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MOSAIC THEATER COMPANY OF DC TO STAGE WORLD PREMIERE OF BENJAMIN BENNE'S CONTEMPORARY QUEER ROMANTIC COMEDY "IN HIS HANDS"

Interracial, interfaith, gay rom-com premieres June 22

WASHINGTON (date) — Mosaic Theater Company of DC (Mosaic) is proud to announce that Benjamin Benne's radically contemporary *In His Hands* premieres June 22 for a limited run until July 17. This queer romantic comedy centers on Daniel, an aspiring Lutheran pastor, as he explores his budding relationship with Christian. As provocative as it is entertaining, *In His Hands* asks powerful questions about faith, desire, and love.

Benjamin Benne is an award-winning playwright and recent graduate of the David Geffen/Yale School of Drama's Playwriting MFA Program. Benne's works are grounded in intimacy and imagination, and ask important questions about our world with wit and surprise.

"In many ways, *In His Hands* is the sort of play that I always knew I'd write someday. As with all my work, there's some personal aspect to the storytelling that makes it feel necessary to put onto the page," says Benne. "The exploration to find a sense of confluence, and perhaps even harmony, between the sexual and spiritual – when coming from a religious background where queerness was forbidden – is something I've held for a long time. Inspecting this painful rift between aspects of identity that many (including myself) are taught can't co-exist, and learning how others have bridged, and how I might bridge, them, into a more cohesive sense of self, allowed me to begin creating a critical map for myself toward healing."

Director Jose Carrasquillo brings 30 years of experience as a director and educator to this world premiere production. A recipient of the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Direction, Carrasquillo currently works as the Director of Artistic Programming at Ford's Theatre.

"In *In His Hands*, Ben dares to explore the tension between Christian faith and queer identity in a rom-com of biblical proportions," says Carrasquillo. "Ben's themes are deeply felt, but he's also a true master of tone. By infusing the proceedings with genuine lightness, he ushers an uproarious and genuine LGBTQ+ comedy into the canon of great American comedies. With an exciting theatrical style, spare language, and pull/push rhythms at the speed of light, Ben's love story gives us a fresh take on the 'boy meets boy' plot."

"I am so excited to introduce DC audiences to the wonderful Benjamin Benne through Mosaic's world premiere production of *In His Hands*," says Mosaic Theater's Artistic Director Reginald L.

Douglas. “Like so many in our field, I have long admired Ben’s masterful talent and vivid imagination and both are on full display in this timely new play about love, faith, and saying yes to oneself in a culture that so often seems focused on the no’s.”

In His Hands features an all-local cast of Michael J. Mainwaring, Josh Adams, Sasha Olinick, and Joe Mallon. The creative team includes Tony Cisek (Scenic Design), William D'Eugenio (Lighting Design), Moyenda Kulemeka (Costume Design); Sarah O’Halloran (Sound Design); Jonathan Ezra Rubin (Fights and Intimacy Director); Chelsea Radigan (Casting Director & Dramaturg); and Erika Scott (Assistant Director). Jeanette Buck is the Stage Manager and Kaylin Lucas is the Assistant Stage Manager.

A strictly limited 4 week run begins June 22 and ends July 17. Ticket prices range from \$20-\$68 and can be purchased at <https://mosaictheater.org/in-his-hands>. A video on demand option for *In His Hands* will be available July 6 through July 17. \$40 Streaming tickets may be purchased on the website as well.

Members of the media can RSVP for the press performance through the show’s press kit here: <https://mosaictheater.org/press-kit>.

ABOUT BENJAMIN BENNE

Benjamin is newly graduated from the David Geffen/Yale School of Drama MFA Playwriting program. He made his professional debut earlier this year with the World Premiere of his play *Alma* at Center Theatre Group's Kirk Douglas Theatre in Los Angeles, which had its subsequent Seattle Premiere at ArtsWest and is scheduled for a Chicago production at American Blues Theater this fall. Ben has had his work developed by the O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, Primary Stages, Playwrights Realm, The Lark, The Public, Roundabout, Denver Center, The Old Globe, Two River Theater, New Harmony Project, and SPACE on Ryder Farm, among many others. He has been the recipient of Arizona Theatre Company's National Latinx Playwriting Award, American Blues Theater's Blue Ink Playwriting Award, the Robert Chesley/Victor Bumbalo Playwriting Award, The Playwrights' Center's McKnight Fellowship in Playwriting and Many Voices Fellowship. Learn more at www.benjaminbenne.com.

ABOUT JOSE CARRASQUILLO

Jose Carrasquillo is currently serving as the Director of Artistic Programming at Ford’s Theatre and is an accomplished theatre director and educator with over 30 years of experience. Some of his recent productions include *The Brothers Size* at 1st Stage in Reston, Virginia and *Rhinoceros* at Tantrum Theatre in Athens, Ohio. Local credits include *Nat Turner* in Jerusalem, *The Body of an American*, *El Paso Blue*, *After the Fall* and *Happy Days*. He has been involved with The Theatre Lab, Juilliard School of Drama, UMD at College Park, Catholic University, the University of Washington (Seattle), Cornish College for the Arts, Ohio University at Athens, and the National Conservatory of Dramatic Arts.

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ABOUT THE MOSAIC THEATER COMPANY OF DC

Mosaic Theater Company of DC produces bold, culturally diverse theater that illuminates critical issues, elevates fresh voices, and sparks connection among communities throughout our region and beyond.

Under the leadership of the newly appointed Artistic Director Reginald L. Douglas and Managing Director Serge Seiden, Mosaic produces plays that spark conversation and connections amongst the DC Metro area's diverse communities and sees itself as a neighbor and partner with those communities. By sharing stories that both entertain and enlighten, Mosaic uses art to build empathy amongst diverse people united by the magic of theater and hopes to build community by reflecting the people and the many cultures that call DC home.

www.mosaictheater.org