

# The Santaland Diaries

By **David Sedaris**  
Directed by **Steve Scott**



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# welcome

## **A Note from the Director**

On December 23, 1992, listeners of National Public Radio's *Morning Edition* were introduced to the wryly caustic observations of a writer new to the national scene: David Sedaris.

A Chicago-based performance artist, David had built a local following through readings of his daily journal in local clubs, musings which chronicled with deadpan and self-deprecating humor the oddities and outrages of his family relationships, his struggles to establish a life and a career and his uniquely jaundiced view of life in the city. Local radio host (and later, NPR contributor) Ira Glass brought David to a wider audience through his weekly program, *The Wild Room*, which in turn had led to this NPR debut.

The piece that David chose for that morning's program was "Santaland Diaries," an essay based on the writer's brief stint as a Christmas elf at Macy's flagship store in New York. With mordant wit and devastating nuance, David offered a backstage look at this hallowed holiday fixture, skewering the succession of humiliating work rules and lecherous Santas that paraded before his lens, leavening his acidity with moments of true wonder and longing. Soon after, David became a monthly commentator for NPR; two years later, an expanded version of

“Santaland” was included in the author’s first book of stories and essays, *Barrel Fever*. In 1996, David and director Joe Mantello collaborated on a stage version of the story; premiering off-Broadway, the piece won acclaim for a “satirical brazenness that holds up next to Twain and Nathanael West” (*The New Yorker*).

Today, more than two decades later, David’s tongue-in-cheek exposé is read annually by millions of devoted fans, and its theatrical incarnation has been produced on hundreds of stages across the country. Like all great satire, *The Santaland Diaries* both embraces and hilariously deflates the dark realities that lie beneath the sunny exterior of the American Christmas. But his misanthropic celebration of these follies offers a gift that’s sorely needed at a time of celebration and reflection: the chance to confront our own demons and embrace our frustrations while diffusing them with anarchic glee, sardonic joy—and intermittent glimpses of the “good will towards men” to which we all aspire.

Steve Scott

Goodman Theatre Artistic Associate

# It's Not Easy Being Green

*Steven Strafford slips into the role of Crumpet, the less-than-jolly elf, in *The Santaland Diaries**

By Thomas Connors

**Celebrated for his knack of identifying the odd in the obvious** and weirdness around every turn—expressed with a genuine astonishment at the ways of the world—humorist David Sedaris has become something of a regular Christmas visitor, thanks to *The Santaland Diaries*.

A comic recollection of his gig as an elf at Macy's, *The Santaland Diaries* began as a bit on National Public Radio in 1992 and later appeared in the funnyman's first book, *Barrel Fever*. It was adapted for the stage by director Joe Mantello in 1996 and premiered at New York's Atlantic Theater Company, with actor Timothy Olyphant playing Santa's green-garbed helper, Crumpet. Since then, the one-man show has been mounted regularly by theaters across the country. This season, Brooklyn-born, Jersey-raised Steven Strafford—last seen at the Goodman in *Wonderful Town*—steps into the role. Before pulling on those tights and pointy-toed shoes, he pauses to chat with us.

**Are you a David Sedaris fan?**

**STEVEN:** I am a big David Sedaris fan. I love *Barrel Fever*, *Naked*, *Dress Your Family Up in Corduroy and Denim*, *Me Talk Pretty One Day* and anything else I can get my hands on. I also

love hearing him read his own stuff. He has a cadence in his delivery that I love. If you get a chance, you should listen to the episode of the podcast of *This American Life* titled “Music Lessons.” It has pieces by David, Sarah Vowell and Anne Lamott and each is amazing, funny and beautiful.

### **Have you done many solo shows?**

**STEVEN:** This is my third solo show. I wrote a solo show, *Methhtacular!*, that I’ve performed all over the country. It’s the true story of my three years as a crystal meth addict. I use storytelling, tons of jokes, documentary interviews with my mom, an improvised game show and original songs to bring the audience down into the darkest time of my life and come out the other side, reminding people that everyone goes through dark times—although, perhaps not as dark as I did—and makes terrible choices. But we shouldn’t allow shame to keep us silent about them.

### **What made you want to take on Crumpet?**

**STEVEN:** I think the thing that attracts me is that it’s a gay character with an arc. Gay characters in shows are so often a punchline, or a device. As a gay actor, having a shot at playing a gay guy telling a story is really special to me. Also, the challenge of carrying a show on your back is daunting and exciting. Solo shows are like actor boot camp.

### **Tell us more about that, the challenge of doing a solo show.**

**STEVEN:** It’s just me and the audience. I love the intimacy of that. I think as a solo performer you have to make yourself a different kind of vulnerable to have the audience as your scene

partner. If you look out to tell a piece of story and catch someone in a yawn, checking their program or looking at their phone, it can be jarring. You just have to soldier on and connect with the people who are on the edges of their seats. And performing solo comedy material? That's, somehow, more exciting. And scary. There's an immediacy to comedy where you know if stuff is landing. I am very grateful that the comedy in this piece is situational and not punchline-driven, because that way you can just tell the story and let laughs fall where they may.

**On the surface, the notion of a man in an elf costume ragging about the holidays might seem little more than a stand-up routine. Tell us a bit about the character Sedaris has created and the story he tells.**

**STEVEN:** Maybe because I'm tasked with performing the piece, I don't see this show as someone ragging on the holidays. Most people, I think, find themselves battling between being the sort of person who enjoys the lights, music and joy of the holidays with being someone who can't help noticing the rampant commercialism and crass displays. I think David/Crumpet is not only an avatar for David Sedaris, but for the audience. We get to experience, through his eyes, the push/pull of the holidays. We get to explore the odd sense of never quite being as joyful as we're told we're supposed to be. We get to negotiate the strange cultural lie of Santa Claus. What do we get from this myth we perpetuate? What do we lose?

**Are you a Scrooge when it comes to the holidays, or do you enjoy everything about them?**

**STEVEN:** I fall somewhere inbetween. I am somewhat mistrustful of adults who only profess their love for Christmas. I want to ask, “So, none of this stresses you out?! You don’t ever feel melancholy around this time of year?” I mean, for starters, there are the crowds, which stress me out, and I do think the notion of having to buy gifts for people who may or may not need things out of seasonal obligation is a strange practice. However, there are parts of the holiday season I am deeply grateful for, and I find myself thankful that as we approach the darkest days of the year, we have a holiday that puts twinkly lights up everywhere. So, I’d say on a scale of Scrooge to Fezziwig, I’m a Mrs. Cratchit: a realist with heart.

**Christmas Day is your only night off. What will you be doing?**

**STEVEN:** My husband and I are still figuring that out. We might just be on our own. Usually, we travel for Christmas to my family or to his family. This year, we both are performing right around the holidays, so staying in for a simple “just us” day might be what the plan ends up being.

**So, how do you think you look in tights?**

**STEVEN:** I will leave that for the reviewers and audience to decide. Feel free to post your reviews of me in tights on Goodman’s Facebook and Twitter pages.

*Thomas Connors is a Chicago-based freelance writer and the Chicago Editor of Playbill.*



# **Goodman Theatre**

Robert Falls, **Artistic Director**

Roche Schulfer, **Executive Director**

Presents

# **The Santaland Diaries**

By

**David Sedaris**

Adapted by

**Joe Mantello**

Directed by

**Steve Scott**

Set Design by

**Kevin Depinet**

Costume Design by

**Rachel Lambert**

Lighting Design by  
**Mike Durst**

Sound Design by  
**Christopher Kriz**

Casting by  
**Adam Belcuore, CSA**

Production Stage Manager  
**Kaitlin Kitzmiller\***

Originally produced in New York by David Stone and Amy  
Nederlander-Case on November 7, 1996.

# The Santaland Diaries cast

Crumpet.....**Steven Strafford\***

Assistant Director: **Lauren Katz**

*The Santaland Diaries* 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.

Teddy Boone—*Crumpet*

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 Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.

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

**STEVEN STRAFFORD\*** (*Crumpet*) returns to the Goodman, where he was last seen in *Wonderful Town*. Chicago credits include *End Days* (Windy City Playhouse); *She Loves Me*, *Honeymoon in Vegas* (Marriott Theatre); *Little Shop of Horrors* (Drury Lane Theatre) and *Shrew'd* (First Folio Theatre). New York credits include *Songs for a More Funnier World*, *To Pain the Earth* and *The Mad Show* (The York Theatre Company). International credits include a European tour of *Grease!*, an Asian tour of *Cinderella* (with Lea Salonga) and an American tour of *Peter Pan* (with Cathy Rigby). Regional credits include *Snow Queen*, *A Christmas Carol*, *The Mystery of Irma Vep* (Portland Stage Company); *Spamalot*, *Hair*, *Shrek* (Broadway Sacramento); *As Bees in Honey Drown* (The Cape Playhouse); *Twelfth Night*, *Design For Living*, *Love's Labour's Lost* (Bakerloo Theatre Project); *Sense and Sensibilities* (Denver Center for the Performing Arts). Strafford has appeared in NBC's *Chicago Fire* and *Funny or Die's Glitzy Babes*.

**DAVID SEDARIS** (*Author*) is the author of *Barrel Fever* and *Holidays on Ice*, as well as collections of personal essays, *Naked*, *Me Talk Pretty One Day*, *Dress Your Family in Corduroy and Denim*, *When You Are Engulfed in Flames* and his most recent book, *Let's Explore Diabetes with Owls*, each of which became an immediate bestseller. The audio version of *Let's Explore Diabetes with Owls* is a 56th Annual Grammy Awards Nominee for Best Spoken Word Album. He is the

author of the *New York Times* bestselling collection of fables entitled *Squirrel Seeks Chipmunk: A Modest Bestiary*, with illustrations by Ian Falconer. He was also the editor of *Children Playing Before a Statue of Hercules: An Anthology of Outstanding Stories*. Sedaris' pieces appear regularly in *The New Yorker* and have twice been included in "The Best American Essays." There are over ten million copies of his books in print and they have been translated into 25 languages. He and his sister, Amy Sedaris, have collaborated under the name "The Talent Family" and have written half-a-dozen plays which have been produced at La MaMa, Lincoln Center and The Drama Department in New York City. These plays include *Stump the Host*, *Stitches*, *One Woman Shoe* (Obie Award), *Incident at Cobbler's Knob* and *The Book of Liz*, which was published in book form by Dramatists Play Service. Sedaris' original radio pieces can often be heard on the public radio show *This American Life*. He has been nominated for three Grammy Awards for Best Spoken Word and Best Comedy Album. His latest audio recording of new stories (recorded live) is "David Sedaris: Live for Your Listening Pleasure" (November 2009). A book of essays entitled *Calypso* was published June 2018, and a second volume of his diaries is expected for summer 2019. [Davidsedarisbooks.com](http://Davidsedarisbooks.com)

**JOE MANTELLO** (*Adapter*) directing credits include *Assassins* (Tony Award), *Wicked*, *Take Me Out* (Tony Award), *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune*, *A Man of No Importance*, *Design for Living*, Terrence McNally and Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking* (San Francisco Opera); *The Vagina Monologues*, *Bash*, *Another American: Asking and*

*Telling, Proposals, The Mineola Twins, Corpus Christi, Mizlansky/Zilinsky or Schmucks, Blue Window, God's Heart, The Santaland Diaries, Lillian, Snakebit, Three Hotels, Imagining Brad and Fat Men in Skirts.* Mantello also directed the film *Love! Valour! Compassion!*. As an actor, he appeared in *Angels in America* (Tony nomination) and *The Baltimore Waltz*. He is the recipient of the Outer Critics Circle, Drama Desk, Lucille Lortel, Helen Hayes, Clarence Derwent, Obie and Joe A. Callaway awards. He is a member of Naked Angels and an associate artist at Roundabout Theatre Company.

**STEVE SCOTT** (*Director*) was the Producer for over 30 years at Goodman Theatre, where he oversaw more than 200 productions; he is now a member of Goodman's Artistic Collective. His Goodman directing credits include *Ah, Wilderness!*, *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, Horton Foote's *Blind Date*, *Rabbit Hole*, *Binky Rudich and the Two-Speed Clock* and *No One Will Be Immune* for the David Mamet Festival, *Dinner With Friends*, *Wit*, the world premiere of Tom Mula's *Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (co-directed with Michael Maggio) and the 2011 and 2012 editions of *A Christmas Carol*. Other directing credits include productions at Northlight Theatre, Silk Road Rising, American Blues Theater, A Red Orchid Theatre, Redtwist Theatre (where he is a company member), Shattered Globe Theatre, Eclipse Theatre Company (where he is an ensemble member) and many others. He is a member of the Jeff Committee's Artist and Technical Team, a board member of Season of Concern and an advisory board member at Congo Square Theatre. He also teaches on the faculty of the Theatre

Conservatory at Roosevelt University. He was one of six resident directors for WBEZ's series "Stories on Stage," and has contributed articles to a variety of publications, including the *Encyclopedia of Chicago*. Scott is the recipient of six Jeff Award nominations, an After Dark Award, the Illinois Theatre Association's Award of Honor, Eclipse Theatre Company's Corona Award, the 2017 Special Jeff Award for career achievement and the League of Chicago Theatre's Lifetime Achievement Award. As an actor, he most recently appeared in Next Theatre Company's production of *Are You Now or Have You Ever Been...?* (Jeff Award for Outstanding Ensemble).

**KEVIN DEPINET** (*Set Designer*) returns to the Goodman, where he recently designed scenery for *Pamplona, Soups, Stews and Casseroles: 1976, Carlyle, Feathers and Teeth, Smokefall, Brigadoon* and *The Iceman Cometh*. He has designed for Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, The Old Globe, McCarter Theatre, Court Theatre, Writers Theatre, Drury Lane Theatre, Chicago Children's Theatre, Denver Center Theatre Company, Arden Theatre Company, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Glimmerglass Opera, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, American Players Theatre, Indiana Repertory Theatre and The Mark Taper Forum. Broadway credits include associate designer for *August: Osage County, The Motherf\*\*ker with the Hat* and *Of Mice and Men*. National tour credits include *Camelot* and *Ragtime*. Depinet has also designed for the National Theatre of Great Britain in London, the Discovery Channel, Netflix, 21st Century Fox and Disney.



**RACHEL LAMBERT** (*Costume Designer*) returns to Goodman Theatre, where she designed the three incarnations of The Second City production of *Twist Your Dickens* and the New Stages Festival production of *The King of Hell's Palace*. Chicago credits include work with Northlight Theatre, Buffalo Theatre Ensemble, The Gift Theatre, Remy Bumppo Theatre Company, First Folio Theatre, American Blues Theater, DePaul University School of Music and Eclipse Theatre Company, among others. Regionally she has designed at Peninsula Players Theatre and the Texas Shakespeare Festival. Lambert has been nominated for four Jeff Awards.

**MIKE DURST** (*Lighting Designer*) is a Chicago-based lighting designer and ensemble member with A Red Orchid Theatre. Theater credits Court Theatre, McCarter Theatre, Huntington Theatre Company, Lookingglass Theatre Company, Olney Theatre Center, Cardinal Stage, Detroit Public Theatre, TimeLine Theatre, The Hypocrites, The House Theatre of Chicago, Theater Wit, Remy Bumppo Theatre Company and The Gift Theatre, among others. Off-Broadway credits include Primary Stages, 59e59 and Cherry Lane Theatre. National Tour credits include *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia: The Nightman Cometh*. Durst is the lecturer of lighting design at University of Chicago and a consultant on theatrical renovations. He is the recipient of multiple Jeff Awards, an Ovation Award and a Craig Noel Award. His memberships include IATSE Local 2 and United Scenic Artists 829. [MikeDurst.com](http://MikeDurst.com)

**CHRISTOPHER KRIZ** (*Sound Designer*) returns to Goodman Theatre where his previous credits include *Carlyle* and *The*

*Magic Play*. Chicago credits include Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Victory Gardens Theater, Court Theatre, Northlight Theatre, TimeLine Theatre Company, Remy Bumppo Theatre Company, American Blues Theater, First Folio Theatre and Shattered Globe Theatre, among others. Regional credits include Seattle Repertory Theatre, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Alabama Shakespeare Festival and Peninsula Players Theatre. Kriz is the recipient of 5 Jeff Awards and 21 nominations for original music and sound design. He is a proud member of United Scenic Artists 829. Christopherkriz.com

**KAITLIN KITZMILLER\*** (*Production Stage Manager*) returns to the Goodman where previous credits include *Incendiary* (2019 *New Stages* Festival). Chicago credits include Drury Lane, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre and Royal George Theatre. Regional Credits include Peninsula Players Theatre, Resident Ensemble Players and Lake Dillon Theatre Company. Kitzmiller is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association.

**ROBERT FALLS** (*Goodman Theatre Artistic Director*) will revive his 2014 production of *Don Giovanni* for the Lyric Opera this fall, and will direct Brian Friel's *Molly Sweeney* at the Goodman next spring. Most recently, he directed Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* and David Cale's *We're Only Alive for A Short Amount of Time* (Goodman Theatre, The Public Theater). Other recent productions include *Pamplona*, starring Stacy Keach; Rogelio Martinez's *Blind Date*; and his own original adaptation of Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*. Recent credits also include *2666*, adapted from Roberto Bolaño's epic novel

and co-directed with Seth Bockley; *The Iceman Cometh*, starring Nathan Lane and longtime collaborator Brian Dennehy (Brooklyn Academy of Music); and Beth Henley's *The Jacksonian*. Falls' Broadway productions include *Death of a Salesman*, starring Dennehy; *Long Day's Journey into Night*, starring Dennehy, Vanessa Redgrave, Philip Seymour Hoffman and Robert Sean Leonard; Eric Bogosian's *Talk Radio*; the American premiere of Conor McPherson's *Shining City*; and Horton Foote's Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Young Man from Atlanta*. His Broadway production of Elton John and Tim Rice's *Aida*, for which he also co-wrote the book, continues to be produced around the world. Previous Goodman productions include, most notably, Arthur Miller's *Finishing the Picture*; *The Seagull*; *Uncle Vanya*; *Measure for Measure*; *King Lear*; *Desire Under the Elms*; *The Misanthrope*; *Pal Joey*; *Galileo*; the American premiere of Alan Ayckbourn's *House and Garden*; the world premieres of Rebecca Gilman's *A True History of the Johnstown Flood*, *Blue Surge*, *Dollhouse* and *Luna Gale*; and Gilman's *Soups, Stews, and Casseroles: 1976*. 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), the Distinguished Service to the Arts Award (Lawyers for the Creative Arts) 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 ultimately became executive director in 1980. Since that time he has overseen more than 350 productions including close to 150 premieres. He initiated the Goodman's annual production of *A Christmas Carol*, which celebrated 40 years as Chicago's leading holiday arts tradition in 2017. 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 many 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 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. 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. Schulfer received an Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from North Central College. He taught at the theater school at DePaul University for 15 years and has lectured regularly on arts management at Southern Methodist University and other academic institutions. Schulfer is a lifelong Chicago area resident and received a degree in economics from the University of Notre Dame, where he managed the cultural arts commission.

# 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 fourth 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: Brian Dennehy, Rebecca Gilman, Henry Godinez, Dael Orlandersmith, Steve Scott, Kimberly Senior, Chuck Smith, Regina Taylor, Henry Wishcamper and Mary Zimmerman. David W. Fox, Jr. is Chairman of Goodman Theatre's Board of Trustees, Denise Stefan Ginascol is Women's Board President and Megan McCarthy Hayes is President of the Scenemakers Board for young professionals.