

PEARL CLEAGE FESTIVAL



THEATRE
GOODMAN

WELCOME

Welcome to Goodman Theatre's Pearl Cleage Festival! We are thrilled to offer the city of Chicago nine 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 its 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 BUMPPPO
think theatre

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GOODMAN THEATRE

Susan V. Booth
Artistic Director

Roche Schulfer
Executive Director/CEO

presents

WHAT I LEARNED IN PARIS

By
Pearl Cleage

Directed by
TaRon Patton

CAST

J.P. Madison.....**James Vincent Meredith***

Ann Madison**Kierra Bunch***

Lena Jefferson.....**Anji White***

John Nelson.....**Anthony Irons***

Eve Madison.....**Shanesia Davis***

Stage Directions **Matty Robinson**

ADDITIONAL STAFF

Production Assistants: **Danielle Roos, Jamal Howard**

Casting: **Lauren Port, CSA**

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



JAMES VINCENT MEREDITH* (*J.P. Madison*) Goodman credits include *Lottery Day* and *A Raisin in the Sun*. Other Chicago theater credits: *Steppenwolf* (ensemble member), *Court*, *Chicago Shakespeare*, *Writers and Lookingglass*. Broadway: *Superior Donuts* (Music Box); *The Minutes* (Studio 54); *Book of Mormon* (Eugene O'Neill); *The Skin of Our Teeth* (Lincoln Center). National tour: *Book of Mormon*. TV: *BOSS*; *Chicago Med*; *Chicago Fire*; *Betrayal*; *Empire*; *Fargo*; *Your Honor*.



KIERRA BUNCH* (*Ann Madison*) was most recently seen in *Measure of Measure* (Chicago Shakespeare); *Two Trains Running* (Court Theater); *White* (Definition Theater); *Seven Guitars* (Milwaukee Rep and Cincinnati Playhouse). She can currently be seen on HBO's *Southside*. Other TV credits include: *Shameless*; *Chicago Med* and *Empire*.



ANJI WHITE* (*Lena Jefferson*) Hailing from the south side of Chicago, White's Chicago theater credits include: *For Colored Girls* (Court Theatre); Chicago's premiere of *Sunset Baby* (TimeLine Theatre); world premiere of *To Catch a Fish* (TimeLine Theatre); U.S. premiere of *The Last Wife* (TimeLine Theatre); world premiere of *The Project(s)* (ATC) and many more.



ANTHONY IRONS* (*John Nelson*) *The Notebooks of Leonardo DaVinci*, *Support Group For Men*, *Two Trains Running* (Goodman Theatre); *Steadfast Tin Soldier*, *Treasure Island* (Lookingglass Theatre); *Welcome to Matteson*, *Day of Absence* (Director), *King Hedley II* (Congo Square Theatre); *How to Use a Knife* (Shattered Globe Theatre); *Waiting for Godot* (Court Theatre). Film/TV: *Southside*; *Empire*; *Chicago Med*; *Chicago Fire*; *Let's Go to Prison*. Irons is the creator of *The BLACKSiDE*.



SHANESIA DAVIS* (*Eve Madison*) is an award winning, NAACP and Jeff nominated actress who has graced Chicago and regional stages since 1992. She is a proud member of SAG/AFTRA and AEA unions.



MATTY ROBINSON, he/him (*Stage Directions*) Theatrical credits include *Toni Stone* (Goodman Theatre); *Is God Is* (A Red Orchid Theatre); *The Ugly One*, *The Martyrdom of Peter Ohey* (Trap Door Theatre); *Back in the Day* (Urban Theatre Company); *I & You*, *The African Company Presents Richard III*, *Taming of the Shrew* (Oak Park Festival Theatre); *Cyrano* (BoHo Theatre). Other credits include *PIMPROV* (Chicago, Michigan, Thailand); *Romeo & Juliet*; *Macbeth* (A Crew of Patches). Film and Television credits include *South Side* (HBO Max).

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.

TARON PATTON (*Director*) Directing: *The Billboard* (16th Street Theater); *"N"* (Greenhouse Theatre); *Saturday Night, Sunday Morning* (Steppenwolf Garage Rep); *Bulrusher, Nativity Tribute* (Congo Square Theatre). Acting: *Meet Vera Stark* (Goodman Theater); *Your Honor Mayor Byrne* (Lookingglass Theater). TV: *The Chi; Empire*.

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.