THE GOODMAN

THEATER OF THE MIND
CREATED BY DAVID BYRNE AND MALA GAONKAR
DIRECTED BY ANDREW SCOVILLE

2026/2027 SEASON • FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THEATER OF THE MIND BY DAVID BYRNE AND MALA GAONKAR WILL CONCLUDE ITS CHICAGO-PREMIERE PRODUCTION IN EARLY 2027 AFTER NEARLY 5,000 PERFORMANCES

NEARLY 50,000 PEOPLE HAVE EXPERIENCED THE ONE-OF-A-KIND IMMERSIVE DESTINATION, CREATED AS A CENTERPIECE OF THE GOODMAN'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY, GENERATING $12 MILLION IN ECONOMIC IMPACT

(CHICAGO, IL |November 17, 2026) After welcoming 50,000 audience members from 34 countries and all 50 states—more than 65% attending a Goodman Theatre attraction for the first time—to nearly 5,000 performances, and employing 100+ artists, artisans and crew over the past year, *Theater of the Mind* will conclude its extended run early next year. Created by Academy, Grammy and Tony Award-winning artist **David Byrne** with writer **Mala Gaonkar**, the Chicago debut production was established by Walter Artistic Director **Susan V. Booth** and Executive Director **John Collins** as a key offering of The Goodman's Centennial Season and is estimated to have generated $12 million in economic impact. Performances of *Theater of the Mind* continue through the holidays towards a January 17, 2027 closing date.

"Thank you, Chicago! This has been a deeply creative partnership with The Goodman, and we're honored to have welcomed so many people this year to *Theater of the Mind*," said co-creators **David Byrne** and **Mala Gaonkar** in a joint statement. "Audiences here were so curious and open to a new theatrical experience showing how loose our hold is on our seemingly strongest memories. Many told us how moved they were, returning again, knowing it would never translate to a screen, but had to be experienced. We are forever grateful that our show enjoyed such a lengthy run in this open-hearted community—and hope you join our audiences in these final weeks!"

"Just as it expands the heads and hearts of those who experience it, *Theater of the Mind* has opened new doors for us. Our community's embrace paves the way for more creative adventures and has underscored the need to be bold in our thinking," said Walter Artistic Director **Susan V. Booth**. "On behalf of all at The Goodman—it's been a 'once-in-100-years' kind of opportunity to collaborate with David and Mala to create this unforgettable experience for our city."

The Goodman's Chicago premiere of *Theater of the Mind*, directed by **Andrew Scoville** with technology direction by **Heidi Boisvert, PhD**, broke ground in fall 2025 with the transformation and build-out of an in-the-raw 19,000-square-foot space in the Reid Murdoch Building (333 N. LaSalle) into a bespoke immersive performance venue.

"Over the past year, The Goodman's expansion has presented new, exciting possibilities as we contemplate what's next for this space in the beautiful Reid Murdoch Building—a venue and location that has quickly become a destination for high-end nightlife and immersive activations," said Goodman Executive Director **John Collins**.

"The success of *Theater of the Mind* demonstrates River North's capacity for distinctive, experience-driven concepts," **Albert M. Friedman**, CEO and Chairman of Friedman Properties. "We look forward to continuing our decades-long partnership with The Goodman and supporting its next big idea."

ABOUT *THEATER OF THE MIND*

A 75-minute mind-bending sensory journey, *Theater of the Mind* engages 16 audience members at a time. Led by a Guide whose stories are inspired by the creators' lives, audiences explore how they perceive the world through sensory experiments derived from both historical and current neuroscience research that reveal the inner mysteries of the brain.

Performances take place Tuesday through Sunday, beginning every 15 minutes. Tuesday performances start at 5:30 pm; Wednesdays, Thursday and Friday evenings start at 5 pm; Saturday and Sunday performances start at 2 pm. *Note that scheduling can vary during the holidays; check website for the most up-to-date information.*

Theater of the Mind, recommended for ages 8+, appears at the Reid Murdoch Building (333 N. LaSalle). Tickets (starting at $69, subject to change) are available at the Goodman Theatre Box Office (170 N. Dearborn), by calling 312.443.3800 or by purchasing online at TheaterOfTheMindChicago.com.

The Goodman is grateful for the support of Northern Trust, the Chicago Department of Planning and Development, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, the Illinois Office of Tourism, Friedman Properties and Winston Taylor. *Theater of the Mind* is produced here in special arrangement with Arbutus, a not-for-profit founded by David Byrne to celebrate, re-present, and amplify ideas found in surprising places.

Company of *Theater of the Mind*
Co-created by David Byrne and Mala Gaonkar
Directed by Andrew Scoville

Guides: **James Earl Jones II, Osiris Khepera, Elizabeth Laidlaw, Helen Joo Lee, Victoria Nassif, Shariba Rivers, Kelli Simpkins**, **Wai Yim**, and **Emily Zhang.** Understudies: **Jesús Barajas** and **Eleanor Hindson** The original cast included **Maidenwena Alba, Em Modaff, Victor Musoni, AJ Paramo** and **Lucky Stiff.**

Creative Team
Technology Director: **Heidi Boisvert, PhD**
Technology Producer: **LeeAnn Rossi**
Scenic Designer: **Neil Patel**
Costume Designer: **Sarita Fellows**
Lighting Designer: **Jeannette Oi-Suk Yew**
Sound Designer: **Cody Spencer**
Mask Designer: **Kevin Copenhaver**
Associate Scenic Designer: **Lisa Orzolek**
Associate Costume Designer: **Caryn Klein**
Associate Lighting Designer: **Brian Elston**
Associate Sound Designer: **Forrest Gregor**
Props Designer: **Adam Weiss-Halliwell**
Local Assistant Scenic Designer: **Ryan Emmens**
Resident Director: **Elizabeth Laidlaw**

Assistant Directors: **Maidenwena Alba, Betty Hart, Amanda Berg Wilson,** and **Lorenzo Rush Jr.**

Casting is by: **Lauren Port**, CSA

General Manager: **Karen Berry**
Production Manager: **Matt Marsden**
Line Producer: **Adam Belcuore**
Consulting Producer: **Charlie Millller**
Company Manager: **Michael Pauken**
Associate Production Manager: **Resolution Productions, Ellen Willet**
Technical Director: **Resolution Productions, Brian Claggett**

ABOUT THE GOODMAN

Since 1925, The Goodman has been a theatrical home for artists and a gathering space for Chicagoland, where bold stories spark connection, conversation and change. Now, as it enters its second century, The Goodman builds on that legacy with an eye toward the future. Under the leadership of Walter Artistic Director **Susan V. Booth** and Executive Director **John Collins**, the theater continues to champion new work—following hundreds of plays developed and a national reputation for commissioning and premiering original stories by living writers—while reimagining classics and producing large-scale musicals.

But The Goodman's reach today extends beyond its home in the heart of the Loop. From the intimate magic of *The Magic Parlour,* now in its third year, to the boundary-pushing world of *Theater of the Mind*—an immersive experience that blurs the lines between science, storytelling and sensation—and from citywide initiatives like *100 Free Acts of Theater* to partnerships with artists and companies across Chicago and around the world, The Goodman is expanding what theater can be, and where it can live.

At its core, The Goodman is driven by a belief that a more empathetic, more connected city is built one story at a time. Generation-spanning productions and programs offer theater for a lifetime—from babies and young children to teens, adults and seniors—including *Theater for the Very Young* (ages 0–5) and the beloved annual *A Christmas Carol*, which has welcomed audiences for five decades. Education and Engagement programs, led by Clifford Director Jared Bellot and based in the Alice Rapoport Center, use the tools of theater to spark imagination, reflection and belonging—reaching thousands each year, the majority from underserved communities.

With nearly 200 world or American premieres, two Pulitzer Prizes, 22 Tony Awards and nearly 200 Joseph Jefferson Awards, The Goodman remains a defining force in American theater—and the first to produce all 10 plays of August Wilson's *American Century Cycle*. The theater also frequently serves as a production partner—from national and international companies to Chicago's Off-Loop theaters—to help amplify a wide range of theatrical voices.

Founded by William O. Goodman and his family in memory of playwright Kenneth Sawyer Goodman, the theater carries forward a legacy of artistic ambition and civic generosity. With the help of Mr. Goodman's descendants—Albert Ivar Goodman and his late mother, Edith-Marie Appleton—that spirit continues to shape its future as The Goodman expands its impact across Chicago and beyond. **Marsha Cruzan** is Chair of the Goodman Theatre Board of Trustees; **Diane Landgren** is Women's Board President; and **Christopher Way** is president of the Scenemakers Board for Young Professionals.

The Goodman stands on the unceded homelands of the Council of the Three Fires—the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi Nations—and acknowledges the many other Nations for whom this land now called Chicago has long been home, including the Myaamia, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Sac and Fox, Peoria, Kaskaskia, Wea, Kickapoo, and Mascouten. The Goodman is proud to partner with the Gichigamiin Indigenous Nations Museum (Gichigamiin-Museum.org) and the Center for Native Futures (CenterForNativeFutures.org)—organizations devoted to honoring Indigenous stories, preserving cultural memory, and deepening public understanding.

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