

Arts Alliance Illinois to hold Gubernatorial Arts Forum at Goodman Theatre

Alison Cuddy, Craig Dellimore to co-host public conversation
on the role of arts, culture, and creativity in Illinois communities

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High-resolution images available upon request

CHICAGO — **Arts Alliance Illinois** Executive Director Claire Rice, Managing Director for Development and External Affairs at **Chicago Shakespeare Theater** and Alliance Board Chair Brooke Flanagan, and **Goodman Theatre** Executive Director and Alliance Board Member Roche Schulfer, are pleased to announce the **2017 Gubernatorial Arts Forum** on **Monday, September 11, 2017** at Goodman Theatre, located at 170 North Dearborn Street in Chicago. Open to the general public, the event begins at **7:30pm. Admission is free**, but reservations are recommended. **Alison Cuddy**, Marilynn Thoma Artistic Director of the Chicago Humanities Festival, and **Craig Dellimore**, Political Editor at WBBM Newsradio, will co-host and moderate this roundtable discussion on issues of importance and relevance to the arts, culture, and creative industries in Illinois — including arts education, community development, cultural exchange, public engagement, and sources of support — ahead of the Illinois Gubernatorial Primary on March 20, 2018, and the November 6, 2018 General Election.

Invitations to participate were extended regardless of party affiliation, as well as to the incumbent Governor Bruce Rauner; those confirmed for the 2017 Gubernatorial Arts Forum as of August 30, 2017 include State Senator **Daniel Biss**, representing Illinois' Ninth District; **Bob Daiber**, Regional Superintendent of Schools for Madison County; and **J. B. Pritzker**, Managing Partner and Co-Founder of the Pritzker Group. Any additional participants in the Forum will be announced at later dates. Questions may be submitted to the Forum in advance by visiting bit.ly/GovArtsForum, or by using the hashtag **#GovArtsForum** on social media.

Says Claire Rice, Executive Director of Arts Alliance Illinois: "Our Alliance members and the broader coalition of arts stakeholders we are honored to represent look forward to this timely discussion. In recent months, the Illinois State Board of Education included the arts as an indicator for school quality and student success under new federal education guidelines, while the passage of SB 1933, signed into law by Governor Rauner this week, makes Illinois the tenth state to adopt automatic voter registration, which will support increased participation in the democratic process and equitable access to the ballot box. In the spirit of these demonstrations of our state's national leadership on key issues, we are facilitating an open conversation between gubernatorial hopefuls and the general public about the many roles that the arts, culture, and creativity can play in a vibrant future for all Illinois residents."

While admission to the 2017 Gubernatorial Arts Forum is free, space is limited and seating cannot be guaranteed for walk-ups. Attendees are encouraged to book complimentary tickets in advance, online at GoodmanTheatre.org/GovArtsForum or by phone at 312-443-3800. The Goodman Theatre Box Office is open daily from noon-5pm CST.

Arts Alliance Illinois is the Lead Sponsor of the 2017 Gubernatorial Arts Forum, with Host and Sponsor **Goodman Theatre**. Arts Alliance Illinois thanks the following Co-Sponsors of the 2017 Gubernatorial Arts Forum: **Audience Architects**, the **Chicago Humanities Festival**, **Chicago Shakespeare Theater**, **Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association**, **Harris Theater for Music and Dance**, **HMS Media**, the **Illinois Art Education Association**, **Illinois Humanities**, the **Illinois Music Education Association**, **Ingenuity**, **The Joffrey Ballet**, the **Joseph Jefferson Awards Committee**, **Krannert Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign**, the **League of Chicago Theatres**, **Lyric Opera of Chicago**, the **Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists** (SAG-AFTRA), and **Steppenwolf Theatre Company**.

About Alison Cuddy

Alison Cuddy is the Marilynn Thoma Artistic Director of the Chicago Humanities Festival, the largest and longest running festival of arts and ideas in North America. Before joining CHF, she spent more than 10 years at WBEZ 91.5 FM, the NPR affiliate in Chicago. There she helped launch *Odyssey*, a nationally syndicated talk show of arts and ideas, hosted the award-winning morning newsmagazine *Eight Forty-Eight*, and reported on arts and culture. In addition to her work at CHF, Cuddy moderates public forums in partnership with many of the city's cultural and civic institutions, including the the Arts Club of Chicago, Gene Siskel Film Center, IDEO, the Illinois Holocaust Museum, and Chicago Shakespeare Theater. Visit chicagohumanities.org to learn more.

About Craig Dellimore

Political Editor for WBBM Newsradio since 2001, Craig Dellimore joined the all-news AM and FM radio station in 1983, after several years with the Associated Press Radio Network in Washington, DC. Throughout his time at WBBM, Dellimore has performed a wide variety of roles including anchor, Managing Editor, Legislative Correspondent, and Suburban Bureau Chief. He has covered several national political campaigns and conventions for WBBM including those in 2008 and 2016, which he regards among the country's most historic political cycles. Dellimore is also the immediate Past President of SAG-AFTRA's Chicago Local and remains head of the Local Broadcast Steering Committee for the union, which represents actors, broadcasters, voiceover artists, vocalists, and other performers. Visit chicago.cbslocal.com to learn more.

About Goodman Theatre

America's "Best Regional Theater" (*Time* magazine), Goodman Theatre, established in 1925, is a premier not-for-profit organization distinguished by the excellence and scope of its artistic programming and civic engagement. Led by Artistic Director Robert Falls and Executive Director Roche Schulfer, the theater's artistic priorities include new play development (more than 150 world or American premieres in the past three decades), large scale musical theater works, and reimagined classics (celebrated revivals include Falls' productions of *Death of a Salesman* and *The Iceman Cometh*). Goodman Theatre artists and productions have earned two Pulitzer Prizes, 22 Tony Awards, more than 160 Jeff Awards, and many more accolades. In addition, the Goodman is the first theater in the world to produce all 10 plays in August Wilson's "American Century Cycle" and its annual holiday tradition *A Christmas Carol*, which celebrates its 40th anniversary this season, has created a new generation of theatergoers. Committed to three core values of Quality, Diversity, and Community, the Goodman proactively makes inclusion the fabric of the institution and develops education and community engagement programs that support arts as education. The Goodman's Alice Rapoport Center for Education and Engagement is the home of such programming, most offered free of charge, and has vastly expanded the theater's ability to touch the lives of Chicagoland citizens (with 85% of youth participants coming from underserved communities) since its 2016 opening. Visit goodmantheatre.org to learn more.

About Arts Alliance Illinois

In 1982, a small group of artists and arts administrators joined forces to combat the threatened elimination of state funding for the arts in Illinois. Out of these early advocacy efforts, Arts Alliance Illinois was born. Today, under the leadership of Executive Director Claire Rice, the Alliance is a statewide arts advocacy and service organization promoting the value of the arts to all Illinois residents. Through arts access, arts advocacy, arts education, cultural equity, and statewide civic engagement, the Alliance advances widespread support of all the arts, enhances the health of the state's arts and cultural sectors, and fosters a climate in which the broadest spectrum of artistic expression can flourish. The Alliance envisions a world where the arts are central and indispensable to Illinois, where people acknowledge that the arts enhance their quality of life, fuel creativity and innovation, sharpen the state's competitive edge, attract and retain talent, promote cross-cultural understanding, aid in solving civic and social issues, and keep Illinois nationally and globally connected. Visit artsalliance.org to learn more.

