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***BOOK UP!* NOW IN REHEARSAL,PREPARES TOTUCK AND ROLL INTO 12 CHICAGO PARKS STARTING JULY 23**

**\*\*\*WHIMSICAL CIRCUS READING ADVENTURE IS A “THEATER FOR THE VERY YOUNG” (AGES 0-5) PRODUCTION, PRESENTED AS PART OF THE GOODMAN’S *100 FREE ACTS OF THEATER* ANDCHICAGO PARK DISTRICT’S NIGHT OUT IN THE PARK SERIES, BOTH SUPPORTED BY THE MAYOR’S OFFICE AND THE CITY OF CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND SPECIAL EVENTS (DCASE)\*\*\***

(Chicago, IL) Every book holds a new adventure; where will we go next? Goodman Theatre brings *BOOK UP!*—a high-octane outdoor circus spectacle that invites little ones and their grown-ups to move, play and discover the magic of reading—to 12 Chicago parks from July 23 to August 10. Specially made for children aged 0–5 years and their adult friends and family, *BOOK UP!* is co-directed by Goodman Michael Maggio Directing Fellow **Raquel Torre** and Northwestern University Directing Fellow **Tor Campbell**. *BOOK UP!* appears July 23 (Harrison Park/Pilsen), July 24 (Bosley Park/Bridgeport), July 26 (Kosciuszko Park/Logan Square), July 27 (West Lawn Park), July 30 (Hale Park/Clearing), July 31 (Hayes Park/Ashburn/Wrightwood), August 2 (Haas Park/Logan Square), August 3 (Marquette Park/Chicago Lawn), August 6 (Homan Square Community Center Park/North Lawndale), August 7 (Brighton Park Community Campus/Brighton Park), August 9 (Portage Park) and August 10 (Oriole Park/Norwood Park). Two FREE 60-minute performances appear in each park (at 9:30am and 11:30am) and a hands-on workshop immediately follows. Tickets are not required, but registration is encouraged; visit [GoodmanTheatre.org/BookUp](https://www.goodmantheatre.org/event/book-up/). The Goodman is grateful to Kirkland & Ellis, Arts and Community Sponsor for Theater for the Very Young programming.

“Think Reading Rainbow meets the circus meets Chicago’s beautiful parks network,” said **Jared Bellot**, Goodman’s Clifford Director of Education and Engagement. “*BOOK UP!* is joyful, imaginative and built to meet children exactly where they are—physically, developmentally, and creatively. We believe that live performance has the power to spark curiosity, build connections and foster a lifelong love of storytelling. And by bringing this work directly into neighborhoods across the city, we’re saying every child deserves access to the arts, and every park can be a stage. This is about nurturing early literacy, yes—but it’s also about creating shared moments of wonder and joy for families and communities.”

A traveling librarian (**Jean Claudio**) rolls into town with a magical book cart, ready to spark big imaginations everywhere and beyond! With a little wiggle, a little giggle and a whole lot of wonder, stories leap off the pages through juggling, tumbling, clowning and aerial acrobatics—with **Kylie Anderson**, **Madie Doppelt** and **Robbie Matthew**, all ProTraining alumni of Chicago’s famed Actors Gymnasium.

“This show has a call to action: it’s about getting kids excited about reading,” said Co-Director **Tor Campbell**.

Added Co-Director **Raquel Torre**, “We know that when we expose the youngest of us to theater, they will continue to come back—and after this show, we hope they will continue looking for books as well. It’s also wonderful to bring free, accessible theater to Chicago’s beautiful parks, including six we visited last year with *The Lizard y El Sol*,”

*BOOK UP!* is presented as part of Goodman’s [***100 Free Acts of Theater***](https://www.goodmantheatre.org/event/100-free-acts-of-theater/) program and the Chicago Park District’s Night Out in the Parks series, both supported by the Mayor’s Office and the **Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE).** The Night Out in the Parks program presents cultural events year-round in neighborhood parks throughout the city. The Chicago Park District in partnership with 100 local artists and organizations, presents engaging events and performances that enhance quality of life across Chicago and amplify the artistic and cultural vibrancy in every neighborhood. Through multiple disciplines, which include theater, music, movies, dance, site-specific work, nature programs, and community festivals, the series aims to support Chicago-based artists, facilitate community-based partnerships and programs, cultivate civic engagement, and ensure equity in access to the arts for all Chicagoans. .[www.nightoutintheparks.com](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nightoutintheparks.com%2F&data=05%7C02%7CDeniseSchneider%40GoodmanTheatre.org%7Cec86f46d359a4ac1907408dc80c0bb49%7C8305ef74c2704cdb9f2107217cc0965a%7C0%7C0%7C638526812484520261%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=SL%2FN4sRrKw%2F20IyoW33P2pFi4JRLR28SiDxzLZ7jXD0%3D&reserved=0).

**Full Company of *BOOK UP!***

Directed by **Tor Campbell** and **Raquel Torre**

Created by **Raquel Torre**, Originally Devised by **La Vuelta**

**Kylie Anderson**…Kid 1/Teaching Artist

**Jean Claudio**…Librarian/Teaching Artist

**Maddie Doppelt**…Kid 3/ Teaching Artist

**Robbie Matthew**…Kid 2/Teaching Artist/US Librarian

**Creative Team**

1st Line Producer…**Jared Bellot**

2nd Line Producer…**Raquel Torre**

Production Manager…**Claudette Przygoda**

Set Designer…**Alyssa Mohn**

Scenic Builder…**Luke Lemanski**

Costume Designer…**Ben Argenta Kress**

Composer & Sound Designer…**Justin Cavazos**

Casting Director...**Lauren Port, CSA**

Production Associate…**Jojo Wallenberg**

Production Assistant & Circus Rigger…**Glenna Broderick**

**ABOUT *100 FREE ACTS OF THEATER***

An unprecedented citywide event spanning Goodman Theatre’s Centennial 2025/2026 Season, ***100 Free Acts of Theater*** activates all 50 wards of Chicago. The Goodman partners with local organizations to amplify existing creative programming and collaborate on new efforts—from performances to special events to community engagement offerings—to celebrate the city’s rich cultural landscape and honor the communities that have inspired and supported Chicago’s flagship resident theater over the past 100 years. Each Act, developed in close collaboration and in tune with that partner organization’s mission, is programmed to take place at destinations in its community. Produced in partnership with the **Department of Cultural Events and Special Affairs (DCASE)**, all 100 Acts are offered FREE with participation open to Chicagoans of all ages and backgrounds. Together, DCASE and The Goodman help provide resources to make each Act possible—including but not limited to artistic personnel, tech support, assistance with marketing/publicity and more. Allstate Insurance Company is additionally a Corporate Sponsor Partner for *100 Free Acts of Theater*. The first quarter of Free Acts is now live; additional Acts will be announced as the Centennial Season continues. Visit [GoodmanTheatre.org/FreeActs](https://www.goodmantheatre.org/event/100-free-acts-of-theater/) for more information.

**ABOUT CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND SPECIAL EVENTS**

The **City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE)** supports artists and cultural organizations, invests in the creative economy, and expands access and participation in the arts throughout Chicago’s 77 neighborhoods. As a collaborative cultural presenter, arts funder, and advocate for creative workers, our programs and events serve Chicagoans and visitors of all ages and backgrounds, downtown and in diverse communities across our city—to strengthen and celebrate Chicago. DCASE produces some of the city’s most iconic festivals, markets, events, and exhibitions at the Chicago Cultural Center, Millennium Park, and in communities across the city—serving a local and global audience of 25 million people. The Department offers cultural grants and resources, manages public art, supports TV and film production and other creative industries, and permits special events throughout Chicago. For details, visit Chicago.gov/DCASE and stay connected via our newsletters and social media.

**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 Walter Artistic Director **Susan V. Booth** and Executive Director **John Collins**, 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 nearly 200 Joseph Jefferson 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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