

PEARL CLEAGE FESTIVAL



THEATRE
GOODMAN

WELCOME

Welcome to Goodman Theatre's Pearl Cleage Festival! We are thrilled to offer the city of Chicago 10 of Cleage's written works and other special events over four weeks, works from her massive catalog spanning over fifty years. Pearl once mentioned that there was not one play she's written that hadn't been produced. Yes, she's that good. Her gift has provided endless opportunities for Black women designers, actors, directors, producers and educators through her work that centers the Black woman and yet appeals and can be enjoyed by everyone.

Earlier this year, Goodman's Artistic Director Susan Booth introduced me to Pearl and I felt like I was meeting a queen. I was a nervous wreck, but I soon saw how human she was, how much she loves theater and anyone who dares to make it, how she believes in the power and impact of art and that writing is her gift to the world. I hope that you experience as much of the festival as you can, that you learn more about Pearl than you did before, that you help us celebrate the amazing talents of Chicago artists who bring her words alive, that you engage, support and visit our partners who helped make this festival a citywide event: Black Ensemble Theater, Congo Square Theatre, eta Creative Arts Foundation, MPAACT, Definition Theatre, Chicago West Community Music Center and Remy Bumpo. I am continually amazed by the wealth of riches Chicago has in these arts organizations who demonstrate the power of collaboration, amplify local artists and commit to ushering in new generations of leaders and artists.

I would like to take this time to acknowledge the tremendous work of the team that worked tirelessly to make the festival happen: Jenny Gargaro, Lena Romano, Kelcey Anyá, Jamal Howard, Chuck Smith, Willa Taylor and the rest of the amazing staff at Goodman. Goodman Theatre's commitment to producing excellent theater is evident in the passion and dedication of it's staff, leadership and supporters.



A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'M. Stampley', written in a cursive style.

Malkia Stampley
BOLD Artistic Producer
for Goodman Theatre

PEARL CLEAGE FESTIVAL

A CITYWIDE CELEBRATION

Readings

Bourbon at the Border

Directed by Lauren Wells-Mann
September 19 at 7:30pm
MPAACT at Greenhouse Theater Center

Pointing at the Moon

Directed by Lydia R. Diamond
September 28 at 7pm
Goodman Theatre

Chain

Reading + Art Exhibit
Directed by Ted Williams III
October 6 at 7pm
eta Creative Arts Foundation

Angry, Raucous and Shamelessly Gorgeous

Directed by Ericka Ratcliff
October 8 at 2pm
Congo Square Theatre

A Song for Coretta

Directed by Malkia Stampley
Definition Theatre

What I Learned in Paris

Directed by TaRon Patton
October 14 at 6pm
Goodman Theatre

Special Events

R. Blues for an Alabama Sky

Directed by Mikael Burke
Through October 15
Remy Bumppo Theatre Company at Theater Wit

"Chicago's Black Jewels" Reception

September 16 at 6pm
Goodman Theatre

DIVINE 9 Night Reception

September 23 at 6pm
Goodman Theatre

In Conversation with Pearl Cleage: Playwright, Poet and Author

September 26 at 6pm
Remy Bumppo Theatre Company and American Writers Museum

Poetry and Music: Mad at Miles

Directed by Daryl D. Brooks
October 2, 6pm (reception) and 7pm (performance featuring
Chicago West Community Music Center)
Black Ensemble Theater

Plus writing workshops and more!

PEARL CLEAGE FESTIVAL PARTNERS:



CHICAGO WEST
COMMUNITY
MUSIC CENTER



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THEATRE



REMY BUMPPO
think theatre

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GOODMAN THEATRE

Susan V. Booth
Artistic Director

Roche Schulfer
Executive Director/CEO

presents

POINTING AT THE MOON

By
Pearl Cleage

Directed by
Lydia R. Diamond

CAST

Jenny..... **Celeste Williams***

Isabel..... **J. Nicole Brooks***

Stage Directions..... **Ariya Hawkins**

ADDITIONAL STAFF

Production Assistants: **Danielle Roos** and
Caroline Michele Uy

For a list of additional staff members, please visit
Goodmantheatre.org/About/People-at-Goodman/

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 and the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events.

Goodman Theatre is a constituent of the Theatre Communications Group, Inc., the national service organization of nonprofit theaters; the League of Resident Theatres; the Illinois Arts Alliance and the American Arts Alliance; the League of Chicago Theatres; and the Illinois Theatre Association.

Goodman Theatre operates under agreements between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States; the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, Inc., an independent national labor union; the 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.

PROFILES



CELESTE WILLIAMS (*Jenny*) most recently appeared in Court Theatre's production of *Arsenic and Old Lace*. In Chicago, Celeste has also performed at Goodman Theatre, Northlight Theatre, Victory Gardens Theater, Next Theatre, Onyx Theatre Ensemble, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, and Writers Theatre.



J. NICOLE BROOKS, *she/they* (*Isabel*) is an award winning actor, writer, director, and educator based in Chicago. Brooks' writing practice includes playwriting, screenwriting, essays, and poetry. As a theatre artist Brooks is an ensemble member and Mellon Foundation Playwright in Residence at the Tony

Award winning Lookingglass Theatre Company. Film and TV credits include *Candyman* (Say My Name) and guest recurring roles on *Chicago Fire*, *Fargo*, *South Side*, *The Chi* and *Power: Force*.



ARIYA HAWKINS (*Stage Directions*) works as an actor, singer and teaching artist throughout the city of Chicago. Recent Chicago credits include *Haven* (Outer Loop Theater Experience); *A Hit Dog Will Holler* (Artemisia Theatre); *Shut Up Kiss Me* (PrideArts). Touring credits: *A*

Raisin in the Sun and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Olney Theatre Center, National Players). Regional credits include *The Bikinis*, *The Queen Bees* and *Vanities: The Musical* (Canterbury Summer Theatre).

PEARL CLEAGE (*Playwright*) is currently the Distinguished Artist in Residence at Atlanta's Tony Award winning Alliance Theatre. Her new play *Angry, Raucous, and Shamelessly Gorgeous*, had its world premiere as a part of the theatre's 50th anniversary season in 2019 and recently completed a successful run at Hartford Stage. Both productions were directed by Susan V. Booth. Her other plays premiered at the Alliance include *What I Learned in Paris*, *Blues for an Alabama Sky*, and *Flyin' West*. Cleage's latest play *Something Moving: A Meditation on Maynard* was commissioned by Ford Theatre's Lincoln Legacy Project and will be produced at Ford's Theatre in the fall of 2023. Her first of 8 novels, *What Looks Like Crazy On An Ordinary Day*, was an Oprah Book Club pick and spent nine weeks on the New York Times bestseller list. Ms. Cleage currently serves as Atlanta's first Poet Laureate.

LYDIA R. DIAMOND (*Director*) is an award-winning playwright whose work includes *The Gift Horse* (2002 premier at Goodman Theatre), *Toni Stone* (2019 premiere at Roundabout Theatre Company); *Smart People*; *Stick Fly* (Broadway run at Cort Theatre); *Voyeurs de Venus*; *Harriet Jacobs* and *The Bluest Eye*. Her work has been performed at Congo Square, Steppenwolf Theatre, Arena Stage, Company One and Huntington Theatre Company. Diamond has been a W. E. B. DuBois Institute Fellow at Harvard, a Sundance Playwright Lab Creative Advisor, a Harvard Radcliffe Institute Fellow, a Sally B. Goodman Fellow, and a National Endowment for the Arts/Theatre Communications Group playwright. She was a consulting producer and co-writer for Showtime's 4th season of *The Affair* and nominated for a Writer's Guild Award for Best Drama Episode. She has also written for projects on HBO and Hulu. She sits on the Dramatists Guild Legal Defense Fund board and is on faculty at University of Illinois at Chicago.

SUSAN V. BOOTH (*Goodman Theatre Artistic Director*) joined Goodman Theatre in the fall of 2022, having previously served as Artistic Director of Atlanta's Tony Award-winning Alliance Theatre, premiering new work that went on to national, international and commercial life. She has directed at the Goodman, Hartford Stage, Ford's Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, St. Louis Repertory Theatre, Cincinnati Playhouse, New York Stage and Film, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Northlight Theatre, Victory Gardens, Court Theatre and others. She has held teaching positions at Northwestern, DePaul and Emory Universities. She is past president of the Board of Directors for the Theatre Communications Group, the national service organization for the field.

ROCHE EDWARD SCHULFER (*Goodman Theatre Executive Director/CEO*) became executive director in 1980. He has produced more than 400 plays, initiated the Goodman's annual production of *A Christmas Carol*, and oversaw the theater's relocation to the North Loop in 2000. Schulfer has served in leadership roles with numerous theater and arts advocacy groups, including being a founder of the League of Chicago Theatres. He has been recognized for his work by a wide variety of media, civic, and arts organizations including an Honorary Doctorate from North Central College. He has taught at DePaul, Southern Methodist, and his alma mater Notre Dame. Schulfer has presented his study on the economics of the performing arts at theaters and organizations around the country. He is a lifelong Chicago area resident.

ABOUT GOODMAN THEATRE

AMERICA'S "BEST REGIONAL THEATRE" (*Time* magazine), the Goodman is a premier not-for-profit organization distinguished by the excellence and scope of its artistic programming and civic engagement. Led by Artistic Director Susan V. Booth and Executive Director/CEO Roche Schulfer and committed to core values of Quality, Diversity and Community, the Goodman makes inclusion the fabric of the organization through its artistic priorities—including new play development, large scale musical theater works and reimagined classics. Distinctions include two Pulitzer Prizes, 22 Tony Awards and nearly 200 Jeff Awards. The Goodman was first to produce all 10 plays in August Wilson's "American Century Cycle," and its annual *A Christmas Carol*, now in its fifth decade, has created a new generation of theatergoers. The Goodman also serves as a production partner with local, national and international companies.

Our nationally recognized Education and Engagement programs use the tools of our profession to inspire youth, lifelong learners and audiences to find and/or enhance their voices, stories and abilities. The Alice Rapoport Center for Education and Engagement (est. 2016) is the home of such programming, most offered free of charge, and has vastly expanded the theater's ability to serve our city (with 85% of youth participants from underserved communities).

Goodman Theatre was founded by William O. Goodman and family in honor of their son, Kenneth, a figure in Chicago's early 1900s cultural renaissance. The family's legacy endures through Albert Ivar Goodman who, with his late mother, Edith-Marie Appleton, contributed the funds for the new Goodman center in 2000. Today, Goodman leadership also includes the distinguished members of the Artistic Collective. Jeff Hesse is Chairman of Goodman Theatre's Board of Trustees, Fran Del Boca is Women's Board President and Craig McCaw is President of the Scenemakers Board for young professionals.