

THEATRE GOODMAN

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***AH, WILDERNESS!*, EUGENE O'NEILL'S "WELCOME DOSE OF LOVE AND LAUGHTER" (LA TIMES), BEGINS SATURDAY, JUNE 17**

*****STEVE SCOTT DIRECTS THE RARELY-PRODUCED COMING-OF-AGE COMEDY WITH A CAST OF CHICAGO FAVORITES,
AND NIAL CUNNINGHAM AND AYSSETTE MUÑOZ AS THE LOVE-STRUCK YOUNG COUPLE*****

(Chicago, IL) Experience the fireworks of love—first love, unrequited love and mature love—on stage this summer, as Goodman Theatre concludes its 2016/2017 Season with a major revival of Eugene O'Neill's *Ah, Wilderness!* Longtime Goodman Producer **Steve Scott** directs O'Neill's only comedy, which follows the Miller family at the turn of the 20th century. As previously announced, **Niall Cunningham** (CBS' *Life in Pieces*) leads the 15-member cast in his Goodman debut as Richard Miller, the poetry-obsessed, Yale-bound teenager whose love for his young neighbor, Muriel McComber (**Ayssette Muñoz**), drives him to one night of uncharacteristic rebellion. *Ah, Wilderness!* appears June 17 through July 23 (opening night is June 26) in the Albert Theatre. Tickets (\$25-\$75, subject to change) are available by phone at 312.443.4800, online at GoodmanTheatre.org/AhWilderness or at the box office (170 N. Dearborn). See page two for more information regarding events and accessibility. American Airlines is the Major Corporate Sponsor, ComEd is the Official Lighting Sponsor and Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP is the Corporate Sponsor Partner.

"While I have spent much of my 30 years at the Goodman diving again and again into Eugene O'Neill's oeuvre, I am pleased with *Ah, Wilderness!* to present a different director's interpretation of this towering playwright," said Artistic Director **Robert Falls**. "My longtime associate, Steve Scott, is an artist of extraordinary intellectual and theatrical distinction who has made an indelible mark on Chicago theater over his decades-long career. A gifted director of comic works, Steve is the perfect match for this play—a warm, nostalgic comedy about a small-town family whose love for each other prevents them from falling into the common 'O'Neillian traps' of alcoholism, lack of connection and existential torment."

As Goodman Theatre's Producer, Scott has overseen more than 200 productions and is a member of Goodman's Artistic Collective. His Goodman directing credits include the 2015 critical and popular hit *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* by Christopher Durang; Horton Foote's *Blind Date*; *Rabbit Hole*; *Binky Rudich and the Two-Speed Clock* and *No One Will Be Immune* (David Mamet Festival); *Dinner With Friends*; *Wit*; the world premiere of Tom Mula's *Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol*; *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (co-directed with Michael Maggio); and numerous productions of *A Christmas Carol*.

"I find *Ah, Wilderness!* compelling because it's as profound as O'Neill's tragic plays—but it's very funny and sweet," said director **Steve Scott**. "The themes this play touches on—family, relationships and figuring out your identity—are ones that I've dealt with in my own work, consciously or unconsciously, for 40 years. I think we all long for a family we can really be a part of. Some of us were lucky enough to grow up in that family, some of us weren't—but as we grow to maturity, it's a kind of primal need to find people who will nurture us. And that's what *Ah, Wilderness!* shows us."

On July 4, fireworks aren't the only flames burning for 16-year-old Richard Miller—whose passion for poetry is rivaled only by affection for Muriel, the girl of his dreams. When her father forbids the young couple from dating, Richard embarks on an evening of unexpected rebellion. *Ah, Wilderness!* captures the bliss, adventure and angst of young romance. The previously-announced cast and creative team appears below.

About Eugene O'Neill at Goodman Theatre

The Goodman's history with the work of "the father of American drama" spans nearly eight decades and 20+ productions—beginning with *Anna Christie* in 1939 (and 1955) and continuing with *Ah, Wilderness!* (1944 and 1957); *Desire Under the Elms* (1953 and 2009); *Mourning Becomes Electra* (1955 and 2009); *Long Day's Journey Into Night* (1976 and 2002); *The Iceman Cometh* (1990, 1992, 2012 and 2015); *A Touch of the Poet* (1996); *A Moon for the Misbegotten* (2000); *Hughie* (2004 and 2010); and *The Emperor Jones*, *The Sea Plays* and *Strange Interlude* (2009). For the duration of Falls' tenure, O'Neill's work has been a major feature of the Goodman's programming—with numerous productions featuring Brian Dennehy as well as other stage and screen stars, including Cherry Jones, Gabriel Byrne, Carla Gugino, Pablo Schreiber, Nathan Lane, Pamela Payton-Wright and David Cromer. In 2009, Falls invited companies from all over the world to perform the masterful playwright's works as part of *A Global Exploration: Eugene O'Neill in the 21st Century*. Participating companies included *The Wooster Group* (New York); *Companhia Triptal* (Brazil); *The Hypocrites* (Chicago); *Toneelgroep* (Amsterdam); and *The Neo-Futurists* (Chicago). This *Global Exploration* gave international companies a chance to showcase their interpretations of the quintessentially American writer's work to Chicago audiences, and gave Chicago-based companies the opportunity to display their diverse aesthetics.

Company of *Ah, Wilderness!*

Randall Newsome.....Nat Miller, head of the Miller household and the owner of a local newspaper
Ora Jones.....Essie Miller, Nat's wife, head of the well-kept but lived-in Miller household
Travis A. Knight.....19-year-old Arthur Miller, the eldest of the Miller children and a football linesman at Yale University
Niall Cunningham.....17-year-old Richard Miller, who sees himself as a radical and a poet, and in throes of first love
Rochelle Therrien.....15-year-old Mildred Miller, attractive and vivacious and a great tease to her older brothers
Matthew Abraham.....11-year-old Tommy, the youngest child in the Miller family, bursting with energy
Larry Bates.....Sid Davis, Essie's 45-year-old brother, a gambler and an alcoholic, onetime fiancé of Lily
Kate Fry.....Lily Miller, Nat's 42-year-old sister, an unmarried and childless schoolteacher
Ricardo Gutierrez.....David McComber, Muriel's father and a local businessman who advertises in Nat's newspaper
Aysette MuñozMuriel McComber, almost 16 and in love with Richard
Will Allan.....Wint Selby, Arthur's classmate
Amanda Drinkall.....Belle, a pretty young prostitute
Bri Sudia.....Norah, the Miller's Irish maid
Joe Dempsey.....Bartender
Bret Tuomi.....Salesman

The design team includes **Todd Rosenthal** (Set), **Amy Clark** (Costumes), **Aaron Spivey** (Lights) and **Richard Woodbury** (Sound).

TICKETS, DISCOUNTS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Tickets (\$20-\$75) – GoodmanTheatre.org/AhWilderness; 312.443.3800; Fax: 312.443.3825; TTY/TDD: 312.443.3829

Box Office Hours –12noon - 5pm; on performance days, the box office remains open until 30 minutes past curtain

MezzTix – Half-price day-of-performance mezzanine tickets available at 10am online (promo code MEZZTIX)

\$10Tix – Student \$10 day-of-performance tickets; limit four, with valid student ID (promo code 10TIX)

Group Sales are available for parties 10+; 312.443.3820

Gift Certificates – Available in any amount; GoodmanTheatre.org/GiftCertificates

AH, SUMMER! – June 21 at 6pm| The Alice Center for Education and Engagement at Goodman Theatre

Tickets are \$45 including a pre-show reception and 7:30pm performance. Join Steve Scott and actor Niall Cunningham to celebrate the first official day of summer with a kick-off party with classic summer bites and nostalgic drinks, followed by the 7:30pm performance.

ARTIST ENCOUNTER – [June 25 at 5pm](#) | [The Alice Center for Education and Engagement at Goodman Theatre](#)

Tickets are \$10 for general public; \$5 for Goodman members, donors and students. Join the director for an in-depth conversation about the play; this marks the final Artist Encounter of the season.

ACCESSIBILITY AT THE GOODMAN

[Touch Tour, July 15 at 12:30pm](#) – A presentation detailing the set, costume and character elements

[Audio Described Performance, July 15 at 2pm](#) – The action/text is audibly enhanced for patrons via headset

[ASL Interpreted Performance, July 19 at 7:30pm](#) – Professional ASL interpreter signs the action/text as played

[Open Captioned Performance, July 22 at 2pm](#) – An LED sign presents dialogue in sync with the performance

Visit [Goodman Theatre.org/Access](http://GoodmanTheatre.org/Access) for more information about Goodman Theatre's accessibility efforts.

About Goodman Theatre

America's "Best Regional Theatre" (*Time* magazine) and "Chicago's flagship resident stage" (*Chicago Tribune*), Goodman Theatre is a not-for-profit organization distinguished by the quality and scope of its artistic programming and civic engagement. Founded in 1925, the Goodman is led by **Robert Falls**—"Chicago's most essential director" (*Chicago Tribune*), who marks 30 years as Artistic Director this season—and Executive Director **Roche Schulfer**, who is celebrated for his vision and leadership over nearly four decades. Dedicated to new plays, reimagined classics and large-scale musical theater works, Goodman Theatre artists and productions have earned hundreds of awards for artistic excellence, including: two Pulitzer Prizes, 22 Tony Awards, nearly 160 Jeff Awards and more. Over the past three decades, audiences have experienced more than 150 world or American premieres, 30 major musical productions, as well as nationally and internationally celebrated productions of classic works (including Falls' productions of *Death of a Salesman*, *Long Day's Journey into Night*, *King Lear* and *The Iceman Cometh*, many in collaboration with actor **Brian Dennehy**). In addition, the Goodman is the first theater in the world to produce all 10 plays in **August Wilson's** "American Century Cycle." For nearly four decades, the annual holiday tradition of *A Christmas Carol* has created a new generation of theatergoers.

The 2016 opening of the **Alice Rapoport Center for Education and Engagement** ("the Alice") launched the next phase in the Goodman's decades-long commitment as an arts and community organization dedicated to educating Chicago youth and promoting lifelong learning. Programs are offered year-round and free of charge. Eighty-five percent of the Goodman's youth program participants come from underserved 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 of the new Goodman center in 2000.

Today, Goodman Theatre leadership includes the distinguished members of the Artistic Collective: **Brian Dennehy, Rebecca Gilman, Henry Godinez, Dael Orlandersmith, Steve Scott, Chuck Smith, Regina Taylor, Henry Wishcamper** and **Mary Zimmerman**. **Joan E. Clifford** is Chair of Goodman Theatre's Board of Trustees, **Cynthia K. Scholl** is Women's Board President and **Justin A. Kulovsek** is President of the Scenemakers Board for young professionals.

Visit the Goodman virtually at GoodmanTheatre.org—including [OnStage+](#) for insider information—and on [Twitter \(@GoodmanTheatre\)](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

***Ah, Wilderness!* By Eugene O'Neill, Directed by Steve Scott, Begins Preview Performances This Saturday
Major Revival of O'Neill's Only Comedy Opens June 26, Runs Through July 23 in the Albert Theatre**

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