Goodman Theatre Opens Alice Rapoport Center for Education and Engagement

The Chicago theatre’s new 10,000-square-foot space will host educational programs and two residencies.

BY AMERICAN THEATRE EDITORS

CHICAGO: The Goodman Theatre has opened the Alice Rapoport Center for Education and Engagement, which will help fulfill the company’s goal to use art as education in service of social change. The center launched last week with free public events, including a screening of Lorraine Hansberry’s A Raisin in the Sun on May 19—to coincide with the current production of Hansberry’s The Sign in Sidney Brustein’s Window—and a youth
spoken word event on May 20.

“This is an incredibly proud, game-changing moment for all of us at the Goodman Theatre,” said artistic director Robert Falls in a statement. “Our work in education and engagement has always begun with the art itself—as practiced on our stages and as created by hundreds of distinguished artists each season.”

Named for the Goodman trustee and chair of the theatre’s education and community engagement committee who died in 2014, the Alice is a 10,000-square-foot, LEED-certified space offering classrooms, a “learning lab,” and more. The space will support and expand the Goodman’s youth, adult, audience, and artist programs, which are facilitated by a group that includes the Goodman’s director of education and engagement, Willa J. Taylor.

The theatre also announced two collaborations with the launch. Pulitzer Prize finalist and Obie Award-winning playwright/performer/poet Dael Orlandersmith will be a Goodman artistic associate/artist in residence at the Alice. The Center for Performance and Civic Practice (CPCP), along with its executive director Michael Rohd, will also begin a three-year residency at the center.

“I have been working with Willa and her team at Goodman for several years now,” said Rohd in a statement. “They are a passionate, dedicated group of artists/organizers working in community contexts around Chicago and committed to issues of equity, access, and social justice. We at CPCP are tremendously excited at the opportunity to deepen our collaboration and explore new ways to partner with and positively impact Chicago neighborhoods and residents.”

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