



Support Group for Men

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A Note About *Support Group for Men*

I first encountered Ellen Fairey's play *Support Group for Men* several years ago, when Ellen and her director, Kimberly Senior, submitted it for consideration for our annual *New Stages* Festival. At that time, I found it to be a drolly funny, trenchant study of a group of average Wrigleyville men confronting the sometimes dizzying evolution of the new realities of gender in our society—and how that evolution affected their own views of masculinity (and femininity) in a changing world.

We immediately scheduled a workshop presentation of the play in the 2016 festival, where it was an undisputed hit. Audiences were captivated by the play's humor and honesty, and intrigued by the central characters' struggles to come to terms with new insights, definitions and understandings of what it means to be a man, especially in a time when men's longstanding roles in society are no longer rock solid.

Ellen's inspiration for this play came not only from a specific story of a male friend and his support group, but also by a general sense that many of her male peers (most in their late 40s and early 50s) were struggling with feelings of loneliness, disconnection and uncertainty related to their own identities amid society's new view of them. As noted author and theologian Wonhee Anne Joh writes, "At the heart of sexism is the construction of

gender polarization, in which femininity and masculinity are assumed to be clearly delineated, and any transgression of this pattern warrants punitive measures.” The effort to move beyond the obvious ill effects of this rigid polarization is undoubtedly long overdue. It also requires a new way of thinking about ourselves and our own (perhaps outmoded) understandings of gender roles, as Fairey’s well-meaning band of brothers finds—an acknowledgment of the spaces that exist in between those traditional poles of gender identification, both outside and within ourselves, and the freedom that comes from that understanding.

In the two years since that workshop production, Ellen has continued to hone her play to reflect rapid societal changes; references include the new activism evidenced by the post-inauguration Women’s March and the birth of the #MeToo movement. But Ellen’s obvious empathy and affection for her characters—their Chicago roots and traditions and their earnest but sometimes painful journey to enlightenment—is still laugh-out-loud funny and bracingly perceptive.

Under the skilled direction of Kimberly Senior, *Support Group for Men* is the perfect summertime entertainment for our times, a warm-hearted, witty and timely exploration of who we are, who we thought we were, and who we can become.

Robert Falls
Artistic Director

Leading the Support Group: A Conversation with the Playwright

By Isaac Gomez

Ten years after her play *Graceland* earned enormous popular and critical acclaim, playwright Ellen Fairey—“one of my favorite made-in-Chicago writers,” raved the *Chicago Tribune's* Chris Jones—returns to town with *Support Group for Men*, following a decade writing and producing for television, including *Nurse Jackie*, *Masters of Sex* and *The Sinner*. Shortly before rehearsals began, dramaturg Isaac Gomez spoke with Fairey about her motivation to write the play, changing gender dynamics and loving Chicago.

Isaac Gomez: What inspired you to write *Support Group for Men*?

Ellen Fairey: Watching the actor Brian Kerwin, who played Joe in my play *Graceland*. There's a scene where he's alone in his apartment, chopping carrots and drinking white wine. As unremarkable as that sounds, something about it felt like the embodiment of loneliness. I remember thinking: I want to write a play about *that* guy. Around the same time, I met a writer in Los Angeles who told me about a men's group he attended on Thursday nights. It

was held at the apartment of an aging, out-of-work musician in North Hollywood. The way he described it—the talking stick, the sad apartment in the Valley— struck me as both heartbreaking and inherently comic. I missed Chicago terribly at the time—the voices, the directness, the warmth—so I set the play there.

IG: Why this play right now?

EF: I began writing *Support Group for Men* almost eight years ago, and in the time since, the national conversation around gender has come to the forefront in a way I never could have imagined. It's incredibly exciting, meaningful and, at times, challenging. It's affected how I've worked on the play, the changes that I've made, and continue to make. I'm no longer just writing about a bunch of middle-aged guys trying to figure their shit out. I'm writing about a group of men who find themselves in a world where everything has changed, and will continue to change, and what it means when "to be a man" finds itself on the sociological chopping block.

IG: How would you talk about the gender dynamics of this play to total strangers?

EF: Utter the words "straight white men" these days, and you'll likely get groans and eye rolls. Bring up the topic of

expanding gender pronouns or identity politics in a different crowd, and you'll probably get a similar response. There is anger, resentment and confusion on all sides of the conversation—perhaps because there is no 'conversation'—lots of venting, not so much listening. This play, at its core, is about a group of guys attempting—not necessarily succeeding—to be open about who they are, what they're afraid of, and how they might learn to move forward in a world that is moving forward with or without them.

IG: Why write about men?

EF: Because this woman is also a human who is interested in understanding other humans, many of whom happen to be men.

IG: Where do you find yourself in this story and with these men?

EF: I am forever interested in, confused by and pondering what it means to be a man—and what it means to be a woman. Or neither. Or both.

IG: Where did the title come from?

EF: I was going over possible titles with my friend, playwright Rajiv Joseph, and he suggested using his go-to method for titling, which basically boils down to: state the obvious, call it what it is. The straight forwardness of the title *Support Group for Men* seemed to fit the “Chicago of it all.”

IG: Talk to me about the Chicago of it all.

EF: I had no idea how special Chicago was until I moved away, after living there for 23 years. One of the things that struck me—that I hadn’t realized or appreciated—was that Chicago, to me, is a city that is *in conversation*. Where Los Angeles can feel isolating and lonely and New York can feel fast-paced and overwhelming, Chicago is down-to-earth and ready to talk. Everybody’s talking. It doesn’t matter whether they know you or not—the bus driver, the cabbie, the lady wheeling her pullcart full of groceries down Clark Street—they’ve all got something to say and they’ll say it to you. You are engaged with, you are alive, you exist.

IG: And the men in Chicago?

EF: We’re all familiar with the cartoonish “Chicago guy” we see in film and TV: a chunky, dumpy, beer-drinking sports fan who says things like *da Bears*. I’m sure those guys

probably exist, but the Chicago men I have known—on all sides of the gender spectrum—are hard workers, easy laughers, funny without trying, the kind of guy who would pull over and help you push your car if you're stuck in a snow drift, even if he just worked a 12-hour shift. He is warm, unflappable and has a big heart.

END OF INTERVIEW

Ellen Fairey on Writing

By Isaac Gomez

Isaac Gomez: What's the first thing you do when you sit down to write a new play?

Ellen Fairey: By the time I sit down to actually write, there's a chance I've been thinking about the play for a long time—years even. In a way, I'm just unleashing the voices in my head. I usually start with a scene—not necessarily the opening—just something to get characters talking. Sometimes I'll listen to the music I think they might listen to, eat what they might eat (over the sink in this case), walk around the house talking to myself, acting out conversations. I get a little bit possessed.

IG: What time of day do you get your best work done? Why do you think that is?

EF: It's more about a state of mind than a time of day. Getting to a place where nothing or no one (most of all myself) can distract/interrupt/invoke. Walks help. Also snacks. Occasionally music.

IG: What other writers inspire you?

EF: Studs Terkel, Norman Lear, Carl Reiner. Anyone who writes about “ordinary” people and everyday lives with some combination of reverence, regard and humor. Mavis Gallant, especially the Paris stories. William Maxwell, who I’m pretty sure has the best titles ever as well as being a beautiful storyteller. I love John Jeremiah Sullivan’s and Zadie Smith’s essays...the poet Richard Wilbur.

IG: Is there a play out there that has changed your life? Why or how so?

EF: Most recently, Signature Theatre’s revival of Steven Adly Guirgis’ *Jesus Hopped the A Train*. Watching it felt like getting my heart slowly, yet thrillingly, ripped out of my chest. Gutted, in a good way.

IG: What’s the best piece of advice you’ve ever received about writing?

EF: Write what you don’t want people to know.

IG: What else are you working on right now?

EF: Adapting a Belgian film for television and writing on season two of USA Network’s *The Sinner*.

IG: What do you hope audiences take away from this piece?

EF: The same thing I hope to feel after writing it: less alone.

END OF INTERVIEW

Lonely American Men

By Isaac Gomez, dramaturg for *Support Group For Men*

If your gender identity lands somewhere in the spectrum of male, man or masculine, chances are you've heard some variety of those phrases growing up. I know I did. As a queer Mexican man from the border, I observed how the men around me demonstrated "manliness" through their actions and words -through snorts, sports, spit and sweat, through always having something to say, being strong, being smart and *being the best*. Always.

For generations, men have been trapped in the same suffocating, outdated cycle of "masculinity," where manhood is measured in strength, where there is no way to be vulnerable without being emasculated, where manliness equals power over others. Consequently men often find themselves trapped without the language to talk about how they feel, because that language is considered sensitive or feminine in our current society.

And so, the man who feels lost but wishes to preserve his sense of masculinity has one of two options: withdrawal or rage. This country has seen what withdrawal and rage can lead to; from the devastation of mass shootings to an ongoing history of abuse and violence against women to

the more mundane daily microaggressions that impact people every day. All stem from the same place: misplaced anger, a desire to demonstrate power and visibility and feeling terribly alone.

In the wake of the #MeToo movement, it's clear that difficult conversations about masculinity, vulnerability and inequality are long overdue, and almost impossible to entertain. Earlier this year, *Chatelaine* magazine, in partnership with Abacus Data, asked 1,000 men between the ages of 25 and 65 about growing up, work, fatherhood, sex, 'mansplaining,' loneliness, #MeToo and more.

In my experiences being around other men, and talking with them about what it means to be "men," I was struck by how many were scared of other men—and afraid I am about being around other men. It's as if being vulnerable and speaking truth to each other is an act of rebellion, something taboo and unrecognizable. And as we grow older, it is far more difficult for men to hold onto friendships; research suggests this likely begins in adolescence, and is one of the largest contributors to loneliness (and increased suicide rates) among men as we age.

There's a social isolation that many men in America face today, especially in the wake of rapid social and political progress. Why are men so afraid of connecting with other men, emotionally and intimately?

American masculinity, masculine norms and masculine expectations often shun friendships and moments of intimacy as a "girly" or "gay" thing rather than celebrating an emotional connection between two people. So as boys grow older, many become overwhelmed with the expectation or need to be on their own. And somehow, the desire for intimacy with other boys is problematic in a culture driven by hypermasculinity. Young men pick it up quickly and unconsciously; as they raise young men of their own, the cycle continues.

This is a modern American crisis. In a world where the loneliness of man leads to profound withdrawal and potential outbursts of rage, what should men do? In a world where social, political and economic interest is already geared towards the success and progression of men, how can room be carved for vulnerability and connectivity without compromising the emotional and mental labor of women and queer individuals? Where can men be the leaders of their own journey away from loneliness?

FACTS:

Growing up, **57% of the men surveyed believed that “being a man” meant being physically tough.** The next highest percentage, 48%, believed that it meant being the breadwinner.

Only one-third of men surveyed were encouraged by their parents to talk about their fears and emotions.

Men are most likely to feel guilty about their health and diet (46%). **41% of men compared their bodies to other men** and 45% were insecure about their weight.

79% think men and women should have equal rights and opportunities. **But only 18% would describe themselves as feminists.**

49% of men received their sexual education from friends (other older men). Men between the ages of 25–29 were far more likely to have received their sexual education from porn (43%).

When women talk about the pervasiveness of sexual harassment, 25% of respondents said they feel “nothing.” **42% said they feel sad and 32% feel angry.**

34% often feel lonely. That number increases to 45% for 25–29 year olds.

42% aren't especially (or at all) comfortable talking about their emotions with male friends. 24% do it all the time, and 18% said they share, but their friends don't reciprocate.

END OF ARTICLE

Goodman Theatre Presents
SUPPORT GROUP FOR MEN

By ELLEN FAIREY

Directed by KIMBERLY SENIOR

Set Design by JACK MAGAW

Costume Design by NOËL HUNTZINGER

Lighting Design by JEN SCHRIEVER

Sound Design by RICHARD WOODBURY

Casting by ERICA SARTINI-COMBS, ADAM BELCUORE, CSA

Dramaturgy by ISAAC GOMEZ

Production Stage Manager ALDEN VASQUEZ*

Stage Manager JONATHAN NOOK*

CAST

(in alphabetical order)

Delano..... **Anthony Irons**
Brian..... **Ryan Kitley**
Roger..... **Keith Kupferer**
Alex..... **Jeff Kurysz**
Officer Caruso..... **Sadieh Rifai**
Kevin..... **Tommy Rivera-Vega**
Officer Nowak..... **Eric Slater**

Assistant Director: ADRIAN SHELTON
Choreographer: TOMMY RAPLEY
Fight Choreographer: MATT HAWKINS
Associate Lighting Designer: JEREMY CUNNINGHAM

ANTHONY IRONS* (*Delano*) returns to Goodman Theatre, where he previously appeared in *Two Trains Running* and the *New Stages* Festival productions of *Lottery Day*, *Support Group for Men* and *Acquainted with the Night*. He is an ensemble member of Congo Square Theatre Company, where his credits include *Jitney*, *The African Company Presents Richard III*, *Elmina's Kitchen*, *Topdog Underdog* and *King Hedley II* (Jeff Award nomination). Other Chicago credits include *Treasure Island* (Lookingglass Theatre Company), *Waiting for Godot* (Court Theatre) and *A History of Chicago and Reverie* (The Second City). Regional credits include *Too Busy to Hate... Too Hard to Commute* and *Peach Drop Stop and Roll* (Alliance Theatre), *Black Eagles* (Penumbra Theatre), *As You Like It* (Georgia Shakespeare Festival), *The Merchant of Venice* (North Carolina Shakespeare Festival) and *Hamlet* (Illinois Shakespeare Festival). Film credits include *Let's Go to Prison* and *The Lucky Ones*. Television credits include *Chicago Fire*, *Sirens*, *Boss* and *Chicago Code*.

RYAN KITLEY* (*Brian*) returns to Goodman Theatre, where he previously appeared in *Objects in the Mirror* and the

New Stages Festival production of *Support Group for Men*. Chicago credits include *Lettie* (Victory Gardens Theater); *Romeo and Juliet* (Chicago Shakespeare Theater); *Assassination Theater* (Museum of Broadcasting); *Burn This* and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (Shattered Globe Theatre); *Travels with my Aunt* (Writers Theatre); *Romeo and Juliet*, *King O' the Moon*, *Amy's View* and *Things We Do For Love* (Organic Theatre); *Transformations 2000* (Piven Theatre Workshop); *A Few Good Men* (Theatre at the Center); *The Big Funk* (Clock Productions); *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (Meadow Brook Theatre). He received a Jeff Award for Best Ensemble in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (Shattered Globe Theatre) and a Jeff nomination for Best Supporting Actor in *The Big Funk* (Clock Productions). Film and television credits include *Chicago P.D.*, *Empire*, *Chicago Fire*, *Boss*, *Guidance*, *Detroit 1-8-7*, *Turks*, *Early Edition*, *Jimmy Kimmel Live*, *Embeds*, *Miss March*, *Soul Survivors*, *Barbershop II*, *Dig Two Graves*, *Hunter*, *Soul Sessions* and *Other People's Children*.

KEITH KUPFERER* (*Roger*) returns to the Goodman, where he previously appeared in the *New Stages* Festival production of *Support Group for Men*, *God of Carnage*, *High Holidays*, Sarah Ruhl's *Passion Play* and *The Old Neighborhood*. Chicago credits include *The Mystery of Love and Sex* (Writers Theatre, Jeff Award nomination for Best Supporting Actor); *The Qualms*, *Good People*,

Middletown, South of Settling, Of Mice & Men, Carter's Way, Men of Tortuga, Things Being What They Are, Jesus Hopped the A Train and Tavern Story (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); *The Humans* (American Theatre Company); *Hillary and Clinton, Never the Sinner and Appropriate* (Victory Gardens Theater); *Gypsy* (Chicago Shakespeare Theater); *End Days* (Windy City Playhouse); *Execution of Justice* (About Face Theatre); *Cat Feet* and *The Old Neighborhood* (Northlight Theatre); *Desire Under The Elms* (co-production between Philadelphia's Freedom Theatre and Chicago's Court Theatre). Kupferer is a founding member of Rivendell Theatre Ensemble, where he was most recently seen in the Chicago premiere of *How the World Began*, the world premiere of *American Wee-Pie* and *26 Miles*. Other Chicago credits include *The Unseen, The Meek, Canus Lunis Balloonis* (Jeff Award nomination for Best Ensemble) and *The Physicists* (A Red Orchid Theatre) and *Hillbilly Antigone, Trust* and *Big Lake, Big City* for Lookingglass Theatre Company. Film credits include *The Dilemma; Dark Knight; Public Enemies; The Express; Stranger Than Fiction; Road to Perdition*, directed by Sam Mendes; *Finding Santa; Fred Klaus; The Last Rights of Joe May; The Merry Gentleman*, directed by Michael Keaton; *Resurrecting McGinn* and *Open Tables*. Television credits include *Better Call Saul, Betrayal, Empire, Chicago P.D., Crisis, Chicago Fire, Detroit 187, The Beast, Prison Break, The Jamie Kennedy Experiment* and *Early Edition*.

JEFF KURYSZ (*Alex*) returns to the Goodman after appearing in the *New Stages* Festival production of *Support Group for Men*. Chicago credits include *Romeo and Juliet* (Backroom Shakespeare Project), *Julius Caesar* (Brown Paper Box Co.), *As You Like It* and *Much Ado About Nothing* (The Arc Theatre), *Year of the Rooster* and *R+J: The Vineyard* (Red Theater), *Romeo and Juliet* (Teatro Vista), *One Came Home* (Lifeline Theatre), *All My Sons* (Eclectic Theatre), *Bachelorette* (NoraNina Productions), *Amadeus* (Boho Theatre) and *Hansel and Gretel* and *A Charlie Brown Christmas* (Emerald City Theater). Regional credits include *Richard III*, *Twelfth Night* and *The Tempest* (Arkansas Shakespeare Theatre). Television credits include *Crisis*. He is a graduate of The School at Steppenwolf and is represented by Grossman and Jack Talent.

SADIEH RIFAI* (*Officer Caruso*) returns to Goodman Theatre, where she has appeared in two seasons of *A Christmas Carol*. She is an ensemble member at American Theater Company, where her credits include the world premiere of *The Humans* (Jeff Award nomination for Best Ensemble), *The Amish Project*, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (co-production with About Face Theatre), *The Original Grease*, *Columbinus*, *Doubt*, *Agnes of God* and *Speech and Debate* (After Dark Award for Outstanding Performance). Other Chicago credits include *Evening at the Talk House* (A

Red Orchid Theatre), *Ski Dubai* (First Look at Steppenwolf Theatre Company), *The Piano Teacher* (Next Theatre) and *Merchant on Venice* (Silk Road Rising). Film credits include *The Wise Kids*, *Nate and Margaret* and *Olympia*. Television credits include *Chicago Med* and Amazon's *Patriot*, in which she plays the recurring role of Mahtma El-Mashad. She is a graduate of The School at Steppenwolf and received the Princess Grace Award in 2011.

TOMMY RIVERA-VEGA* (*Kevin*) returns to Goodman Theatre, where he previously appeared in the *New Stages* Festival productions of *Lottery Day* and *Mother Road*. Chicago credits include *La Havana Madrid*, *Parachute Men* (Jeff Award nomination for Best Supporting Actor), *Between You Me and the Lampshade*, *A View From the Bridge* and *Momma's Boyz* (Teatro Vista, where he is an ensemble member); *West Side Story* (Drury Lane Theatre); *In the Heights* (Skylight Music Theatre); *In the Heights* and *My Fair Lady* (Paramount Theatre); *Three Sisters* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); *Kiss of the Spiderwoman* (BoHo Theatre); *Augusta & Noble* (Adventure Stage); *Pippin* (Music Theatre Company) and *CATS* (Theo Ubiq Cabaret Theatre). Puerto Rico credits include *Spring Awakening* and *Footloose* (Black Box Theatre). Directing credits include *Strangest Things: The Musical* (Random Acts) and *Barney, the Elf* (Other Theatre Company). He is represented by Paonessa Talent Agency.

ERIC SLATER* (*Officer Nowak*) returns to the Goodman, where he previously appeared in *Feathers and Teeth*, the 2013 and 2014 productions of *Smokefall* and *Revenge of the Space Pandas* as part of the David Mamet Festival. He has worked in Chicago at Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Writers Theatre, Court Theatre and Chicago Children's Theatre, among many others. Off-Broadway credits include productions with The Public Theater, York Theatre Company, The Kitchen, Theater for the New City, The Kraine Theater and The Brick Theater. Regional work includes productions at American Repertory Theater, Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston, Grand Arts, Detroit Institute of Arts Museum, Madison Repertory Theatre and Dobama Theatre. Slater is a company member of Rivendell Theatre Ensemble. Film and television credits include *Chicago Fire* and *WIDOWS*, set for release this fall.

ELLEN FAIREY (*Playwright*) returns to Goodman Theatre, where her play *Support Group for Men* appeared in the 2016 *New Stages* Festival. She is the author of *Graceland*, which held its New York premiere as part of Lincoln Center Theater's LCT3 series and previously enjoyed an extended six-month run at Chicago's Profiles Theatre. *Graceland* was awarded the 2010 Jeff Award for Best New Work and *The New York Times* named Fairey one of their "Faces to Watch" for spring 2010. Her first play, *Girl 20*, was named

one of the top 10 plays of 2006 by the *Chicago Tribune* and nominated for two *LA Weekly* Theater Awards. Her short plays have been part of Collaboraction's Sketchbook Festival and Chicago Dramatists Saturday series, as well as Edward Albee's Last Frontier Theatre Conference in Valdez, Alaska. Fairey was a writer/producer on Showtime's *Nurse Jackie*, a co-executive producer on *Masters of Sex*, and is currently a co-executive producer on USA Network's *The Sinner*. *Support Group for Men* was originally developed at Ojai Playwrights Conference. She is a graduate of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

KIMBERLY SENIOR (*Director*) returns to Goodman Theatre, where she previously directed *Disgraced*, *Rapture*, *Blister*, *Burn* and *Support Group for Men* (New Stages Festival production). Her Chicago credits include *The Scene*, *Marjorie Prime*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Hedda Gabler*, *The Letters*, *Buried Child* (Writers Theatre, where she is a resident director); *Discord*, *4000 Miles* and *The Whipping Man* (Northlight Theatre); *Want* and *The North Plan* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); *Inana*, *My Name is Asher Lev*, *All My Sons* and *Dolly West's Kitchen* (TimeLine Theatre Company, where she is an associate artist); *Disgraced* (American Theater Company), among others. Senior directed the Broadway premiere of Ayad Akhtar's Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Disgraced*, which she previously directed off-Broadway at Lincoln Center Theater and later

at Seattle Repertory Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre and Mark Taper Forum. Her other off-Broadway credits include *Chris Gethard's Career Suicide* (produced by Judd Apatow), *Engagements* (Second Stage Theatre), *The Who and the What* (Lincoln Center Theater) and *Discord* (Primary Stages). Regional credits include *Sex with Strangers* (Geffen Playhouse), *Little Gem* (City Theatre), *Sheltered* (Alliance Theatre) and *Other Than Honorable* (Geva Theatre Center). Television credits include *Career Suicide*. She was a 2013 finalist for the SDCF Joe A. Callaway Award and the Zelda Finchandler Award. Senior is the recipient of the 2016 Special Non-Equity Jeff Award, the 2016 Alan Schneider Award (Theatre Communications Group) and the 2018 Einhorn Award (Primary Stages).
KimberlySenior.net

JACK MAGAW (*Set Design*) returns to the Goodman, where his previous credits include *Rapture, Blister, Burn*. Recent Chicago and regional credits include *The Agitators* and *Other Than Honorable* (Geva Theatre Center), *Sheltered* (Alliance Theatre), *A Flea in Her Ear* (American Players Theatre), *The Flick* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company), *Buried Child* and *East Texas Hot Links* (Writers Theatre), *The Bridges of Madison County* (Peninsula Players Theatre), *Long Day's Journey into Night* (Court Theatre), *Sweeney Todd* and *Evita* (Kansas City Repertory), *South Pacific* (Clarence Brown Theatre), *Man of La Mancha*

and *The Mousetrap* (Milwaukee Repertory Theatre) and *Oklahoma!* (TheatreWorks). He has received 11 Jeff Award nominations. Upcoming projects include *Indecent* (Arena Stage) and *Radio Golf* (Court Theatre). He lives in Chicago and teaches design at The Theatre School at DePaul University. JackMagaw.com

NOËL HUNTZINGER (*Costume Design*) returns to the Goodman, where she designed *The Wolves*, *Pamplona* and *Lottery Day*, *Twilight Bowl*, *Blue Skies Process* and *Support Group for Men* at the *New Stages* Festival. She is an artistic associate at Sideshow Theatre Company (where her credits include *truth and reconciliation*, *Stupid F**king Bird* and *Antigonick*). Huntzinger is a resident artist at Filament Theatre (credits include *The Adventures of Robin Hood*, *The Van Gogh Café*, *Pinocchio: A Folk Musical* and others) and has worked extensively with Interrobang Theatre Ensemble (credits include *North Pool*, *Really Really*, *Pitchfork Disney* and others). Huntzinger has also designed shows with Chicago Lyric Opera, Unlimited, Boise Contemporary Theatre, About Face Theatre, Pride Arts Theatre, A-Squared, Muse of Fire, Shattered Globe Theatre and Collective Theatre Ensemble. In addition to theater, she has designed pieces for choreographer Ginny Sykes (*Bodies of Memory*), Wendy Clinard (*Watershed*) and the Antony Tudor Trust (*Fandango*). She wrapped her first full-length film design for *Olympia: An Instruction Manual for*

Everything last summer. Huntzinger is from Tulsa, Oklahoma, and is a graduate of Oklahoma University.

JEN SCHRIEVER (*Lighting Design*) Goodman Theatre credits include *Rapture, Blister, Burn*. Broadway credits include *Eclipsed* and *Ghetto Klown*. Off-Broadway credits include *Dan Cody's Yacht; In the Body of the World* (Manhattan Theatre Club); *Bobbie Clearly* and *On The Exhale* (Roundabout Theatre Company); *The Amateurs* (Vineyard Theatre); *School Girls, or the African Mean Girls Play* (MCC Theatre); *Strange Interlude* (Transport Group); *...Discord* (Primary Stages); *The Moors* (Playwrights Realm); *Bright Half Life* (Women's Project); *Eclipsed, ToasT* and *A Second Chance* (The Public Theater); *Night is a Room* (Signature Theatre and *Sunset Baby* (LAByrinth Theater Company). Regional credits include *What the Constitution Means to Me* and *Angels in America* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre), as well as work with American Repertory Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Goodspeed Opera House, Studio Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, South Coast Repertory and Williamstown Theatre Festival. Opera credits include *Die Fledermaus* and *Pearl Fishers* (The Metropolitan Opera); *Faust, A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *La Traviata* (Mariinsky, Russia) and *The Pearl Fishers* (English National Opera). Schriever is an adjunct professor at Purchase College. JenSchriever.com

RICHARD WOODBURY (*Sound Designer*) is the resident sound designer at the Goodman, where his credits include music and/or sound design for *An Enemy of the People*; *Blind Date*; *Ah, Wilderness!*; *Uncle Vanya*; *2666*; *The Matchmaker*; *Soups, Stews, and Casseroles: 1976*; *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*; *The Little Foxes*; *stop. reset.*; *Rapture*; *Blister*; *Burn*; *Ask Aunt Susan*; *Luna Gale*; *Measure for Measure*; *Teddy Ferrara*; *Other Desert Cities*; *Crowns*; *Camino Real*; *A Christmas Carol*; *Red*; *God of Carnage*; *The Seagull*; *Candide*; *A True History of the Johnstown Flood*; *Hughie/Krapp's Last Tape*; *Animal Crackers*; *Magnolia*; *Desire Under the Elms*; *The Ballad of Emmett Till*; *Talking Pictures*; *The Actor*; *Rabbit Hole*; *King Lear*; *Frank's Home*; *The Dreams of Sarah Breedlove*; *A Life in the Theatre*; *Dollhouse*; *Finishing the Picture*; *Moonlight and Magnolias*; *The Goat or, Who is Sylvia?*; *Lobby Hero*; productions in the *New Stages Festival* and many others. Steppenwolf Theatre Company credits include *HIR*; *Linda Vista*; *Mary Page Marlowe*; *Slowgirl*; *Belleville*; *Middletown*; *Up*; *The Seafarer*; *August: Osage County*; *I Just Stopped By to See the Man*; *Hysteria*; *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*; *The Memory of Water*; *The Libertine* and others. Broadway credits include original music and/or sound design for *Desire Under the Elms*; *August: Osage County*; *Talk Radio*; *Long Day's Journey into Night*; *A Moon for the Misbegotten*; *Death of a Salesman* and *The Young Man*

from Atlanta. Woodbury's work has also been heard at Stratford Shakespeare Festival in Canada; London's Lyric and National theaters, in Paris and at regional theaters across the United States. Woodbury has received Jeff, Helen Hayes, Ovation and IRNE Awards for Outstanding Sound Design and the Ruth Page Award for Outstanding Collaborative. Woodbury has also composed numerous commissioned scores for dance and has performed live with the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane and Merce Cunningham Dance companies.

ISAAC GOMEZ (*Dramaturg*) is a Chicago-based playwright originally from El Paso, Texas/Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. His play *La Ruta* will receive its world premiere at Steppenwolf Theatre Company this fall. He is currently under commission from South Coast Repertory, Goodman Theatre, Actors Theatre of Louisville (Acting Apprentice New Play Commission), The Theatre School at DePaul University (Cunningham Commission for Youth Theater), Sideshow Theater Company, Steep Theatre, Albany Park Theater Project and StepUp Chicago Playwrights. His plays have been supported by Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Primary Stages, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Goodman Theatre, Victory Gardens Theater, Northlight Theatre, Albany Park Theater Project, WaterTower Theater, Haven Theater, Teatro Vista, Greenhouse Theater Center, Jackalope Theater Company, Pivot Arts, Definition Theater

Company, Broken Nose Theater, Stage Left, The VORTEX and Something Marvelous. He is the recipient of the 2017 Jeffrey Melnick New Playwright Award at Primary Stages, an inaugural 3Arts "Make A Wave" grantee, a member of the 2017/2018 Goodman Theatre's Playwrights Unit, co-creative director at the Alliance of Latinx Theatre, a resident playwright at Chicago Dramatists, an artistic associate with Victory Gardens Theater, ensemble member with Teatro Vista, artistic associate with Pivot Arts, artistic curator for Theater on the Lake 2018/2019, a steering committee member of the Latinx Theatre Commons (LTC) and a core producer with the Jubilee. He is a professional lecturer at The Theatre School at DePaul University and is represented by The Gersh Agency and Circle of Confusion.

ALDEN VASQUEZ* (*Production Stage Manager*) has stage-managed 85 productions at Goodman Theatre. His Chicago credits include 14 productions at Steppenwolf Theatre Company, including the Broadway productions of *The Song of Jacob Zulu* (also in Perth, Australia) and *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*. His regional theater credits include productions at American Theater Company, American Stage Theater Company, Arizona Theatre Company, Ford's Theatre, Madison Repertory Theatre, Manhattan Theatre Club, Northlight Theatre, Peninsula Players Theatre, Remains Theatre, Royal George Theatre, Trinity Repertory Company and the Weston Playhouse. He

teaches stage management at DePaul University, is a 33-year member of Actors' Equity Association and a U.S. Air Force veteran.

JONATHAN NOOK* (*Stage Manager*) returns to the Goodman, where he previously stage managed *An Enemy of the People*, *Ah, Wilderness!*; *Destiny of Desire*; *A Christmas Carol* and the *New Stages* Festival productions of *Twilight Bowl*, *The King of Hell's Palace* and *The Upstairs Concierge*. Chicago credits include *The Flick*, *Grand Concourse*, *This is Modern Art* (based on true events); *The Night Alive*, *Leveling Up*, *Buena Vista*, *The Drunken City*, *South of Settling*, *Want*, *Closer Than I Appear* and *No Sugar Tonight* (both featuring Jeff Garlin); *Animals Out of Paper*, *The North Plan*, *Sex with Strangers* and *Okay, Bye*. (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); *Charm* (Northlight Theatre) and *Side Man* (American Blues Theatre). He has also worked with Court Theatre, American Blues Theatre, SITI Company, The Chicago Commercial Collective, TimeLine Theatre Company, American Theater Company, Theater Wit and Chicago Dramatists, as well as serving as production manager for three seasons at Remy Bumppo Theatre Company.

ROBERT FALLS (*Goodman Theatre Artistic Director*) Most recently, Falls remounted his Lyric Opera of Chicago production of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* for the Dallas Opera.

Earlier this season, in the Goodman's Albert Theatre, he directed the world premiere of Rogelio Martinez's *Blind Date* and a new production of Henrik Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*, for which he also wrote the adaptation. This summer, in the Goodman's Owen Theatre, he will direct the return engagement of Jim McGrath's *Pamplona*, starring Stacy Keach as Ernest Hemingway. In the 2015/2016 Season, Falls directed the Chicago premiere of Rebecca Gilman's *Soups, Stews, and Casseroles: 1976*, and partnered with Goodman Playwright-in-Residence Seth Bockley to direct their world premiere adaptation of Roberto Bolaño's *2666* (Jeff Award for Best Adaptation). Recent productions also include *The Iceman Cometh* for the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Rebecca Gilman's *Luna Gale* for the Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles, *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*, 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*. 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," Falls has 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 induction into the Theater Hall of Fame.

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, 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 US theater companies); Lifeline Theatre in Rogers Park and the Arts & Business Council. 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; 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.

END OF PROGRAM