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*GLORIA*

ONSTAGE

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**A NOTE ABOUT *GLORIA***

As I look at the plays produced by theaters in Chicago and across the country, it is clear to me that we are now in a sort of “golden age” of American playwriting, led by a host of new young writers bringing their considerable talents to our stages. I don’t recall a time, at least during my career, in which we’ve seen such a wealth and diversity of viewpoints, experiences and modes of expression in the theater as we have in the past decade or so—from the ebullient theatricality of Lauren Yee to the sparse poetic naturalism of Annie Baker, from the fierce urban poetry of Stephen Adly Guirgis to the complex investigations of contemporary icons and institutions by Lucas Hnath. And certainly, one of the most original voices in this new generation of artists belongs to Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, whose observations of the cultural, political and racial shifts in 21st century America have won critical and audience acclaim for their trenchant wit, slyly imaginative upendings of theatrical traditions and finely observed satire. Recently named a MacArthur Fellow, Branden received acclaim for his early works *Appropriate* and *An*

*Octoroon*, which focused on complex and incisive renderings of the African American experience. But his more recent works have brought his idiosyncratic sensibilities to bear on a variety of other contemporary concerns, most notably in *Gloria*, which I saw (and loved) in its world premiere at the Vineyard Theatre off-Broadway. Initially, *Gloria* is a darkly humorous portrait of a group of assistants in the offices of a once trendy but now-troubled magazine. We are soon aware of the many challenges faced by these well-educated but under-used Millennials: low wages, impossible deadlines, whimsically demanding bosses and seemingly nonexistent opportunities for advancement in a company still controlled by Baby Boomers. But in an instant, their world is upended—and *Gloria* morphs from a sharp satire of office politics into a much larger, but no less compelling, investigation of 21st century ambition in the fishbowl culture of modern media. In my initial viewing, I found *Gloria* to be among the smartest, most entertaining and most provocative pieces I have seen in many years—and I immediately set about to bring this unusually wise and timely work to the Goodman stage. Fortunately, we were able to secure the outstanding Vineyard cast for our own production, under the expert leadership of that company’s original director, Evan Cabnet, known to Goodman audiences for his beautiful work on our premiere of Christopher Shinn’s *Teddy* *Ferrara* several seasons ago.

A deserved finalist for the 2016 Pulitzer Prize, *Gloria* is a prime example of the exciting work that is emerging from our current theatrical renaissance, and the kind of work that I think will be embraced by our Goodman audiences. I am proud to bring this extraordinary piece to our Albert stage—and to expose a wider audience to the contemporary genius of Branden Jacobs-Jenkins.

—Robert Falls

 Artistic Director

An Important New Voice in American Theater:

Branden Jacobs-Jenkins

by Jonathan L. Green

*The New York Times* hails playwright Branden Jacobs-Jenkins as “one of the most exciting young dramatists working today,” and counts him among “this country’s most original and illuminating writers.”

For someone who just turned 32, and whose first major production was staged only in 2010, Jacobs-Jenkins has earned an impressive number of accolades. Three of his plays made their world premieres over the course of just one year, in 2013 and 2014—*Appropriate* at Chicago’s Victory Gardens Theater, followed by *An Octoroon* at New York’s Soho Repertory Theatre and *War* at Yale Repertory Theatre. He was awarded the Obie Award for Best New American Play for *Appropriate* and *An* *Octoroon*, and the plays have since been staged at many of the country’s leading regional theaters.

When *Gloria* premiered at New York’s Vineyard Theatre in 2015, the play was met with nearly universal acclaim, eventually becoming a finalist for the 2016 Pulitzer Prize, whose selection committee described it as a “play of wit and irony that deftly transports the audience from satire to thriller and back again.” Last year, Jacobs-Jenkins was also awarded Yale University’s 2016 Windham-Campbell Prize for drama and the 2016 PEN/Laura Pels Emerging American Playwright Award. In September, the MacArthur Foundation announced Jacobs-Jenkins as one if its “Genius” grant recipients, noting his plays “use a historical lens to satirize and comment on modern culture, particularly the ways in which race and class are negotiated in both private and public settings. Although the provocation of his audience is purposeful, Jacobs-Jenkins’s creation of unsettling, shocking, often confrontational moments is not gratuitous; these elements are of a piece with the world he has established on stage and in the service of the story he is telling.”

His newest play, *Everybody*, a subversive adaptation of *The Somonyng of Everyman* (a 15th century passion play and the oldest known play in the English language), premieres January 31 at Signature Theatre in New York.

NEW VOICES. NEW IDEAS. NEW PLAYS AT GOODMAN THEATRE.

“I believe theater should be relevant; make us think; hold a mirror to ourselves and society; offer the possibility of real community; connect diverse populations and explore our collective humanity.”

–*Robert Falls, Artistic Director*

New plays like Gloria are emblematic of the Goodman’s mission to cultivate artists whose distinct approaches offer a wide-ranging vision of the world. Throughout its history, the Goodman has presented new works by playwrights both established and up-and-coming, such as Rebecca Gilman, David Henry Hwang, David Mamet, Arthur Miller,

Lynn Nottage, Tanya Saracho, August Wilson, Lauren Yee and more. This season, which marks Robert Falls’ 30th anniversary as artistic director, includes an unprecedented 11-play slate of diverse works (plus the annual *New Stages* Festival of plays-in-process) that embody the Goodman’s values, ambitions and artistic priorities of new plays, large-scale musical revivals, reimagined classics and Goodman commissions. Learn more at GoodmanTheatre.org/NOW

* **150** world or American premieres have been presented by the Goodman since 1986
* In the past 30 years, women and/or playwrights of color have authored **69% of Goodman World Premieres**
* **83** developmental productionsand readings have beenstaged throughout the *New Stages* Festival’s history
* Since 2010, the Playwrights Unit has helped develop **28 new works**
* **66%** **of productions** during the Goodman’s current season are world premieres or second productions of new works
* **24 new plays** are scheduled to receive developmental support from the Goodman during the current season
* **13 writers** are currently under commission by the Goodman, including four Chicago-based playwrights
* **68% of *New Stages* works** have gone on to receive full productions at the Goodman and theaters across the country

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WHAT IS NEWSWORTHY? WHAT LIVES HAVE VALUE? DOES AMBITION COMPROMISE MORALS?

A Conversation with the Playwright

By Miriam Weiner

Shortly before the world premiere of *Gloria*, the Vineyard Theatre’s Miriam Weiner sat down with Branden Jacobs-Jenkins to discuss his play.

**Miriam Weiner: What was the seed idea for *Gloria*?**

**Branden Jacobs-Jenkins:** I was living in Germany for a couple years beginning in 2010 and right before I was about to move back to the U.S. and begin my residency at the Vineyard Theatre, I was panicking because I needed a new play to work on. I was battling one of the worst cases of writer’s block in my life. So I spent two weeks in my studio banging my head against a wall, starting play after play after play and throwing them all out. Then, one day, I sat down in this office chair and had a sense memory of when I was working at *The New Yorker* and the experience of being in a cubicle with a friend/co-worker of mine, and I just started writing. I imagined the two of us—or two people like us—sitting in our cubicles on an average day at work, and I just let them talk and eventually they became the characters Dean and Ani.

**MW: How much of the play is based on your experience working at *The New Yorker*?**

**BJJ:** Very little, actually, and people will be disappointed if they come to the play looking for some sort of behind-the-scenes *Bright Lights* *Big City* tell-all situation. I wanted to write about work because it was during a period in my life when I did not have a job, and I was missing the daily structure of having one. The only office job I’ve ever had was working at the magazine, so obviously I drew heavily on that experience to build out the world of the play, but none of the events in the play actually happened to me. If anything, I was obsessing over that moment in your early adulthood when you’re learning how to “be a part of the workforce”: how one spends this period of one’s life, and does it matter how you spend it, and is it supposed to matter? How disposable are your 20s? I think about when I was at a cubicle every day for years, and how surreal it felt once I realized that the essence of my job was just to be there, even if I had no work to do. I was like, “Well, if I don’t have any work to do, why can’t I just stay home and be paid?” I’m actually being paid for my presence. And then you look up and realize you’ve spent years of your life sitting in the same chair. It’s also worth mentioning that I was also drawing on some events I kept seeing in the news over and over again around the time that I was writing. Events that still show up—and seem to be showing up with even more frequency.

**MW: Can you tell us about the theme of ambition in the play?**

**BJJ:** New York is a city that basically runs on ambition. That’s why an assistant is willing to work for like, $26,000 a year, in a city in which that is definitely the poverty line. People make such sacrifices to work in fields that mostly fulfill some very strange emotional or psychological need that they may not even be fully aware of—needs which may not even be healthy at the end of the day. I’ve also met people who just seem to be ambitious for the sake of ambition–they’re just addicted to the feeling of moving up and ahead in life. In any case, I was interested in the ways that this kind of relationship to the idea of work affects the compromises you make with yourself and your morals. I was also interested in what a writer’s ambition is, because I was writing about a group of people whose job is to basically transcribe life and experience and decide what’s newsworthy or not newsworthy, what lives have value or not, determined by what happens in them.

**MW: How do you see *Gloria* fitting into your body of work? Are you trying to do something different, or are you writing about the same themes consciously?**

**BJJ:** A lot of my work has been wrestling with the idea of authorship in some way, and I think this is my first play in which the drama is pretty overtly anchored around that theme. It’s also the first one in which I’ve drawn on personal, biographical details in a slightly more explicit way in order to tell the story. I still think–I mean, I don’t want to give the play away, but my interest in the playing of character and multiple characters and what that might say about identity is still here.

EDITING THE END.

by Jonathan L. Green

The sudden death of a beloved indie musician throws the Manhattan offices of a major national magazine into chaos in *Gloria*. The writers must scramble to get to work. How quickly can they complete a thoughtfully crafted obituary for the next issue? Writing articulately and sincerely about death on a tight deadline can make for a highly controversial assignment in the world of publishing.

In the field of obituary journalism, it is common practice for newsrooms to begin writing obituaries before their subjects’ deaths. Called “advances,” these commemorations are often prepared in readiness for heads of state (no matter their age) and aging stars of stage and screen. According to *The New York Times*’ Margalit Fox, obit-journalists sometimes even interview these figures (she uses the charmingly morbid term “pre-dead”) in the development of these pieces. She writes about the challenges of hosting these interviews, which often begin with vague introductions such as “We’re updating your biographical file,” or “This is for possible future use.”

*The Washington Post* has an average of 100 advances on file at any given time. *The Los Angeles* *Times* has 400. The Associated Press has roughly 1,000. *The New York Times* has 1,700. No newspaper wants to be caught unprepared to deliver in-depth coverage of major events— publish or perish, distribute or die. But when Anna Nicole Smith passed away in early 2007 at the age of 39, the Associated Press was unprepared to eulogize the relatively young celebrity. When actor Brad Renfro died at 25 one year later, they again were caught without an obituary at the ready. According to one of the AP’s managing editors, these events led to a new trend at the company of preparing necrologies for younger movie and music stars known for living lives of excess. In 2008, the AP announced it was preparing an advance for Britney Spears, then 26, amidst rumors of substance abuse. In

2010, several major outlets pursued the same for Lindsay Lohan, age 23, after a series of episodes and arrests. When Michael Jackson passed away in 2009, many major papers had advances at the ready and only needed to edit details. (Fox refers to the adding of the “when, the where and the how of the death” to an advance as “putting the top on the story.”)

There are risks to this practice. The AP announced

Bob Hope’s death in 1998, five years prior to his actual death, before the announcement was retracted. An errant keystroke in 2003 erroneously published obituaries on CNN’s website for Fidel Castro, Ronald Reagan, Pope

John Paul II, Nelson Mandela, Gerald Ford and Dick Cheney—when none had died. “Is there not something cynical, exploitative and opportunistic about a book in which the subject is the abominable things that happened to real people in the real world?”

And it is not unheard of for an obit-journalist to pass away before the subject of his obituary, and for their name to appear as a staff writer post-mortem. When Gerald Ford died in 2006, one of his print eulogists had been dead for nearly a year. Mel Gussow prepared *The New York* *Times*’ obituaries for Harold Pinter and Elizabeth Taylor, both of whom outlived him by a few years.

Publishing reflections and memoirs about death on a larger scale is just as challenging a field. Writers encounter some of the same demands here, as they are also part of the shaping of the public’s understanding of the tragedy—but, given more writing and editorial time, face different questions around morals and content. One must consider the medium as much as the message: When a book about a mass murder, a terrorist attack or a genocide is on *The New York Times*’ best-seller list, what does that mean for those who found their fortunes writing, editing or publishing it? While healing can be found in writing and in reading stories of trauma, this area of publishing has its critics as well: *The Guardian*’s Darragh

McManus writes, “Is there not something cynical, exploitative and opportunistic about a book in which the subject is the abominable things that happened to real people in the real world?... Publishers know there is a vast audience of ghouls out there, keen to wallow in others’ misery—and pay for the privilege.” A year after the September 11 attacks, *The New* *York Times*’ Walter Kirn wrote a critique of just a few of the many books on the topic flooding bookstores: “…because that is how the publishing industry works now: it doesn’t just seize its moments, it engulfs them… [these] reflections on terrorism have a strained, hurry-up-and-say-something- memorable feeling. One suspects that events caught these authors napping just like almost everybody else, but, being literary professionals, they felt obliged to snap out of it immediately and hit their keyboards, like pianists on the Titanic. Play us something. Play us anything.”

Many critics have noted certain predictable tropes in these accounts, whether of 9/11 or of Columbine or the University of Texas Tower Massacre: how mundane everything felt prior to the incident, for example. No portents; everything was “normal.” (Kirn writes, “That one can be flossing one’s teeth or feeding the cat when tragedy strikes and history spins sideways is a perennial human astonishment.”) They also notice a distinct uneasiness when describing events—either the account is flat reportage, leaning away from meaning and emotion, or it is a cliché and unconvincing attempt at metaphor and symbol. How does one process real-life tragedy, and then sell it to the highest bidder at a publishing house auction?

Because it does sell. In the last 10 years, some of the best-selling non-fiction has been from this arena: *American Sniper*. *13 Hours*, about the attack in Benghazi. *Witness*, about the Scott Peterson trial. *Rampage Nation*. *Columbine*. A quick Amazon.com search displays thousands of books about 9/11. Some authors donate their fees and royalties to not-for-profit organizations and trauma-therapy groups; still, the publishing industry itself salivates over the next ripped-from-the-headlines story of murder, terror, loss, and it stands to make a sizeable profit from these accounts. “These things,” writes McManus, “are the literary golden tickets. And that really is horrible.”

**THE STATE OF PAPER IN AN ERA OF “CLICKBAIT”**

by Jonathan L. Green

We’ve all heard it: “Print is dead.” But is it? In *Gloria*, several young editorial assistants have landed jobs at a storied cultural magazine in New York City—but the strains of their daily grind are far from their glamorous professional dreams. Nearly 300 years since the first newspaper, print media is now slashing staffing and column inches—if not declaring bankruptcy or closing altogether. Book publishers are suffering from online pricing policies, while brickand- mortar bookstores are shuttering. Modes and methods have changed—and the industry must evolve to survive.

The first American multi-issue newspaper, the *New England Courant,* was printed by Benjamin Franklin’s older brother in 1721; since then, there have been tens of thousands of daily and weekly newspaper mastheads published in the country. But print journalists and their publishers have had to fight an increasingly tough battle throughout the years. The early part of the 20th century saw radio news as a threat to newspaper sales (the first radio news broadcast was in 1920 in Detroit, and the medium grew in popularity through the ensuing decades), but the advent of television news combined with a growing mistrust of the media during the Cold War proved even more damaging. Perhaps the biggest challenge yet came in the 1990s, with the advent of the Internet and the exploding ownership of personal computers.

Historically an expensive profession due to the volume of people involved—reporters, photographers, editors, proofreaders, fact checkers, columnists and more—media costs were initially subsidized by corporate, personal and classified advertising. But the 1999 founding of the website Craigslist wiped out a significant percentage of classified advertising income, while increased online dating site usage has nearly eliminated earnings from personal ads placed by lonely hearts. In 2005, Arianna Huffington founded The Huffington Post, first an aggregator of political news and eventually an enormous community of bloggers and commenters. This model eliminated many of the high costs of running newspapers:

“HuffPo” presented reportage from other sources in a way that invited user engagement through comments sections, allowing visitors to communicate with each other, like a sort of global water cooler. This new format arguably led to a decline in editorial quality, but to many users that didn’t matter. And with their high operations costs and declining advertising income, most print newspapers suffered. The value of publically traded American newspapers declined nearly 50% between 2005 and 2008. A survey by the Carnegie Corporation suggests that newspapers trail a distant third as a “trusted news source,” after the Internet and television.

“Today, almost all serious newspapers are scrambling to adapt themselves to the technological and community-building opportunities offered by digital news delivery,” *The New York Times*’ Eric Alterman writes. Modern consumers, on average, prefer speed to quality, interactive to static, and opinionated (at least, opinions that match their own) to non-partisan. The rise of shallow content (surveys and “listicles” prevail online) and sensational, uninformative headlines satisfy cravings for news now. (An actual headline from CNN: “14-year-old girl stabbed her little sister 40 times, police say. The reason why will shock you!”) It’s not that readers no longer have an appetite for long-form journalism; rather, blog posts masquerading as journalism are much easier and cheaper to produce and therefore overwhelm and drown the visibility of long-form works. In his book *The Vanishing Newspaper*, Philip Meyer estimates that, if the industry doesn’t dramatically evolve, the last issue of the last printed newspaper will be delivered in October 2044. In the meantime, staffs are cut, word-counts slashed and page numbers dwindle.

The world of book publishing is faring better, but has had to make significant adjustments to survive. Sales of e-readers peaked in 2011 and have since declined (2016 showed roughly one third as many e-readers purchased as in 2011), but e-Book sales continue to grow; more than one third of American adults have read or will read at least one e-Book this year. Hardcover books are more expensive to buy, but they are also more expensive to produce; a publisher can sell an e-Book for half the price of a hardcover and still increase the profit margin of the sale by 50%. In the last eight years, hardcover sales have decreased 2.5% and paperback sales have decreased 5.5%, but e-Book sales have increased nearly 5,000%. And though print sales have declined since the release of the Amazon Kindle, overall fiction sales (print and digital) have increased to the tune of nearly two billion dollars per year, suggesting that appetite for long-form literature is not flagging. Romance, suspense, true crime and mystery especially are on the rise—and more and more, those books are turned into movies, creating more income opportunity for publishing houses. Non-fiction sales are down, but that trend began before the advent of e-Books; data collected by Nielsen suggests that growing Internet use is the cause for this decline, particularly in the areas of reference and travel.

*The New Republic*’s Evan Hughes writes, “Part of the problem for journalism, music and television is that they are vulnerable to disaggregation.” Online, readers can purchase and consume single articles from a newspaper, single songs from an album, single episodes from a television series. But one finds little value in a single chapter from a novel. Hughes continues, “Hollywood has fallen victim not to disaggregation but to its opposite.” Netflix allows access to all content for one low price, diminishing the perceived value of a single film. Amazon and other companies like Scribd are beginning to experiment with an all-access subscription model for e-Books, but they’ve yet to radically change the market, due in part to a refusal from most of the largest publishing houses to participate.

In addition to the numerous financial challenges facing traditional news media in recent years, news organizations must also now face an alarming, content-specific obstacle: combating the rise of so-called “fake news,” which prevailed during the recent volatile election cycle. These articles are mostly distributed online and through social media outlets, allowing often anonymous writers to spin rumors, conspiracy theories and flat-out fiction into “news” stories. Newspapers may just have a bit more fight in them yet: in just the first week post-election, *The New York Times* saw an increase in 41,000 paid subscriptions across its print and digital platforms—the largest subscription increase since the outlet introduced a pay-wall in 2011, suggesting the public may have a renewed interest in supporting established and trusted media institutions after all.

PUBLIC EVENTS

**Want to learn more about what inspires the work on stage?** Enrich your Goodman Theatre experience with these opportunities.

**PlayBacks: *Gloria***

**The Alice Rapoport Center for Education and Engagement at Goodman Theatre**

Following each Wednesday and Thursday evening performance of *Gloria*, patrons are invited to join us for a post-show discussion about the play with members of the cast\* and the Goodman’s artistic staff. **FREE.**

**PlayTalks: *Gloria***

**January 27 and February 3, 10 and 17**

**The Alice Rapoport Center for Education and Engagement at Goodman Theatre**

One hour prior to select performances, members of the Goodman’s artistic staff present interactive talks to give patrons a deeper understanding of the work they are about to see. **FREE.**

*\*Please note, cast may not be present for all discussions.*

JOIN US FOR ACCESSIBLE PERFORMANCES

OF *GLORIA*

Goodman Theatre believes that all audiences should experience the power of theater, and is proud to offer accessible performances and services for all productions. In addition to ASL-Signed and Audio-Described performances, services the Goodman provides include accessible seating, programs available in braille and large print and complimentary assistive listening devices. For additional information, assistance or an accommodation not mentioned on this page, visit the Guest Services Desk or e-mail Access@GoodmanTheatre.org.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11

Touch Tour, 12:30pm

Audio-Described Performance, 2pm

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15

ASL-Signed Performance, 7:30pm

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18

Open-Captioned Performance, 2pm



ROBERT FALLS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

ROCHE SCHULFER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Presents

THE VINEYARD THEATRE PRODUCTION OF

***GLORIA***

By

BRANDEN JACOBS-JENKINS

Directed by

EVAN CABNET

Set Design by

TAKESHI KATA

Costume Design by

ILONA SOMOGYI

Lighting Design by

MATT FREY

Sound Design by

MATT TIERNEY

Wig and Hair Design by

COOKIE JORDAN

Fight Choreography by

J. DAVID BRIMMER

Original Casting by

HENRY RUSSELL BERGSTEIN, CSA

Understudy Casting by

ERICA SARTINI-COMBS

Dramaturgy by

JONATHAN L. GREEN

Production Stage Manager

BRIANA J. FAHEY\*

Stage Manager

KIMBERLY ANN McCANN\*

*Gloria* was produced by the Vineyard Theatre (Doug Albez, Artistic Director; Sarah Stern, Artistic Director; Jennifer Garvey-Blackwell, Executive Producer) New York, Spring 2015.

Major Production Sponsor

GOODMAN THEATRE WOMEN’S BOARD with additional support from the Director’s Society.

CAST (in alphabetical order)

Miles.. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .**Kyle Beltran\***

Ani.. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . **Catherine Combs\***

Lorin.. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . **Michael Crane\***

Kendra.. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .**Jennifer Kim\***

Gloria. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . **Jeanine Serralles\***

Dean.. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .**Ryan Spahn\***

There will be one 15-minute intermission.

Assistant Director: Vanessa Stalling

Assistant Lighting Designer: Stephen Sorenson

*Gloria* is presented by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York. Understudies never substitute for a listed player unless an announcement is made at the beginning of the play. Japhet Balaban—*Dean*; Kyle Bullock—*Miles*; Tien Doman—*Gloria*; Karissa Murrell Myers—*Kendra*;

Sam Poretta—*Lorin*; Park Williams—*Ani*

The video and/or audio recording of this performance by any means whatsoever are strictly prohibited. Goodman productions are made possible in part by the National Endowment for the Arts; the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency; and a CityArts 4 program grant from the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events.

Goodman Theatre is a constituent of the Theatre

Communications Group, Inc., the national service organization of nonprofit theaters; the League of Resident

Theatres; the Illinois Arts Alliance and the American Arts

Alliance; the League of Chicago Theatres; and the Illinois Theatre Association.

Goodman Theatre operates under agreements between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors’ Equity

Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States; the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, Inc., an independent national labor union; the Chicago Federation of Musicians, Local No. 10-208, American Federation of Musicians; and the United Scenic Artists of America, Local 829, AFL-CIO. House crew and scene shop employees are represented by the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Local No. 2.

*\*Denotes member of Actors’ Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States*

ARTIST PROFILES

**KYLE BELTRAN\*** (*Miles*) Broadway credits include *The*

*Cherry Orchard* (Roundabout Theatre Company) and Usnavi in *In The Heights* (also first national tour). Off-Broadway credits include *Head of Passes* and *Fortress of Solitude* (The Public Theater), *The Flick* (Barrow Street Theatre), *Gloria* (Vineyard Theatre), *Choir Boy* (Manhattan Theatre Club, AUDELCO Award), *The Netflix* *Plays* (Ars Nova) and *10 Things To Do Before I Die* (Second Stage Theatre). Chicago and regional credits include *Head of Passes* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company), *Fortress of Solitude* (Dallas Theater Center), *Good Goods* (Yale Repertory Theatre) and *Kingdom* (The Old Globe). Film and television credits include *Equity* (Sundance & Tribeca 2016), Louis CK’s *Horace and* *Pete*, *The Big C* and *Unforgettable*. Mr. Beltran received his BFA in drama from Carnegie Mellon University. On social media @Kyperbole

**CATHERINE COMBS\*** (*Ani*) returns to the Goodman, where she starred in the 2013 and 2014 productions of *Smokefall*. She most recently starred in the Tony Award-winning revival of *A View* *From the Bridge*, directed by Ivo

Van Hove (Ahmanson Theatre and Kennedy Center). Off-

Broadway credits include *The Sensuality Party* (The New

Group) and *Gloria* (Vineyard Theatre). Regional credits include the world premieres of *The Delling Shore* and *The Edge of Our Bodies* (The Humana Festival of New Plays at Actors Theatre of Louisville), *Hamlet* and *A* *Midsummer Night’s Dream* (Santa Susana Repertory Company) and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Kingsmen Shakespeare Company). Film credits include *The Blind* *Side*, *Touched with Fire* and *13 Going on 30*. Television credits include *The Mentalist* and *The Mysteries of Laura*.

**MICHAEL CRANE**\* (*Lorin*) New York credits include *Gloria* and *This Day Forward* (Vineyard Theatre); *The Body of an* *American* (Primary Stages/ Hartford Stage); *Bloody Bloody* *Andrew Jackson, King Lear* and

*Richard III* (The Public Theater); *Taking Care of Baby* (Manhattan Theatre Club); *Doris to Darlene* (Playwrights Horizons); *The Mag-7* (Naked Angels); *The Young Left* (Cherry Lane Theatre); *The Tenant* (Woodshed Collective); *West Moon* *Street* (Prospect Theater Company); *Bone Portraits* (Stillpoint Productions); *The Leopard and the Fox* (TBG); *Brack’s Last Bachelor Party* (59E59) and *Middlemen* (Human Animals). Regional credits include *Father Comes* *Home from the Wars* (American Repertory Theatre), *Hamlet* (Pioneer Theatre) and *Hell Meets Henry Halfway* (Pig Iron Theatre Co.), as well as works with Long Wharf Theatre, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Berkshire Theatre Festival and the Weston Playhouse. Film and television credits include *People of Earth, Barry, Damages, White* *Collar, Winter’s Tale, Forever, Law & Order* and *Kings*. He received his MFA from New York University.

**JENNIFER KIM\*** (*Kendra*) Off-Broadway credits include

*Gloria* (Vineyard Theatre) and *Engagements* (Second Stage Theatre). Film credits include *The Bourne Legacy, First Winter,* *We Need to Talk About Kevin,* *Confessions of a Shopaholic,* *Obvious Child, Female Pervert,* *The Unity of all Things, Wild Canaries, Intimate* *Semaphores* and *Lace Crater.* Upcoming projects include *Newly Single*, *Spider-Man: Homecoming* and *The Incredible Jessica James*. Television credits include *Search Party*, *Mozart in the Jungle*, *The Blacklist*, *Rescue* *Me*, *The Good Wife*, *666 Park Ave.*, *You’re Whole* and *Elementary*. Ms. Kim received her BFA from New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts.

**JEANINE SERRALLES\*** (*Gloria*) New York credits include *Don’t* *You F\*\*king Say a Word* (59E59); *Gloria* (Vineyard

Theatre, Drama Desk and Lucille Lortel Award nominations), *Verite* and *Stunning* (Lincoln Center

Theater); *Dying For It* and *The Jammer* (Atlantic Theater

Company); *The Muscles in Our Toes* (Labyrinth Theater

Company); *Paris Commune* (The Civilians); *The Maids*

(Red Bull Theater); *Maple and Vine* (Playwrights Horizons) and *The Black Eyed* (New York Theatre Workshop, Drama League Award nomination). Regional credits include *These Paper Bullets* (Yale Repertory Theatre, Connecticut Critics Circle Award nomination) and *Tartuffe* (Westport Country Playhouse, Connecticut Critics Circle Award). Film and television credits include *Inside Llewyn Davis, The Abolitionists, No Pay-Nudity,* *Two Lovers, Across the Universe, The Path*, *Person of* *Interest, The Good Wife* and the upcoming *Cubby, Central Park* and *Hot Summer Nights*. Ms. Serralles received her MFA from the Yale School of Drama.

**RYAN SPAHN\*** (*Dean*) makes his Goodman Theatre debut. Off-Broadway credits include *Exit Strategy* and the upcoming *Daniel’s Husband* (Primary Stages) and *Gloria* (Vineyard Theatre). Regional credits include *Exit Strategy* (Philadelphia Theatre Company, Barrymore Award nomination), *Tribes* (Actors Theatre of Louisville), *Tape* and *End Days* (Martha’s Vineyard Playhouse), *Sick* (Berkshire Theatre Festival) and *Stupid Kids* (Celebration Theatre, LA Weekly Award). Film and television credits include *He’s Way More Famous Than You* (also co-writer, 2013 Slamdance Film Festival), *Grantham & Rose* (also writer), *Woven* (also co-writer, 2016 LA Film Festival), *Polish Wedding*, *Ugly Betty*, *What’s Your Emergency* (co-created for Stage17.TV), *Cocktails & Classics* (co-created for Logo), *Tanner on Tanner* and *Star Trek:* *Voyager*. He received his BFA from The Juilliard School.

**BRANDEN JACOBS-JENKINS** (*Playwright*) Playwright credits include *Gloria* (Vineyard Theatre), *Appropriate* (Signature Theatre, Obie Award and Outer Critics Circle Award nomination), *Neighbors* (The Public Theater), *An*

*Octoroon* (Soho Repertory Theatre and Theatre for a New Audience, Obie Award) and *War* (Yale Repertory Theatre). He is is currently a Residency Five playwright at the Signature Theatre. His work has been seen at Actors Theater of Louisville, Victory Gardens Theater, Woolly Mammoth Theater, The Matrix Theater, Mixed Blood

Theater, CompanyOne and the HighTide Festival in the

U.K. He is under commission from LCT3/Lincoln Center Theater and Manhattan Theatre Club. Honors include a Paula Vogel Award, a fellowship from the New York Foundation for the Arts, the inaugural Tennessee Williams

Award, the 2015 Steinberg Playwright Award and the 2016 “Genius” Fellowship from the MacArthur Foundation. He has taught at New York University and Queens University of Charlotte and holds an MA in performance studies from New York University and a BA from Princeton University. He is a graduate of the Lila Acheson Wallace Playwrights Program at The Juilliard School.

**EVAN CABNET** (*Director*) returns to Goodman Theatre, where he previously directed *Teddy Ferrara*. Broadway credits include *Thérèse Raquin* (Roundabout Theatre Company) and *The Performers*. Off-Broadway credits include *Gloria* and *Outside People* (Vineyard Theater), *The Model Apartment* and *Poor Behavior* (Primary Stages), *A Kid Like Jake* and *All-American* (Lincoln Center Theater), *The Dream of the Burning Boy* (Roundabout Theatre Company), Elizabeth Meriwether’s *Oliver Parker!* (stageFARM), *Warrior Class* (Second Stage Theatre), *Oohrah!* (Atlantic Theater Company), *The Mistakes Madeline Made* (Naked Angels) and *Do I* *Hear a Waltz?* (Encores!). Additional credits include *Henry V* (Chautauqua Theater Company), *An American* *Daughter*, *Off the Main Road* and his own adaptations of *Ubu Roi* and Salman Rushdie’s *Haroun and the Seas of* *Stories* (Williamstown Theatre Festival) and *Saigono* *Samurai* (Ginka Theater, Tokyo). Mr. Cabnet is the Artistic Director of Lincoln Center Theater’s LCT3. He is also a former associate artist with the Roundabout Theatre Company and a performance consultant for the Metropolitan Opera (*Die Fledermaus*).

**TAKESHI KATA** (*Set Designer*) returns to the Goodman, where his credits include *God of Carnage*. Chicago credits include *Slowgirl, The Seafarer* and *The Tempest* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company). New York credits include *Gloria* and *Outside People* (Vineyard Theatre), *Forever* (New York Theatre Workshop); *B.F.E.* and *Doris* *to Darlene* (Playwrights Horizons); *3 Kinds of Exile*, *Storefront Church, Through a Glass Darkly, Dreams of* *Flying Dreams of Falling, Port Authority* and *Intelligent* *Design of Jenny Chow* (Atlantic Theater Company);

*Adding Machine* (Minetta Lane Theatre) and *Orson’s*

*Shadow* (Barrow Street Theatre). Regionally, Mr. Kata has worked at the Alley Theatre, American Players Theatre, Cleveland Play House, Dallas Theatre Center, Ford’s Theatre, Geffen Playhouse, Hartford Stage, La Jolla Playhouse, Long Wharf Theatre, Center Theatre Group, The Old Globe, Williamstown Theatre Festival and Yale Repertory Theatre. He has won an Obie Award and received Drama Desk, Barrymore and Ovation Award nominations. He is an assistant professor at University of Southern California’s School of Dramatic Arts.

**ILONA SOMOGYI** (*Costume Designer)* makes her Goodman Theatre debut. Broadway credits include *Clybourne Park.* Off-Broadway credits include *Body of* *an American, Satchmo at the Waldorf*, *Dinner With* *Friends*, *My Name is Asher Lev*, *A Soldier’s Tale* (Zankel Hall), *The Lying Lesson*, *Almost an Evening*, *Scarcity* (Atlantic Theater Company), *Maple and Vine*, *A Small* *Fire* (Playwrights Horizons), *Jerry Springer: The Opera* (Carnegie Hall) and the original production of *Wit*. West

End credits include *Nice Fish.* Regional credits include *Carousel, King Hedley II*, *Smokey Joe’s Café* (Arena Stage); *Grey Gardens* (Center Theatre Group); *Anything* *Goes* (Goodspeed Opera House); *Romeo & Juliet, The* *Crucible*, *Gem of the Ocean* and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (Hartford Stage); *Richard III* (Oregon Shakespeare

Festival); *Nice Fish*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and *Vanya and*

*Sonia and Masha and Spike* (Guthrie Theater); *Disgraced* and *4000 Miles* (Long Wharf Theatre); *Julius Caesar*

(Chicago Shakespeare Theater); *Disgraced* and *Good*

*People* (Huntington Theatre Company) and *Three Sisters*,

*We Have Always Lived in the Castle* and *Passion Play* (Yale Repertory Theatre). Ms. Somogyi studied at and ison the faculty of the Yale School of Drama.

**MATT FREY** (*Lighting Designer*) Chicago credits include *Middletown* and *Belleville* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company). New York credits include *Rancho Viejo* and *A* *Life* (Playwrights Horizons)*, All the Ways to Say I Love* *You* (MCC Theater), *War* (Lincoln Center Theater), *The* *Way We Get By* (Second Stage Theatre), *Buzzer* (The Public Theater) and *An Octoroon* (Soho Repertory Theatre and Theatre for a New Audience). Regional credits include *And No More Shall We Part* (Williamstown Theatre Festival), *For Peter Pan on Her* *70th Birthday* (Humana Festival of New American Plays at Actors Theatre of Louisville and Berkeley Repertory Theatre) and *Wellesley Girl* (Humana Festival).

**MATT TIERNEY** (*Sound Designer*) Broadway credits include *Machinal* (Tony Award nomination and Drama Desk Award). Off-Broadway credits include *Red Speedo* (New York Theatre Workshop); *The Tempest* (The Public Theater); *Gloria* (Vineyard Theatre); *The Sound and the Fury* (Elevator Repair Service/The Public Theater); *Our Lady* *of Kibeho* (Signature Theatre); *Pocatello, The (Curious* *Case of the Watson) Intelligence, Detroit, Kin* and *This* (Playwrights Horizons); *An Octoroon* and Julie Taymor’s *A* *Midsummer Night’s Dream* (Theatre for a New Audience) and Annie Baker’s adaptation of *Uncle Vanya, Blasted* (Hewes Award), *Futurity, A Public Reading* and *About the* *Death of Walt Disney* (Soho Repertory Theatre). Additional credits with Elevator Repair Service include *Arguendo* and *The Select (The Sun Also Rises)* (Obie and Lortel Awards). Mr. Tierney has also worked with The Wooster Group and Young Jean Lee’s Theater Company. Regional credits include work with The Old Globe, Yale Repertory Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre Company, McCarter Theatre Center, American Repertory Theater, Alley Theatre, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, Long Wharf Theatre, Great Lakes Theater and Center Theatre Group. He is currently the technical director for *This American Life*.

**COOKIE JORDAN** (*Wig and Hair Designer*) Broadway credits include *In Transit*, *Eclipsed*, *Side Show*, *The*

*Pee-wee Herman Show*, *Fela!*, *The Motherf\*\*ker with the*

*Hat*, *Lombardi*, *The Miracle Worker*, *A View from the Bridge* and *South Pacific*. Other credits include *White Noise*, *Royal George* and *You Nero* (Arena Stage); *King*

*Lear*, *Neighbors* and *The Wiz* (City Center); *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* and *The Wiz* (Dallas

Theater Center); *Hurt Village* and *Angels in America*

(Signature Theatre); *Cunning Little Vixen* and *Le Grand*

*Macabre* (New York Philharmonic) and *Liberty Smith* and

*1776* (Ford’s Theatre).

**J. DAVID BRIMMER** (*Fight Choreographer*) is a violence specialist and fight master with the Society of American Fight Directors. Broadway credits include *Spring Awakening, The Lieutenant of Inishmore, Grace,* *Speed the Plow, Thérèse Raquin* and *Long Day’s* *Journey into Night.* Off-Broadway credits include *Futurity; Gloria; Punk Rock; An Octoroon; Mr. Burns,* *a Post-Electric Play; Blasted; The Whipping Man;* *Bethany; The American Pilot; Blackbird; Bug; Killer Joe;* *The Revenger’s Tragedy; The Duchess of Malfi* and *The* *Changeling*. He has also worked with The Metropolitan Opera, as well as regional venues such as The Geffen Playhouse, American Repertory Theatre, Yale Repertory Theatre and Guthrie Theater.

**JONATHAN L. GREEN** (*Dramaturg*) is the Goodman’s associate literary manager. As a dramaturg and director, he has worked with Lookingglass Theatre Company, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Sideshow Theatre

Company, Chicago Dramatists, Theatre Seven of Chicago and Pavement Group, among others. Mr. Green is also the artistic director of Sideshow Theatre Company, where his recent projects include *Stupid* *F\*\*king Bird, Antigonick* and *Idomeneus.* He is a graduate of the University of Virginia and serves on the board of directors of the League of Chicago Theatres.

**HENRY RUSSELL BERGSTEIN** (*Original Casting*) Credits with the Vineyard Theatre include *Dot*, *This Day* *Forward*, *Too Much Sun*, *The Lyons* (also on Broadway),

*Billy & Ray*, *The Landing*, *Somewhere Fun*, *The North*

*Pool*, *Arlington*, *Checkers*, *Picked*, *Middletown*, *The Metal*

*Children*, *Slug Bearers of Kayrol Island* and *Wig Out* Additional theater credits include *Small Mouth Sounds* and the original Ars Nova production of *Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812*. He most recently completedcasting on season three of *Mozart in the Jungle*, whichhe has cast with Douglas Aibel since the series began.Film credits include *It Felt Like Love*, *Saturday Church*, *Coin Heist* (with Douglas Aibel), *Grandma*, *November Criminals* and *How to Talk to Girls at Parties* (with AllisonEstrin), *Drunk Parents* and *Jack of the Red Hearts*.As an associate, Mr. Bergstein worked on films including *Manchester by the Sea*, *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, *Mistress America*, *Frances Ha*, *The Immigrant* and *Two Lovers*. He is the former manager of East Coast castingfor Warner Bros. Television Studios in New York.

**BRIANA J. FAHEY\*** (*Production Stage Manager*) is in her fourth season with Goodman Theatre. Goodman credits include *Wonderful Town*; *The Sign in Sidney* *Brustein’s Window*; *Another Word for Beauty*; *Disgraced; The Little Foxes*; *Rapture, Blister, Burn*; *Smokefall; The White Snake; Luna Gale; Pullman Porter* *Blues* and *Pedro Páramo.* Her regional credits include stage managing at Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, California Shakespeare Theater, Magic Theatre, Center REP Theatre and the Utah Shakespeare Festival.

**KIMBERLY ANN MCCANN\*** (*Stage Manager*) returns to Goodman Theatre for her third season. Chicago credits include *Miss Bennet* and *You Can’t Take It With* *You* at Northlight Theatre and *Million Dollar Quartet.* Broadway credits include *Curtains.* Off-Broadway credits include *Bill W. and Dr. Bob*, *How to Save the World* and *John Ferguson.* Regional credits include work with Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Skylight Music Theatre, Tuacahn Center of the Arts and the Juilliard School.

**ROBERT FALLS** (*Goodman Theatre Artistic Director*) This season, for his 30th anniversary at the Goodman, Mr. Falls will direct Annie Baker’s adaptation of Anton Chekhov’s *Uncle Vanya*. Last season, he directed the Chicago premiere of Rebecca Gilman’s *Soups, Stews,* *and Casseroles: 1976*, and also partnered with Goodman Playwright-in-Residence Seth Bockley to direct their world premiere adaptation of Roberto Bolaño’s *2666* (Jeff Award). During the 2014/2015 Season, he reprised his critically acclaimed production of *The Iceman Cometh* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, directed Rebecca Gilman’s *Luna Gale* at the Kirk Douglas Theatre in Los Angeles and directed a new production of Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* for the Lyric Opera of Chicago. Other recent productions include *Measure for Measure* and the world and off-Broadway premieres of Beth Henley’s *The Jacksonian*. Among his other credits are *The Seagull, King Lear, Desire Under the* *Elms*, John Logan’s *Red*, Jon Robin Baitz’s *Three Hotels*, Eric Bogosian’s *Talk Radio* and Conor McPherson’s *Shining City*; the world premieres of Richard Nelson’s *Frank’s Home*, Arthur Miller’s *Finishing the Picture* (his last play), Eric Bogosian’s *Griller*, Steve Tesich’s *The* *Speed of Darkness* and *On the Open Road*, John Logan’s *Riverview: A Melodrama with Music* and Rebecca Gilman’s *A True History of the Johnstown*

*Flood, Blue Surge* and *Dollhouse*; the American premiere of Alan Ayckbourn’s *House* and *Garden* and the Broadway premiere of Elton John and Tim Rice’s *Aida*. Mr. Falls’ honors for directing include, among others, a Tony Award (*Death of a Salesman*), a Drama Desk Award (*Long Day’s Journey into Night*), an Obie Award (*subUrbia*), a Helen Hayes Award (*King Lear*) and multiple Jeff Awards (including a 2012 Jeff Award for *The* *Iceman Cometh*). For “outstanding contributions to theater,” Mr. Falls has also been recognized with such prestigious honors as the Savva Morozov Diamond Award (Moscow Art Theatre), the O’Neill Medallion (Eugene O’Neill Society), the Distinguished Service to the Arts Award (Lawyers for the Creative Arts), the Illinois Arts Council Governor’s Award and, most recently, induction into the Theater Hall of Fame.

**ROCHE EDWARD SCHULFER** (*Goodman Theatre Executive Director*) is in his 37th season as executivedirector. On May 18, 2015, he received the LifetimeAchievement Award from the League of Chicago Theatres.In 2014, he received the Visionary Leadership Award fromTheatre Communications Group. For his 40th anniversarywith the theater, Mr. Schulfer was honored with a star onthe Goodman’s “Walkway of Stars.” During his tenure hehas overseen more than 335 productions, including closeto 130 world premieres. He launched the Goodman’sannual production of *A Christmas Carol*, whichcelebrates 39 years as Chicago’s leading holiday arts tradition this season. In partnership with Artistic Director

Robert Falls, Mr. Schulfer led the establishment of quality, diversity and community engagement as the core values of Goodman Theatre. Under their tenure, the Goodman has received numerous awards for excellence, including the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre, recognition by *Time* magazine as the “Best Regional

Theatre” in the U.S., the Pulitzer Prize for Lynn Nottage’s

*Ruined* and many Jeff Awards for outstanding achievement in Chicago area theater. Mr. Schulfer has negotiated the presentation of numerous Goodman Theatre productions to many national and international venues. From 1988 to 2000, he coordinated the relocation of the Goodman to Chicago’s Theatre District. He is a founder and two-time chair of the League of Chicago Theatres, the trade association of more than 200 Chicago area theater companies and producers. Mr. Schulfer has been privileged to serve in leadership roles with Arts Alliance Illinois (the statewide advocacy coalition); Theatre Communications Group (the national service organization for more than 450 not-for profit theaters); the Performing Arts Alliance (the national advocacy consortium of more than 18,000 organizations and individuals); the League of

Resident Theatres (the management association of 65 leading U.S. theater companies); Lifeline Theatre in Rogers Park and the Arts & Business Council. He is honored to have been recognized by Actors’ Equity

Association for his work promoting diversity and equal opportunity in Chicago theater; the American Arts

Alliance; the Arts & Business Council for distinguished contributions to Chicago’s artistic vitality for more than

25 years; *Chicago* magazine and the *Chicago Tribune* as a “Chicagoan of the Year”; the City of Chicago; Columbia

College Chicago for entrepreneurial leadership; Arts

Alliance Illinois; the Joseph Jefferson Awards Committee for his partnership with Robert Falls; North Central

College with an Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree;

Lawyers for the Creative Arts; Lifeline Theatre’s Raymond

R. Snyder Award for Commitment to the Arts; Season of

Concern for support of direct care for those living with

HIV/AIDS; and the Vision 2020 Equality in Action Medal for promoting gender equality and diversity in the workplace. Mr. Schulfer is a member of the adjunct faculty of the Theatre School at DePaul University and a graduate of the University of Notre Dame, where he managed the cultural arts commission.

**VINEYARD THEATRE** is one of America’s preeminent homes for the creation of new plays and musicals. Located in New York City’s Union Square, the Vineyard has premiered such acclaimed works as the Tony Award-winning *Avenue Q* by Robert Lopez, Jeff Marx and Jeff Whitty; Kander and Ebb’s *The Scottsboro Boys*; Paula Vogel’s *How I Learned to Drive*; Edward Albee’s *Three Tall Women*; Nicky Silver’s *The Lyons*; Bowen and Bell’s *[title of show]*; Becky Mode’s *Fully Committed*; Tarell Alvin McCraney’s *Wig Out!*; Jenny Schwartz’s *God’s Ear*; Will Eno’s *Middletown*; Colman Domingo’s *Dot* and Branden Jacobs-Jenkins’ *Gloria*. The Vineyard’s recent production of Paula Vogel and Rebecca Taichman’s *Indecent* will transfer to Broadway this spring. Works premiered at the Vineyard have been honored with numerous awards including two Pulitzer Prizes and three Tony Awards, and the Vineyard is proud to be the recipient of special Obie, Drama Desk and Lucille Lortel Awards for sustained excellence and support for artists. VineyardTheatre.org.

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COMING SOON TO THE OWEN STAGE: *UNCLE VANYA*

This winter, Goodman Theatre Artistic Director Robert Falls directs Anton Chekhov’s masterpiece in a new adaptation from Pulitzer Prize winner Annie Baker. Shortly before rehearsals began, Falls spoke with Goodman

Producer Steve Scott about returning to Chekhov after his acclaimed 2010 production of *The Seagull*, which the *Chicago Tribune* hailed as “one of the deepest dives into the psyche of Chekhov one ever is likely to see.” *Uncle*

*Vanya* begins performances on February 11. Tickets, starting at just $10, are available at GoodmanTheatre.org/UncleVanya

**Steve Scott: One of the most successful shows that you’ve done in your three decades at the Goodman was a 2010 production of *The Seagull*. How did that production lead to this staging of *Uncle Vanya*?**

**Robert Falls:** Well, I consider my work on *The Seagull* to be one of the most satisfying experiencesI’ve had in my three decades at the Goodman.It was the culmination of an intensive periodof study for me of the directing techniques developedby Constantin Stanislavsky, the Russiandirector who collaborated with Chekhov on hismajor works. I spent months reading contemporaryanalyses of Stanislavsky’s work, and traveledto Russia to study at the Moscow Art Theater withdirectors who really knew the revolutionary methodsthat Stanislavsky developed—not the ratherwatered-down versions we’ve inherited fromAmerican acting teachers, but the highly experimentalapproaches he explored in his work with

Chekhov, who was himself an extremely experimental writer for his time. In the same way, *The* *Seagull* was an experimental process for me, and helped me develop new techniques of my own which I’ve applied in the work I’ve done since.

**SS: We’re now so familiar with Chekhov’s work—or think we are—that it’s difficult to think of him as an experimental writer.**

**RF:** Chekhov was really the creator of modern drama; to an enormous extent, everything that we are as modern theater artists comes from Chekhov and his very complex collaboration with Stanislavsky. He broke tradition with everything that had come before him: the melodrama, for example, or classical poetic dramas, or the highly symbolist works of [playwright] Maurice Maeterlinck and others. Imagine what the audiences of his day felt when the curtain rose on *The Seagull*: instead of highly wrought declamation in front of opulently rendered sets, Chekhov’s characters were dressed in the same clothes as the audience, performing everyday actions like smoking or drinking or eating in rooms that looked like contemporary rooms, speaking simple dialogue with no poetry or verbal embellishment. It was a revolutionary approach to the making of theater—telling a story about recognizably contemporary characters in which an enormous amount happens without anything really happening. And nowhere is that approach more evident than in *Uncle Vanya*.

**SS: So is *Uncle Vanya* very similar to *The Seagull*?**

**RF:** Not really—*The Seagull* was really a turning point for Chekhov, in which he was trying hard to release himself from the theatrical conventions of the day, and the play itself is about being young, experimenting, flaunting tradition. *Uncle Vanya* is his first fully mature play—and as such, is his most radical. It’s certainly the play of his that I’ve least understood until fairly recently. It’s about aging, regret, loss, mourning, humiliation—and for many years I had a hard time connecting to it. But I re-read it last year, and suddenly it demanded to be done.

**SS: How so?**

**RF:** I think because I’m finally at the age when I can understand it. In the play, Vanya says something like, “I’m 47 years old. If I live for 13 more years, I’ll be 60. What happens then?” I’m very different from Vanya in many ways, but I’m now 62, and in 13 years I’ll be 75. What the hell does that mean? *Uncle Vanya* is essentially about life— whether you’re 27, 47, 60 or 80. Time is going by, and you naturally start to examine your life and how you’re living it, or have lived it. You may be like Serebreyakov, the retired professor who’s constantly complaining about his various aches and pains (which I certainly identify with)—but yet you go on. You don’t give up—none of the characters in the play ever give up. Chekhov understood that; he doesn’t judge his characters, ever. They’re simply trying to live their lives as best they can, often facing enormous obstacles: sometimes loving the wrong person, or being loved by the wrong person, or making choices that may seem odd or hilarious to the outside eye—but not to them.

**SS: Do you have a particular concept for your production, or a particular interpretation?**

**RF:** I love the play, and I have an extraordinary cast—so I want to learn from all of them what the play is about. With Chekhov, I try to resist “interpretation” as such—I don’t think, “I’m going to make this a funny production, or a tragic production,” or whatever. It’s life, and my job is to let the characters live their lives in all of their human contradictions. At this point in my life and my career, it’s about me having enough experience and maturity to go into a room and make something beautiful.

ESSENTIAL GOODMAN STORIES:

THE CINDY BANDLE YOUNG CRITICS PROGRAM CELEBRATES 10 YEARS

By Elizabeth Rice

For hundreds of young women over the past decade, the Cindy Bandle Young Critics (CBYC) program, named in honor of former Goodman Press Director Cindy Bandle, has offered 10th and 11th graders the opportunity to explore, strengthen and share their thoughts and critiques on art and the world around them. From November to May each year, young female critics meet at the Goodman to attend and critique the plays on stage, and also discuss how the themes touch both their own lives and the world at large. Youth participants are paired with mentors from the Association for Women Journalists to improve their craft. The program helps prepare these young women for future careers—with some alum even joining the Goodman staff, including Becca Browne and Rachel Weinberg, now the Goodman’s Audience Development Associate and New Media Assistant, respectively. They recently spoke with Goodman Education and Engagement’s Elizabeth Rice about the continuing value of their experiences.

**Elizabeth Rice: What would you count among your most memorable experiences from your time in CBYC?**

**Rachel Weinberg:** I met [actor] Carla Gugino during the run of *Desire Under the Elms*. [Golden Globe Award-winning actor/playwright/director and Goodman Artistic Collective member] Regina Taylor also spoke to us which was really exciting because she is one of the playwrights with whom the Goodman works most closely. It was inspiring to hear from a female writer who has really made a name for herself and a living in the theater.

**Becca Browne:** Regina Taylor spoke to my group, too. Seeing a black, female playwright like herself was important to me. As a young person, having someone who looked like me, who was involved with theater, come in and speak was special. I really believe in the notion that representation matters, and CBYC certainly delivered in that respect. One opportunity that really stood out was going to WBEZ’s studio to record our reviews. It was a surreal experience; there’s a difference between writing your words and hearing yourself read them. I was only 16 years old, so to not only be able to come to the Goodman, but then to go to Navy Pier to record at WBEZ as well, really makes you feel that your voice is important and valued. That only pushes you to grow further with how you critique and process art.

**ER: How else did being in CBYC impact you?**

**RW:** One of the first pieces of advice our mentors gave us was that we were allowed to feel ambivalent about a show. I found that really interesting at the time, because I felt pressured to either say, “This was great” or “This was terrible.” Through CBYC, I learned that sometimes ambivalence about a piece of art is the most difficult thing to communicate, but the mark of a good critic is to be able to express, in a very articulate way, why something is “middle of the road.” I also remember thinking, “Oh well, there’s only one [*Chicago Tribune* theater critic] Chris

Jones, so I don’t know if I’ll ever become him— but maybe I can get a job and write reviews on the side.” And that is actually what I am doing now; I write reviews for two websites, the Chicago division of *Broadway World* and *PerformInk*, while working at the Goodman.

**BB:** Before the program, I don’t think I took myself seriously as a writer because I hadn’t been given any kind of permission to do so. I started considering myself someone who could write and have an opinion with value; I started to put more weight to my words. I also didn’t really know what I wanted to do career-wise, and the program introduced me to communications as a field and opened up options to how I could work in theater in different ways than I had previously imagined. It eventually led me to working in public relations while still speaking to my love of theater, and specifically to theater in Chicago.

**ER: Why did you want to return to the Goodman in a professional capacity?**

**RW:** I wanted to join the Goodman marketingteam because I was excited about the opportunityto work full-time for one of the most respected theatersin the country and because my experienceas a Cindy Bandle Young Critic had instilled in mea passion both for theater marketing and for theGoodman as an institution. CBYC really reinforcedmy interest in theater and in writing. Those are stillmy two favorite things, so it’s amazing to be ableto put those together in my professional life.

**BB:** The second my time at CBYC ended, I wanted to go back to the Goodman. I wanted to work here because I grew so much as a member of CBYC and because of the support I received from the Goodman. I knew that I could find a home here and that working at the Goodman would allow me to be a part of something bigger than myself.

“Programs such as the Cindy Bandle Young Critics have the power to open worlds and change life directions for young women. These young participants learn leadership skills from strong female professionals alongside their peers. I’m delighted to see CBYC at home in the new Alice Center and to know that two of the program’s participants have found career paths at the Goodman. I wish Rachel, Becca and all the young women in CBYC the best in their journey.”

–Elaine Leavenworth, Senior Vice President,

Chief Marketing & External Affairs Officer, Abbott

Trustee Elaine Leavenworth is the Principle Funder of Cindy Bandle Young Critics. Goodman Theatre is grateful for her generous support, which has enabled this program to reach hundreds of young women over 10 years.

BREIF HISTORY OF THE GOODMAN

FOUNDED IN 1925, Goodman Theatre is led by Robert Falls—“Chicago’s most essential director” (*Chicago Tribune*)—and Executive Director Roche Schulfer, who is celebrated for his vision and leadership over nearly four decades. Goodman Theatre artists and productions have earned hundreds of awards for artistic excellence, including two Pulitzer Prizes, 22 Tony Awards, nearly 160 Jeff Awards and more. Over the past three decades, audiences have experienced more than 150 world or American premieres, 30 major musical productions, as well as nationally and internationally celebrated productions of classic works (including Mr. Falls’ productions of *Death of a Salesman*, *Long Day’s Journey* *into Night*, *King Lear* and *The Iceman Cometh*, many in collaboration with actor Brian Dennehy). In addition, the Goodman was the first theater in the world to produce all 10 plays in August Wilson’s “American Century Cycle.” For nearly four decades, the annual holiday tradition of *A Christmas Carol* has created a new generation of theatergoers.

The 2016 opening of the Alice Rapoport Center for Education and Engagement (“the Alice”) launched the next phase in the Goodman’s decades-long commitment as an arts and community organization dedicated to educating Chicago youth and promoting lifelong learning. Programs are offered year-round and free of charge. Eighty-five percent of the Goodman’s youth program participants come from underserved communities.

Goodman Theatre was founded by William O. Goodman and his family in honor of their son Kenneth, an important figure in Chicago’s early 1900s cultural renaissance. The Goodman legacy lives on through the continued work of Kenneth’s family, including Albert Ivar Goodman, who with his late mother, Edith-Marie Appleton, contributed the necessary funds for the creation of the new Goodman center in 2000.

Today, Goodman Theatre leadership includes the distinguished members of the Artistic Collective: Brian Dennehy, Rebecca Gilman, Henry Godinez, Dael Orlandersmith, Steve Scott, Chuck Smith, Regina Taylor, Henry Wishcamper and Mary Zimmerman. Joan Clifford is Chair of Goodman Theatre’s Board of Trustees, Cynthia K. Scholl is Women’s Board President and Justin A. Kulovsek is President of the Scenemakers Board for young professionals.

YOUR VISIT

SUBSCRIPTIONS, TICKETS AND GIFT CERTIFICATES

Subscriptions and tickets for Goodman productions are available at the Goodman box office, online or by calling **312.443.3800.** Gift certificates are also available in any amount and can be exchanged for tickets to any Goodman production. Learn more at **GoodmanTheatre.org.**

PARKING

Receive a discounted $16.50\* pre-paid parking rate for

Government Center Self Park (located at Clark/Lake Streets) on your next visit to the Goodman. Visit **GoodmanTheatre.org/Parking** to learn more. If you didnot purchase a pre-paid parking pass for Government Center Self Park, you can still receive a discounted rate of $22\* with a garage coupon available at Guest Services. Pre-paid parking is also available at Theatre District garage for $28 or $34 with lobby validation.

*\*Parking rates subject to change.*

USHERING

Love theater and want to volunteer as a Goodman usher? Call **312.443.3808** to learn more.

ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

The Goodman offers listening assistance devices, available at Guest Services at no charge, in addition to accessible seating options and other services. For more information visit **GoodmanTheatre.org/Access.**

DISCOUNTS

On the day of performances, remaining mezzanine level seats are available at half-price with code MEZZTIX. Students can also purchase $10 mezzanine tickets with code 10TIX. Visit **GoodmanTheatre.org** to learn more.

HOTELS

Chicago Kimpton Hotels offer patrons special discounted rates at Hotel Allegro, Hotel Burnham and Hotel Monaco. Rates are based on availability. Rooms must be booked through the Chicago VIP reservations desk based at Hotel Allegro at **312.325.7211.** Mention code **GMT.** Learn more at **GoodmanTheatre.org/Visit.**

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145 North Dearborn Street | 312.384.1242

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230 North Clark Street | 773.219.0900

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**Paramount Events** 773.880.8044

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312.724.7777

EMERGENCIES

In case of an emergency during the performance, please call Guest Services at **312.443.5555.**

170 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60601 • 312.443.3800 | GoodmanTheatre.org • Box Office Hours: Daily 12–5pm

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