

Gem of the Ocean

By August Wilson
Directed by Chuck Smith



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welcome

Whether you are a longtime fan of August Wilson, or are experiencing one of his works for the first time today, there is always something new to be discovered in his plays. Between 1986 and 2007, the Goodman produced all 10 works in his Century Cycle, a group of interconnected plays that provide a panoramic view of Black American life in the 20th century. August, a Pittsburgh-born poet-turned-playwright, was then in the process of establishing himself as a quintessential American writer. We felt honored that he entrusted the Goodman with the world premieres of two plays in the Cycle: *Seven Guitars* in 1995 and *Gem of the Ocean* in 2003. By the time we had produced the entire Cycle—becoming the first theater in the nation to do so—August had passed away, leaving behind timeless plays that are simultaneously realistic and poetic. I am thrilled now to revive *Gem of the Ocean*, a lyrical and stirring exploration of the legacies of slavery and what freedom means in both personal and political realms. Though not the first play August wrote, it is set in 1904 and represents the first decade of the 20th century.

Counted among August's many collaborators in his lifetime is director Chuck Smith, a longtime member of the Goodman's Artistic Collective and a champion of Black theater in Chicago and across the nation. In addition to his many Goodman

directing credits—which include *Two Trains Running*, *Objects in the Mirror*, *Pullman Porter Blues* and *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark*—he has worked at regional theaters across the country, including the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Milwaukee Repertory Theater and Seattle Repertory Theatre. He also participated in the development of *Gem of the Ocean* by serving as dramaturg for the original production. Chuck’s passion for August’s work—and for deepening audiences’ understanding of Black history—make him the ideal director for this production.

Although we all miss August’s presence, I am thrilled that his words still echo through our theater. I hope his poetry and humanity will stay with you long after the curtain call.

Robert Falls,
Artistic Director of Goodman Theatre

Standing Up

Q + A with Director Chuck Smith

By Neena Arndt

August Wilson had a special relationship with Chicago—including a one-of-a-kind collaboration with longtime Goodman Resident Director Chuck Smith. As he prepares to direct what he considers the most important work in the 10-play Century Cycle, Mr. Smith opens up about his time spent with the Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright.

QUESTION: Tell us about your collaboration with August while he was alive—and how you've worked to preserve his legacy.

ANSWER: I'd describe my relationship with Mr. Wilson as a 'casual working relationship.' We got to know one another personally in 1997, during the ten-day preview period for my Goodman production of Ma Rainey's Black Bottom. When we were not rehearsing, I drove him around to my favorite spots on Chicago's south side. Since he passed away in 2005, I've directed seven productions of his plays nationwide, and curated two August Wilson festivals at the Goodman.

Q: You were tapped to dramaturg an August Wilson world-premiere production! What was the experience like, and are you applying that knowledge to your 2022 production?

A: As dramaturg on the world premiere of *Gem of the Ocean* in 2003, I provided research materials for the actors as well as script notes and suggestions to August. Naturally, some of the character development issues from those original rehearsals slip into our current rehearsals. This is the third production of this play I've directed, and each time I find myself approaching *The City of Bones* sequence in a different manner.

Q: August Wilson is counted among our country's most important playwrights; why is this play, in particular, important?

A: No other playwright has created a cycle of 10 stand-alone plays, two of which are Pulitzer Prize winners. In my opinion, *Gem of the Ocean* is the most important play of all 10, because it begins the cycle.

Q: What do you hope will stay with the audience after experiencing this production?

A: I wish the audience leaves the theater asking themselves if they are doing their part in our American Democracy? If they consider themselves a good citizen? If they all, like some of the characters in the play, are Standing Up?

Neena Arndt is the Resident Dramaturg for Goodman Theatre.

The Ground on Which He Stood: August Wilson and The Century Cycle

By Jared Bellot

It was a keynote address that sent shock waves through the theater industry.

Playwright August Wilson stood before an audience at the Theatre Communications Group National Conference (June 1996) and declared: “I am what is known, at least among the followers and supporters of the ideas of Marcus Garvey, as a ‘race man.’ That is simply that I believe that race matters—that it is the largest, most identifiable and most important part of our personality.” Wilson, who had already come to be known as one of the most influential playwrights of the 20th century, made it clear that he was unable and unwilling to separate his Blackness from his artistry—and offered a sharp indictment of an industry that too often underfunded Black theater and overlooked Black stories.

Wilson demanded the opportunity for Black artists to practice self-determination, and in the process, rooted his body of work in the complicated and oft-unspoken history

of Black experience in America. Using the ground as a central metaphor, he stated, "I stand myself and my art squarely on the self-defining ground of the slave quarters and find the ground to be hallowed and made fertile by the blood and bones of the men and women who can be described as warriors on the cultural battlefield that affirmed their self-worth."

August Wilson (born Frederick August Kittel Jr.) was born on April 27, 1945 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the fourth child of Daisy Wilson, a Black housekeeper, and Frederick August Kittel Sr., a German immigrant who left the family when Wilson was a child. Wilson grew up in Pittsburgh's Hill District, a historically Black neighborhood and cultural hub for African American businesses and artists that would later become the setting for many of his plays.

Wilson's mother remarried in 1958, and the family relocated to the predominantly white neighborhood of Hazelwood. As a mixed race child in a predominantly white space, Wilson often grappled with his own racial identity and struggled to fit in with his peers, as he was one of just 14 Black students. In Hazelwood, Wilson and

his family were frequent targets of racial threats and harassment, including an incident that led Wilson to quit school at age 15 after being accused by his teacher of having plagiarized a paper.

After leaving school, Wilson committed to self-education, spending time at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, and returning to the Hill District to learn from the community there. Wilson became involved with the Black Arts Movement in the 1960s; in 1968, he became the cofounder and director of Pittsburgh's Black Horizons Theatre.

He was deeply inspired by what he referred to as “my four Bs”: poet Jorge Luis Borges, playwright Amiri Baraka, painter Romare Bearden, and, most significantly, the blues. For Wilson, the blues represented not only “the best literature we have,” but a sense of connection and rootedness to the ancestors that came before and a language of the Black community that was entirely unique.

The defining project of Wilson's playwriting career—‘The Century Cycle’ (also sometimes referred to as ‘The

Pittsburgh Cycle’) is a series of ten interconnected plays documenting the history, culture and lived experiences of African Americans over the 20th century. Staged over the course of three decades, and completed just before the author’s death in 2005, The Century Cycle offers an articulation of Black traditions as told through the evolution of a single neighborhood over generations. All of the plays (save for Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom, which is set in Chicago) take place in the Hill District, the same neighborhood that Wilson grew up in, with each play set in a different decade of the 20th century.

Wilson says of his work,: “I wanted to place this culture on stage in all its richness and fullness and to demonstrate its ability to sustain us all in areas of human life and endeavor and through profound movements of our history in which the larger society has thought less of us than we have thought of ourselves” (The New York Times, 2000). While the plays are not connected in the sense that they don’t tell a single, serialized story, they do share a common set of roots and speak to one another on an emotional and spiritual level.

Characters reappear at different stages in their lives, past and future ancestors are featured in various plays, and locations are echoed and revisited.

In *The Century Cycle*, Wilson chooses to focus on characters and stories that represent everyday, working class Black people. Grounding the plays in what he describes as “what I felt were the most important issues confronting black Americans for that decade,” Wilson manages to illuminate larger historical patterns and trends—the trauma of slavery, racial harassment, red lining, gentrification, stagnant wages, the pursuit of the American dream—through small interactions of daily life. Drawing on a rich African American literary tradition, the plays in *The Century Cycle* also feature spiritual and supernatural elements juxtaposed against the naturalism of their urban backdrops. Wilson believed deeply that Black theater, like the Black experience, is unique and distinct, and therefore insisted that his plays only be produced by theaters that would hire Black directors and designers. While this meant that a number of predominantly white theaters had not developed relationships with Black artists were unable to stage Wilson’s work, he stood by his belief that “[Black people] cannot allow others to have authority over our cultural

and spiritual products.” In doing so, Wilson helped to provide work for Black theater makers largely ignored in the American theater and ensure that his stories were told by those who shared the experience of being Black in America.

While many theaters have produced plays from The Century Cycle, Goodman Theatre was the first theater in the world to produce the entire cycle of plays in productions that spanned from 1986 to 2007. Chuck Smith’s 2022 production of *Gem of The Ocean* marks only the second time the Goodman has revisited Wilson’s work after *Two Trains Running* (also directed by Chuck Smith in 2015).

Widely celebrated during his lifetime, Wilson received numerous honors and awards during his career—including, notably, a Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize for *Fences*, a second Pulitzer for *The Piano Lesson*, as well as seven New York Drama Critics’ Circle Awards for best play. Two weeks after his death in 2005, Broadway’s Virginia Theatre was renamed the August Wilson Theatre, the first Broadway theater to bear the name of an African American.

Wilson's legacy is undeniable. Between the years of 1959, when Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun* premiered on Broadway, and 1984, when Wilson debuted with Ma Rainey's *Black Bottom* at the Cort Theatre, not a single play penned by a Black playwright managed to find success on Broadway. However, Wilson's critical and commercial success helped to usher in a new era for many Black artists who had previously been unable to gain traction. His work created opportunities for artists such as Kenny Leon, Samuel L. Jackson, Courtney B. Vance, Angela Bassett, Ruben Santiago-Hudson, Laurence Fishburne, Suzan-Lori Parks, Lynn Nottage and Charles Smith, all of whom who have gone on to create legacies in their own regard.

But has the American Theater met the challenge issued by Wilson in his "The Ground on Which I Stand" keynote speech? Has the American Theater, in the past 25 years, created the space for Black artists to practice self-definition? Not quite. While every new play on Broadway this past fall was written by a Black playwright, the industry at large is still grappling with complicated questions around systemic racism, representation and equity among artists. Many Black theater artists and

companies still struggle to remain financially sustainable. While there are more Black theater artists than ever before carving out for themselves lives in the theater, still Black artists must fight against an industry rooted in the tenets of white supremacy to, in the words of Wilson himself, “Let us be the catalysts of our future and our images. Let us be the custodians of our culture, of when it’s dispersed, how it’s dispersed, when it’s disseminated, and to whom.”

We must keep fighting forward to build a more solid foundation for the ground on which we stand.

PLAYS IN THE CENTURY CYCLE

“Gem of the Ocean”* (set in 1904)

Written in 2003

Premiered at Goodman Theatre in 2003

Produced on Broadway (Walter Kerr Theatre) in 2004

“Joe Turner’s Come and Gone” (set in 1911)

Written in 1984

Premiered at Yale Repertory Theater in 1986

Produced on Broadway (Ethel Barrymore Theatre) in 1988

Produced at Goodman Theatre in 1991

“Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom” (set in 1927)
Written in 1982
Premiered at Yale Repertory Theater in 1984
Produced on Broadway (Cort Theatre) in 1984
Produced at Goodman Theatre in 1997

“The Piano Lesson” (set in 1936)
Written in 1986
Premiered at Yale Repertory Theater in 1987
Produced at Goodman Theatre in 1989
Produced on Broadway (Walter Kerr Theatre) in 1990

“Seven Guitars”* (set in 1948)
Written in 1995
Premiered at Goodman Theatre in 1995
Produced on Broadway (Walter Kerr Theatre) in 1996

“Fences” (set in 1957)
Written in 1983
Produced at Goodman Theatre in 1986
Produced on Broadway (46th Street Theatre) in 1987

“Two Trains Running” (set in 1969)
Written in 1990
Premiered at Yale Repertory Theater in 1990
Produced on Broadway (Walter Kerr Theatre) in 1992
Produced at Goodman Theatre in 1993

“Jitney” (set in 1977)

Written in 1979

Premiered at Allegheny Repertory Theatre in 1982

Produced at Goodman Theatre in 1999

Produced off-Broadway (Second Stage Theatre) in 2000

“King Hedley II” (set in 1985)

Written in 1999

Premiered at Pittsburgh Public Theater in 1999

Produced at Goodman Theatre in 2000

Produced on Broadway (Virginia Theatre) in 2001

“Radio Golf” (set in 1997)

Written in 2005

Premiered at Yale Repertory Theater in 2005

Produced at Goodman Theatre in 2007

Produced on Broadway (Cort Theatre) in 2007

***Denotes a Goodman Theatre world-premiere production
Jared Bellot is the dramaturg for Gem of the Ocean.**

Goodman Theatre

Robert Falls, **Artistic Director** Roche Schulfer, **Executive Director**

Presents

Gem of the Ocean

By

August Wilson

Directed by

Chuck Smith

Set Design by

Linda Buchanan

Costume Design by

Evelyn Danner

Lighting Design by

Robert Perry

Original Music and Sound Design by

Pornchanok Kanchanabanca

Projection Design by
Mike Tutaj

Casting by
Lauren Port, CSA
Rachael Jimenez, CSA

Dramaturgy by
Jared Bellot
Fatima Sowe

Production Stage Manager
Briana J. Fahey*

Stage Manager
Nikki Blue*

August Wilson's *Gem of the Ocean* was originally produced by Goodman Theatre, directed by Marion McClinton. Originally Produced on Broadway by Carole Shorenstein Hays Jujamcyn Theaters. Originally presented at National Playwright's Conference of The Eugene O'Neill Theater Center.

ABBOTT FUND

ALLSTATE INSURANCE CO.

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August Wilson's GEM OF THE OCEAN

cast

Eli.....	A.C. Smith*
Citizen Barlow.....	Sharif Atkins*
Aunt Ester.....	Lisa Gaye Dixon*
Black Mary.....	Sydney Charles*
Rutherford Selig.....	Gary Houston*
Solly Two Kings.....	James A. Williams*
Caesar.....	Kelvin Roston, Jr.*

UNDERSTUDIES never substitute for a listed player unless an announcement is made at the beginning of the play.

Wardell Julius Clark*—*Citizen Barlow*

Ronald L. Conner*—*Eli/Caesar*

Krystel McNeil*—*Black Mary*

Joseph Primes*—*Solly Two Kings*

Ron E. Rains*—*Rutherford Selig*

TayLar*—*Aunt Ester*

SETTING:

Hill District. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. 1904

The home of Aunt Ester, 1839 Wylie Avenue

Associate Director.....**Mac Gay Anderson-Cooper**

Fight Coordinator & Intimacy Consultant.....**Nick Sandys**

Assistant Lighting Designer.....**Michelle E. Benda**

Assistant to the Director.....**Rebecca Goodman**

Fight Captain.....**Ronald L. Conner**

Voice and Text Coach.....**Stan Brown**

“August Wilson's Gem of the Ocean” is presented by arrangement with Concord.

The video and/or audio recording of this performance by any means whatsoever are strictly prohibited.

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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 United Scenic Artists of America, Local 829, AFL-CIO and the Chicago Federation of Musicians, Local No. 10-208, American Federation of Musicians. 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.

profiles

SHARIF ATKINS* (Citizen Barlow) makes his Goodman Theatre debut. Chicago credits include Love Talk (Chicago Theatre Co.); Words on Fire (Steppenwolf Theatre); Let The Circle Be Unbroken (Apple Tree Theatre); and The Abesha Conspiracy (Victory Gardens). Off-Broadway, he has appeared in Dutchman (50th Anniversary Presentation, The Classical Theatre of Harlem). Film credits include Aftermath; The Open House; Guardians of the Galaxy; The Auctioneer; Brothers Blood; Oceanus; Preacher's Kid and Paved with Good Intentions. Television credits include The Rookie; NCIS: Hawai'i; Queen of the South; 9-1-1: Lone Star; The Good Doctor; Magnum P.I.; God Friended Me; Shameless; The Gifted; Seal Team; Amy's Brother (Pilot); Lucifer; White Collar; The Good Wife; Criminal Minds; and ER.

SYDNEY CHARLES* (Black Mary) returns to the Goodman where she previously appeared in I Hate It Here, Lottery Day and Father Comes Home From the Wars Parts 1, 2 & 3. Selected Chicago credits include Her Honor Jane Byrne (Lookingglass Theatre); Duchess! Duchess! Duchess! and Wally World (Steppenwolf Theatre); Theatre for One: Here We Are and Guess Who's Coming to Dinner (Court Theatre); The Color Purple (Drury Lane); Nina Simone: Four Women (Northlight

Theatre); Flyin' West (American Blues Theater); The Wiz (Kokandy Productions); and Dessa Rose (Bailiwick Chicago). Regional credits include I Hate it Here (Studio Theatre). Television credits include South Side, The Chi, Shameless, The T and The Haven . Her other work includes assistant director and dramaturg for Bug (Steppenwolf Theatre), associate director for His Shadow (16th Street Theater); and associate director for The Shipment (Red Tape Theatre). She is the recipient of 3Arts "Make a Wave" award, a Black Theater Alliance Award, Chicago Reader's "Best Stage Performer" runner-up, a four-time Jeff Award nominee and has been featured twice as part of NewCity 's "50 Players of the Year." She is a proud and active member of AEA and SAG-AFTRA and is represented by Stewart Talent. sydneycharlesexp.com

LISA GAYE DIXON* (Aunt Ester) returns to the Goodman, where she appeared in A Christmas Carol (2014, 2015 and 2017). Chicago and regional credits include for colored girls who have considered suicide / when the rainbow is enuf (Steppenwolf); Richard III, A Winter's Tale, Measure For Measure, As You Like It, (Illinois Shakespeare Festival), The Tempest (Milwaukee Shakespeare), An Evening With Dorothy Parker (Attic Theatre), Getting Out, Riff's: A Theatre and Blues Cabaret (Performance Network), Having Our Say (Lost Nation Theatre), Black Pearl Sings! (Kitchen Theatre, GEVA Center), Slaughter City (Royal Shakespeare Company), The Masque Of

Heaven, Damon and Pythias (New Globe Theatre). Film credits include The Trouble with Men and Women, Leading Ladies, USING, Ruby Love. Dixon is Professor of Acting and Producer for University of Illinois Theatre.

GARY HOUSTON* (Rutherford Selig) appeared at the Goodman in The Front Page and Chuck Smith's productions of Ma Rainey's Black Bottom and A Raisin in the Sun. For the Goodman's Stage 2 series at the Ruth Page Center For the Arts, he directed Peter Handke's Kaspar (Joseph Jefferson Award for Overall Technical Design) and Heathcote Williams' The Local Stigmatic. He was last on stage as Captain Falcon in Pegasus Theatre's Rutherford's Travels, an adaptation of the National Book Award-winning novel Middle Passage by Charles Johnson, a close friend of August Wilson. Formerly a Chicago Sun-Times staffer, Houston is Managing Editor of Chicago Quarterly Review, whose recent special issue, An Anthology of Black American Literature, was guest-edited by Mr. Johnson.

KELVIN ROSTON, JR.* (Caesar) is an actor/singer/musician/writer whose Chicago credits include Crowns at the Goodman and Othello in The Tragedy of Othello, The Moor of Venice (Court Theatre). Roston authored and performed in Twisted Melodies, a look at mental illness through the eyes of Donny Hathaway, legendary soul singer and musician; national tour included New York's Apollo Theater. He has

performed at Chicagoland theaters including Congo Square, Court Theatre, Paramount, Marriott-Lincolnshire, Eta, Writers Theatre, Black Ensemble, Timeline, Northlight Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre, Pegasus Theatre, Chicago Children's Theatre. Regional theater appearances include St. Louis Black Rep; Fulton (Lancaster, PA); New Theatre (Overland Park, KS); Maine State Music Theatre; Baltimore Center Stage; Mosaic (Washington, D.C.), Apollo (New York). International credits include Orb (Tokyo, Japan) and Festival Hall (Osaka, Japan). Television credits include South Side, Chicago Med, Chicago PD, KFC, Instant Care, Ace Hardware. Film: Get a Job, Princess Cyd, Breathing Room. Awards: Jeff Award, 4 BTA Awards, 3 Black Excellence Awards, NAMI Award, Court Theater's 2019/20 Nicholas Rudall Classic Artist Award. Roston is a proud member of AEA, SAG-AFTRA, a Congo Square Ensemble Member, and represented by Paonessa Talent.

A.C. SMITH* (Eli) returns to Goodman Theatre, where he most recently appeared in *Two Trains Running*. Additional Goodman credits include *A Christmas Carol*, *Measure for Measure*, *Black Star Line* and *The Visit*, as well as many staged readings and workshops. Chicago credits include productions at Victory Gardens Theater, TimeLine Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, the Chicago Center for Performing Arts, the Illinois Theatre Centre and The Second City. He has appeared in many productions at Court Theatre,

including *Jitney*, *The Invisible Man*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, *The Piano Lesson*, *The First Breeze of Summer* and *Fences* (Jeff Award for Best Actor). Mr. Smith has also appeared off-Broadway in *Jelly Belly* (Audelco Award nomination) and in the Broadway national tour of *The Piano Lesson*, directed by Lloyd Richards. His regional theater credits include Ensemble Theatre Cincinnati; Portland Stage Company; Geva Theatre Center; Milwaukee Repertory Theater; Actors Theatre of Louisville and the Black Rep in St. Louis, where he is a company member and nine-time Woodie King, Jr. Award winner. He has also appeared on film, television, radio, commercials and voice-overs, and in *Ebony* and *Jet* magazines.

JAMES A. WILLIAMS* (*Solly Two Kings*) most recently appeared at the Goodman in *Dartmoor Prison* during the 2011/2012 Season. Other Goodman credits include *August Wilson's Radio Golf*. He appeared in *Radio Golf* on Broadway, and his off-Broadway credits include *August Wilson's Jitney*, *Marion McClinton's Walkers*, *The Piano Lesson* and *My Children! My Africa!* His regional credits include multiple roles in *August Wilson's Twentieth-Century Cycle* at The Kennedy Center, and appearances at Centerstage, the Guthrie Theater, the Mark Taper Forum, McCarter Theatre Center, Penumbra Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre and Yale Repertory Theatre. He is an Acting Coach and Instructor for 3rd year students in The University of MN/ Guthrie Theater BFA Program. James

was nominated for an NAACP Image Award and named Artist of the Year by The Minneapolis StarTribune in 2008. He is also a McKnight Theater Fellow, a Fox Foundation Distinguished Acting Fellow and a Ten Chimneys Acting Fellow.

WARDELL JULIUS CLARK* (U/S Citizen Barlow) a Chicago-based award-winning actor, director, producer, activist who hails from Fairfield, Alabama, makes his Goodman Theatre debut. Select acting credits include *The Whisper's Apprentice* and *Once in a Bleu Moon* (Sideshow Theatre), *Flyin' West* (American Blues), *Suddenly Last Summer* (Raven), *Silent Sky* (First Folio), *Othello* (Theater at Monmouth) and *The Gospel According to James* (Victory Gardens). He earned his BFA from The Theatre School at DePaul University. Clark is a Company Member with TimeLine Theatre and an Ensemble Member at Sideshow Theatre. He recently returned from Williamstown Theatre Festival, where he directed the world premieres of *Black Moon Lilith*, *A Ghost in Satin* and was one of three directors of *Celebrating the Black Radical Imagination: Nine Solo Plays*. Select Chicago directing credits include *Michael Jackson and The Devil's Book*, *Whitney Houston and The Devil's Book* (Jackalope Theatre Company); *Kill Move Paradise* (Timeline Theatre - 2020 Jeff Award Winner, Best Director (Large)); *Sheepdog* (Shattered Globe); *His Shadow* (16th Street); *The Shipment* (Red Tape); *Dutch Masters* (Jackalope). His television

and film credits include Proven Innocent, Shameless and Chicago Fire (seasons one and four). Wardelljuliusclark.com

RONALD L. CONNER* (U/S Eli/Caesar/Fight Captain) has appeared at the Goodman in Incendiary, Sweat, Father Comes Home From The Wars and A View From the Bridge. Chicago credits include Pipeline (Victory Gardens Theatre); Jitney and Day of Absence (Congo Square Theatre, where he is an Ensemble Member); Titanic..., King Hedley II, The Piano Lesson and Seven Guitars (Court Theatre); and Paradise Blue (Timeline Theatre). Regional credits include Ma Rainey's Black Bottom, The Mountaintop, Joe Turner's Come and Gone (St. Louis Black Rep); Two Trains Running (Geva Theatre); Gem of the Ocean (Ensemble Theatre of Cincinnati); Fences (New Harmony Theatre). Film and television credits include Chasing The Blues, Southside, The Chi and Sirens. Conner is represented by Paonessa Talent.

KRYSTEL MCNEIL* (U/S Black Mary) returns to the Goodman, where she previously understudied Objects in The Mirror and Carlyle. Other Chicago credits include The Cake; Women at War; Laura and The Sea (Rivendell Theatre Ensemble); In The Next Room or The Vibrator Play; Spill (Timeline Theatre Company); The Compass (Steppenwolf Theatre Company), Bootycandy (Windy City Playhouse). Tours include Defamation The Play (Canamac Productions). Film and

television credits include Chiraq (Amazon Films); Gossamer; The Chi (Showtime); Chicago P.D. (NBC); Next (Fox); Soundtrack (Netflix), Proven Innocent (FOX).

JOSEPH PRIMES* (U/S Solly Two Kings) is a Cleveland, Ohio native who now resides in Chicago. He attended Texas Tech University and Howard University before returning home to start a career and family. Primes spent many years as an activist and mentor before starting a career as an educator in the Euclid and East Cleveland school district. As a performance poet, he appeared with Vince Robinson and the jazz poets and the underground Hip Hop group, Chop Shop. Theater credits include works at Cleveland Public Theatre, Karamu, Ensemble, Great Lakes and more. An award winning actor and producer, Primes produced the film #50 Fathers and the web series Seeing Tomorrow. He has worked at Steppenwolf, Court Theatre, Definition Theatre and Indiana Repertory Theatre. Television credits include Chicago PD. He is a member of SAG-AFTRA and AEA.

RON E. RAINS* (U/S Rutherford Selig) returns to the Goodman, where he played Bob Cratchit in A Christmas Carol for eleven seasons. Other Goodman credits include The Music Man, The Matchmaker, By the Way, Meet Vera Stark, Passion Play and Revenge of the Space Pandas. Chicago credits include work with Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre

Company, TimeLine Theatre, Drury Lane Theatre, Northlight Theatre, Paramount Theatre and Writers Theatre. Television credits include Chicago Justice and Chicago Med. Rains has appeared in several independent films, including the upcoming Brooklyn '45 on Shudder (expected in 2022). Rains is also known for his role as the Head Film Critic for The Onion (Peter Rosenthal). He is a proud member of AEA and SAG-AFTRA, and is represented by Paonessa Talent. RonRains.com

TAYLAR* (U/S Aunt Ester) returns to the Goodman. Other Goodman Productions include Sweat, The Little Foxes, Ruined, The Convert, Mary, Joe Turner's Come and Gone and The Cook. Other Chicago credits include King Hedley, II and Oedipus Rex at Court Theatre, along with appearances at Writers Theater, Steppenwolf Theatre, Eclipse Theater, Eta Creative Arts and Black Ensemble Theatre. Regional credits include The Great Society and The Little Foxes (Asolo Repertory Theatre); Off-Broadway credits include Ruined (Manhattan Theatre Club) and television credits include Chicago PD, Chicago Fire, Chicago Med, Empire, The Chi and NeXt. On film, she can be seen in Southside With You, Teacher and Ms. White Light. TayLar is represented by DDO Artists Agency-Chicago.

AUGUST WILSON (Playwright, 1945-2005) authored *Gem of the Ocean*, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, *The Piano Lesson*, *Seven Guitars*, *Fences*, *Two Trains Running*, *Jitney*, *King Hedley II* and *Radio Golf*. These works explore the heritage and experience of African Americans, decade by decade, over the course of the 20th century. Goodman Theatre was the first in the country to have produced every play in Mr. Wilson's cycle. In 2003, Mr. Wilson made his professional stage debut in his one-man show *How I Learned What I Learned*. Mr. Wilson's work garnered many awards, including Pulitzer Prizes for *Fences* (1987) and *The Piano Lesson* (1990); a Tony Award for *Fences*; Great Britain's Olivier Award for *Jitney*; as well as seven New York Drama Critics Circle Awards for *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, *Fences*, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, *The Piano Lesson*, *Two Trains Running*, *Seven Guitars* and *Jitney*. Additionally, the cast recording of *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* received a 1985 Grammy Award and Mr. Wilson received a 1995 Emmy Award nomination for his screenplay adaptation of *The Piano Lesson*. Mr. Wilson's early works include the one-act plays *The Janitor*, *Recycle*, *The Coldest Day of the Year*, *Malcolm X*, *The Homecoming* and the musical satire *Black Bart and the Sacred Hills*. Mr. Wilson received many fellowships and awards, including Rockefeller and Guggenheim Fellowships in Playwriting, the Whiting Writers' Award, the 2003 Heinz

Award, a 1999 National Humanities Medal by the President of the United States and numerous honorary degrees from colleges and universities, as well as the only high school diploma ever issued by the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. He was an alumnus of New Dramatists, a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and a 1995 inductee into the American Academy of Arts and Letters. October 16, 2005, Broadway renamed the theater located at 245 West 52nd Street the August Wilson Theatre. Mr. Wilson was born and raised in the Hill District of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and lived in Seattle, Washington, at the time of his death. He is survived by his two daughters, Sakina Ansari and Azula Carmen Wilson, and his wife, costume designer Constanza Romero.

CHUCK SMITH (Director) is a member of Goodman Theatre's Board of Trustees and is Goodman Theatre's Resident Director. He is also a resident director at the Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe in Sarasota, Florida. Goodman credits include the Chicago premieres of *Objects in the Mirror*; *Pullman Porter Blues*; *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark*; *Race*; *The Good Negro*; *Proof and The Story*; the world premieres of *By the Music of the Spheres* and *The Gift Horse*; James Baldwin's *The Amen Corner*, which transferred to Boston's Huntington Theatre Company, where it won the

Independent Reviewers of New England (IRNE) Award for Best Direction; *A Raisin in the Sun*; *Blues for an Alabama Sky*; August Wilson's and Ma Rainey's *Black Bottom*; *Ain't Misbehavin'*; the 1993 to 1995 productions of *A Christmas Carol*; *Crumbs From the Table of Joy*; *Vivisections from a Blown Mind* and *The Meeting*. He served as dramaturg for the Goodman's world-premiere production of August Wilson's *Gem of the Ocean*. He directed the New York premiere of *Knock Me a Kiss* and *The Hooch* for the New Federal Theatre and the world premiere of *Knock Me a Kiss* at Chicago's Victory Gardens Theater, where his other directing credits include *Master Harold... and the Boys*, *Home*, *Dame Lorraine* and *Eden*, for which he received a Jeff Award nomination. Regionally, Mr. Smith directed *Death and the King's Horseman* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), *Birdie Blue* (Seattle Repertory Theatre), *The Story* (Milwaukee Repertory Theater), *Blues for an Alabama Sky* (Alabama Shakespeare Festival) and *The Last Season* (Robey Theatre Company). At Columbia College he was facilitator of the Theodore Ward Prize playwriting contest for 20 years and editor of the contest anthologies *Seven Black Plays* and *Best Black Plays*. He won a Chicago Emmy Award as associate producer/theatrical director for the NBC teleplay *Crime of Innocence* and was theatrical director for the Emmy-winning *Fast Break to Glory* and the Emmy-nominated *The Martin Luther King Suite*. He was a founding member of the

Chicago Theatre Company, where he served as artistic director for four seasons and directed the Jeff-nominated *Suspenders* and the Jeff-winning musical *Po'*. His directing credits include productions at Fisk University, Roosevelt University, Eclipse Theatre, ETA, Black Ensemble Theater, Northlight Theatre, MPAACT, Congo Square Theatre Company, The New Regal Theater, Kuumba Theatre Company, Fleetwood-Jourdain Theatre, Pegasus Players, the Timber Lake Playhouse in Mt. Carroll, Illinois and the University of Wisconsin in Madison. He is a 2003 inductee into the Chicago State University Gwendolyn Brooks Center's Literary Hall of Fame and a 2001 Chicago Tribune Chicagoan of the Year. He is the proud recipient of the 1982 Paul Robeson Award and the 1997 Award of Merit presented by the Black Theater Alliance of Chicago.

LINDA BUCHANAN (Set Designer) returns to the Goodman, where she has designed many productions, including *American Mariachi*, *Having Our Say*, *Two Trains Running*, *Race*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*, *House and Garden*, *Black Snow*, the musical adaptation of *Wings* and the world premiere production of *Marvin's Room*, plus subsequent regional and commercial productions in New York and London. Recent Chicago credits include *Stick Fly* (Writers Theatre) and *Blues for an Alabama Sky* (Court Theatre). Regional work includes *Murder on The Orient Express*, *Inherit the Wind* (Resident Ensemble Players); *Pride and Prejudice* (Idaho

Shakespeare Festival, Great Lakes Theatre) and You Can't Take It with You (Indiana Repertory Theatre). Buchanan has received the Michael Merritt Award for Design and Collaboration, multiple Jeff Awards and a Helen Hayes Award. She has designed more than 100 environments for corporate theater and special events. Buchanan is Professor Emeritus from DePaul University, where she headed the Scenic Design program.

buchananscenedesign.com

EVELYN DANNER (Costume Designer) makes her Goodman debut. Other Chicago credits include work with Black Ensemble Theatre, MPAACT Theatre, Red Clay Dance Company and Chicago Public Schools.

ROBERT PERRY (Lighting Designer) previously collaborated with Goodman Theatre on Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike during the 2014/2015 Season and Drowning Crow during the 2001/2002 Season. Other Chicago credits include Love's Labor's Lost (Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Jeff Award nomination). Off-Broadway credits include Lost Lake directed by Dan Sullivan (Manhattan Theatre Club); Crowns (Second Stage, Vivian Robinson Audelco Award); Boston Marriage (The Public Theater); Reefer Madness (Variety Arts Theatre); Iphigeneia at Aulis (Pearl Theatre Company); An Adult Evening with Shel Silverstein, The Water Engine (Drama Desk Award nomination), Sexual Perversity in Chicago and The Hothouse

(Atlantic Theater Company); For Colored Girls who have considered Suicide when the Rainbow is Enuf (American Place Theatre) and Kingdom of Earth (The Drama Dept.). Regional credits include Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike (Arena Stage); Coriolanus (The Shakespeare Theatre); A Doll's House (Hartford Stage); The Night of the Iguana (Dallas Theater Center); The Skin of Our Teeth (California Shakespeare Festival, Dean Goodman Choice Award) and The Glass Menagerie and Crumbs from the Table of Joy (Yale Repertory Theatre). Mr. Perry holds an MFA from the Yale School of Drama and BFA from North Carolina School of the Arts.

PORNCHANOK (NOK) KANCHANABANCA (Original Music and Sound Designer) Chicago credits include Curious Incident of The Dog in the Night Time and The Great Leap at Steppenwolf Theatre. Regional credits include Sweat (Huntington Theatre); As You Like It (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); Be Here Now, The Thanksgiving Play (Cincinnati Playhouse); Sky Light (McCarter Theatre Center), The Wolves (Actors Theatre); Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley, The Nerd, The Niceties (Milwaukee Repertory Theater); Murder on The Orient Express, Everything is Wonderful (Everyman Theatre); Into the Breeches! (ASF). International: Damage Joy (BIPAM: Thailand). wishnok-music.com

MIKE TUTAJ (Projection Designer) returns to the Goodman, where credits include *Objects in the Mirror*; *Another Word for Beauty*; *Ask Aunt Susan*; *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark*; *New Stages Festival* and *The Good Negro*. Chicago credits include *The Detective's Wife* (Writers Theatre); *Sweeney Todd* (Drury Lane Theatre); *The Hot L Baltimore* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); *The Year of Magical Thinking* (Court Theatre); *Macbeth* and *Romeo y Julieta* (Chicago Shakespeare Theater); *A Walk in the Woods*, *The Pitmen Painters*, *In Darfur*, *Frost/Nixon*, *The Farnsworth Invention*, *Martin Furey's Shot* (Jeff Award) and *The History Boys* (TimeLine Theatre Company, where he is an artistic associate); *Tomorrow Morning* (Jeff Award) with Hillary A. Williams, LLC; *Love Person and I Sailed with Magellan* (Victory Gardens Theater); *Distracted*, *Kid-Simple: a radio play in the flesh*, *I Do! I Do!* and *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (American Theater Company); *Scorched*, *Pangs of the Messiah* and *Our Enemies* (Silk Road Theatre Project) and *Jon* (Collaboraction). He is a company member of Barrel of Monkeys Productions.

FATIMA SOWE (Dramaturg) returns to the Goodman after serving as production dramaturg for *School Girls*; *Or, The African Mean Girls Play*. Past dramaturgy work includes *Caroline, or Change* (Firebrand Theatre in partnership with TimeLine Theatre); *Paradise Blue* (TimeLine Theatre) and *Scottsboro Boys* (Porchlight Music Theatre). Additional credits

include Choreographer & Movement Director for Once (Hangar Theatre); Movement Choreographer for Cardboard Piano (TimeLine Theatre); Assistant Director for Rutherford and Son (TimeLine Theatre); Assistant Director for True West and The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time (Steppenwolf Theatre).

JARED BELLOT (Dramaturg) is a Chicago based educator, dramaturg and facilitator. Select credits include: This is Modern Art (Steppenwolf Theatre), Kill Move Paradise; Cardboard Piano Sunset Baby; The Last Wife; Paradise Blue; The Audience (TimeLine Theatre); America v. 2.1: The Sad Demise & Eventual Extinction of The American Negro, No Child... ; An Octoroon (Definition Theatre), Insurrection: Holding History (Stage Left Theatre), The Scottsboro Boys (Porchlight Theatre), Michael Jackson and the Devil's Book; Whitney Houston and the Devil's Book ((Jackalope Theatre). Jared is the Associate Artistic Director at Definition Theatre, an Associate Artist at TimeLine Theatre and a Company Member with Jackalope Theatre.

BRIANA J. FAHEY* (Production Stage Manager) is in her ninth season with Goodman Theatre, having most recently stage managed American Mariachi, the Live series (The Sound Inside, Ohio State Murders and I Hate It Here), Fannie Lou Hamer; Speak On It!, Roe, Bernhardt/Hamlet and The Winter's Tale.

Her regional credits include stage managing at Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, California Shakespeare Theater, Magic Theatre, Center REP Theatre, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre and the Utah Shakespeare Festival.

NIKKI BLUE* (Stage Manager) returns to Goodman Theatre, where previous credits include American Mariachi, Roe, Bernhardt/Hamlet, Lottery Day, The Santaland Diaries, Having Our Say, The Wolves, The Matchmaker and New Stages Festival productions of graveyard shift, Lottery Day, Support Group for Men and Objects in the Mirror. Other regional credits include Six (Chicago Shakespeare Theater), Godspell (Arkansas Repertory Theatre/2 Ring Circus), Gerald Clayton Piedmont Blues (tour) and The Year I Didn't Go to School (Chicago Children's Theatre). She has also worked with TheatreSquared, Yale Opera, Utah Festival Opera & Musical Theatre and Florida Studio Theatre. Blue was a stage management apprentice at Steppenwolf Theatre Company, a floor manager at the Goodman for two seasons and is a graduate of the University of Central Florida.

LAUREN PORT (Casting) joined the Goodman in August of 2019 after having spent eleven years casting in NYC, a decade of that at Caparelliotis Casting where she worked on a number of Goodman productions over the years, including Father Comes Home From The Wars, Parts 1, 2 and 3, Uncle Vanya, The Sign

in Sidney Brustein's *Window, Disgraced* and *Sweet Bird of Youth*. Lauren has also worked on countless Broadway/Off Broadway and other regional theatre productions. Some Broadway highlights include: *Junk*, *Meteor Shower*, *A Doll's House Part 2*, *The Front Page*, *It's Only a Play*, *Disgraced*, *Fish in the Dark*, *Holler If Ya Hear Me*, *The Trip to Bountiful*, *Grace*, *Death of a Salesman*, *Seminar*, *Stick Fly*, *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*, *Lend Me a Tenor*, and *Fences*. Lauren is a four-time Artios Award winner, a recipient of the 40th Annual Media Access Awards and a proud member of the Casting Society of America.

RACHAEL JIMENEZ (Casting) originally from the Los Angeles area, is in her seventh season in the Goodman Theatre casting department. In addition to her work at Goodman, she has cast productions at Theater Wit, Windy City Playhouse, and Remy Bumppo Theatre Company. She is a proud member of CSA (Casting Society of America) and ALTA (The Alliance for Latinx Theater Artists of Chicago) and part of the Casting Director Trainor team in Broadway For Racial Justice's Casting Directive program. Jimenez received her BA in Theatre Arts, Entrepreneurship and Comparative Religious Studies from California State University, Fullerton.

MAC GAY ANDERSON-COOPER (they/them) (Associate Director) is a Chicago-based director and playwright. Associate and assistant directing credits include *Objects in the Mirror*, *Carlyle*, *Having Our Say* (Goodman Theatre); *Moby Dick*, *Blood Wedding* (Lookingglass Theatre); *Tempest*, *Mary Stuart* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre). Chicago directing credits include *Saint Joan* (Greenhouse Theatre); *Route* (Aegis Theatre). International directing credits include *Twentieth Century Way* (Jermyn Street Theatre); *Pomegranate Season* (Camden Fringe); *Take Flight* (Theatre 503). Mac studied playwriting at Northwestern University and is an alumnx of the Jackalope Playwrights Lab.

NICK SANDYS (Fight Coordinator & Intimacy Consultant) has staged violence for more than 25 productions at Goodman Theatre, including *The Iceman Cometh*, *Pullman Porter Blues*, *Electricidad*, *Stage Kiss*, *Ruined*, *Gem Of The Ocean* and *Seven Guitars*. Recent credits include *Macbeth*, *Pagliacci*, *Don Giovanni*, *West Side Story* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); *Captain Blood* (First Folio); *Ragtime* (Music Theater Works); *Frankenstein* (Remy Bumppo); *Prince Igor* (Metropolitan Opera); and *Who's Afraid Of Virginia Woolf* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company and on Broadway). He won a Jeff Award for *Requiem For A Heavyweight* (Shattered Globe). Sandys is a Fight Director with the Society of American Fight Directors, and teaches at DePaul's Theatre School.

MICHELLE E. BENDA (Assistant Lighting Designer) returns to the Goodman, after previously assisting lighting designers on *We're Only Alive for A Short Amount of Time*, *Carlyle and Vanya* and *Sonia and Masha and Spike*. Other Chicago assistant lighting design credits include *The Roommate*, *The Minutes* and *Domesticated* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); *Q Brothers* *Christmas Carol*, *Short Shakespeare! A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Chicago Shakespeare Theater). Chicago lighting design credits include productions with Interrobang Theatre Project, Theater Wit, The Gift Theatre, and Raven Theatre. Michelle holds an MFA in Lighting Design and Technology from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

REBECCA GOODMAN (She/Her/Hers) (Assistant the the Director), a senior at the University of Illinois (BFA in Theatre Studies with a concentration in directing) makes her Goodman debut. Directing credits with Illinois Theatre include *La Casa de las Mañas* (online), *Between Us* (Krannert Center) and *Chasing the Ghost* (Armory Free Theatre). She is among six student directors selected for the Kennedy Center American College Theater (KCACTF)'s New Play Program, where she directed *A Home Bar Means Your Fine* (online). Additional directing/writing/acting credits include 10-minute plays for the annual *Impulse 24/7* at the Armory Free Theatre, for which she also served as event coordinator (2021).

STAN BROWN (Voice and Text Coach) is the Director of Graduate Studies of the MFA in Acting program at Northwestern University where he holds the Inaugural W. Rockwell Wirtz Professorship. Stan has worked as a professional actor and vocal coach for over 30 years in the US, UK and Canada. His television credits include featured and recurring roles on NBC's Homicide: Life in the Streets, In the Heat of the Night, and the critically acclaimed I'll Fly Away. In film, Stan co-starred in Robby Benson's Modern Love and Doug Liman's Getting In opposite Calista Flockhart, Matthew Perry, Dave Chapelle, and Christine Baranski. In 2015 he played the lead in the short film The Bespoke Tailoring of Mr. Bellamy. The film won the prestigious Louisiana Film Prize and was shortlisted for the Academy Award ballot. Stan also won the Louisiana Film Prize Best Actor award for his work.

ROBERT FALLS (Goodman Theatre Artistic Director) recent Goodman credits include The Sound Inside, The Winter's Tale, We're Only Alive for A Short Amount of Time, Pamplona, An Enemy of the People, 2666 and The Iceman Cometh. Falls' Broadway productions include Death of a Salesman, Long Day's Journey into Night, Talk Radio, Shining City and The Young Man from Atlanta. His Broadway production of Elton John and Tim Rice's Aida continues to be produced around the world. Previous Goodman productions include, most notably, The Seagull, Uncle Vanya, Measure for Measure, King Lear,

Desire Under the Elms, Finishing the Picture, The Misanthrope, Pal Joey, Galileo, House and Garden, Blue Surge, Dollhouse and Luna Gale. Falls' honors for directing include 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. For "outstanding contributions to theater," he 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) and the Illinois Arts Council Governor's Award. Falls was inducted into the Theater Hall of Fame in 2015.

ROCHE EDWARD SCHULFER (Goodman Theatre Executive Director) started working in the Goodman Theatre box office and became executive director in 1980. Since that time he has overseen more than 350 productions including more than 150 premieres. He initiated the Goodman's annual production of A Christmas Carol, which celebrated 42 years as Chicago's leading holiday arts tradition in 2019. 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. During their tenure, the Goodman has received numerous awards for excellence, including the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theater, 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. Schulfer has negotiated the presentation of numerous Goodman Theatre productions to national and international venues. He coordinated the 12-year process to relocate the Goodman to the Theatre District in 2000. To mark his 40th anniversary with the Goodman, his name was added to the theater's "Walk of Stars." Schulfer was a founder and twice chair of the League of Chicago Theatres, the trade association of more than 200 Chicago area theaters and producers. He 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 500 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 over 70 leading U.S. theater companies); Lifeline Theatre; the Arts & Business Council and Theater Wit. Mr. Schulfer is honored to have been recognized with the League of Chicago Theater's Lifetime Achievement Award; Theatre Communication Group's Visionary Leadership Award; Actors' Equity Association for promoting diversity and equal opportunity in Chicago theater; the American Arts Alliance and Arts Alliance Illinois for arts advocacy; the Arts & Business Council for distinguished contributions to Chicago's artistic

vitality; Chicago magazine and the Chicago Tribune as a “Chicagoan of the Year”; the City of Chicago; the Chicago Loop Alliance’s “Illumination Award,” honoring his commitment to Chicago’s theater district; Columbia College Chicago for entrepreneurial leadership; the Joseph Jefferson Awards Committee for his partnership with Robert Falls; 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 Vision 2020 for promoting gender equality and diversity in the workplace. He taught at the theater school at DePaul University, lectured annually on strategic planning in the arts at Southern Methodist University and frequently consults with local and national theater companies. Schulfer received a degree in economics from the University of Notre Dame where he served as cultural art commissioner and currently conducts an annual seminar on theater management. He received an Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from North Central College in 2009. His celebrated presentation on the economics of the performing arts and business models in the theater industry, **WHY NOT FOR PROFIT THEATER**, has been seen by numerous theater companies and at national conferences over the past two years. Mr. Schulfer was born in Chicago and is a lifelong resident of the area.

about us

AMERICA’S “BEST REGIONAL THEATRE” (Time magazine), Goodman Theatre 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, over 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*, now in its fifth decade, has created a new generation of theatergoers. The Goodman also frequently serves as a production partner with local off-Loop theaters and national and international companies by providing financial support or physical space for a variety of artistic endeavors.

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. This practice uses the process of artistic creation to inspire youth, lifelong learners and audiences to find and/or enhance their voices, stories and abilities. 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.

Goodman Theatre was founded 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. The Goodman family's legacy lives on through the continued work and dedication 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 also includes the distinguished members of the Artistic Collective: Rebecca Gilman, Dael Orlandersmith, Henry Godinez, Steve Scott, Kimberly Senior, Chuck Smith, Regina Taylor, Henry Wishcamper and Mary Zimmerman. Jeff Hesse is Chairman of

Goodman Theatre's Board of Trustees, Fran Del Boca is
Women's Board President and Megan McCarthy Hayes is
President of the Scenemakers Board for young professionals.

Accessibility

Audio-Described Performance and Touch Tour

Touch Tours for the 2021/2022 Season will not have access to the stage due to current health and safety protocols, but will feature alternate pre-show sensory introductions.

“Gem of the Ocean”

Saturday, February 19 at 2pm

“The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci”

Saturday, March 12 at 2pm

“Good Night, Oscar”

Saturday, April 9 at 2pm

Unlock tickets with promo code **AUDIO**.

American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreted Performance

“Gem of the Ocean”

Friday, February 25 at 8pm

“The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci”

Friday, March 11 at 8pm

“Good Night, Oscar”

Friday, April 15 at 8pm

Unlock tickets with promo code **SIGN**.

SCOTT AND LENORE ENLOE

Accessibility Sponsors

Open-Captioned Performance

“Gem of the Ocean”

Saturday, February 26 at 2pm

“The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci”

Saturday, March 19 at 2pm

“Good Night, Oscar”

Saturday, April 16 at 2pm

Unlock tickets with promo code **OPEN**.

ELIZA AND NEIL STERN, Open-Captioned Performance

Sponsors

The Goodman is proud to offer an inclusive range of programs and services that help make performances accessible to more audiences, including enhanced performances, accessible seating, braille and large print programs and complimentary Assistive Listening Devices and Sensory Bags. Complimentary tickets for Personal Care Assistants and professional caregivers are also available. For additional information, assistance or an accommodation not listed, visit our Guest Services Desk today or e-mail Access@GoodmanTheatre.org.

More details about accessibility services can be found at **GoodmanTheatre.org/Access**.