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Baltimore Center Stage Announces *The Christians* Cast and Artistic Team
Center Stage launches its “Season of Community” with an examination of
Leadership

Baltimore—August 30, 2017. Baltimore Center Stage is pleased to announce the cast and artistic team for *The Christians*, the theater’s first production of the 2017/18 Season.

The Christians launches a “season of community” at Baltimore Center Stage, where every program and production will explore the role of artists and institutions in building community. Prescient in its investigation of the commercialization of religion, *The Christians*, one of the most produced plays in recent years in the American regional theater, is a new play about the cost of challenging one’s beliefs, the responsibility of leadership, and the seemingly insurmountable distance that exists when people of strong convictions and common faith discover that they might not believe the same thing.

This production brings the community on stage via soul-stirring anthems from the New Psalmist Baptist Church Choir, the Greater Baltimore Church of Christ Choir and the Community Choir of Baltimore Center Stage.

“The Christians specifically examines leadership and faith. Faith is fundamentally what we have all been discussing since 9/11. The church in this play is a metaphor for our communities and our country. What happens when you no longer trust those you have entrusted to lead you?” said Baltimore Center Stage Artistic Director Kwame Kwei-Armah. “I’m thrilled to bring this production to Baltimore and for Center Stage to serve as

a convener of many more conversations about leadership ... in Baltimore, in Maryland and in our country.”

The majestic set converts the historic Pearlstone Theater into a modern-day megachurch. Activities to engage theatergoers in conversation, such as “Table Talk” for impromptu, audience-driven conversations, as well as post-show panel discussions with leaders from different faiths and opportunities to meet the actors, will occur throughout the run.

The cast includes **Lawrence Clayton*** (Elder Jay), **Jessiee Datino*** (Jenny), Adam Gerber* (Associate Pastor Joshua), Howard W. Overshown* (Pastor Paul) and **Nikkole Salter*** (Elizabeth).

The artistic team includes **Lucas Hnath** (Playwright), **Hana S. Sharif** (Director), **Mike Carnahan** (Scenic Designer), **Michael Alan Stein** (Costume Designer), **Jen Schriever** (Lighting Designer), **Hana S. Kim** (Projection Designer), **Gavin Witt** (Production Dramaturg), **Pat McCorkle**, **Katja Zarolinski**, **McCorkle Casting, Ltd.** (Casting Director), **Tiffany Fulson** (Assistant Director), **Nathan A. Roberts**, **Jaret Landon**, **Charles Coes** (Original Music/Arrangements), Nathan A. Roberts, Charles Coes, (Sound Design) **Jaret Landon** (Music Director), **Edward Goldstein** (Music Contractor), **Todd Harrison** (Drums), **Jaret Landon** (Keyboards), **Max Murray** (Bass), **Michael Raitzyk** (Guitar).

*Member of Actors' Equity Association.

The Christians opens Thursday, September 14, with previews September 7–13, and closes Sunday, October 8. Press night is Opening Night, September 14. For more information, visit www.centerstage.org or call the box office at 410.332.0033.

is made possible by DLA Piper. This performance is supported in part by a grant from the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC). To discover more about Maryland State Arts Council grants and how they impact Maryland's arts sector, visit msac.org. Funding for the MSAC is also provided by the National Endowment for the Arts. Center Stage's Season Sponsor is M&T Bank and the season is also made possible by The Shubert Foundation and the Baltimore County Commission on Arts and Sciences.

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About Baltimore Center Stage

Baltimore Center Stage is a professional, nonprofit institution committed to entertaining, engaging and enriching audiences through bold, innovative and thought-provoking classical and contemporary theater. Named the State Theater of Maryland in 1978, Baltimore Center Stage has steadily grown as a leader in the national regional theater scene. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Kwame Kwei-Armah OBE and Managing Director Michael Ross, Baltimore Center Stage is committed to creating and presenting a diverse array of world premieres and exhilarating interpretations of established works.

Baltimore Center Stage believes in access for all—creating a welcoming environment for everyone who enters its theater doors and, at the same time, striving to meet audiences where they are. In addition to its Mainstage and Off Center productions in the historic Mount Vernon neighborhood, Baltimore Center Stage ignites conversations among a global audience through digital initiatives, which explore how technology and the arts intersect. The theater also nurtures the next generation of artists and theater-goers through the Young Playwrights Festival, Student Matinee Series and many other educational programs for students, families and educators.