



## Washington, DC Washington, DC NNPN Sets CHURCH & STATE as 60th Rolling World Premiere

by

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The National New Play Network, the country's alliance of nonprofit theaters that champions the development, production, and continued life of new plays, announces its 60th NNPN Rolling World Premiere (RWP): *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 continued development of the play.

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?

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.

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