

# *Sweat*

By

**Lynn Nottage**

Directed by

**Ron OJ Parson**



# Table of Contents

Page 1 – A Note from Artistic Director Robert Falls

Page 3 – Blue-Collar Blues

Page 7 – Reading, Pennsylvania: A Brief History

Page 13 – Cast and Artist Profiles

Page 34 – About Us

# welcome

In 2009, I was thrilled when Lynn Nottage became the second African American woman to win the Pulitzer Prize for Drama for *Ruined*. A year earlier, the Goodman had commissioned and premiered the play, which depicts the plight of a group of women in the war-torn Democratic Republic of Congo. In 2017, Lynn became the first woman in history to win the prize twice— this time for *Sweat*, a fervent cri de coeur that centers around steelworkers in Reading, Pennsylvania, on the brink of losing their once-steady jobs. After premiering at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the play enjoyed a Broadway run, where The New York Times critic Ben Brantley called it "bracingly topical."

When I read the play—which toggles back and forth in time between 2000 and 2008—I thought Goodman audiences would appreciate its adroit examination of the deindustrialization of American cities, its incisive portrayal of race relations and its lively characters whose quotidian daily concerns belie the vast scope of their story.

In addition to *Ruined*, the Goodman has produced two of Lynn's other plays, both directed by Chuck Smith: *Crumbs from the Table of Joy* (2006) and *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark* (2013). In these works, Lynn used research to exhume African American history and view it through a contemporary lens. For *Sweat*, Lynn once again engaged

in extensive research, traveling to Reading and interviewing residents about their economic status and the changing landscape of their town. She found the citizens keen to speak with her, and I believe their eagerness to share their situations is evident in the play, which shimmers with heart-rending detail.

For this new production, I approached director Ron OJ Parson, a longtime resident artist at Court Theatre, who last directed at the Goodman two decades ago— 1998's *Let Me Live*. In addition to his work at Court, Ron has directed at countless theaters in Chicago—including Steppenwolf, Victory Gardens and The Onyx Theatre Ensemble, where he served as artistic director.

I am elated to welcome Lynn and Ron back to the Goodman. I am confident that this Pulitzer Prize-winning play will be as enthralling as it is thought-provoking, as we look back on the first decade of this century with the perspective of all that has happened in our nation since.

Enjoy *Sweat*,

Robert Falls

Artistic Director of Goodman Theatre

# Blue-Collar Blues

*Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Lynn Nottage explores the damage done when shrinking opportunities pit worker against worker*

By Thomas Connors

As historians often try to make clear, the us-and-them divisiveness that defines American life today did not spring full-blown from the election of 2016: our cultural discord goes back decades. And while its causes are varied, the threads of race and the economy are woven deep into the fabric of this dilemma. With *Sweat*—for which she won her second Pulitzer Prize—playwright Lynn Nottage unravels these knots and reminds us that so much of what sets us at odds is often beyond our control.

Set in a bar in blue-collar Reading, Pennsylvania (one of the poorest cities in the country), *Sweat* moves back and forth between 2000 and 2008 as it charts the achievements and defeats of residents whose lives depend upon the fortunes of a local factory. It's a rough ride, not only for the strains of the work (or the lack thereof), but for the way in which the pinch of physical and emotional hunger can gut the deepest friendships.

“The plays deals with the heartbeat of America,” says director Ron OJ Parson. “I know that sounds like an old Chevy commercial, but that's really what it is all about. It deals with all the societal issues we are dealing with

today, including drug addiction, alcoholism, racism, the loss of jobs, class.”

A resident artist at Court Theatre and a co-founder and former artistic director of The Onyx Theatre Ensemble, Parson is drawn to plays that have an historical element to them, such as the work of August Wilson, which he has directed a number of times. Although Nottage isn't diving into the deep past with *Sweat*, in the ever-accelerating age we live in, today is quickly yesterday and the present is history before we know it. “Richness of character also interests me,” notes Parson. “I like audiences to feel what's on stage—not just see it, not just hear it. I think when you have a richness of character, as you do in Lynn's plays, you're able to make people do that.”

Keith Kupferer, whose Goodman credits include appearances in Ellen Fairey's *Support Group for Men* and Yasmina Reza's *God of Carnage*, is one of the actors charged with bringing audiences into the world his character inhabits. Kupferer plays Stan, who once did factory work but is now behind the bar. “I know exactly from where my character is coming,” says the actor. “I've worked many jobs and am attuned to the blue-collar sensibility. The play may be educational to the more affluent members of the audience, but I already know the realities of how the 'other half' lives. That's why I believe this play is so important and beautiful and necessary at this point in time.”

“The blue-collar world resonates with me in a couple of different ways,” shares Steve Casillas, who plays Oscar, a Colombian-American who works in the bar while hoping for a job at the plant. “I never worked a blue-collar job quite like the characters in the play, but some of my family members have. I remember hearing their stories of 16 to 18 hour shifts. My family members have always been extremely hardworking and I believe their work ethic trickled down to me. I bartend—and I know that’s not a blue-collar job, but I’ve had my fair share of 12-hour shifts on my feet.”

Like Kupferer, Casillas thinks *Sweat* hits home in its realistic depiction and artful dissection of lives tottering on the edge. “What I love about the play is that it is a big eye-opener on how a lot of Americans live and struggle. Living here in Chicago you can be distracted by the city lifestyle. It’s easy to forget that there are small towns all over America that depend solely on work in factories. It makes brunch and cupcake shops seem extremely inessential.”

Although Nottage is fearless in exploring the social disintegration that so often trails the struggle to make ends meet, *Sweat* is a play about people, not an editorial. It may be just a play, but if an audience can “feel what’s onstage,” as Parson hopes, perhaps hearts and minds can be altered. “Theater should make us think about who we are,” asserts Parson. “Theater can change the world.”

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



# Reading, Pennsylvania: A Brief History

By Neena Arndt

Lynn Nottage sets her play *Sweat* in Reading, Pennsylvania—a once-prosperous city 48 miles northwest of Philadelphia—captivated by its early 21st century economic struggles. Reading’s story, from its earliest pre-Revolutionary beginnings to its apex in the 1930s to its current state of economic decline, mirrors that of many cities across the nation that have undergone sweeping changes in their economic landscapes.

Thomas and Richard Penn, sons of Pennsylvania founder William Penn, founded Reading in 1748, naming it after the British town from which their family hailed. Britons and Germans settled the area, with the British controlling local affairs until the Revolutionary War. The town and its surrounding region became known for manufacturing iron products—including cannons, rifles and ammunition for Washington’s troops. In the 1820s, workers completed two major canals: the Schuylkill Canal and the Union Canal, which connected Reading with Philadelphia and the Delaware and Susquehanna Rivers, allowing cargo to be transported to and from the area.

In 1833, only a few years after the canals' completion, the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad was founded, rendering the canals almost obsolete. For more than a century this railway transported coal from the Pennsylvania Coal Region to the eastern United States; though now defunct, the Reading Railroad lives on as one of the four railroads on the *Monopoly* game board.

Early in the 20th century, Reading increased in population as its industries grew; it was known at various times for manufacturing bicycles, textiles, hosiery, automobiles and pretzels, while maintaining its production of steel and other iron products. By 1930, it was a bustling city of 111,000, making it the nation's 76th largest—slightly outsizing Miami, Florida and Sacramento, California.

By the mid-20th century, some of Reading's industries were in decline and, like many cities that had once prospered on the profits of industry, it experienced a decrease in population and an increase in crime. In 1972, Hurricane Agnes caused flooding in the already struggling city: the Schuylkill River, which had once made Reading a transportation hub, overflowed its banks.

After bottoming out at 78,380 people in 1990, the population edged up due to an influx of Latinx transplants from New York City, and because Philadelphia's northwest suburbs had sprawled to the edges of Reading. By 2010, the population had rallied to just over 88,000; Hispanic or

Latinx residents made up 58.2% of the city, while African Americans comprised 13.2%.

Reading, which had maintained its German identity throughout the centuries since its founding—transformed over the course of a few decades into a diverse city. People of all races needed not only to make the cultural adjustments necessary to live peaceably together, but also to compete against one another for the relatively few jobs still available. More than 26% of the population lived below the poverty line in 2010. In 2011, The New York Times called Reading “America’s poorest city.”

It was this combustible combination of economic desperation and racial tensions that propelled Lynn Nottage to visit the city—and begin writing *Sweat*.

Neena Arndt is the resident dramaturg at Goodman Theatre.

# **Goodman Theatre**

Robert Falls, **Artistic Director**

Roche Schulfer, **Executive Director**

Presents

## ***Sweat***

By

**Lynn Nottage**

Directed by

**Ron OJ Parson**

Set Design by

**Kevin Depinet**

Costume Design by

**Mara Blumenfeld**

Lighting Design by

**Keith Parham**

Sound Design by

**Richard Woodbury**

Casting by

**Adam Belcuore, CSA**

Dramaturgy by  
**Martine Kei Green-Rogers**

Production Stage Manager

**Alden Vasquez\***

Stage Manager

**Jonathan Nook\***

Co-commissioned by Oregon Shakespeare Festival's  
"American Revolutions: The United States History  
Cycle," and Arena Stage.

World Premiere produced by the Oregon Shakespeare  
Festival.

*Sweat* was first presented in New York by The Public  
Theater.

*Sweat* was originally produced on Broadway by Stuart  
Thompson and Louise L. Gund.

Major Corporate Sponsors

**AMERICAN AIRLINES**

**JPMORGAN CHASE & CO.**

Official Lighting Sponsor

**COMED**

Production Sponsor

**CONAGRA BRANDS FOUNDATION**

Corporate Sponsor Partner  
**ITW**

# cast

**Cynthia**.....Tyla  
Abercrombie\*

**Oscar**.....Steve  
Casillas\*

**Jason**..... Mike  
Cherry

**Evan**..... Ronald L.  
Conner\*

**Jessie**.....Chaon  
Cross\*

**Tracey**..... Kirsten  
Fitzgerald\*

**Stan**.....Keith  
Kupferer\*

**Chris**..... Edgar Miguel  
Sanchez\*

**Brucie**..... André  
Teamer\*

**Assistant Director**.....  
Aaron Mays

**Fight Choreographer**.....Matt  
Hawkins

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

Understudies – Felipe Carrasco—*Jason*; Eric Gerard—*Chris*; Mierka Girten\*—*Tracey* and *Jessie*; Vincent Kracht—*Stan*; Victor Marañña—*Oscar*; Joseph Primes—*Brucie* and *Evan*; TayLar\*—*Cynthia*

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

**TYLA ABERCRUMBIE\*** (*Cynthia*) returns to Goodman Theatre, where she previously appeared in *Magnolia*. Additional Chicago credits include Victory Gardens Theater, TimeLine Theatre Company, Writers Theatre, Court Theatre, Northlight Theatre and Chicago Shakespeare Theater. Regional credits include Asolo Repertory Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Pittsburgh Public Theater, Portland Stage Company, The St. Louis Black Repertory and many others. Television credits include *Proven Innocent*, *The Chi*, *Easy*, *Chicago Med*, *Chicago P.D.* and *Shrink*, among others. Film credits include *Animator*, *Unexpected* and *Poker House*. She is a company member with TimeLine Theatre Company and the recipient of the TimeLine Theatre Company Playwrights Collective. Abercrombie holds a BA in theater from Columbia College and is a proud member of the Actors' Equity Association.

**STEVE CASILLAS\*** (*Oscar*) returns to Goodman Theatre, where he previously appeared in *Pedro Páramo*. Additional Chicago credits include the revival of The Inconvenience's *Hit The Wall* at Greenhouse Theater Center; the world premiere of *Between You, Me and the Lampshade* and *Oedipus El Rey* (Jeff Award nomination for Production, directed by Chay Yew) at Victory Gardens Theater and *Momma's Boyz* (directed by Ricardo

Gutierrez) with Teatro Vista. Television credits include *The Chi* on Showtime, *Chicago Fire* and *Chicago Med*. Casillas graduated from Columbia College Chicago with a BA in acting. He is an artistic associate with Teatro Vista.

**ANGELA MORRIS** (*Maddy*) returns to Goodman Theatre where she previously appeared in the *New Stages* Festival production of *Twilight Bowl* and understudied *Ah, Wilderness!*. Additional Chicago credits include *Hang Man* (The Gift Theatre Company), *The Hamlet Project* (The Collective) and *Horatio* (A Beautiful Fight Productions). Regional credits include *The Comedy of Errors* (The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts). Television and film credits include *Chicago Fire*, *Two in the Bush: A Love Story* and the award-winning shorts *SPACEMAN.*, *Trash* and *My Best Girl*, which she also co-wrote. Morris voices the main character (among others) in the video game *Perception* and has been heard in commercial spots, including those for Sears and Google Books.  
AngelaMorris.net

**MIKE CHERRY** (*Jason*) returns to the Goodman Theatre, where he previously appeared as Russian John in the world premiere of Cándido Tirado's *Fish Men*. He was most recently seen as Montezuma in Teatro Vista's production of *American Jornalero*. Additional Chicago credits include *Water and Power* and *Devil Land* (UrbanTheater Company), *At Home at the Zoo* (City Lit Theater Company), *Marisol* (Promethean Theatre Ensemble), *Riff Raff* (Marry-Arrchie Theatre), *Blacula*

(Pegasus Theatre Chicago), *First Class* (Theater on the Lake) and *Sonnets for an Old Century* (Garage Rep at Steppenwolf Theatre Company). Television credits include *Chicago Fire* and *Chicago Med*.

**RONALD L. CONNER\*** (*Evan*) returns to Goodman Theatre, where he previously appeared in *Father Comes Home From the Wars (Parts 1, 2 & 3)* and *A View From the Bridge*. Additional Chicago credits include *Pipeline* (Victory Gardens Theater); *Paradise Blue* (TimeLine Theatre Company); *Jitney*, *A Small Oak Tree Runs Red* and *King Hedley II* (Congo Square Theatre Company, ensemble member); *Short Shakespeare! Twelfth Night* (Chicago Shakespeare Theater); *Seven Guitars*, *The Piano Lesson* and *First Breeze of Summer* (Court Theatre). Regional credits include *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, *The Whipping Man*, *The Mountaintop* and *Macbeth* (The St. Louis Black Repertory); *Gem of the Ocean* (Ensemble Theatre Cincinnati); *Fences* (New Harmony Theatre) and *Two Trains Running* (Geva Theatre Center). Film credits include *Chasing the Blues* and *The Layover*. Television credits include *Southside*, *The Chi*, *Empire*, *Chicago P.D.*, *Chicago Med*, *Sirens* and *The Secret Santa*. Conner is represented by Paonessa Talent Agency.

**CHAON CROSS\*** (*Jessie*) makes her Goodman Theatre debut. Chicago credits include Court Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Lookingglass Theatre Company, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Northlight Theatre and

Lyric Opera of Chicago. Regional credits include Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Cleveland Play House, Theater at the Center and American Shakespeare Center. Television credits include *The Exorcist* (FOX), *Chicago Fire* (NBC), *Boss* (Starz) and *Detroit 1-8-7* (ABC). Film credits include *Widows* and *My Dog Skip*.

**KIRSTEN FITZGERALD\*** (*Tracey*) makes her Goodman Theatre debut. She is a proud member of the artistic ensemble at A Red Orchid Theatre, where she has also served as Artistic Director since 2008. In addition to her work at A Red Orchid (*Traitor*, *Abigail's Party*, *The Sea Horse*), she has been seen on stage at Victory Gardens Theater (*Lettie*, *Appropriate*), Steppenwolf Theater Company (*Mary Page Marlowe*, *The Qualms*, *Clybourne Park*) as well as Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Remy Bumppo Theatre Company, Shattered Globe Theatre, Plasticene and Defiant Theatre, among others. Television credits include *The Exorcist*, *Sirens*, *Chicago Med*, *Chicago Justice*, *Chicago Fire*, *Underemployed* and *ER*. Film credits include *Widows*, *Killing Eleanor* and *Working Man*.

**KEITH KUPFERER\*** (*Stan*) returns to Goodman Theatre, where he previously appeared in *Support Group for Men* (Jeff nomination for Ensemble), *God of Carnage* and *Passion Play*. He is a founding member of Rivendell Theatre Ensemble, where he was most recently seen in *The Cake* and *Cal in Camo* (2018 Jeff Award for Supporting Actor). Additional recent Chicago credits

include *The Mystery of Love and Sex* (Jeff nomination for Supporting Actor) and *Death of a Streetcar Named Virginia Wolf* at Writer's Theatre; *The Qualms*, *Good People* and *Middletown* at Steppenwolf Theatre Company; the world premiere of *The Humans* at American Theater Company; *Hillary and Clinton*, *Never the Sinner* and *Appropriate* at Victory Gardens Theater; *Gypsy* at Chicago Shakespeare Theater; *The Legend of Georgia McBride* at Northlight Theatre; *Big Lake*, *Big City* and *Trust* at Lookingglass Theatre Company. Film credits include *Widows*, *Monuments*, *The Dilemma*, *Dark Knight*, *Public Enemies*, *The Express*, *Stranger Than Fiction*, *Road to Perdition*, *Finding Santa*, *Fred Klaus*, *The Last Rights of Joe May* and *The Merry Gentleman* (directed by Michael Keaton). Television credits include *The Chi*, *Proven Innocent*, *Better Call Saul*, *Empire*, *Chicago P.D.*, *Betrayal*, *Crisis*, *Chicago Fire* and *Detroit 1-8-7*.

**EDGAR MIGUEL SANCHEZ\*** (*Chris*) returns to Goodman Theatre, where he previously appeared in *stop. reset*. Additional Chicago credits include *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet in the Park*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Twelfth Night* (Chicago Shakespeare Theater); *In The Next Room* (TimeLine Theatre Company); *Water by the Spoonful* and *Native Son* (Court Theatre) and *The Wheel* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company). Regional credits include *Fences* (American Theater Company, Indiana Repertory Theatre and Milwaukee Repertory Theater); the title role in *Hamlet* (GableStage); *Twelfth Night*, *Richard III*, *Troilus and Cressida* and *The Admirable Crichton* (American Players

Theatre) and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Othello* and *The Comedy of Errors* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival). Television and film credits include *Sense8*, *Chicago P.D.* and *Blueprint*.

**ANDRÉ TEAMER\*** (*Brucie*) returns to Goodman Theatre, where he previously understudied for *Objects in the Mirror* and *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window*. Additional Chicago credits include *Sucker Punch* (Victory Gardens Theater); *Stick Fly* (Windy City Playhouse); *Ruined* (Jeff nomination for Actor in a Principal Role, Eclipse Theatre Company); *Jitney* and *Wait Until Dark* (Court Theatre); *WELL* and *Luck of the Irish* (Next Theatre Company); *The Last Dancer Standing*, *The Trial of Moses Fleetwood Walker* and *The WVON Radio Story* (Black Ensemble Theater); *Martin Furey's Shot* and *Weekend* (TimeLine Theatre); *Hope VI* (Chicago Dramatists); *Black Diamond* (Lookingglass Theatre Company), *Pantomime* (Jeff nomination for Actor in a Principal Role, Pegasus Players) and *Warm on the Coolin' Board* (MPAACT). Television and film credits include *The Christmas Tree*, *Love Shorts*, *Market Value*, *The Playboy Club*, *Chicago P.D.*, *Chicago Med* and *Empire*. Teamer majored in speech and performing arts at Northeastern Illinois University. He is represented by Paonessa Talent.

**LYNN NOTTAGE** (*Playwright*) is the first woman in history to win two Pulitzer Prizes for Drama. Her plays have been produced widely in the United States and throughout the world. *Sweat* (Pulitzer Prize, Obie Award, Susan Smith

Blackburn Prize, Tony Award nomination, Drama Desk Award nomination) moved to Broadway after a sold-out run at The Public Theater. It premiered and was commissioned by Oregon Shakespeare Festival American Revolutions History Cycle/Arena Stage. Her other plays include *By The Way, Meet Vera Stark* (Lilly Award, Drama Desk Nomination), *Ruined* (Pulitzer Prize, OBIE, Lucille Lortel, New York Drama Critics' Circle, Audelco, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Awards), *Intimate Apparel* (American Theatre Critics and New York Drama Critics' Circle Awards for Best Play), *Fabulation, or The Re-Education of Undine* (OBIE Award), *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*, *Las Meninas*, *Mud, River, Stone*, *Por'knockers* and *POOF!* In addition, she is working with composer Ricky Ian Gordon on adapting her play *Intimate Apparel* into an opera (commissioned by The Metropolitan Opera/Lincoln Center Theater). She is also developing *This is Reading*, a performance installation based on two years of interviews, which opened at the Franklin Street, Reading Railroad Station in Reading, PA in July 2017. She is currently an artist-in-residence at the Park Avenue Armory. She is the co-founder of the production company Market Road Films, whose most recent projects include *The Notorious Mr. Bout* directed by Tony Gerber and Maxim Pozdorovkin (premiere at Sundance Film Festival 2014), *First to Fall* directed by Rachel Beth Anderson (premiere at International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam, 2013) and *Remote Control* (premiere at Busan International Film Festival 2013, New Currents



Award). She has also developed original projects for HBO, Sidney Kimmel Entertainment, Showtime, This is That and Harpo. She is writer/producer on the Netflix series *She's Gotta Have It* directed by Spike Lee. Nottage is the recipient of a MacArthur Fellowship, Steinberg Distinguished Playwright Award, PEN/Laura Pels Master Playwright Award, Arts and Letters Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Columbia University Provost Grant, Doris Duke Artist Award, The Joyce Foundation Commission Project & Grant, Madge Evans and Sidney Kingsley Award, Nelson A. Rockefeller Award for Creativity, The Dramatists Guild Hull-Warriner Award, the inaugural Horton Foote Prize, Helen Hayes Award, the Lee Reynolds Award and the Jewish World Watch iWitness Award. Her other honors include the National Black Theatre Fest's August Wilson Playwriting Award, a Guggenheim Grant, Lucille Lortel Fellowship and Visiting Research Fellowship at Princeton University. She is a graduate of Brown University and the Yale School of Drama. She is also an associate professor in the theater Department at Columbia School of the Arts. Nottage is a board member for BRIC Arts Media Bklyn, Donor Direct Action, Dramatist Play Service, Second Stage and the Dramatists Guild. She recently completed a three-year term as an Artist Trustee on the Board of the Sundance Institute. She is member of the The Dramatists Guild and WGAE.

**RON OJ PARSON** (*Director*) returns to Goodman Theatre, where he previously directed *Let Me Live*. As an

actor, he last appeared at the Goodman in *Romance*. He is a resident artist at Court Theatre, and former co-founder and artistic director of The Onyx Theatre Ensemble. Recent directing credits include *Skeleton Crew* and *Detroit 67* at Northlight Theatre; *Fences* at Kansas City Repertory Theatre; *Five Guys Named Moe*, *Gem of the Ocean*, *Seven Guitars*, *The Mountaintop*, *Waiting For Godot* and *Radio Golf* at Court Theatre; *East Texas Hot Links* and *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* at Writers Theatre (where he is an associate artist); *Paradise Blue*, *A Raisin in the Sun* and *Sunset Baby* at TimeLine Theatre Company (where he is a company member), *Apt. 3A* at Windy City Playhouse and *The Who & The What* at Victory Gardens Theater. Additional Chicago credits include Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Black Ensemble Theater, ETA Creative Arts, Congo Square Theatre Company, Teatro Vista (associate artist), Chicago Dramatists, UrbanTheater Company, Chicago Theatre Company, American Blues Theater and City Lit Theater. Regional and New York credits include Virginia Stage Company, Paul Robeson Theatre, Portland Stage, Studio Theatre, Studio Arena Theatre, Roundabout Theatre Company, Morris A. Mechanic Theatre, Baltimore Center Stage, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, The St. Louis Black Repertory, Pittsburgh Public Theater, Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre Company, Geva Theatre Center, Signature Theatre (New York), Alliance Theatre, South Coast Repertory and Pasadena Playhouse. In Canada, he directed the world premiere of *Palmer Park* at the Stratford Festival. Parson

is a member of AEA, SAG-AFTRA and SDC. Parson hails from Buffalo, New York and is a graduate of the University of Michigan's professional theater program.

RonojParson.com

**KEVIN DEPINET** (*Set Designer*) returns to Goodman Theatre, where he previously designed scenery for *The Santaland Diaries*; *Pamplona*; *Soups, Stews and Casseroles: 1976*; *Carlyle*; *Feathers and Teeth*; *Smokefall*; *Brigadoon*; *The Iceman Cometh* and New Stages Festival productions of *There's Always the Hudson*, *Felons & Familias* and *Graveyard Shift*. 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.

**MARA BLUMENFELD** (*Costume Designer*) returns to Goodman Theatre, where she previously designed *Brigadoon*, *The Jungle Book*, *The White Snake*, *Candide*, *Mirror of the Invisible World*, *Pericles*, *Silk*, *The Trojan*

*Women, Galileo Galilei, The Odyssey, Dollhouse, House & Garden, Griller and Oedipus Complex.* Additional Chicago credits include Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Writers Theatre, Court Theatre and Lookingglass Theatre Company, where she is an ensemble member. New York credits include Mary Zimmerman's *Metamorphoses* (Second Stage Theater/Circle in the Square Theatre); *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci* (Second Stage Theater); *Measure for Measure* (New York Shakespeare Festival/Public Theater) and *Rusalka, Lucia di Lammermoor* and *La Sonnambula* (The Metropolitan Opera). Her work has been seen at regional theaters across North America and internationally in the UK, France, Italy, Australia and Japan. Blumenfeld is the recipient of four Jeff Awards and was the 2012 recipient of the Michael Merritt Award for Excellence in Design and Collaboration.

**KEITH PARHAM** (*Lighting Designer*) returns to Goodman Theatre, where past credits include *Father Comes Home From the Wars (Parts 1, 2 & 3), The Wolves, Uncle Vanya, stop. reset., Ask Aunt Susan, Venus in Fur, Teddy Ferrara, Sweet Bird of Youth, Red, Mary, The Seagull* and *A Christmas Carol*. Broadway credits include *Therese Raquin* (Roundabout Theatre Company). Off-Broadway credits include *Man from Nebraska* (2econd Stage Theater), *The Purple Lights of Joppa Illinois* and *Between Riverside and Crazy* (Atlantic Theater Company), *Tribes* and *Red Light Winter* (Barrow Street Theatre), Karen O's Opera *Stop the Virgens* (St. Ann's Warehouse/Sydney

Opera House), *Ivanov* and *Three Sisters* (Classic Stage Company), *A Minister's Wife* (Lincoln Center Theater) and *Adding Machine A Musical* (Minetta Lane Theatre).

Parham's credits at The Utopian Theatre Asylum include *The Edge of Our Bodies* and *Gentle*; he is also a company member. He has received Obie and Lucille Lortel Awards.

**RICHARD WOODBURY** (*Sound Designer*) is the resident sound designer at Goodman Theatre, where credits include original music and/or sound design for *Support Group for Men*; *An Enemy of the People*; *Blind Date*; *Ah, Wilderness!*; *Uncle Vanya*; *2666* and many others.

Additional recent Chicago credits include *HIR* and *Linda Vista* at Steppenwolf Theatre Company and *Smart People* and *The Scene* at Writers Theatre. Woodbury's work has also been featured on Broadway, internationally and at regional theaters across the United States. He has received Jeff, Helen Hayes, Ovation and IRNE Awards for Outstanding Sound Design and the Ruth Page Award for Outstanding Collaborative Artist.

**MARTINE KEI GREEN-ROGERS** (*Dramaturg*) is an assistant professor at The State University of New York New Paltz, a freelance dramaturg and the president of the Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas.

Green-Rogers' dramaturgical credits include work with Court Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Louisville Orchestra, Pioneer Theatre Company, Plan-B Theatre Company, Classical Theatre Company and CATCO.

**ALDEN VASQUEZ\*** (*Production Stage Manager*) has stage managed over 85 productions at Goodman Theatre, including 29 productions of *A Christmas Carol*. 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 Theatre 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 Theatre Company. He teaches stage management at DePaul University, is a 34-year member of Actors' Equity Association and a U.S. Air Force veteran.

**JONATHAN NOOK\*** (*Stage Manager*) returns to Goodman Theatre, where he previously stage managed *Support Group for Men; An Enemy of the People; Ah, Wilderness!; Destiny of Desire; A Christmas Carol* and the New Stages Festival productions of *Felons and Families, Twilight Bowl, The King of Hell's Palace* and *The Upstairs Concierge*. Chicago credits include work with Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Northlight Theatre, American Blues Theater, Court Theatre, American Blues Theater, SITI Company, Chicago Commercial Collective, TimeLine Theatre Company, American Theater Company, Theater Wit and Chicago Dramatists.

**ROBERT FALLS** (*Goodman Theatre Artistic Director*)

Most recently, Falls directed the world premiere of David Cale's *We're Only Alive for A Short Amount of Time, Pamplona*, and remounted his Lyric Opera of Chicago production of *Don Giovanni* for the Dallas Opera. In the Goodman's 2017/2018 Albert Season, 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. 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, 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.

Goodman Theatre thanks the following individuals for their generous support!

**The Edith-Marie Appleton Foundation/ Albert and Maria Goodman**

**Roger and Julie Baskes**

**Joan and Robert Clifford**

**David and Alexandra Fox**

**Kimbra and Mark Walter 2018-2019 Season Sponsors**

**Carol Prins and John Hart 2018-2019 Albert Season  
Sponsors**

**Denise Gamble Education Sponsor**

# 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: Brian Dennehy, Rebecca Gilman, Henry Godinez, Dael Orlandersmith, Steve Scott, Chuck Smith, Regina Taylor, Henry Wishcamper and Mary Zimmerman. David W. Fox, Jr. is Chair 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.