CONTACT: Denise Schneider/Ata Younan **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** 312.443.5151 or [Press@GoodmanTheatre.org](mailto:Press@GoodmanTheatre.org)  **JANUARY 24, 2024**

**GOODMAN THEATRE’S BOARD OF TRUSTEES NAMES JOHN COLLINS AS THE THEATER’S NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FOLLOWING HIS LONGTIME LEADERSHIP AS GOODMAN MANAGING DIRECTOR/COO**

**\*\*\*OVER NEARLY TWO DECADES IN GOODMAN SENIOR LEADERSHIP, COLLINS NEGOTIATED FIVE BROADWAY TRANSFERS, PRODUCED AN UNPRECEDENTED SERIES OF LIVE VIRTUAL PROGRAMS, HELPED OPEN THE**

**$15 MILLION ALICE RAPOPORT CENTER FOR EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT, AND MORE\*\*\***

(Chicago, IL) Today, Goodman Theatre’s Board of Trustees announced that **John Collins** will become the theater’s new Executive Director, beginning September 1, 2024. For the past 17 years, Collins has served as a Goodman senior leader—first in General Management (2008-2019) and currently as Managing Director/COO, in which capacity he provides daily direction and guidance to the senior leadership team (finance, management, marketing, communications, development, production and human resources) and manages the theater’s annual budget of approximately $23M, working closely with the CFO and department heads. His appointment follows Executive Director/CEO **Roche Schulfer**, who has announced his retirement after 50 years.

Goodman Theatre Board of Trustees Chair **Julie Danis** and Board President **Linda Coberly** said in a joint statement, “At the heart of this appointment is the Board’s belief that John is exactly the right person at the right time. John enters the role with tremendous leadership and management skills, having trained under the best in the industry—including our own Roche Schulfer. And over the past year, he has developed a highly productive and collaborative relationship with Artistic Director Susan Booth. We are excited to see where Susan's vision and John's expertise will take the Goodman as it enters its second century."

Collins has overseen numerous production transfers to Broadway, regional and international venues and tours of Goodman productions, including *The Who’s TOMMY*; *Good Night, Oscar*; *War Paint*, *Desire Under the Elms*; and *Chinglish* (Broadway); *The Iceman Cometh* New York/BAM; *Th*e *White Snake* (China), *Luna Gale* (Los Angeles). He also helped open the Alice Rappaport Center for Education & Engagement at Goodman Theatre—including the successful completion of a $15 million campaign to build out a 10,000 square foot center for expanded programming and activities.

“It’s an enormous honor to step into this role to realize Susan Booth’s distinguished creative vision; to support our world-class artists; to foster meaningful collaboration with our three dedicated Boards and extraordinary staff; and, most importantly, to deliver the best possible productions and programs for our community,” said **John Collins**. “We’re at a moment of possibility in our industry—a time of new ideas and unprecedented opportunity. The Goodman will meet this moment and forge our success as we always have—by letting our values and artistry lead the way. I’m grateful to Julie, Linda and our Board of Trustees for their support, and I look forward to our work ahead.”

Working in partnership with Artistic Director **Susan V. Booth**, Collins as Executive Director will oversee the fiscal and producorial responsibilities that support her creative vision for Chicago’s oldest and largest not-for-profit theater company. Said Booth, “Over the past year, I have experienced John as a seasoned administrative leader who is deeply valued by our staff, our artists and by our national peers. He is a salt-of-the-earth good human with whom I truly enjoy working, and with whom I look forward to writing the theater’s next chapter.”

Collins is a past Chairman and current board member of the League of Chicago Theaters, and a board member of the Chicago Loop Alliance and the League of Resident Theatres (LORT).

"It’s so important to have a leader with the wisdom, care, allyship and advocacy for our industry that John possesses,” said **Marissa Lynn Jones**, Executive Director of the League of Chicago Theaters. “John embodies the energy, engagement, experience and expertise that is needed in this unique time where theater is evolving—and specifically within the Chicago community where we are making change and taking risks."

During the pandemic shutdown, Collins enabled successful virtual programs and events—including a series of live, fully-realized productions simulcast from Goodman’s Owen Theatre—keeping the theater connected with its donors and patrons and reducing attrition. Also, during that time, in his capacity as Chairman of the Board of the League of Chicago Theatres, Collins worked with cross-sector stakeholders to establish a $100,000 emergency relief fund for out-of-work artists and technicians. He was also key to the launch of an extensive strategic planning process specific to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access and Anti-racism (IDEAA) including artists, staff, Board and other key stakeholders, resulting in the creation of Goodman’s IDEAA Plan, and ensuring alignment on values and priorities among Board, staff and artists.

“I could not be happier about the promotion of John Collins to Executive Director for Goodman Theatre. For 20 years, John has always demonstrated genuine love and commitment to supporting artists and their creative visions. For me, personally, John was instrumental in the success of the Goodman’s Latino Theatre—making even the most challenging international collaborations a joyous creative venture. The future for Goodman could not be in better hands,” said Goodman Resident Artistic Associate **Henry Godinez**.

**ABOUT GOODMAN THEATRE**

Chicago’s theater since 1925, **Goodman Theatre** is a not-for-profit arts and community organization in the heart of the Loop, distinguished by the excellence and scope of its artistic programming and community engagement. Led by Artistic Director **Susan V. Booth** and Executive Director/CEO **Roche Schulfer**, the theater’s artistic priorities include new play development (more than 150 world or American premieres), large scale musical theater works and reimagined classics. Artists and productions have earned two Pulitzer Prizes, 22 Tony Awards and more than 160 Jeff Awards, among other accolades.

The Goodman is the first theater in the world to produce all 10 plays in August Wilson’s “American Century Cycle.” Its longtime annual holiday tradition *A Christmas Carol*, now in its fifth decade, has created a new generation of theatergoers in Chicago. The Goodman also frequently serves as a production and program partner with national and international companies and Chicago’s Off-Loop theaters.

Using the tools of theatrical practice, the Goodman’s Education and Engagement programs aim to develop generations of citizens who understand and empathize with cultures and stories of diverse voices. The Goodman’s Alice Rapoport Center for Education and Engagement is the home of these programs, which are offered for Chicago youth—85% of whom come from underserved communities—schools and life-long learners.

Goodman Theatre was built on the traditional homelands of the Council of the Three Fires: the Ojibwe, Odawa and Potawatomi Nations. We recognize that many other Nations consider the area we now call Chicago as their traditional homeland—including the Myaamia, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Sac and Fox, Peoria, Kaskaskia, Wea, Kickapoo and Mascouten—and remains home to many Native peoples today. While we believe that our city’s vast diversity should be reflected on the stages of its largest theater, we acknowledge that our efforts have largely overlooked the voices of our Native peoples. This omission has added to the isolation, erasure and harm that Indigenous communities have faced for hundreds of years. We have begun a more deliberate journey towards celebrating Native American stories and welcoming Indigenous communities.

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 on the new Goodman center in 2000.

**Julie Danis** is Chair of Goodman Theatre’s Board of Trustees, **Lorrayne Weiss** is Women’s Board President and **Kelli Garcia** is President of the Scenemakers Board for young professionals.

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