

Comic Drama **CHURCH & STATE** Opens Tomorrow at New World Stages



PHOTO: Rob Nagle. Photo credit - Russ Rowland.

Producers Charlotte Cohn, SCS Innovations, LLC, Forty-Eight Theatrical Group, Neil Gooding Productions, Ralph Meranto/JCC CenterStage, Brierpatch Productions, Karen Cohen/Jack Hayflick, and Bonnie E. Lautenberg, in association with NewYorkRep & The Telling Company present the New York Premiere of *Church & State*, the critically acclaimed play by Jason Odell Williams at New World Stages (340 W. 50th Street - between 8th & 9th Avenues) where performances began March 3, 2017 for an open-ended engagement. Opening Night is tomorrow evening, Monday, March 27, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.

Directed by Markus Potter (*Stalking the Bogeyman*), the cast features Rob Nagle (*"Castle," "Mad Men"*), Nadia Bowers Bowers (*The Farnsworth Invention, "Orange is the New Black"*), Christa Scott-Reed (*The Pitman Painters, Relativity*) and Jonathan Louis Dent (*The Broken Record, Romeo and Juliet*).

Church & State is a fast-paced, seriously funny take on faith, politics, and "The Twitter." Three days before his bid for re-election in North Carolina, a Republican U.S. Senator makes an off-the-cuff comment to a blogger that calls into question his belief in God. The Senator's devoutly Christian wife and liberal Jewish campaign manager try desperately to contain the damage with mixed results. This brutally honest and surprisingly funny new play sheds light on how religion, guns, and social media influence our politics and our politicians.

Originally developed with Artistic director Ralph Meranto and JCC CenterStage, *Church & State* was produced as a National New Play Network Rolling World Premiere at JCC CenterStage in Rochester and The Skylight Theatre in Los Angeles where it recently received three Ovation Award nominations including Best Playwriting for an Original Play, Best Production (Intimate Theatre), and Best Lead Actor in a Play. The Los Angeles Times praised it as "gripping entertainment," and "simply superb," while The Huffington Post called it "powerful, humorous and highly contemporary" and named it one of the Top Ten L.A. Theatre Productions of 2016.

The creative team includes David Goldstein (scenic design), Burke Brown (lighting design), Dianne K. Graebner (costume design), and Erik T. Lawson (sound design). Sofia Montgomery is Production Stage Manager.

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Church & State will play the following performance schedule: Monday at 8pm, Wednesday - Friday at 8pm, Saturday 2pm & 8pm, Sunday 3pm & 7:30pm.

Tickets are \$59 - \$105 and are available for purchase through Telecharge.com/212-239-6200. They may also be purchased in person at the New World Stages Box Office (340 West 50th Street. Visit www.newworldstages.com for box office hours.