akhtar, directed by Kimberly Senior (September 12 – October 25 in the Albert), and continues with Feathers and Teeth by Charise Castro Smith, directed by Henry Godinez, a world premiere (September 19 – October 18 in the Owen); the annual New Stages Festival (October 28 - November 15 in the Owen); the 38th annual production of A Christmas Carol adapted by Tom Creamer, directed by Henry Wishcamper (November 14 – December 27 in the Albert); The Second City’s Twist Your Dickens by Peter Gwinn and Bobby Mort (December 4 – 27 in the Owen); Another Word for Beauty by José Rivera, directed by Steve Cosson, a world premiere Goodman commission (January 16 – February 21, 2016 in the Albert); 2666 adapted and directed by Robert Falls and Seth Bockley, a world premiere special event (February 6 – March 13, 2016 in the Owen); The Matchmaker by Thornton Wilder, directed by Henry Wishcamper (March 5 – April 10, 2016 in the Albert); Carlyle by Thomas Bradshaw, directed by Benjamin Kamine, a world premiere Goodman commission (April 2 – May 1, 2016 in the Owen); The Sign in Sidney Brustein’s Window by Lorraine Hansberry, directed by Anne Kauffman (April 30 – June 5, 2016 in the Albert); Soups, Stews, and Casseroles: 1976 by Rebecca Gilman, directed by Robert Falls, a Chicago premiere (May 21 – June 19, 2016 in the Owen); Wonderful Town music by Leonard Bernstein, lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green, book by Joseph A. Fields and Jerome Chodorov, directed by Mary Zimmerman (June 28 – August 21, 2016 in the Albert); and a production still to be announced with the Albany Park Theater Project.

Chicago’s flagship theater since 1925, 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 premières and more than 30 new-work commissions. “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. 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.

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