



**National
New Play
Network**

NNPN ANNOUNCES CHURCH & STATE BY JASON ODELL WILLIAMS AS ITS 60TH ROLLING WORLD PREMIERE

June 2, 2016

WASHINGTON, D.C. - THE **NATIONAL NEW PLAY NETWORK**, THE COUNTRY'S ALLIANCE OF NONPROFIT THEATERS THAT CHAMPIONS THE DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION, AND CONTINUED LIFE OF NEW PLAYS, ANNOUNCES THE 60TH NNPN ROLLING WORLD PREMIERE (RWP) OF **CHURCH & STATE** BY JASON ODELL WILLIAMS. THE PLAY WAS DEVELOPED IN CONJUNCTION WITH RALPH MERANTO, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF ASSOCIATE MEMBER **JCC CENTERSTAGE** (ROCHESTER, NY, OCTOBER 20-NOVEMBER 6, 2016). OTHER PARTNER THEATERS ARE NNPN ASSOCIATE MEMBER **SKYLIGHT THEATRE COMPANY** (LOS ANGELES, CA, JULY 2-AUGUST 14, 2016) AND CORE MEMBER **NEW JERSEY REPERTORY COMPANY** (LONG

BRANCH, NJ, MAY 4-JUNE 4, 2017).

NNPN provides production support to the playwright and the partnering theaters, including assistance with the creation and the contracting of the premiere agreement, collaborative interactions between the theaters, and funds for the playwright's residency in each city to further develop the play.

ABOUT CHURCH & STATE

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 the senator's belief in God. As his devoutly Christian wife and liberal Jewish campaign manager try to contain the damage, this look at how religion, guns and social media influence our political system is both brutally honest and shockingly funny. Will the fall-out destroy the senator's career... or change the world?

ABOUT JASON ODELL WILLIAMS

Jason Odell Williams is an Emmy® Award-nominated writer and producer ("Brain Games") as well as an award-winning playwright, novelist and screenwriter. His play *Handle With Care* (published by Dramatists Play Service) ran for over 100 performances Off-Broadway and has been produced 18 times in the last five years in the U.S. and Canada. The play was a *New York Times* Critics' Pick where they raved, "Mr. Williams has achieved something special: He has written a hilarious and heartwarming romantic comedy...which exudes gobs of comic energy and insight." His other plays have been produced or developed at NC Stage, the cell, the DR2, Primary Stages, The Blank Theatre, The Lark, and EST. Jason's first novel, *Personal Statement*, was optioned for a three-picture deal and he is currently adapting it for the screen with his wife and collaborator Charlotte Cohn. Their TV script, *Birdland*, was a Top 10 Finalist in The Tracking Board's 2015 Pilot Competition. They live in Manhattan with their daughter Imogen and their rescued dog, Pepper. More at jasonodellwilliams.com.

ABOUT SKYLIGHT THEATRE COMPANY

Skylight expands the boundaries of mainstream theatre through the

telling of relevant and more inclusive stories. A vibrant family of artists, **Skylight Theatre Company** discovers, develops and produces new works, introduces plays new to Los Angeles, and educates and nurtures the people that create them. Our passion is telling original stories that speak to today's audience. Our goal is to further establish Los Angeles as a center of innovation in American Theater and to develop an enthusiastic local theater-going community.

ABOUT JCC CENTERSTAGE

CenterStage began in 1977 as the volunteer theatre company at the Rochester Jewish Community Center. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Ralph Meranto since 2005, CenterStage is now a professional theatre utilizing the finest local actors, directors, and designers to present a 5-show subscription series of plays and musicals.

ABOUT NEW JERSEY REPERTORY COMPANY

The **New Jersey Repertory Company** is a professional, non-profit theater founded in 1997 by SuzAnne Barabas (Artistic Director) and Gabor Barabas (Executive Producer). Located in Long Branch, New Jersey, the theater's primary mission is to develop and produce new plays and to make a lasting contribution to the American stage. In addition, it also seeks to achieve the following: to be a catalyst in the redevelopment and revitalization of its surrounding community; to build and encourage young audiences and inspire interest in theater arts among young people; and to nurture the work of writers from diverse backgrounds and build diverse audiences.



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With generous support by

