

CHURCH & STATE To Have New York Premiere In March 2017

by BWW News Desk

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Charlotte Cohn, co-producers Brierpatch Productions, Neil Gooding Productions and SCS Innovations, LLC, in association with New York Rep and The Telling Company, will present the New York Premiere of Jason Odell Williams' critically acclaimed play *Church & State*. Performances are set to begin on Friday, March 3, 2017 with an official opening night of Monday, March 20th at New World Stages (340 W. 50th Street - between 8th & 9th Avenues). This is an open-ended engagement.

Church & State is a fast-paced, seriously funny take on faith, politics, and "The Twitter." It's three days before Charlie Whitmore's Senate reelection and he's decided to finally tell the public exactly what's on his mind, no filter. What could possibly go wrong? Directed by Markus Potter (*Stalking the Bogeyman*), the cast will feature Rob Nagle ("Castle," "Mad Men") in the role of the conflicted Senator for which he received an Ovation Award Nomination for Best Lead Actor in a Play. Additional casting and creative team will be announced at a later date.

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."

Church & State is produced by Charlotte Cohn and Brierpatch Productions, Neil Gooding Productions, SCS Innovations LLC, in association with New York Rep and The Telling Company. Casting is by Wojcik | Seay Casting and Brierpatch Productions provides General Management.

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 will be available for purchase beginning December 24th through

Telecharge.com/212-239-6200 (<http://Telecharge.com/212-239-6200>). They may also be purchased in person at the New World Stages Box Office (340 West 50th Street) Monday through Friday from 12noon until 8pm.

Bios

Jason Odell Williams (Playwright) is an Emmy-nominated writer and producer. His latest play, *Church & State*, was recently nominated for three L.A. Ovation Awards including Best Playwriting for an Original Play. His play *Handle With Care* (published by Dramatists Play Service) was a New York Times Critics' Pick and ran for over 100 performances Off-Broadway. The play has been produced 21 times in the last five years in the U.S. and Canada. Other plays: *Baltimore in Black & White* (the cell theatre); *Someone Else* (NC Stage); *The Science of Guilt* (DR2). Readings: 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.

Markus Potter (Director) is a NYC based director, and the producing artistic director of NewYorkRep. Recent directing: *Stalking the Bogeyman* at London's Southwark Playhouse and Off-Broadway at New World Stages (Outer Critics Circle Award nomination, NY Times Critics' Pick), *Lost Boy Found In Whole Foods* by Tammy Ryan at The Portland Stage Company, *Why You Beasting* by David Don Miller (Best of FringeNYC - Time Out NY critic's pick), *Someone Else* by Jason Odell Williams at NC Stage, as well as directing at Luna Stage (/people/Luna-Stage/) and the Weston Playhouse. Potter received his MFA from Columbia University and has taught and guest directed at many MFA/BFA programs around the county including the Guthrie, The Denver Center, AMDA, and Adelphi University. He is currently a mentor to the MFA playwrights at the New Hampshire Institute of Art. MarkusPotter.com

Rob Nagle (Senator Charles Whitmore) is a proud member of the Antaeus Theatre Company and the Troubadour Theater Company. Recent credits include the world premieres of Jason Odell Williams' *Church & State* (Ovation nominee, Best Lead Actor in a Play, Skylight Theatre Company), Meghan Brown's *The Kill-Or-Dies* (Electric Footlights and Moving Arts), Melissa Ross' *Of Good Stock* and Samuel D. Hunter's *Rest* (both at South Coast Repertory), as well as James Still's *Appoggiatura* at Denver Center for the Performing Arts. Other credits include Samuel D. Hunter's *Pocatello* at Rogue Machine, Itamar Moses' *Completeness* at Vs. Theatre Company, and *James Joyce's The Dead* at Open Fist Theatre Company. Other theaters include Portland Center Stage, Mark Taper Forum, Old Globe Theatre, Centerstage, San Jose Repertory and Shakespeare Theatre Company. Film includes *Bad Samaritan*, *Mother's Day*, *Boost*, *Fishing Naked*, *New Year's Eve*, *Life As We Know It*, *The Soloist*, *Fun With Dick and Jane*, *Cellular*, and *American Wedding*. Television includes recurring roles on "Eli Stone," "Lincoln Heights" and "Dawson's Creek," as well as guest appearances on "The Librarians," "Grey's Anatomy," "CSI," "Criminal Minds," "Castle," "Major Crimes," "NCIS," "Mad Men," "Cold Case," "Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip," "Without A Trace," "Everwood," "The Guardian," and "Buffy The Vampire Slayer." Training: Northwestern University. Wife: Heather Allyn. Pug: Roosevelt. Geek: www.robnagle.com

Charlotte Cohn (/people/Charlotte-Cohn/) (Producer) was born in Denmark and raised in Israel where she served in the Israeli Army as a Commanding Officer. She is a founding producer of the New York Music Theatre Festival (NYMF) and Mainstreet Musicals. Other producing credits include: *Baltimore in Black & White* (the cell theatre -Resident Artist), *Rated P for Parenthood*, The New York Times Critics' Pick *Handle With Care* (both at the Westside Theater Off-Broadway), and the upcoming *Church & State*. Charlotte has collaborated with her husband Jason Odell Williams on a variety of writing projects including their screenplay *Personal Statement* and their TV pilot "Birdland," which was a Top Ten Finalist in the Tracking Board's 2015 Launch Pad Pilot Competition. Charlotte's screenplay *By the Book* was a finalist in the NYWIFT 2015 competition, sponsored by Meryl Streep.

NewYorkRep and The Telling Company (Co-Producer) is an award-winning company committed to telling innovative stories that inspire and compel social change. Recent productions include *Stalking The Bogeyman* at New World Stages. NewYorkRep.org, thetellingcompany.org www.churchandstatetheplay.com