

ACCLAIMED CHICAGO PLAYWRIGHT REBECCA GILMAN NAMED MEMBER OF GOODMAN THEATRE'S ARTISTIC COLLECTIVE \*\*\*GILMAN JOINS CURRENT MEMBERS BRIAN DENNEHY, HENRY GODINEZ, STEVE SCOTT,

(Chicago, IL) Robert Falls proudly names his longtime artistic collaborator Rebecca Gilman to Goodman Theatre's Artistic Collective, a diverse group of outstanding American theater artists who make the Goodman their artistic home. Gilman, who has the "ability to shake up a theater audience with the power of her ideas—and words" (Chicago Tribune) and whose work "reaches the heart and head with equal force" (Time) joins Actor Brian Dennehy; Director/Actor Henry Godinez; Director Steve Scott; Director Chuck Smith; Playwright/Director/Actor Regina Taylor; and Director Mary Zimmerman as part of the Goodman's ongoing mission to keep its work fresh, relevant and engaging in contemporary American theater. After 24 years, original Collective member Frank Galati has rotated off as artistic associate, continuing the evolution of this diverse, driven group of artists.

"I first encountered Rebecca more than 10 years ago when I read her play *The Glory of Living* (2002 Pulitzer Prize finalist) and knew at once that I was in the presence of a powerful and distinct new voice in the theater," said Goodman Artistic Director Robert Falls. "Beginning with our production of *Spinning into Butter*, it's been an enormous pleasure to collaborate with her on a remarkable range of styles and subject matter, all of which keep her at the forefront of American playwriting."

Gilman has collaborated with the Goodman six times within the past 10 years; three of those productions were directed by Robert Falls. Falls commissioned Gilman to write a new play for the Goodman, and she responded with the provocative, hard-hitting *Spinning Into Butter* (premiered at the Goodman Studio in 1999 directed by Les Waters, subsequently produced at Lincoln Center Theater in 2000 and most recently made into a feature film starring Sarah Jessica Parker). The show's run was extended three times and led to Gilman's next Goodman commission, *Boy Gets Girl* (premiered at the Goodman in 2000, directed by the late Michael Maggio), which transferred to New York's Manhattan Theatre Club and in 2010 was named by Time magazine as one of the "Best Theatre Productions of the Decade." Falls later directed Gilman's *Blue Surge* (2001) and *Dollhouse* (2005)—a modern interpretation of Ibsen's *A Doll's House*. In the spring of 2009, *The Crowd You're In With*, directed by Wendy C. Goldberg, made its Chicago debut at the Goodman and in the fall of 2009 Falls and Gilman teamed up once again for the premiere of *A True History of the Johnstown Flood*. Gilman's other plays include *The Sweetest Swing in Baseball* and *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*, which was named one of Time magazine's top 10 plays of 2009.

"I am so fortunate for the relationship I have with the Goodman," said Gilman. "The resources and support that this theater offers are unparalleled to anything else I have experienced in my career. To join Bob Falls and the other artists of the Artistic Collective is a true honor."

Gilman's plays have also been produced at Royal Court Theatre, Lincoln Center Theatre, Joseph Papp's Public Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club and Manhattan Class Company. She is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, The Prince Prize for Commissioning New Work, The Roger L. Stevens Award from the Kennedy Center Fund for New American Plays, The Evening Standard Award for Most Promising Playwright, The George Devine Award, The Harper Lee Award, The Scott McPherson Award and an Illinois Arts Council Playwriting fellowship.

Gilman is a member of the Council of Dramatists Guild of America and a board member of the American Civil Liberty Union of Illinois. She is an Associate Professor of Playwriting and Screenwriting in the Master of Fine Arts Writing for the Screen and Stage program at Northwestern University.

Falls formed the Artistic Collective in 1986, based on such institutions as the Royal Shakespeare Company and Scotland's Citizens Theater. A similar structure allowed Falls to incorporate Frank Galati and Michael Maggio, two directors with whom he had developed mutual respect and friendship, into the overall artistic vision of the Goodman. Over two decades, the ever-changing Collective expanded to include a group of artists whose individual passions and standards of excellence are among the most accomplished of its kind in the American theater. As the collective has evolved some members have gone on to pursue careers in other performance arenas.

Collective members and current projects include stage and screen star Brian Dennehy now in *The next Three Days* with Russell Crowe and who will soon be seen in John B. Keane's *The Field* at The Olympia Theatre in Dublin (January 2011). He will then return to the Stratford Shakespeare Festival performing the roles of Sir Toby Belch in *Twelfth Night* and Max in *The Homecoming*; Henry Godinez who currently helms *A Civil War Christmas* (through December 19 at Northlight Theatre) and is co-authoring a book with the working title *Festival Latino*, incorporating his experiences with Goodman Theatre's Latino Theatre Festival; Regina Taylor, who recently made Chicago her permanent home, will present her latest work, *The Trinity River Plays* a co-production with Dallas Theatre Center beginning at the Goodman on January 15, 2011; Steve Scott, whose upcoming productions include Martin McDonagh's *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* at Shattered Globe Theatre (January 2011), David Henry Hwang's *Yellow Face* at Silk Road Theatre Project (March 2011) and Machiavelli's *The Mandrake* at A Red Orchid Theatre; Chuck Smith, whose critically acclaimed New York production of Charles Smith's *Knock Me A Kiss* runs through December 5 at New Federal Theatre; and Mary Zimmerman whose newly-adapted *Candide* has moved from the Goodman to Washington D.C.'s Shakespeare Company (through January 9, 2011).