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GOODMAN THEATRE ANNOUNCES ITS SIXTH PLAYWRIGHTS UNIT—THE FIRST ALL-FEMALE UNIT OF CHICAGO WRITERS—INCLUDING KRISTIANA RAE COLÓN, SANDRA DELGADO, JENNI LAMB AND CALAMITY WEST

*****THE WORLD PREMIERE OF *FOR HER AS A PIANO* BY PLAYWRIGHTS UNIT ALUM NAMBI E. KELLEY OPENS PEGASUS THEATRE'S NEW SEASON, SEPTEMBER 30 – NOVEMBER 1 AT CHICAGO DRAMATISTS*****

(Chicago, IL) Goodman Theatre launches the 2015/2016 Playwrights Unit with four newly-named members: **Kristiana Rae Colón, Sandra Delgado, Jenni Lamb and Calamity West** (bio information follows). In partnership with Chicago Dramatists, the Playwrights Unit is a year-long residency program designed to foster new work by emerging and established Chicago playwrights. Participating writers attend bi-monthly meetings with members of the Goodman's artistic team to discuss their plays-in-progress and provide feedback for one another. The residency culminates in summer 2016 with public staged readings at the Goodman of their completed works.

"I'm thrilled to welcome this talented group of Chicago-based playwrights and theater makers to the 2015/16 Playwrights Unit," said Director of New Play Development **Tanya Palmer**. "Each brings a unique perspective and set of experiences to the group, and the plays they have proposed to work on over the next year promise to be challenging, relevant and full of life. I know they will all benefit from the collaboration with their peers, and I look forward to sharing the results of their hard work with our audiences in the summer of 2016."

Playwrights Unit alum **Nambi E. Kelley** brings *For Her As a Piano*—the play she authored as a 2012 member of the Playwrights Unit—to Pegasus Theatre as its 2015/2016 season opener, directed by Ilesa Duncan. Co-produced with the Goodman and Chicago Dramatists, *For Her As a Piano* follows the story of one woman's journey to unravel a history she's never been told. The world premiere production runs September 30 – November 1 at Chicago Dramatists (1105 W. Chicago Ave.). Tickets (\$30; subject to change) are on sale now by phone at 866.811.4111 and PegasusTheatreChicago.org.

Playwrights Unit alumni include Scott T. Barsotti, Mia McCullough, Bonnie Metzgar and Carlos Murillo (2014/2015 Season); Anne García Romero, Andrew Hinderaker, Mickle Maher and Laura Schellhardt (2013/2014 Season); Greg Allen, Alice Austen, Ike Holter and Christopher Oscar Peña (2012/2013 Season); Philip Dawkins, Nambi E. Kelley, Elaine Romero and Martín Zimmerman (2011/2012 Season); and Seth Bockley, Lisa Dillman, Laura Jacqmin and Rohina Malik (2010/2011 Season).

About the 2015/2016 Playwrights Unit Members

Kristiana Rae Colón is a poet, playwright, actor, educator, Cave Canem Fellow and executive director of the #LetUsBreathe Collective. Her play *Octagon*, winner of Arizona Theater Company's 2014 National Latino Playwriting Award and Polarity Ensemble Theater's Dionysos Festival of New Work, had its world premiere at the Arcola Theater in London in September 2015. Her work was featured in Victory Gardens Theater's 2014 Ignition Festival. In 2013, she toured the UK with her collection of poems *promised instruments* published by Northwestern University Press. In autumn 2012, she opened her one-woman show *Cry Wolf* at Teatro Luna in Chicago while her play *but i cd only whisper* had its world premiere at the Arcola Theater in London. Colón is a resident playwright at Chicago Dramatists and one half of the brother/sister hip-hop duo April Fools. She appeared on the fifth season of HBO's "Def Poetry Jam."

Sandra Delgado is a Colombian American actor, singer, writer and producer born and raised in Chicago. She first appeared on the Goodman stage in *Zoot Suit* in 2000 and has since appeared in many other Goodman productions

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including *The Upstairs Concierge*, *Pedro Páramo*, *El Nogalar*, *Chicago Boys*, *Electricidad*, *Massacre*, *Mariela in the Desert* and *A Christmas Carol*. Other Chicago stage highlights include *The Motherf**ker with the Hat*, *Sonia Flew* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company), *El Grito del Bronx* (Teatro Vista, Collaboraction, Goodman Theatre), *Mojada*, *Anna in the Tropics* (Victory Gardens Company) and *Summertime* (Lookingglass Theatre Company). Her original work *para Carmen* premiered at Collaboraction's Sketchbook Festival and was later seen in the Goodman's Latino Theatre Festival in 2010. She is an ensemble member of Teatro Vista, where she served as associate artistic director from 2006-2008, and a founding ensemble member of Collaboraction, where she produced the YO SOLO Festival of Latino Solo Shows and the popular Sketchbook Festival from 2005-2008. Delgado is on the National Steering Committee for the Latina/o Theatre Commons. She was a Theatre Communications Group Fox Foundation Resident Actor Fellow in residence at the Goodman Theater where she developed her solo show, *para Graciela*. She is the recipient of the Joyce Award.

Jenni Lamb is a Chicago-based playwright and former improviser and actor. Her plays include *12th and Clairmount*, *Candy Store*, *Memento Polonia*, *Period Piece* (with Lisa Linke), *Suicide Kills*, *Quiver* and *Thou Proud Dream* (with Damon Krometis). Her plays have had readings or productions with The Gift Theatre, American Theatre Company, Stage Left Theatre, Wordsmyth Theatre (Houston), Northwestern University, Route 66 and Chicago Dramatists. Her play *Quiver* received an honorable mention from The Kilroys List and will be produced as part of the Route 66 season in spring 2016. Lamb is a two-time semi-finalist for the O'Neill Playwrights Conference and has received grants for her writing from the Illinois Arts Council. As an improviser, she has performed on many Chicago stages as well as national comedy festivals in New York, Washington DC and Los Angeles. She is a producing playwright and proud member of Living Room Playmakers, a playwright collective focused on creating theater in unusual spaces and an Artistic Associate at Route 66. Lamb holds an MFA in Writing for the Screen and Stage from Northwestern University.

Calamity West is a Chicago-based award-winning playwright. Her most recent productions include *The Peacock* (Jackalope Theatre), *The Gacy Play* (Sideshow Theatre), *Common Hatred* (The Ruckus), and *Ibsen Is Dead!* Her play *Give It All Back* was commissioned by Sideshow Theatre in 2015 and was cited on The Kilroys List the same year. In February 2016 her newest play, *Rolling*, will receive its world premiere at Jackalope Theatre. West's short plays have been seen in Chicago at/with: Victory Gardens, The Inconvenience, Chicago Dramatists, Rhinofest, Living Newspaper Festival, Abbie Fest, Chicago Home Theatre Festival, LiveWire, One-Minute Play Festival, The Anatomy Collective, Broken Nose Theatre, Fight Night, First Floor Theater and The Good Night Ladies. She earned her BA in playwriting at Webster University and her MFA in playwriting from California College of the Arts in San Francisco. She was born and raised in Missouri.

The Goodman is grateful for the generosity of its New Work sponsors, including: the Time Warner Foundation, Lead Support of New Play Development; the Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation, Major Support of New Work Development; The Pritzker Pucker Family Foundation, Major Support of New Work Development; The Glasser and Rosenthal Family, Support of New Work Development; the Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust, Support of New Work Development; Kirkland & Ellis LLP, *New Stages* Festival Reception Sponsor; and The Joyce Foundation, Principal Support for Diverse Artistic and Professional Development.

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 developmental 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 premieres 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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