2666, ROBERT FALLS’ AND SETH BOCLEY’S STAGE ADAPTATION OF ROBERTO BOLAÑO’S LITERARY MASTERPIECE, BEGINS ITS LIMITED RUN AT GOODMAN THEATRE FEBRUARY 6

***A FREE “EVENING OF POETRY OF BOLAÑO, GABRIEL GARCIA MÁRQUEZ AND EDUARDO GALEANO” TO BE PRESENTED AT THE POETRY FOUNDATION ON FEBRUARY 29, IN CONJUNCTION WITH 2666***

(Chicago, IL) An epic global portrait of the modern world and the artist’s role within it, 2666 by the late Chilean author/poet Roberto Bolaño appears in a world premiere stage adaptation at Goodman Theatre, by its Tony Award-winning Artistic Director Robert Falls and Playwright-in-Residence Seth Bocley. 2666, for which Bolaño was posthumously awarded the 2008 National Book Critics Circle Award, is “as bravura a display of novelistic mastery, and as devastating a reading experience, as you are likely ever to encounter” (Time). Falls, a recent Theater Hall of Fame inductee, and Bocley, a Chicago-based director and playwright whose work is rooted in collaborative creation and inventive visual style (Basetrack Live, Jon) co-adapt and co-direct the internationally-celebrated novel in five parts, each performed on its own distinct set by Walt Spangler. With an ensemble all-Chicago cast of 15 actors portraying nearly 80 roles and approximately 120 costumes by Costume Designer Ana Kuzmanic, 2666 features multi-media production—including video and projections by Shawn Sagady with underscoring and original music by Sound Designers Richard Woodbury and Mikhail Fiksel. 2666 is made possible by a generous grant from The Roy Cockrum Foundation.

“For the past 29 years, I have watched as my producer partner Robert Falls, a theater artist of unparalleled range and talent, has consistently and fearlessly pushed into new creative horizons. As extraordinary an undertaking as a stage adaptation of 2666 is, it is not surprising to me that Bob was attracted to the challenge in collaboration with the talented Seth Bocley,” said Goodman Theatre Executive Director Roche Schulfer. “This production exemplifies the Goodman’s devotion to new works large in scale and provocative in storytelling, and it would not be possible without The Roy Cockrum Foundation. We are extremely grateful for the Foundation’s innate understanding and support of big artistic dreams.”

With an anticipated running time of five hours (including three intermissions), 2666 is a limited-run, off-subscription event in the Goodman’s Owen Theatre, February 6 – March 13, 2016 (opening night is February 16). One performance appears per day at 6:30pm (Tuesday – Saturday) and 1pm on Sunday. Please note: 2666 contains adult language, descriptions of extreme sexual violence and is recommended for mature audiences only. Tickets are $20-$45, and special $10 tickets are available for students with valid ID; visit GoodmanTheatre.org, call 312.443.3800 or purchase in person at the Box Office at 170 N. Dearborn. In conjunction with the play, a FREE “Evening of Poetry of Roberto Bolaño, Gabriel Garcia Márquez and Eduardo Galeano” will be presented at The Poetry Foundation (61 W. Superior) on February 29 at 7:30pm. Reservations are not required.

Falls first encountered 2666 during a 2006 visit to Barcelona, where he became fascinated by the novel’s promotional posters featuring pink crosses in the desert. Upon reading its 2008 English language translation, he marveled at the novel’s scope, audacity and five-part structure, which shifts in tone from comedy to film noir to hyper-realism, finishing with a “fairy tale” tour of the 20th century.

“Few other contemporary novels have ever involved me so completely; I was convinced (and still am) that 2666 will be regarded as one of the great books of the 21st century,” said Robert Falls. “I have never previously wanted to adapt a novel for the stage, let alone one of this complexity. Aside from its epic length and breadth, Bolaño’s writing is primarily thematic and discursive, and not presented in a narrative format. But I found myself so thoroughly engaged with the novel after reading it—and, if for no other reason than to figure out exactly why it had such a hold on me—I embarked on a very personal journey to explore this work in theatrical terms, together with Seth, a strikingly imaginative writer and director. The process has been amongst the most challenging work of my life.”
Several years into the work, Falls found a kindred creative partner in Seth Bockley, who was also fascinated by Bolaño’s writings and fluent in Spanish.

“2666 is the culmination of a deep collaboration between myself and Bob and between us and the novel. Bolaño asks everything of his readers, and this collaboration has asked a great deal of us,” said Seth Bockley. “This is an immense and ambitious book—by turns tragic, comic, horrific and transformative—in which Bolaño describes the contours of the universe of human experience. We are attempting to bring his novel’s singular vision to the stage, using all the tools we have. I am continually inspired by this opportunity to collaborate with Bob Falls, one of the great theater artists of our time. The vagabond anarchist spirit of Bolaño is alive and well in the world; we are trying to honor it with a big, wild, faithful but free adaptation.”

From Spain to England, Mexico and Germany—and back in time, from the 1990s to World War II—the stage adaptation of 2666 spans nearly 80 years and unfolds across the globe in five linked parts, each distinct in style and tone. It begins with four European academics in pursuit of an enigmatic German author, Benno Von Archimboldi, and continues overseas into Santa Teresa—a Mexican border city where hundreds of women have been inexplicably murdered. The fictitious Santa Teresa is inspired by Ciudad Juárez, a real Mexican city Bolaño once referred to as “our curse and our mirror, the unquiet mirror of our frustrations and of our vile interpretation of freedom and of our desires” (Playboy). 2666 is widely considered to be the culmination of themes that run throughout Bolaño’s body of work, which includes nine novels, two story collections and five books of poetry.

As previously announced, the 15-member ensemble cast, appearing in dozens of roles throughout the production, includes Charín Alvarez, Janet Ulrich Brooks, Yadira Correa, Sandra Delgado, Alejandra Escañante, Sean Fortunato, Henry Godinez, Larry Grimm, Eric Lynch, Mark L. Montgomery, Adam Poss, Demetrios Troy, Juan Francisco Villa, Jonathan Weir and Nicole Wiesner. The creative team includes designers Walt Spangler (sets), Ana Kuzmanic (costumes), Aaron Spivey (lights), Richard Woodbury and Mikhail Fiksel (sound and original music), and Shawn Sagady (projections and video).

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), Goodman Theatre has garnered hundreds of awards for artistic achievement and community engagement, including two Pulitizer 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’s 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 numerous education and community engagement programs—including the innovative Student Subscription Series, now in its 30th year—serve thousands of students, teachers, life-long learners and special constituencies. In addition, for nearly four decades the annual holiday tradition of A Christmas Carol has led to the creation of a new generation of theatergoers in Chicago.

Goodman Theatre’s leadership includes the distinguished members of the Artistic Collective: Brian Dennehy, Rebecca Gilman, Henry Godinez, 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.

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