Joe Turner’s Come and Gone

By **August Wilson**
Directed by **Chuck Smith**

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**Welcome**

If you’ve been working in the theater for a while—and if you’re really lucky—chances are, you have an August Wilson story.

Here’s mine.

It was winter of 1990, and August was at the Goodman working, incidentally, on a production of Joe Turner’s Come and Gone. We’d met earlier that year, over the summer at The Eugene O’Neill Center’s National Playwrights Conference, and became friends. One morning while he was in Chicago for rehearsals, we’d arranged to meet for coffee. I shared with August that, while reading the paper that day and encountering yet another story about yet another atrocity, I found myself thinking, “Well, at least only nine people were killed.”

August put down his coffee cup.

In his deepest voice, he started to count–ever so slowly–to nine. People around us got quiet. In that moment, August lifted human story to a kind of divinity. A kind of musical essence. Just as he does with the people who inhabit his plays. And I learned a lesson in never underestimating the worth and value of a single life by aggregating it into some larger and anonymous group.

While we all still miss the man himself fiercely, we continue to celebrate the power of his gifts.

They lift us up. All of us.

**Susan V. Booth**

Artistic Director

**Q&A With Chuck Smith**

**by Ireon Roach**

**DIRECTOR CHUCK SMITH** discusses Joe Turner’s Come and Gone in conversation with Ireon Roach, winner of the 2016 National August Wilson Monologue Competition. With this being the fourth August Wilson play he’ll direct at the Goodman, the Resident Director gives insight to the theater’s standing legacy with August Wilson and vision for the future.

**IREON ROACH:** You know, I’ve actually seen your 2016 production of Two Trains Running, and understand you to have brought a number of August Wilson’s plays to life here at the Goodman. Is this by coincidence or calculation? What is your connection to this work and more specifically, what pulls you to Goodman stages?

**CHUCK**: I would say it first began more by coincidence. In 1986 Goodman Theatre had an opening in the season for a production and August’s team had Fences just sitting around waiting for a Broadway run. So they asked if they could bring Fences to the Goodman and the artistic and executive teams said, “Yeah, by all means!” That started the relationship between August Wilson and Goodman Theatre. From that point we had a really great relationship. As a result, the Goodman was the very first theater in the country to produce all ten plays in August's American Century Cycle. In that original run of 10, I only directed one: Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom in 1997. August Wilson actually came to our very first preview of that show and really worked with me firsthand in polishing it up to be a first class show.

**IREON:** What a legacy to find yourself at the ground level! That’s pretty special.

**CHUCK:** Yes, and the Goodman is committed now–since we’ve already done all ten of the plays – to now doing them in the chronological order of the cycle. We started with Gem of the Ocean which takes place in 1904 and now [Joe Turner’s Come and Gone] takes place in 1911.

**IREON**: You beat me to the coveted creative’s question: Why today? This is the next play in the cycle so that answers the question practically, but why now? What does Joe Turner’s Come and Gone say to a 2024 audience?

**CHUCK:** It says that more than anything we must look after our children. There are children in Joe Turner and they represent the new way. We must take very delicate care of our children and do whatever we can, as best we can, to provide them a better future.

**IREON:** Because by doing that, we in turn take care of our futures – futures we might not even have the sight for yet ourselves.

**CHUCK:** Exactly.

**IREON:** This season is held together by the thread of “Remixed Reality,” where each production grapples with “the mess and magic of us all.” How do you see this play fitting into that narrative?

**CHUCK:** There’s a lot of mysticism in the play. There’s a beautiful character in this play by the name of Bynum who speaks of… Africans coming across the water and those who didn’t make it. Aunt Ester, in Gem of the Ocean, speaks of the City of Bones and then Bynum talks about the bones coming out of the water. August Wilson was a poet – he’s always had that mysticism.

**IREON:** Yet August’s contemporary and friend, Romulus Linney, writes about this play being one of August’s favorites because of its humanism and simplicity compared to the rest of the cycle.

**CHUCK:** It’s the idea that a place such as Seth Holly’s boarding house is attracting all these different kinds of people in the midst of this industrial revolution. Our hero in the play goes on this journey to find his wife with his kid. He says, “I can’t move on until I get this thing straightened out. My life is in limbo until this is straightened out.” Knowing August, I could see why this is one of his favorite plays.

**IREON:** So we’ll see more of a springboard, so to speak; a landing place for these people to come, go, and begin to build something new. Can you talk to me a bit about the cast? What were you looking for in a cast for this play? What kind of alchemy do you need in the rehearsal room?

**CHUCK:** Our cast is an all local cast, all Chicagoans. Quite a few of the cast members I’ve worked with before. These people are all familiar with August Wilson’s language. They’re seasoned veterans and very fine performers who know Chicago theater and what it’s all about. They know what August Wilson is all about.

Ireon Roach is a Chicago-bred writer, performer, curator and teaching artist.

**August Wilson and the Goodman**

**by Neena Arndt**

When the Goodman moved from its old home on Columbus Drive to its current space on Dearborn Street in 2000, August Wilson—by then among the most celebrated of living American playwrights—took to the stage to deliver a keynote address. “This building is a challenge and an invitation to theater artists across America,” he intoned. “We who work in the American theater are heirs to a spiritual wealth that has taught us that theater is architecture of the human spirit that ennobles and empowers if it is honest and full of grace, and that its eloquence can only be fashioned out of uncompromising truth.”

Now, 24 years later, Goodman resident director Chuck Smith brings Wilson’s “uncompromising truth” to the very stage on which the playwright once stood. Wilson, who died in 2005 at age 60, leaves behind a remarkable body of work, most notably his American Century Cycle, which consists of 10 plays that chart the African American experience in the 20th century. Each play takes place in a different decade of the century, giving viewers a panoramic view of a time period that began with horses, buggies and Jim Crow laws and ended with the rise of the internet and cell phones—and the long shadow of slavery still looming over America. Most of the plays take place in Pittsburgh, Wilson’s home city and a common destination for African Americans who fled the South in the early 20th century. Joe Turner’s Come and Gone, set in a boardinghouse in Pittsburgh in the second decade of the century, offers a peek into the lives of Black Americans at a time when slavery was only 50 years in the past. Its title refers to the semi-mythical “mancatcher” Joe Turner, who in the first decade of the 20th century essentially re-enslaved sharecroppers by accusing them of a crime and forcing them to work on a chain gang as punishment. In his book Slavery by Another Name, historian Douglas Blackmon describes this practice as “neo-slavery,” and explains that it was legal because the 13th Amendment abolished slavery “except as punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted.” The title of Wilson’s play implies that Joe Turner is no longer present; the play explores the aftereffects of imprisonment on one character’s life.

Longtime Goodman patrons may recall that between 1986 and 2007, the Goodman produced all 10 plays in the Cycle, becoming the first theater to do so. During most of those years, Wilson was a living playwright still completing his ouvre, and Goodman staff members knew him not as a distant name in a textbook or playbill, but as a warm, vibrant man. Executive Director/CEO Roche Schulfer recalls Wilson’s encyclopedic knowledge of jazz and blues, and his joy at discovering the musical riches of Chicago’s now-defunct Jazz Record Mart. Schulfer counts himself lucky to have spent two hours with Wilson, browsing through records and learning about jazz and blues from a man who had so absorbed their rhythms that his plays reflect them.

For director Chuck Smith, who is widely known for championing the work of Wilson and many other Black playwrights at the Goodman and elsewhere, a key moment with Wilson came when Smith was working as the dramaturg on the world premiere production of Gem of the Ocean in 2003. Smith suggested that Wilson’s idea of a “city of bones”—a mystical place at the bottom of the ocean inhabited by the souls of enslaved Africans who perished on slave ships—should become a bigger part of the play. As anyone familiar with the play knows, Wilson took Smith’s advice, and the city of bones became central to the narrative of Gem of the Ocean.

Nineteen years after Wilson’s death, his plays have become staples of the American theatre and are regularly taught in schools. What were new plays not so long ago are now contemporary classics. And though Wilson can no longer stand on the Goodman stage and give a stirring speech, his words remain in the memories of those among us who knew him and, perhaps more importantly, still live in the mouths of actors who make them echo through our theatre.

Neena Arndt is the Literary Manager and Dramaturg for Goodman Theatre.

**Play on Words: Poetry**

**In an exciting new collaboration, the Poetry Foundation partners with the Goodman to commission a different poet to respond to each play in Susan V. Booth’s first curated season as Goodman Theatre Artistic Director.**

**IREON ROACH** is a Chicago-bred actor and writer excited to collaborate with Goodman Theatre and the Poetry Foundation to offer a poetic companion to Joe Turner’s Come and Gone. Chicago credits include cullud wattah (Victory Gardens Theater), Blood at the Root (Jackalope Theatre Company) and How We Got On (Haven Theatre Company). Other regional credits include School Girls; Or, The African Mean Girls Play (SpeakEasy Stage) and Laughs in Spanish (Boston Playwrights’ Theatre). Roach has starred in the CW’s 4400 and appeared in Nia DaCosta’s Candyman, Jennifer Reeder’s Perpetrator and Clare Cooney’s Departing Seniors (2023).

PREFACE TO A TEN VOLUME HYMNAL

if you look for that curse prayer put on me
you’ll never find it
just a corpse-less mother in the pigeon coop
you’ll never get a proper count of the stars again
just the holes they leave in the sky

you never met somebody
never open his mouth and speak sentences
like my father
they run on

he did a bit of a bid of a jittery jig/ big
bold and black/
balding early and bent/ bound
to shake and girate/
seize and cease/ fires
dance behind his eyes/
like his body behind his barre

I am unbound
yet you tell me that I am blessed

Read Ireon Roach’s full poetic response to Joe Turner’s Come and Gone and learn more about Play On Words!

GoodmanTheatre.org/Poetry

**Goodman Theatre**

presents

**AUGUST WILSON'S JOE TURNER'S COME AND GONE**

By

**August Wilson**

Directed by

**Chuck Smith**

Associate Director and Choreographer

**Cristin Carole**

Set Design by

**Linda Buchanan**

Costume Design by

**Evelyn Danner**

Lighting Design by

 **Jared Gooding**

Sound Design & Composition by

**Pornchanok Kanchanabanca**

Dramaturgy by

**Neena Arndt**

Casting by

**Lauren Port, CSA**

Production Stage Manager

**Mars Wolfe\* (through May 5)**

**Kimberly Ann McCann\* (beginning May 7)**

Stage Manager

**Beth Koehler\***

“August Wilson’s Joe Turner’s Come and Gone” is presented by arrangement with concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com

Originally Produced on Broadway By Elliot Matin, Vy Higginsen and Ken Wydro; produced in association with Yale Repertory Theatre (Lloyd Richards, Artistic Director; Benjamin Mordecai, Managing Director); associate producer, Jeffrey Steiner, Kery Davis and Charles Grantham.

World Premiere at Yale Repertory Theatre; Second Production at Huntington Theatre Company (Peter Altman, Producing Director; Michael Maso, Managing Director); Originally presented as a staged reading at the 1984 National Playwrights Conference at the Eugene O’Neill Theatre Center.

**CAST**

Reuben Mercer………………………………..**Harper Anthony** Jeremy Furlow…………………………**Anthony Fleming III\*** Bertha Holly……………………………………………**TayLar\***

Rutherford Selig………………………………**Gary Houston\*** Zonia Loomis………………………………**Kylah Renee Jones** Mattie Campbell …………………………….**Nambi E. Kelley\***
Molly Cunningham ………………………**Krystel V. McNeil\***
Bynum Walker……………………………………..**Tim Rhoze\***

Martha Loomis……………………………… **Shariba Rivers\***

Seth Holly…………………………………..**Dexter Zollicoffer\***

**UNDERSTUDIES**

Jeremy Furlow/ Bynum Walker……………………..**Sean Blake**
Bertha Holly/ Martha Loomis…………………...**Stacie Doublin**

Mattie Campbell/ Molly Cunningham…………**Kristin E. Ellis\*** Rutherford Selig………………………………...**Bill McGough\*** Reuben Mercer………………………………**Jean-Luc Nazaire**

Seth Holly……………………………………...**André Teamer\***
Zonia Loomis………………………………**Riley Lauren Wells**

Line Producers — **Malkia Stampley and Adam Belcuore**

Intimacy Consultant — **Cristin Carole**

Young Performer Supervisor — **Katie Hanson**

Assistant Lighting Designer — **Brenden Marble**

Stage Management Apprentice — **Mia Napue**

Musician — **Travis Elfers**

Guitar Consultant — **Mike Przygoda**

Fight Coordinator — **Nick Sandys**

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.

\*Denotes member of Actors’ Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.

**Profiles**

**HARPER ANTHONY** (Reuben Mercer) is an 11-year-old Chicago native and thrilled to make his theater debut at the Goodman. Beginning his professional journey at age three, Harper has amassed credits in TV and film including a starring role in Marvel Studios' Ironheart series and co-starring in Chicago Med, Perdido and City of Vultures 2 & 3. His talent also extends to the world of advertising, where Harper has been featured in a multitude of commercials and print campaigns.

**ANTHONY FLEMING III\*** (Jeremy Furlow) returns to the Goodman. His Chicago theater credits include Camino Real (Goodman Theater); Moby Dick, 1984, Alice (Lookingglass); Division St: America, The Glass Menagerie (Steppenwolf); Jitney, Fences (Court Theater); Hambone, Free Man of Color, Denmark (Victory Gardens); Cut Flowers (Chicago Theater Co); Orlando (Piven Theater); and Cider House Rules (Famous Door). TV: Narrator for Chicago Stories (WTTW) and series regular on Power Book IV: Force (Starz). 2016 Jeff Award-winner for Best Supporting Actor (Moby Dick).

**GARY HOUSTON\*** (Rutherford Selig) appeared at the Goodman as Selig two years ago in Gem of the Ocean, earlier in The Front Page and Chuck Smith’s productions of Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom and A Raisin in the Sun. For the Goodman’s Stage 2 series he directed Peter Handke’s Kaspar and Heathcote Williams’ The Local Stigmatic. He cites among his many off-Loop credits Organic Theater's E/R and Kingston Mines Theatre Co.'s world premiere of Grease.

**GARY HOUSTON\*** (Rutherford Selig) appeared at the Goodman as Selig two years ago in Gem of the Ocean, earlier in The Front Page and Chuck Smith’s productions of Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom and A Raisin in the Sun. For The Goodman’s Stage 2 series he directed Peter Handke’s Kaspar and Heathcote Williams’ The Local Stigmatic. He cites among his many off-Loop credits Organic Theater's E/R and Kingston Mines Theatre Co.'s world premiere of Grease.

**KYLAH RENEE JONES** (Zonia Loomis) makes her Goodman Theatre debut. Stage credits include: Last Night and the Night Before (Steppenwolf Theatre). Commercial credits include: ABC Plumbing. Screen credits include: Kings & Prophets (Wonder Ink).

**NAMBI E. KELLEY\*** (Mattie Campbell) Chicago: Two Trains Running, The Good Negro, The Ballad of Emmett Till, Crumbs from the Table of Joy, Drowning Crow and Mirror of the Invisible World (Goodman); Harriet Jacobs, The Glass Menagerie and Nikki Giovanni: New Songs for a New Day (Steppenwolf). Off-Broadway: Kunstler (59E59); Court Martial at Fort Devens (New Federal Theatre). Regional: Pipeline (City Theatre); Seven Guitars (TheatreWorks Colorado Springs); Gees Bend (Arkansas Repertory). Select television: Chicago Med (NBC) and Chicago Justice. @nambi.e.kelley.

**KRYSTEL V. MCNEIL**\* she/her (Molly Cunningham) returns to the Goodman, where she previously understudied Toni Stone, Gem of The Ocean, Objects in The Mirror and Carlyle, and was most recently seen in Mothers at Gift Theatre. McNeil is a company member of Rivendell Theatre Ensemble where she has been seen in Spay, The Cake, Women at War and Laura and the Sea. Other Chicago credits include: In The Next Room or The Vibrator Play, Spill (Timeline Theatre Company); The Compass (Steppenwolf Theatre Company) and Bootycandy. @mommylutherking.

**TIM RHOZE\*** (Bynum Walker) returns to Goodman Theatre where his credits include Waiting for Godot, All The Rage, Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom, A Raisin In The Sun, The Gift Horse, Carlyle and others. Chicago credits include Airline Highway, Wendell Green and The Crucible at Steppenwolf Theatre Company; North Star, Eden and FREEFALL at Victory Gardens Theater; and The Whipping Man at Northlight Theatre. With theatrical roots beginning in Detroit, Mr. Rhoze’s career includes work in theater, film, television and as a playwright and voiceover artist. He has performed in, produced and directed over 100 productions, and has been the Producing Artistic Director of the Fleetwood-Jourdain Theatre in Evanston, IL since 2010.
**SHARIBA RIVERS\*** (Martha Loomis) The Nacirema Society and School Girls; Or, the African Mean Girls Play (US) (Goodman Theatre). Chicago area credits include Notes from the Field and Trouble in Mind (TimeLine Theatre); The October Storm and Hoodoo Love (Raven Theatre); and Sweat (Paramount Theatre). Regional credits include Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner (Arts Center of Coastal Carolina). TV and film credits include Chicago Med; The Chi; Chicago Fire; Empire; Smoking Gun! and Okie. Rivers was named one of the 50 Players 2023 by Newcity Stage and was featured in the Chicago Reader's 2023 The People Issue. sharibatheactor.com
**A.C. SMITH\*** (Herald Loomis) returns to Goodman Theatre where he most recently appeared in Gem of the Ocean and Objects in the Mirror. His extensive repertoire includes Two Trains Running, A Christmas Carol, Measure for Measure and more at the Goodman, alongside appearances at Victory Gardens, Steppenwolf and Chicago Shakespeare Theater. Notable roles at Court Theatre include King Hedley II and Fences, both of which earned Jeff Awards. Off-Broadway, he garnered acclaim in Jelly Belly and toured nationally in The Piano Lesson. As a celebrated member of the Black Rep in St. Louis, Mr. Smith's talent extends off stage in film, television and voice-over work.

**TAYLAR\*** (Bertha Holly) is excited to return to Goodman, where her credits include Gem of the Ocean, Sweat, The Little Foxes, Ruined, The Convert, Mary, Joe Turner’s Come and Gone and The Cook. Chicago credits: Arsenic and Old Lace, King Hedley, II, Oedipus Rex, Court Theatre, Writers Theatre, Steppenwolf, Eclipse, Eta Creative Arts and Black Ensemble. Regional credits: Fences (Arts Center of Coastal Carolina), Hamlet 50/50 (Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival) and American Fast (Constellation). @taylarfondren

**DEXTER ZOLLICOFFER\*** (Seth Holly) Goodman credits include: The Little Foxes, Dartmoor Prison, The Odyssey, Blues for an Alabama Sky and A Christmas Carol. He has also worked at several local theatres including Court Theatre, Steppenwolf, Northlight, Victory Gardens and Next theatre, to name a few. Regionally, Mr. Zollicoffer performed at Alabama Shakespeare Festival, McCarter Theatre Center, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Madison Repertory Theatre and BoarsHead Theater. Television/ films credits include: Ghostlight (in theaters in late 2024), Southside, Joe Pera Talks to You, Chicago Med, Chicago Fire and Detroit 1-8-7. He is a Best Actor Jeff award recipient for Charm at Northlight theatre.

**SEAN BLAKE\*** (US Jeremy Furlow/Bynum Walker) returns to the Goodman, where he previously appeared in The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci, The Story, Purlie, Ain’t Misbehavin,’ The Rose Tattoo and Bounce. Regional credits include work at Longwharf Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Court Theatre, Kennedy Center, Indiana Rep Theatre and Asolo Rep, among others. He appeared in the Broadway first National Tour of Hal Prince’s Showboat and is featured on the original cast recording of Hal Prince and Stephen Sondheim’s Bounce. Television and film credits include Empire, Chicago PD, Mixtape, The Christmas Pitch and Just Visiting.

**STACIE DOUBLIN**, she/her (US Bertha Holly/Martha Loomis) Credits include: In My Granny's Garden (Goodman Theatre); The October Storm (US), Streetcar Named Desire, Diner Tales and The Room (Raven Theatre); The House That Will Not Stand (US) (Victory Gardens Theatre); The Green Book and Shakin' The Mess Outta Misery (Pegasus Theatre); MacBeth, Twelfth Nite and Taming of the Shrew (Oak Park Festival Theatre); Love Child (Live Bait Theatre); The Elephant Man (The Side Project); Chicago PD (Wolf Entertainment); The Chi (TVM Productions Inc.); and Unfocused (Prowler Pictures).

**KRISTIN E. ELLIS\*** (US Mattie Campbell/Molly Cunningham) Goodman credits include the ripple, the wave that carried me home. Recent credits How Blood Go (Congo Square Theatre); Routes (Remy Bumppo Theatre); Paradise Blue (TimeLine Theatre, BTAA for Best Featured Actress); Traitor (A Red Orchid Theatre); and Pipeline (Next Act Theatre). Regional credits include Writers Theatre, McCarter Theatre and National Black Theatre. Ellis wrote and performed her one woman show I Don’t Trust It (solo series: MPAACT Theatre). Notable TV and film credits include Chicago Fire (NBC); 4400 (The CW); and The Chi (Showtime). Ellis holds her BFA from The Theatre School at DePaul. Rep: Stewart Talent.

**ANTHONY IRONS\*** (US Herald Loomis) is thrilled to return to the Goodman, where he’s appeared in Support Group for Men and Two Trains Running. Mr. Irons is an ensemble member at Congo Square Theatre, credits including Welcome to Matteson and King Hedley II; and an ensemble member of Lookingglass Theatre, credits including The Steadfast Tin Soldier and Treasure Island. Other Chicago credits include How to Use a Knife (Shattered Globe Theatre) and Waiting for Godot (Court Theatre). Film and television credits include Chicago Med, Southside, Empire, Chicago Fire and Let’s Go to Prison. Mr. Irons is the creator of the Youtube comedy series The BLACKSiDE.

**BILL MCGOUGH\*** (US Rutherford Selig) Chicago: The Cherry Orchard, Continuity, The Death of Bessie Smith (Goodman Theatre); Fiddler on the Roof (Drury Lane); Fiddler on the Roof, My Fair Lady (Lyric Opera of Chicago); Three Sisters, The Cherry Orchard, Death of a Salesman, Henry V, Marat/Sade (The Hypocrites); Dee Snider's Rock 'n' Roll Christmas Tale (Broadway Playhouse); Old Jews Telling Jokes (Royal George); The Front Page, The Farnsworth Invention, The Seagull (Timeline Theatre). Regional: Invisible Man, The Importance of Being Earnest (Court Theatre); Pride and Prejudice (Cleveland Play House). Television: Chicago Med, Chicago Fire (NBC), South Side (Comedy Central), Sirens (USA). Film: Monuments, In Memoriam, The Christians, Let's Go to Prison.

**JEAN -LUC NAZAIRE** (US Reuben Mercer) is excited to be back on stage once again at Goodman Theatre, marking his second appearance at the venue. He made his debut when he was cast in the role of Genie through a collaboration between his school programming and the Goodman's Disney Musicals. Since then, Jean-Luc's journey has been filled with various school productions showcasing his passion for performing. He is currently represented by Lily’s Talent Agency.

**ANDRÉ TEAMER\***, he/him (US Seth Holly) Goodman Theatre credits include: SWEAT, How To Catch Creation (US), The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window (US) and Objects In The Mirror (US). Television and film credits include: The Christmas Tree, Love Shorts, Market Value, Spokes, The Playboy Club, Chicago Med, Chicago PD (NBC) and Empire (FOX). André is a company member of Ma'at Production Association of Afrikan Centered Theatre (MPAACT), and he's represented by Paonessa Talent.

**RILEY LAUREN WELLS** (US Zonia Loomis) is thrilled to be part of Joe Turner's Come and Gone after a standout performance in the Jeff Award-winning production Fences (American Blues Theater). She's also acted in They Say Time Heals and the CW's 4400. As a dedicated performing arts student, she trains in dance and acting at FieldCrest School of Performing Arts, while also studying voice and piano at MuzicNet. @RileyLaurenWells.

**AUGUST WILSON** (April 27, 1945 – October 2, 2005) (Playwright) authored Gem of the Ocean, Joe Turner’s Come and Gone, Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom, The Piano Lesson, Seven Guitars, Fences, Two Trains Running, Jitney, King Hedley II and Radio Golf. These works explore the heritage and experience of African-Americans, decade-by-decade, over the course of the twentieth century. His plays have been produced at regional theaters across the country and all over the world, as well as on Broadway. In 2003, Mr. Wilson made his professional stage debut in his one-man show, How I Learned What I Learned. Mr. Wilson’s works garnered many awards including Pulitzer Prizes for Fences (1987); and for The Piano Lesson (1990); a Tony Award for Fences; Great Britain’s Olivier Aware for Jitney; as well as eight New York Drama Critics Circle Awards for Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom, Fences, Joe Turner’s Come and Gone, The Piano Lesson, Two Trains Running, Seven Guitars, Jitney and Radio Golf. Additionally, the cast recording of Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom received a 1985 Grammy Award, and Mr. Wilson received a 1995 Emmy Award nomination for his screenplay adaptation of The Piano Lesson. Mr. Wilson’s early works included the one-act plays The Janitor, Recycle, The Coldest Day of the Year, Malcolm X, The Homecoming and the musical satire Black Bart and the Sacred Hills. Mr. Wilson received many fellowships and awards, including Rockefeller and Guggenheim Fellowships in Playwrighting, The Whiting Writers Award, 2003 Heinz Award, was awarded a 1999 National Humanities Medal by the President of the United States and received numerous honorary degrees from colleges and universities, as well as the only high school diploma ever issued by the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. He was an alumnus of New Dramatists, a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a 1995 inductee into the American Academy of Arts and Letters and on October 16, 2005, Broadway renamed the theater located at 245 West 52nd Street – The August Wilson Theatre. Additionally, Mr. Wilson was posthumously inducted into the Theater Hall of Fame in 2007. Mr. Wilson was born and raised in the Hill District of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and lived in Seattle, Washington at the time of his death. He is immediately survived by his two daughters, Sakina Ansari and Azula Carmen Wilson and his wife, costume designer Constanza Romero.

**CHUCK SMITH** (Director) is Goodman Theatre’s Resident Director, Board of Trustees member and resident director at the Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe. Mr. Smith's Goodman credits include Objects in the Mirror, Two Trains Running, Pullman Porter Blues, By the Way, Meet Vera Stark, and The Amen Corner, among many others. He also served as dramaturg for the Goodman’s world-premiere of August Wilson’s Gem of the Ocean. Regionally and locally, he has directed at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Seattle Repertory Theatre, MPAACT, Black Ensemble Theatre, and Congo Square Theatre Company, among others. Mr. Smith is an Emmy Award-winner, a recipient of the Paul Robeson Award, and was the 2001 Chicago Tribune Chicagoan of the Year.

**LINDA BUCHANAN** she/her (Set Designer) Goodman Theatre: 25 productions including Gem of the Ocean, Two Trains Running, American Mariachi, House And Garden, Black Snow and Marvin’s Room. Chicago: The Lion In Winter and Blues From An Alabama Sky (Court Theatre); Stick Fly (Writers Theatre); Miss Saigon and Hairspray (Paramount). Regional: Alley Theatre, Indiana Rep, Cleveland Playhouse, Kansas City Rep, Idaho Shakespeare Festival, Milwaukee Rep, Resident Ensemble Theatre, Syracuse Stage, Utah Shakespeare Festival and others.

**EVELYN DANNER** (Costume Designer) has been working creatively in the Chicagoland area for more than 20 years. Goodman Theatre costume credits include Swing State (Premiere), Gem of the Ocean and This Happened Once At The Romance Depot off of I-87 In Westchester. Other costume credits include the Peninsula Players Theatre’s Trying and The Rainmaker; Black Ensemble Theater’s The Other Cinderella and The Real Housewives of Motown; MPAACT’s Red Summer; and Marriott Theatre’s You’re a Good Man Charlie Brown.

**JARED GOODING** (Lighting Designer) is excited to make his Goodman Theatre debut. Credits include: Writers Theatre, Depaul University, Victory Gardens, TimeLine Theatre, University of Illinois Chicago Theatre, American Blues, Remy Bumppo Theatre, Strawdog Theatre, The Hypocrites, Definition Theatre, First Floor Theater, About Face Theatre, MPAACT, Pegasus Theatre, Bristol Riverside Theatre, Florentine Opera Company, First Stage, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Madison Children’s Theater and University of Indiana Northwest. goodingdesigns.com

**PORNCHANOK “NOK” KANCHANABANCA** she/her (Sound Designer and Composer) is a Thai artist, sound designer, musician and composer. Recent productions include Richard III (Chicago Shakespeare), Potus (Steppenwolf) and The Three Musketeers (OSF). Nok has worked with theater companies across the country including Lincoln Center, Geva Theatre, Actors Theatre, Everyman Theatre, Montana Shakespeare in the Park and many others. Nok graduated from the School of Drama at Yale and is a member of the TSDCA, USA Local 829. wishnok-music.com. @wishnok.

**NEENA ARNDT** (Dramaturgy) Neena Arndt is the literary manager and dramaturg at Goodman Theatre. Since 2008, she has served as dramaturg for more than 40 productions, including Robert Falls’ productions of The Cherry Orchard, The Winter’s Tale, An Enemy of the People, and The Iceman Cometh, David Cromer’s production of Sweet Bird of Youth and the world premiere of Rebecca Gilman’s Luna Gale. She has also worked with the American Repertory Theater, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Actors Theatre of Louisville, the New Harmony Project and Actors Shakespeare Project, among others. Ms. Arndt has taught at Boston University and DePaul University. She holds an MFA in dramaturgy from the A.R.T./MXAT Institute for Advanced Theatre Training at Harvard University, and a BA in linguistics from Pomona College.

**LAUREN PORT**, she/her (Casting) joined the Goodman as Casting Director in August of 2019 after eleven years casting in NYC, where she worked on many Goodman productions over the years, including Father Comes Home from the Wars, Parts 1, 2 and 3, Uncle Vanya, The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window, Disgraced and Sweet Bird of Youth. Broadway: Junk; Meteor Shower; A Doll's House, Part 2; The Front Page; It's Only a Play; Disgraced; Fish in the Dark; The Trip to Bountiful; Grace; Death of a Salesman; Seminar; Stick Fly; Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo; Lend Me a Tenor and Fences. Television/Film: New Amsterdam (NBC); American Odyssey (NBC) and Steel Magnolias (Sony for Lifetime). Port is a five-time Artios Award winner, a recipient of the 40th Annual Media Access Awards, and a proud member of the Casting Society of America.

**KIMBERLY ANN MCCANN\*** (Production Stage Manager) is in her ninth season with Goodman Theatre. Most recently, she has worked on The Penelopiad, A Christmas Carol, The Cherry Orchard and Good Night Oscar. Chicago credits include Northlight Theater and Million Dollar Quartet. Broadway: Curtains. Off-Broadway: Bill W. and Dr. Bob, How to Save the World and John Ferguson. Regional: Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Peninsula Players Theatre, Skylight Music Theatre, Tuacahn Center for the Arts and The Julliard School.

**MARS WOLFE\***, they/them (Production Stage Manager) returns to the Goodman, where their credits include New Stages: Revolution(s); Life After; Good Night, Oscar; Objects in the Mirror; Gloria; A Christmas Carol and Wonderful Town. Broadway/Off-Broadway credits include Kimberly Akimbo (Best Musical - Tony Award); Sunset Baby (Signature Theatre); The New Englanders (Manhattan Theatre Club); The Peculiar Patriot (National Black Theatre) and The Black Clown (Lincoln Center). Film/TV credits include MTV’s Video Music Awards, The View and VH1’s Trailblazers Honors. Mars is a Sundance Episodic Lab Fellow and tall poPpy Apprentice studying with Jeanine Tesori. Education: DePaul University; Juilliard Apprentice Program.

**BETH KOEHLER\***, she/her (Stage Manager) is thrilled to return to the Goodman, where her previous credits include The Who’s Tommy, The Cherry Orchard, Toni Stone, Clyde’s and A Christmas Carol (2021-2023). Regional credits include Where We Stand, Or and Bad Dates (Portland Stage Company). She was a stage management apprentice at Portland Stage Company and graduated from Northwestern University as a part of the Theatre Management Module.

**CRISTIN CAROLE**, she/her (Associate Director/Intimacy Consultant/Choreographer) is delighted to return to the Goodman after serving as movement director for Toni Stone. Her movement and intimacy work has been seen on stage at Steppenwolf, Timeline Theatre, American Blues Theatre, Writers Theatre and Court Theatre in Chicago as well as the Cincinnati Playhouse, Milwaukee Rep and the Getty Villa. She serves on the Board of Classical Kids LIVE! and is the founder of the Shirley Hall Bass Foundation. Ms. Carole is a member of National Dance Education Organization (NDEO), Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC) and an SDC Foundation Denham Fellow.

**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 and a 2024 Leadership Greater Chicago Daniel Burnham Fellow.

**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 and was recently named a 2023 Chicagoan of the Year by the Chicago Tribune.

NOTE: Bios are current as of March 25, 2024. Full bios also appear online at **GoodmanTheatre.org/** **JoeTurnersComeAndGone.**

**about us**

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

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; learn more at **GoodmanTheatre.org/Accountability**.

**accessible & enhanced performances**

**Audio-Described Performance and Touch Tour:** May 11at 2pm, Touch Tour at 12:30pm

**American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreted Performance:** May 10 at 7:30pm

**Open-Captioned Performance:** May 12 at 2pm

**Spanish Subtitles Performance:** May 11 at 7:30pm