FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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BROADWAY’S KRISTINE NIELSEN AND CHICAGO FAVORITE ALLEN GILMORE LEAD THE MATCHMAKER, THORNTON WILDER’S RARELY-REVIVED UPROARIOUS ROMP AT GOODMAN THEATRE

***DIRECTED BY HENRY WISHCAMPER WITH A SET BY NEIL PATEL AND COSTUMES BY JENNY MANNIS, THE MATCHMAKER APPEARS MARCH 5 – APRIL 10 IN THE ALBERT THEATRE; TICKETS GO ON SALE JANUARY 22***

(Chicago, IL) Casting is complete for Henry Wishcamper’s contemporary take on Thornton Wilder’s The Matchmaker—the inspiration for the musical Hello, Dolly!, praised as “one of the sweetest and smartest romantic farces ever written” (The Wall Street Journal)—revealing social truths through mistaken identity, outrageous misbehavior and spontaneous romance. Tony Award nominee Kristine Nielsen is Dolly Gallagher Levi, the vivacious matchmaker who is recruited to find a wife for the wealthy yet prickly widower, Horace Vandergelder, portrayed by Chicago favorite Allen Gilmore. Little does Horace know that Dolly is plotting to become the next Mrs. Vandergelder herself! Joining Nielsen and Gilmore are a cast of acclaimed talents and rising stars, including Theo Allyn (Ermengarde), Behzad Dabu (Barnaby Tucker), Larry DiStasi (Cabman/Rudolph), Marilyn Dodds Frank (Flora Van Huyens), Sydney Germaine (Minnie Fay), Marc Grapey (Malachi Stack), Anita Hollander (Cook/Gertrude), Ronobir Lahiri (Ambrose Kemper), Elizabeth Ledo (Mrs. Malloy), Postell Pringle (Cornelius Hackl) and Ron Rains (Joe Scanlon). The creative team includes: Neil Patel (sets), Jenny Mannis (costumes), David Lander (lights) and Richard Woodbury (sound). Alden Vasquez is the Production Stage Manager. The Matchmaker appears in the Goodman’s 856-seat Albert Theatre, March 5 – April 10, 2016. Tickets ($25-$82, as well as a special $10 ticket price for students) go on sale Friday, January 22; visit GoodmanTheatre.org, call 312.443.3800 or purchase in person at the Box Office at 170 N. Dearborn. For images and bio information for the company, visit GoodmanTheatre.org/PressRoom. Ernst & Young LLP and Interactive Health are the Corporate Sponsor Partners.

“I’m thrilled to collaborate with this diverse group of extraordinary artists on the play Thornton Wilder called ‘a farce with social implications’—and what I believe is his most unappreciated major play,” said Director Henry Wishcamper, who has earned critical acclaim for his productions of classic plays, including Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol and Lillian Hellman’s The Little Foxes, among others. “Effortlessly charming, funny and romantic, The Matchmaker also touches on many issues—economic inequity, diversity and the search for the authentic self—that feel relevant to our current cultural moment. Like the play, I hope our production will capture both levity and emotional depth.”

Broadway star Kristine Nielsen makes her Goodman debut.

“This will be my first time back in Chicago since I graduated from Northwestern University 30-odd years ago, and I can’t wait to unleash ‘Dolly Gallagher Levi’—crossing fingers for hijinks and hilarity results,” said Nielsen, who previously appeared as ‘Sonia’ in the Broadway sensation Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike by Christopher Durang, earning her the 2013 Tony Award Nomination for Best Lead Actress in a Play.

On the heels of his appearance in Wishcamper’s production of A Christmas Carol, Allen Gilmore joins Nielsen to lead the 13-member cast.

“I’m happy to return to the Goodman for this exciting reimagining of Thornton Wilder’s iconic play and am likewise overjoyed to reunite with Henry, Theo Allyn and Ron Rains, my buddies from A Christmas Carol,” said Gilmore, the 2015 recipient of the 3Arts Award, whose past Thornton Wilder credits include Our Town at Seattle’s Intiman Theater.

Evolution of The Matchmaker

1937 – Thornton Wilder writes The Merchant of Yonkers, inspired by Johann Nestroy’s 1842 farce Einen Jux Will Er Sich Machen, in response to the hyperrealism of New York’s Group Theatre and their focus on topical social issues.

1938 – The Merchant of Yonkers opens on Broadway and closes after 39 performances.

1955 – Wilder rewrites The Merchant of Yonkers; retitled The Matchmaker, the hit play runs on Broadway through 1957.

1964 – Based on The Matchmaker, the musical Hello, Dolly! (lyrics and music by Jerry Herman, book by Michael Stewart)
About Henry Wishcamper

Wishcamper’s Goodman Theatre directing credits include The Little Foxes, the world premiere of Ask Aunt Susan, his own adaptation of Animal Crackers (Jeff Award nomination), A Christmas Carol (2013, 2014 and 2015 productions), Other Desert Cities and Talking Pictures. Other Chicago directing credits include The Dance of Death (Jeff nomination) at Writers Theatre and The Night Alive at Steppenwolf Theatre Company. His New York directing credits include Spirit Control at Manhattan Theatre Club; Graceland at LTC3; Port Authority at Atlantic Theater Company; Elvis People at New World Stages; The Polish Play at Katharsis Theater Company and Pullman Car Hiawatha at Keen Company (Drama Desk nomination for Outstanding Revival of a Play). Regional theater and other directing credits include Animal Crackers at the Williamstown Theatre Festival, the American premiere of Conor McPherson’s The Birds at the Guthrie Theater; Engaging Shaw and The Mystery of Irma Vep at The Old Globe and The Seafarer and Speech & Debate at TheaterWorks. He served as the assistant director for the Broadway productions of August: Osage County and Shining City. His adaptation of Animal Crackers has been produced by the Denver Center Theatre Company, Baltimore Center Stage, Oregon Shakespeare Festival and Lyric Stage Company. Wishcamper was the Artistic Director of Katharsis Theater Company in New York and the Maine Summer Dramatic Institute (MSDI) in Portland, Maine. At MSDI, he founded Shakespeare in Deering Oaks Park, a free Shakespeare festival in Portland’s primary public park featuring students from MSDI's education program. Wishcamper is a Drama League directing fellow and a graduate of Yale University.

TICKETS AND DISCOUNTS (Individual tickets on sale January 22)

Tickets ($25-82) – GoodmanTheatre.org/Matchmaker; 312.443.3800; Fax: 312.443.3825; TTY/TDD: 312.443.3829
Subscriptions – Four-play Albert Theatre subscriptions start at $100 (GoodmanTheatre.org/Brilliant)
MezzTix – Half-price day-of-performance mezzanine tickets available at 10am online (promo code MEZTIX)
$10Tix – Student $10 day-of-performance tickets; limit four, with valid student ID (promo code 10TIX)
Group Sales – Discounted tickets for parties of 10+ – 312.443.3820
Gift Certificates – Available in any amount (GoodmanTheatre.org/GiftCertificates)
Box Office Hours – 12noon - 5pm; on performance days, the office remains open until 30 minutes past curtain)

ACCESSIBILITY AT GOODMAN THEATRE

March 23, Sign Interpreted Performance – 7:30pm; professional ASL interpreter signs the action/text as played.
Goodman Theatre Announces Casting and Creative Team for *The Matchmaker* by Thornton Wilder

Henry Wishcamper Directs the Rarely-Produced Romantic Farce, starring Kristine Nielsen and Allen Gilmore

April 2 Touch Tour Presentation – 12:30pm; a presentation detailing the set, costume and character elements; Audio Described Performance – 2pm; the action/text is audibly enhanced for patrons via headset.

April 9, Open Captioned Performance – 2pm; an LED sign presents dialogue in sync with the performance. Visit GoodmanTheatre.org/Access for more information about Goodman Theatre’s accessibility efforts.

### 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 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’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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Visit the Goodman virtually at [GoodmanTheatre.org](http://GoodmanTheatre.org), and on [Twitter (@GoodmanTheatre)](https://Twitter (@GoodmanTheatre)), [Facebook](https://Facebook) and [Instagram](https://Instagram).

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