PULITZER PRIZE FINALIST RAPTURE, BLISTER, BURN BY GINA GIONFRIDDO MAKES ITS CHICAGO PREMIERE AT GOODMAN THEATRE, JANUARY 17 – FEBRUARY 22

*** KIMBERLY SENIOR MAKES HER GOODMAN DEBUT WITH THIS INVESTIGATION OF MODERN WOMEN’S CHOICES***

(Chicago, IL) “It’s that 40-something thing when you start thinking about the life not lived.” Three generations of women balance choice, reality and expectations in the Chicago premiere of *Rapture, Blister, Burn*, Gina Gionfriddo’s “smart, funny and lightning-paced look at feminism” (*New York Daily News*), which began rehearsals this week at Goodman Theatre. Celebrated Chicago director Kimberly Senior makes her Goodman debut direct from her first Broadway show—Ayad Akhtar’s Pulitzer Prize-winning *Disgraced*, which originated in Chicago and was recently named among *The New York Times*’ Best Theater of 2014. *Rapture, Blister, Burn* runs January 17 – February 22, 2015 in the Albert Theatre (opening night is Monday, January 26). Tickets ($25 - $81; subject to change) are on sale at GoodmanTheatre.org/Rapture, by phone at 312.443.3800 or at the box office (170 North Dearborn). Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP is the Major Corporate Sponsor and PwC LLP and United Scrap Metal, Inc. are the Corporate Sponsor Partners for *Rapture, Blister, Burn*. Bella Bacinos is the Opening Night Party Sponsor.

“We are thrilled to work with Kimberly Senior, who is making a long-awaited Goodman debut after much success in Chicago and lately on Broadway, to bring this timely play to the Albert stage,” said Artistic Director Robert Falls. “She has assembled a magnificent cast and design team for a piece that is one of the most exciting and entertaining new plays in many years, examining a variety of heady questions with warmth, intelligence and sly humor. *Rapture, Blister, Burn* will be appreciated by anyone who has ever negotiated the tricky tension between one’s ideals and reality.”

Senior is a resident director at Writers Theatre, an associate artist at TimeLine Theatre and a founding member of Collaboraction. In Chicago, she has also worked at Northlight Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Next Theatre, American Blues Theatre and Redtwist Theatre.

“I love thinking of the play’s two main characters as the same woman who made completely different choices; I feel like I’m both of them. I’m a mother of two kids with a house in Evanston, but I was also just in New York directing a play. Am I trying to have it all? Can you have it all? I love the show’s dialogue about that because we have to be present in our own lives,” said Senior. “I’ve always dreamed of directing at the Goodman and have been working for 20 years to make this happen. The Goodman belongs to our city, so it’s a joy to be a part of this production.”

What do women really want? After graduate school Catherine (*Jennifer Coombs*) became a renowned feminist scholar, while her best friend Gwen (*Karen Janes Woditsch*) married and raised a family. When the women reunite 20 years later, they reflect on the choices they’ve made—and regretted making. Longing for what the other has, they decide to “trade places” to see what they’ve missed. Sparks fly, martinis flow and hilarity ensues as the women ponder their futures—and fates. The title *Rapture, Blister, Burn* is taken from lyrics in Courtney Love’s song, “Use Once and Destroy,” which associates love with heroin addiction. The all-Chicago cast also includes *Mark L. Montgomery* as Don, Gwen’s passive, porn-watching husband—and Catherine’s ex-boyfriend—and *Mary Ann Thebus* as Catherine’s mother, Alice, who came of age in an era when women rarely set goals outside the domestic realm. *Cassidy Slaughter-Mason* plays twenty-one-year-old college student Avery.

The creative team includes *Jack Magaw* (sets), Emily Rebholz (costumes), Jennifer Schriever (lights) and Richard Woodbury (sound). *Briana J. Fahey* is the production stage manager. *Jonathan L. Green* is the dramaturg. Casting is by Adam Belcuore.

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A Brief History of the Waves of Feminism

The **first wave** of feminism took place in the late 19th and early 20th centuries with a focus on suffrage. The wave formally began at the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848, when 300 men and women rallied to the cause of equality for women and Elizabeth Cady Stanton drafted the Seneca Falls Declaration outlining the new movement’s ideology and political strategies. The **second wave** began in the 1960s and addressed multiple aspects of women’s lives: career, roles within marriage, domestic violence and reproductive rights. Second-wave feminism called for women and men to recognize and question the sexist power structure that affected nearly every facet of their lives, and to consider political and cultural inequality as inextricably linked; as such, much of the movement’s energy was focused on passing the Equal Rights Amendment to the constitution guaranteeing social equality regardless of sex. Change occurred rapidly, partly because it coincided with other social movements of the 1960s and 70s, such as the civil rights movement and the beginnings of the gay rights movement. The **third wave** of feminism began in the early 1990s and continues (by most accounts) through the present day. The movement aims to embrace and represent women who, by virtue of their economic class, race or sexual orientation, remained largely ignored by the two previous waves. It also has focused on eradicating gender roles, and on defending sex work, promiscuity, pornography and sex positivity.

**SPECIAL EVENTS (all events take place at Goodman Theatre unless otherwise noted)**

**Artist Encounter with Kimberly Senior**
Sunday, January 25 at 5pm | $5 general public, FREE Subscribers, Donors, students
Artist Encounters bring together audiences and Goodman artists in an intimate environment for a behind-the-scenes look at the plays and the playmaking process. Join director Kimberly Senior as she discusses the process of bringing *Rapture, Blister, Burn* to life.

**College Night: Pizza and Play**
Wednesday, January 28 at 6pm – preshow reception; 7:30pm - performance | $10 with promo code COLLEGE (must redeem with valid student ID)
Enjoy pizza, pop and the opportunity to mingle with other students and meet the Goodman artists before a performance.

**Women’s Night: “Women on Fire”**
Wednesday, January 28 at 6pm – preshow reception at Petterino’s; 7:30pm – performance | $75
Women’s Night is part of Goodman Theatre’s Civic Engagement Series of thought-provoking and entertaining audience engagement events. Hosted by the Goodman’s Board of Trustees, Women’s Board and Scenemakers Board, the series is designed to deepen our engagement with the community and open up the broad range of work on our stages to diverse groups.

**Free PlayTalks**
Fridays, February 6, 13 and 20 at 7pm
One hour prior to select performances, members of the Goodman’s artistic staff present interactive in-depth talks to give patrons a deeper understanding of the work they are about to see.

**CONTEXT: The Third Wave: Women, Men and Feminism**
Monday, February 16, 6:30pm | FREE, though reservations are required at GoodmanTheatre.org
CONTEXT engages the community in conversation about issues raised within the Goodman’s plays and how they resonate in today’s culture. This discussion on *Rapture, Blister, Burn* explores how we use a feminist lens to critique our world and the choices we make amid cultural shifts brought on by technology, globalization and practices of resistance around the world.

**Free Post-Show Discussions**
Stay late for discussions about the play with members of the artistic team every Wednesday and Thursday evening throughout the run of the show.
Rapture, Blister, Burn by Gina Gionfriddo, directed by Kimberly Senior, is a Chicago premiere (January 17 – February 22, 2015 in the Albert) of a comedy that asks: What Do Women Really Want?

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Ticket and Discount Opportunities

Rapture, Blister, Burn is a participating production in Chicago Theatre Week (February 12-22; tickets on sale January 6); use promo code THWEEK for special $30 tickets. Theatre Week is coordinated through the League of Chicago Theaters and offers discounted tickets to 100 different productions throughout Chicago in one week. Visit ChicagoTheatreWeek.com for more information. Four-Play Albert Theatre subscriptions start at $90 at GoodmanTheatre.org/Subscriptions. The Goodman WILD Card offers four flexible tickets to mix and match at GoodmanTheatre.org/WildCard. Mezztix are half-price mezzanine tickets available at 12 noon at the box office, and at 10am online (promo code MEZMTIX) day of performance; Mezztix are not available by telephone. 10TIX are $10 tickets for students (promo code 10TIX); 10TIX are not available by telephone; a valid student ID must be presented when picking up the tickets; limit four per student with ID. All tickets are subject to availability and handling fees apply. Discounted Group Tickets for 10 persons or more are available at 312.443.3820. Purchase Goodman Gift Certificates in any amount at GoodmanTheatre.org/GiftCertificates. The flexibility of Goodman Gift Certificates allows recipients to choose the production, date and time of their performance. Artists, dates and ticket prices are subject to change.

About Goodman Theatre

The Goodman’s 2014/2015 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 that includes additional developmental productions, and partner productions with The Second City and Albany Park Theater Project. The season includes the annual New Stages Festival, including an “Industry Weekend” (October 29 - November 16, in the Owen); the 37th annual production of Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol, directed by Henry Wishcamper (November 15 – December 28, in the Albert); The Second City’s Twist Your Dickens, Or Scrooge You by Peter Gwinn and Bobby Mort (December 5 – 28, in the Owen); Rapture, Blister, Burn by Gina Gionfriddo, directed by Kimberly Senior, a Chicago premiere (January 17 – February 22, 2015 in the Albert); Two Trains Running by August Wilson, directed by Chuck Smith, in conjunction with a citywide celebration of August Wilson (March 7 – April 12, 2015 in the Albert); The Upstairs Concierge by Kristoffer Diaz, directed by KJ Sanchez, a world premiere co-commission with Teatro Vista (March 28 – April 26, 2015 in the Owen); The Little Foxes by Lillian Hellman, directed by Henry Wishcamper (May 2 – June 7, 2015 in the Albert); stop. reset. written and directed by Regina Taylor, a Chicago premiere (May 23 – June 21, 2015 in the Owen); Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike by Christopher Durang.
Kimberly Senior Directs Gina Gionfriddo’s Comedy That Asks: What Do Women Really Want?

directed by Steve Scott, a Chicago premiere (June 20 – July 26, 2015 in the Albert), and Albany Park Theater Project’s Feast (Summer dates TBA in the Owen).

Now celebrating its 90th year as Chicago’s flagship theater, 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 nearly 30 new-work commissions. Joan Clifford is Chairman 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. American Airlines is the Exclusive Airline of Goodman Theatre.

“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.

The 90th Anniversary “Season to Celebrate” programming is rooted in the same spirit that launched the Goodman in 1925—an array of dramatic fare, from classics to noteworthy contemporary works, innovative and often controversial, embracing genres from farces to searing social dramas—honoring the theater’s past and envisioning its future. The nine-play season begins with an All-New Fall of works fostered and developed in the Goodman’s new play development programs followed by an “August Wilson Celebration” in spring 2015, the 10th anniversary of the playwright’s death and the 70th anniversary of his birth. This city-wide Celebration honors the longstanding collaboration between Wilson and the Goodman, the first theater in the world to produce all 10 works in his “20th Century Cycle.”

Visit the special anniversary website, GoodmanTheatre.org/90, to see famous faces who’ve worked at the theater, browse photos of classic productions and read interviews with noted artists.