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**For Immediate Release**

Contact: Tara Wibrew, Associate Producer

Telephone: 541-684-6988 x204

Email: tara@octheatre.org

**Oregon Contemporary Theatre Finishes the 2017/2018 Season with Broadway Hit Comedy, Robert Askins’s *Hand to God***

***May 18 – June 9, 2018***

**EUGENE, OREGON –** Oregon Contemporary Theatre finishes its 26th season with Robert Askins’s Tony Award-nominated comedy ***Hand to God***, directed by Brian Haimbach. ***Hand to God*** opens May 18th, 2018, and runs through June 9th, 2018. All performances are at Oregon Contemporary Theatre, located at 194 W. Broadway in downtown Eugene. Tickets are available online at [www.octheatre.org](http://www.octheatre.org/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) or by calling (541) 465-1506.

In the small town of Cypress, Texas, teenage Jason (Connor French) finds an outlet for his anxiety through the Christian Puppet Ministry. Tyrone, Jason’s puppet, looks innocent, but when he infiltrates the angst-ridden church youth group and takes possession of Jason’s arm, well, all hell breaks loose. Jason’s already complicated relationships with his mother (Kari Welch), the local pastor (Tom Wilson), the resident bully (Ben Lawrence), and his crush (Meg Schenk) become even more chaotic as Tyrone takes over. Spectacularly foul-mouthed and wickedly scandalous, Tyrone shocks the congregation with his outrageous insinuations, exposing their deepest secrets—and teaching us all about love, grief, and what it means to be human. ***Hand to God***is slightly profane and truly profound story of morality, faith, love and loss. ***Hand to God***is a five-time Tony Award nominee, including Best New Play.

“***Hand To God*** is a smart and slightly blasphemous comedy. Askins does a great job of making us laugh out loud—while also feeling a little guilt. Then you realize everyone around you is laughing just as hard. It’s a fun night of theatre that ends our season with a little bit of naughty laughter,” said OCT Artistic Director Craig Willis.

***Hand to God***’s cast includes OCT veterans Kari Welch (*Middletown*, *The Big Meal*) and Tom Wilson (*The 39 Steps*, *The Great Gatsby*) alongside Connor French, Ben Lawrence, and Meg Schenk in their OCT debuts. The artistic team for ***Hand to God*** includes: director Brian Haimbach, scenic designer Craig Willis, sound designer Gabe Carlin, properties designer Gareth Warr, costume designer Heather Kidd, lighting designer Michael A. Peterson, fight director William Hulings, and puppet coach Rachael Carnes. Jennifer Sandgathe is the production stage manager.

Robert Askins (*Playwright)* is a Texas-born playwright and member of Ensemble Studio Theatre. He has received two EST/Sloan grants, an Arch and Bruce Davis Award for Playwriting, and commissions from Divercity Theatre and Baylor University. Select other works include *Princes of Waco,* *Matthew and the Pastor's Wife*, and *Doll Parts.* He was a part of the 52nd Streets *Heads or Tail: The Chancey Plays*, and he can be found on the second Sunday of every month running around a fancy Greek restaurant for his sight specific brunch serial*All the Little Fishes*, about the trials and tribulations of working fine dining in Manhattan with Greeks.

Pay-What-You-Can preview performances for ***Hand to God*** are May 16th and May 17th at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are on sale now an Oregon Contemporary Theatre’s website, [www.octheatre.org](http://www.octheatre.org). Tickets may also be purchased at (503) 465-1506 or by visiting the OCT Box Office at 194 W Broadway.

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**Performance Calendar**

 Wednesday May 16 7:30 pm – Preview Performance

(Pay-What-You-Can, suggested $15 – general admission)

Thursday May 17 7:30 pm – Preview Performance

(Pay-What-You-Can, suggested $15 – general admission)

 Friday May 18 7:30 pm – $35; Opening Night/Post-Show Reception

 Saturday May 19 7:30 pm - Tickets starting at $20

Thursday May 24 7:30 pm - Tickets starting at $20

 Friday May 25 7:30 pm - Tickets starting at $20

 Saturday May 26 7:30 pm - Tickets starting at $20

 Sunday May 27 2:00 pm - Tickets starting at $20; Talk-Back After the Performance

 Thursday May 31 7:30 pm - Tickets starting at $20

 Friday June 1 7:30 pm - Tickets starting at $20

 Saturday June 2 7:30 pm - Tickets starting at $20

 Sunday June 3 2:00 pm - Tickets starting at $20; Talk-Back After the Performance

Thursday June 7 7:30 pm - Tickets starting at $20

 Friday June 8 7:30 pm - Tickets starting at $20

 Saturday June 9 7:30 pm - Tickets starting at $20

Discounts are available for current students with student ID. For more information, visit [www.octheatre.org](http://www.octheatre.org) or call the OCT Box Office at (541) 465-1506.