

MFA DRAMATIC WRITING YEAR 2
NEW WORKS
FESTIVAL
PLAYWRIGHTS WORKSHOP

WITH GOD AND MEN
BY M. TRISTAN McDANIEL

USC School of Dramatic Arts 2015/2016 SEASON

USC School of Dramatic Arts

New Works Festival / YEAR 2

The Master of Fine Arts in Dramatic Writing Playwrights Workshop

PRESENTS

WITH GOD AND MEN

By M. Tristan McDaniel

Directed by Hector Rodriguez

Cast of Characters (in order of appearance)

Hector Henry Reed

Liam/Student #2 Michael DiNardo

Lawrence/Student #1 Matthew Lebowitz

Shadow Angel Bayley Ellenburg

TIME: The present

PLACE: The Pacific Northwest

There will be no intermission.

WARNING

Please be advised that this production contains mature language and themes.

Massman Theatre | April 8–10, 2016

PRODUCTION STAFF

Stage Manager Kelly Jonske | *Scenic Design* Zach Blumner | *Costume Design* Mallory Gabbard

Lighting Design Abby Light | *Sound Design* Emma Bramble | *Dramaturg* Melinda C. Finberg

Fight Choreography Edgar Landa | *Scenic Artist* Erin O'Donnell

Scenic Design Mentor Tom Buderwitz | *Lighting Design Mentor* Tom Ontiveros

Production Manager Jennifer Caspellan | *Crew* Sabrina Batchler, Liviera Leebong, Afton Reid

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE

A year ago, Professor Oliver Mayer challenged us to write the play we didn't expect to write. Like my peers, there were other ideas I had planned to explore that semester, but I was intrigued by this smiling provocation. Like the rest of my family, I'm a bit of a rascal – and I love a fellow rascal's challenge.

Oliver encouraged us to explore deeply, guided by a few simple questions. The one which birthed this play was, "What makes me blush?" Few things, save this. This. Identities, and all the beliefs and cultural practices that create them, are difficult to explain, particularly to those outside of them. Soldiering through doubt and one's own sinfulness, while mining those beliefs for all their vitality, is even harder. And real loving, that delicate balance between accepting and challenging the beloved, is hardest of all.

This play is adapted from life, and many things have been compressed, stretched, or invented so that the spirit of the story is more clearly heard. I want you to be entertained. I yearn for you to think. Together. About this play. About every play.

My favorite plays are always the ones that spark my friends and I to muse together, to reflect on the story and, hopefully, on life itself. May this humble offering possess something of that same spirit.

Special Thanks – To God, for shepherding me through my many messes and fears. To Oliver Mayer, who set me at ease and inspired me to create (and still does). To my friends and family, especially those who could make it here; thank you for your long-lasting love and patience. To Hector, Melinda, Kelly, and my delightful cast and crew – you bless me with your enthusiasm, energy, and craft. I am so grateful for your care and belief in this play. And to all of you for coming out – I appreciate getting to share my first full-length production with you.

Godspeed.

PLAYWRIGHT'S BIO

M. Tristan McDaniel hails from the verdant climbs of the Pacific Northwest, and gained his BA in History at Western Washington University. His work provocatively explores critical questions in the often tumultuous realms of faith and politics. He is a writer of 'bright sadness', wrestling with the stark brokenness of life, while grasping tightly to hope.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

God, Angels and hardcore dancing; what more could a director want? I am grateful to have been asked to direct such a wonderful new work that unabashedly deals with the themes of faith and love. Faith and religion are subjects seemingly absent from the stage outside of holiday plays and parodies. So it is exciting to direct a play that honestly explores the effects of people trying to balance both their religious tradition and life in contemporary society especially when God sends a message the Old Testament way.

I would like to thank Oliver Mayer, Velina Hasu-Houston and Josefina Lopez for recommending me to direct in the New Works Festival. I also would like to thank the cast, Bayley, Henry, Matthew and Michael, for their hard work, professionalism and positive energy which they brought to rehearsals everyday. A big thank you to Kelly, our stage manager, for keeping us on track and to our wonderful designers, Abby, Emma, Mallory and Zach. Thanks also to Els, Melinda, Edgar, Jennifer, the faculty advisors and mentors.

Special thanks to Tristan for trusting me with his story. Bless you all for coming and enjoy the show.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Hector is excited to be directing in the New Works Festival for the first time. He is a resident director at Casa 0101 in Boyle Heights where he has directed several world premieres in addition to the Los Angeles Times Critics Choice *I Don't Have to Show You No Stinking Badges*, the LA Weekly acclaimed *Love Letters to Women*, and co-directed the Imagen Award winning *8 Ways to Say I Love My Life*. Hector is a member of Directors Lab West, a Theater Communications Group "Young Leader of Color" and a graduate of the USC School of Cinematic Arts.

SPECIAL THANKS

Stephen Yamaguchi



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