Goodman Theatre presents The Sign in Sidney Brustein’s Window by Lorraine Hansberry, the famed author of A Raisin in the Sun and one of Chicago’s first great playwrights. Obie Award winner Anne Kauffman directs this major revival of Hansberry’s final work, which premiered on Broadway just three months before her untimely death in 1965 at age 34. The Sign in Sidney Brustein’s Window follows Sidney Brustein in Greenwich Village, 1964: a magnet for ideals and activism of every stripe. At its center is Brustein’s apartment, the gathering place for an eclectic group of bohemians during a time of rapid change. As Sidney gets increasingly swept up in the radical issues of the day, however, he ignores the equally dangerous tension mounting between himself and his wife Iris, the one person he holds most dear.

The production is the centerpiece of The Lorraine Hansberry Celebration throughout the month of May curated by Resident Director Chuck Smith (events and details to be announced soon). The Sign in Sidney Brustein’s Window runs April 30 – June 5, 2016. Opening Night is Monday, May 9. Tickets ($25-$75, as well as special $10 student tickets), are on sale now; visit GoodmanTheatre.org/TheSign, call 312.443.3800 or purchase in person at the Box Office at 170 N. Dearborn. Goodman Theatre Women’s Board is the Major Production Sponsor, Edelman and ITW are Corporate Sponsor Partners, and WBEZ 91.5 is the Media Partner.

Casting update: Chris Stack appears in the role of Sidney Brustein. As previously announced, the cast also includes Diane Davis (Iris), Travis A. Knight (Alton), Kristen Magee (Gloria), Miriam Silverman (Mavis), Phillip Edward Van Lear (Max), Guy Van Swearingen (Wally O’Hara) and Grant James Varjas (David).

“Chicago native Lorraine Hansberry is, of course, best known for A Raisin in the Sun, her searing and revelatory portrait of the Younger family and its pursuit of the American dream. Although the characters in her equally ambitious but rarely-produced The Sign in Sidney Brustein’s Window occupy another place and time—Greenwich Village in the turbulent 1960s—they are also dreamers who yearn to secure their rightful place in the American landscape,” said Artistic Director Robert Falls. The questions that Hansberry posed more than 50 years ago remain just as relevant in 2016: What are the core values of our society? Who among those in power speaks my truth? Should I take action or watch passively from the sidelines? We welcome the opportunity to revisit these essential questions with Anne Kauffman’s exciting new production of The Sign in Sidney Brustein’s Window, and to celebrate Lorraine Hansberry’s legacy as one of America’s most important playwrights.”

In a New York Times piece days before the 1964 premiere, Hansberry described the play as “a genuine portrait of the milieu.” The politically prescient and powerful work by an iconic American playwright, The Sign in Sidney Brustein’s Window eerily reflects today’s political climate, including Sidney’s warning, “The world is about to crack right down the middle. We’ve gotta change—or fall in the crack.” Hansberry’s heartfelt and perceptive play holds a mirror up to the injustice and corruption of the contemporary world.

"When I met Anne close to 10 years ago, her passion and commitment to the play was abundantly clear. I view this edition as an examination of Lorraine’s wishes and intentions, and a chance to find the most effective ways to achieve them. We couldn’t be happier that the Goodman jumped on board to produce it,” said Joi Gresham, Executive Director & Trustee, Lorraine Hansberry Literary Trust. "Lorraine was dying when she wrote this play. She was thinking about the
end of her life, the things to which she was most committed, and what it meant to be fully engaged in the world. Those powerful questions are reaching us here and now in 2016.”

The production’s design elements capture the New York energy of a world under constant construction. Kevin Depinet’s mostly realistic set will appear to float above the stage by opening the trap room below Sidney’s apartment and utilizing Justin Townsend’s light design to illuminate the empty space beneath the apartment’s floor. The set’s verticality also includes an elaborate maze of scaffolding above the apartment to allow for the dreamscape moments of the play. The design team also includes Alison Siple (costumes) and Mikhail Fiksel (sound). Briana Fahey is the production stage manager.

ACCESSIBILITY AT GOODMAN THEATRE

May 18. American Sign Language Interpreted Performance – 7:30pm; Enter the promo code SIGN when purchasing
May 28. 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.
June 4. 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.

TICKETS & DISCOUNTS

Tickets ($25-$75) – GoodmanTheatre.org/TheSign; 312.443.3800; Fax: 312.443.3825; TTY/TDD: 312.443.3829
MezzTix – Half-price day-of-performance mezzanine tickets available at 10am online (promo code MEZZTIX)
$10Tix – Student $10 day-of-performance tickets available at 10am online; limit four, with valid student ID (promo code 10TIX)
Group Sales – Discounted tickets for parties of 10+ call 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)
About Lorraine Hansberry

Born in Chicago, Lorraine Hansberry made history in 1959 as the first African American female playwright to have a work produced on Broadway with *A Raisin in the Sun*. The play’s success led Hansberry, at age 29, to become the youngest American playwright, the fifth woman and the only African American to win the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for Best Play of the Year. In addition to earning a Tony Award nomination for the play, Hansberry wrote the screenplay for its 1961 film adaptation, which won a special award at the Cannes Film Festival and earned Hansberry a Writers Guild of America Award. Her second play to be produced on Broadway, *The Sign in Sidney Brustein’s Window*, was in its early run when Hansberry died of cancer at age 34 in 1965. *To Be Young, Gifted and Black*, an autobiographical portrait in her own words adapted by her former husband and literary executor Robert Nemiroff, was posthumously produced in 1969. In 1970, *Les Blancs*, her play about African colonization, ran on Broadway to critical acclaim. At her death, she left behind file cabinets holding her public and private correspondence, speeches, journals and various manuscripts, including an almost complete novel. Her published writings also include *The Drinking Gourd*; *What Use Are Flowers?*; and *The Movement*, a photo history of the civil rights movement.

About Anne Kauffman

Obie Award-winning director Anne Kauffman’s production highlights include *Smokefall* at Goodman Theatre; *You Got Older* with P73; *The Nether* at MCC; *Somewhere Fun* at Vineyard Theatre; *Your Mother’s Copy of the Kama Sutra*, *Detroit* and *Maple and Vine* at Playwrights Horizons; *Belleville* at New York Theatre Workshop, Yale Repertory Theatre and Steppenwolf Theatre Company; *Tales from My Parents’ Divorce* at the Williamstown Theatre Festival and The Flea Theater; *This Wide Night* at Naked Angels; *Becky Shaw*, *Cherokee* and *Body Awareness* at The Wilma.
Obie Award Winner Anne Kauffman Directs The Sign in Sidney Brustein’s Window (April 30–June 5)

Theater; Slowgirl and Stunning at LCT3; Sixty Miles to Silver Lake with Page 73 Productions at Soho Rep; God’s Ear at Vineyard Theatre and New Georges; The Thugs at Soho Rep and the musical 100 Days at Z Space. Kauffman is a recipient of the Joan and Joseph F. Cullman Award for Extraordinary Creativity, the Alan Schneider Director Award and several Barrymore awards. She is a program associate with Sundance Theater Institute, a New York Theatre Workshop Usual Suspect, a member of Soho Rep’s Artistic Council, on the New Georges’ Kitchen Cabinet, an alumna of the Lincoln Center Directors Lab and the Drama League, a founding member of The Civilians and an associate artist with Clubbed Thumb.

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.

Visit the Goodman virtually at GoodmanTheatre.org, and on Twitter (@GoodmanTheatre), Facebook and Instagram.