McCARTER PRESENTS WORLD PREMIERE OF
TURNING OFF THE MORNING NEWS

Tony Award®-winning playwright Christopher Durang returns to Princeton with his third commissioned work for McCarter

PRINCETON, NJ: McCarter Theatre Center completes the 2017-2018 Theater Series with Christopher Durang’s Turning Off the Morning News. His third world premiere commission for McCarter, Durang’s follow-up to Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike (2013 Tony Award® for Best Play), is a decidedly dark and daring comedy taking hilarious aim at today’s absurd and dangerous world. Directed by McCarter’s Artistic Director and Resident Playwright Emily Mann, the play runs May 4 – June 3 in the Berlind Theatre. Press opening is Saturday, May 12 at 8 p.m.

Turning Off the Morning News introduces Durang’s newest group of eccentric characters. Happily living a “normal” suburban life, things are good for Cliff and Salena. Their neighbors across the street, however, are peculiar at best - and at worst, stark-raving mad.

The cast includes Jenn Harris (2013 NYC revival of All In the Timing) as Rosalind; Rachel Nicks (Skeleton Crew at The Old Globe) as Salena; Kristine Nielsen (Tony Award® nomination and Outer Critics Circle Award for Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike) as Polly; Recent Juilliard Drama Division graduate Nicholas Podany as Timmy; John Pankow (Ira Buchman in the long-running NBC comedy Mad About You) as Jimmy; and Broadway veteran Robert Sella (My Fair Lady, Cabaret, Chitty Chitty Bang Bang) as Clifford.

About working with Mr. Durang, director Emily Mann said, “Chris is an absolutely unique voice in the American theatre. He is able to take on disturbing questions and issues that in another writer’s hands would take the form of tragedy and spin it into comedy. This is his own particular alchemy, his singular sense of humor and extraordinary craft as a playwright and a theater maker. I am honored that McCarter is an artistic home for Chris, and it is an exciting event to bring his newest play to life here.”

Mann added, “At its heart, Turning Off the Morning News explores the absurdity of our modern world. A fierce exposure of the ways that our personal and societal anxieties can bring out the worst in us, it also gently reveals the antidote—reaching out beyond ourselves to find connection with others.”

Turning Off the Morning News is brought to life by a quartet of McCarter veteran designers, including Tony Award® winners Beowulf Boritt (Set and Projections) and Jeff Croiter (Lighting) alongside Obie Award-winners Jennifer von Mayrhauser (Costumes) and Mark Bennett (Original Music and Sound).
Cast and Creative Team Bios

The Cast: (clockwise from top left) Jenn Harris, Rachel Nicks, Kristine Nielsen, Robert Sella, Nicholas Podany, and John Pankow.

About the Playwright
Christopher Durang graduated from Harvard and Yale School of Drama. His plays include A History of the American Film (Tony Award® nomination); The Actor’s Nightmare; Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All For You (Obie award); Beyond Therapy; Baby with the Bathwater; The Marriage of Bette and Boo (Obie award, Dramatists Guild Hull Warriner Award); Laughing Wild; Durang/Durang (an evening of six plays); Betty’s Summer Vacation (Obie award); Mrs. Bob Cratchit’s Wild Christmas Binge; and Why Torture is Wrong, and the People Who Loved Them. Miss Witherspoon was a double premiere at McCarter Theatre and Playwrights Horizons (2005, finalist for the Pulitzer Prize); McCarter and Lincoln Center jointly produced Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike, winning the 2013 Tony Award® for Best Play, and 5 other awards. christopherdurang.com

About the Director
Emily Mann has overseen 150+ productions as Artistic Director and Resident Playwright of the Tony Award®-winning McCarter Theatre Center. Her McCarter directing credits include the world premieres of: Ken Ludwig’s adaptation of Murder on the Orient Express; her co-adaptation with Pierre Laville of Tennessee Williams’ Baby Doll; Rachel Bonds’ Five Mile Lake; Danai Gurira’s The Convert; Sarah Treem’s The How and the Why; Christopher Durang’s Miss Witherspoon; and Edward Albee’s Me, Myself & I. Broadway: A Streetcar Named Desire, Anna in the Tropics, Execution of Justice, Having Our Say. Her plays: Having Our Say, adapted from the book by Sarah L. Delany and A. Elizabeth Delany with Amy Hill Hearth; Execution of Justice; Still Life; Annulla, An Autobiography; Greensboro
(A Requiem); Meshugah; Mrs. Packard, and Hoodwinked (A Primer on Radical Islamism). Adaptations: Baby Doll, Scenes from a Marriage, Uncle Vanya, The Cherry Orchard, A Seagull in the Hamptons, The House of Bernarda Alba, and Antigone. She is currently writing a play with Gloria Steinem to premiere fall of 2018, and a stage adaptation of Władysław Szpilman’s The Pianist. Awards: Peabody, Hull Warriner, NAACP, OBIEs, Guggenheim fellowship; Tony®, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle nominations; a Princeton University Honorary Doctorate of Arts, a Helen Merrill Distinguished Playwrights’ Award, and the Margo Jones Award given to a “citizen-of-the-theatre who has demonstrated a lifetime commitment to the living theatre everywhere.”

Jenn Harris (Rosalind) is a NY-based actress/writer/producer. Her web series New York Is Dead, which she co-wrote, starred in and produced premiered at The Tribeca Film Festival in 2017 and won Best Comedy at the NYTVF. She won a Lortel & Theatre World Award for Modern Orthodox, starred as Clarice Starling in Silence! The Musical, was in the revival of All in the Timing and many more off and off-beat productions in NYC and regionally. Film: Gayby (SXSW 2012), Fits and Starts, Better Living Through Chemistry, Confessions of a Shopaholic. TV: High Maintenance, 30 Rock, Blacklist, Younger, Eastsiders, Difficult People. Her podcast with Jeff Hiller, Touche Podcast, chats about “fighting your way to the middle.”

Rachel Nicks (Salena) is excited to be making her McCarter debut. She has appeared in Skeleton Crew (The Old Globe). Her Off Broadway credits include War (LCT3), And I and Silence (Signature Theatre), The Good Negro (The Public). Her television appearances include The Affair, Nurse Jackie, Grey’s Anatomy, and Crossing Jordan. She was also in the films Ball Don’t Lie and Life Support on HBO. Ms. Nicks is a graduate of The Juilliard School. www.RachelNicks.com @RachelENicks

Kristine Nielsen (Polly) Broadway: Present Laughter, You Can’t Take It With You, Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike (Tony Award® nomination, Outer Critics Circle Award); Bloody, Bloody Andrew Jackson; Spring Awakening; The Greenbird; Jackie; The Iceman Cometh. Off-Broadway: Hir; Why Torture Is Wrong, And The People Who Love Them; How I Spent Last Summer; Omnium Gatherum; Our Leading Lady; Betty’s Summer Vacation (Obie Award); Dog Opera (Obie Award). Regional work at Williamstown, Guthrie, McCarter, Old Globe, Long Wharf, Yale Rep, The Alley, and The Goodman Theatre. Film and TV includes: Theresa Rebeck’s Trouble, Happyish, Elementary, Morning Glory, The Savages, Small Time Crooks, Political Animals, NBC’s Sound of Music Live!, and most recently, Amazon’s Zelda. Graduate of Northwestern and the Yale School of Drama.

John Pankow (Jimmy) John most recently appeared in Peter Parnell’s Dada Woof Papa Hot at Lincoln Center Theater. Broadway credits include Amadeus, The Iceman Cometh, Cymbeline, Serious Money and Twelve Angry Men. John appeared in the Off-Broadway premieres of Christopher Durang’s Why Torture is Wrong, and The People Who Love Them; John Patrick Shanley’s Italian American Reconciliation; David Mamet’s Keep Your Pantheon; Kenny Lonergan’s Medieval Play; Peter Hedges’ Baby Anger; Israel Horovitz’ North Shore Fish; Brian Friél’s Aristocrats; and Caryl Churchill’s Cloud Nine. Mr. Pankow played Ira Buchman in the long-running NBC comedy Mad About You, as well as television exec Merc Lapidus on Showtime’s Episodes. Feature films include Morning Glory, Putzel, Mortal Thoughts, Married Young, The Secret of My Success, and To Live and Die in L.A.
Nicholas Podany (Timmy) is honored to be making his McCarter debut after receiving his BFA from the Juilliard Drama Division this year (Group 47). Juilliard: Waiting for Godot (Estragon), Henry V (Henry), Triumph of Love (Harlequin), and The Marriage of Bette and Boo (Boo). Regional: Big River (Huck). Los Angeles: Ah, Wilderness! (Richard); On Golden Pond (Billy); The Diviners (Buddy); Hermetically Sealed (Conor); and ‘identity Crisis (Robert). Film/TV: Hart of Dixie; Writer’s Block; and The Ballerina, Her Shoemaker, and His Apprentice. He has also composed scores for films and web series like Standardized, Thicker, and The Ballad of Sheriff Kid McLain. Awards: John Houseman Award (Juilliard, co-recipient, for excellence in classical theatre), U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts (semi-finalist). www.nicholaspodany.com

Robert Sella (Clifford) McCarter: The Night Governess. Broadway: Sylvia, My Fair Lady, Cabaret, Sideman, and Chitty Chitty Bang Bang. Robert played Prior in the first national tour of Angels in America, and starred with Dame Maggie Smith in Edward Albee’s The Lady from Dubuque on the West End. Other favorites include: The Mystery of Irma Vep (Red Bull/Lucille Lortel); Verité (LCT3); Boys and Girls (Playwrights Horizons); Stuff Happens (Public Theater/NYSP); Design for Living; Don Carlos; Mourning Becomes Electra (Shakespeare Theatre, Washington DC); Chick the Great Osram (Hartford Stage); Amadeus, Private Lives (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre). Film/TV: Manchester by the Sea, 1985, Match, Sleepy Hollow, Mindhunter, Deception, In Plain Sight, among others. Robert is a graduate of UCLA and The Juilliard School.

Beowulf Boritt (Set & Projection Designer) McCarter: Murder on the Orient Express, Stones in His Pockets. Broadway: Act One (Tony Award®), The Scottsboro Boys (Tony® nomination), Therese Raquin (Tony® nomination), Come From Away, Meteor Shower, A Bronx Tale, Prince Of Broadway, Sunday in the Park…, Hand To God, On The Town, Sondheim On Sondheim, …Spelling Bee, Grace, LoveMusik, Rock Of Ages, Chaplin, Bronx Bombers, and The Two And Only. Off-Broadway: 100 shows including The Last Five Years, Sleepwalk With Me, 20th Century Blues, and Miss Julie. He has designed for The NYC Ballet and the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus and around the world in England, Russia, China, Australia, and Japan. 2007 Obie Award for sustained excellence.

Jennifer von Mayrhauser (Costume Design) has designed many productions with Emily Mann including 20th Century Blues (off-Broadway); Bathing in Moonlight; Five Mile Lake; Proof; A Delicate Balance; Mrs. Warren’s Profession; Me, Myself & I; A Seagull in the Hamptons; Mrs. Packard; The Birthday Party; All Over; The Cherry Orchard; A Doll’s House; Miss Julie; Cat on a Hot Tin Roof; Three Sisters; Betsey Brown; The Glass Menagerie; and Execution of Justice. She has designed costumes for many Broadway and Off-Broadway shows. She won an Obie for “Sustained Excellence in Costume Design.” Film/TV: The Sinner; FBI; Seal Team; The Slap; Game of Silence; Unforgettable; Law & Order (Emmy nom.); Hateship, Loveship; The Ballad of Jack and Rose; Mystic Pizza; The Hand that Rocks the Cradle; The Real Blonde; Lean on Me; I’m Not Rappaport; and others. jennifervonmayrhauser.com

Jeff Croiter (Lighting Design) McCarter: All the Days, Five Mile Lake, Last of the Boys, Miss Witherspoon, The Birthday Party, Mrs. Packard, Mrs. Warren’s Profession, Phaedra Backwards Broadway: Bandstand, Falsettos, Holiday Inn, Disaster, Penn and Teller, Something Rotten, Newsies, Mothers and Sons, Peter and the Starcatcher(Tony Award®), A Time to Kill, Soul Doctor, Jekyll and Hyde, The Anarchist, The Performers, The Pee-wee Herman Show, Next Fall, Kiki and Herb. Regional Theatre

Mark Bennett (Original Music and Sound Design) McCarter: All The Days, Antony & Cleopatra, Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike (also Lincoln Center Theater & Broadway), Proof, Phaedra Backwards, An Iliad, Candida, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof. Broadway: Junk; The Coast of Utopia (Drama Desk Award); Driving Miss Daisy, A Streetcar Named Desire (Emily Mann, dir.); Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?; Henry IV; Lily Tomlin’s The Search...; A View From the Bridge. BAM/Old Vic: original scores for all Bridge Project productions 2009-2012 (Sam Mendes, dir.). Off-Broadway: An Iliad, Mad Forest (NYTW). Scores for eight Shakespeare productions at The Public (NYC); as well as The Low Road; The Seagull (Mike Nichols, dir.); and Dogeaters. Regional: Over 50 productions including, recently, King Charles III, Salome, Coriolanus (Shakespeare Theatre). Awards: Obie for An Iliad, Sustained Excellence in Sound Design, 14 Drama Desk nominations.

About McCarter Theatre Center
McCarter is one of America’s leading regional theaters and also one of the few organizations in the country that is a professional producing theater and simultaneously a presenter of major performing artists. Winner of the 1994 Tony Award® for Outstanding Regional Theatre, recent world premieres include Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike (2013 Tony® - Best Play); Miss Witherspoon; The Brother/Sister Plays; Me, Myself & I; Having Our Say; The Convert; and Crowns. Other plays include Broadway productions of Translations, Anna in the Tropics (Pulitzer Prize), and Electra. McCarter is a presenter of world renowned artists such as Lang Lang, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Wynton Marsalis, David Sedaris and many others. Education and outreach efforts serve tens of thousands through student matinees, in-school residencies, and adult education classes. McCarter is supported by contributions from Princeton University, the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, corporations, foundations and from over 2,000 individuals. More at mccarter.org.

**TURNING OFF THE MORNING NEWS – PRODUCTION FACTS**

**CREATIVE, PRODUCTION, AND DESIGN TEAM**
Written by: Christopher Durang
Direction: Emily Mann
Set and projection design: Beowulf Boritt
Costume design: Jennifer von Mayrhauser
Lighting design: Jeff Croiter
Original Music and Sound design: Mark Bennett
Casting director: Henry Russell Bergstein
Production stage manager: Cheryl Mintz
Director of Production: David York
Resident Producer: Debbie Bisno
Managing Director: Michael S. Rosenberg
Artistic Director/Resident Playwright: Emily Mann
THE CAST (in alphabetical order)

Rosalind.......................... Jenn Harris
Salena.............................. Rachel Nicks
Polly................................. Kristine Nielsen
Jimmy............................... John Pankow
Timmy.............................. Nicholas Podany
Clifford........................... Robert Sella

The Actors and Stage Manager for this production are members of Actors Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.

McCarter is supported by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, Princeton University, and over 2,000 individuals, corporations, community leaders, and foundations. McCarter Theatre is located at 91 University Place in Princeton, NJ. For more information, please visit mccarter.org.

Turning Off the Morning News is made possible in part by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts and by funds from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Ticket Information and Performance Schedule

Turning Off the Morning News runs May 4 – June 3 in the Berlind Theatre. Single tickets range from $25 - $97.50 and are on sale now online at mccarter.org, by phone at (609) 258-2787, or in person at the McCarter Theatre Center Ticket Office, located at 91 University Place in Princeton.

The production’s running time is 90 minutes, with no intermission.

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| Saturday  | May 12 | 8 p.m.     | Opening Night
| Sunday    | May 13 | 2 p.m.     | Dialogue on Drama
| Tuesday   | May 15 | 7:30 p.m.  |
| Wednesday | May 16 | 7:30 p.m.  | Post-Show Discussion
| Thursday  | May 17 | 7:30 p.m.  | Pride Night
| Friday    | May 18 | 8 p.m.     |
| Saturday  | May 19 | 2 p.m.     |
Saturday     May 19     8 p.m.
Sunday       May 20     2 p.m.     Post-Show Discussion
Sunday       May 20     7:30 p.m.

Wednesday    May 23     7:30 p.m.
Thursday     May 24     7:30 p.m.
Friday       May 25     8 p.m.
Saturday     May 26     2 p.m.     Open Captioning
Saturday     May 26     8 p.m.
Sunday       May 27     2 p.m.

Tuesday      May 29     7:30 p.m.
Wednesday    May 30     7:30 p.m.
Thursday     May 31     7:30 p.m.
Friday       June 1     8 p.m.
Saturday     June 2     2 p.m.     Audio Described, ASL Interpreted
Saturday     June 2     8 p.m.
Sunday       June 3     2 p.m.     Closing

SPECIAL EVENTS

Dialogue on Drama – Sunday, May 13
An in-depth post-show interview with a member of the creative team, often the playwright or director, offering audiences a window into the artistic process of bringing a play to life. The interview is followed by questions and reflections from the audience. This is a free event, no RSVP required.

Post-Show Discussions – Wednesday, May 16 and Sunday, May 20
Post-show discussions are interactive conversations facilitated by a member of McCarter’s artistic staff, often featuring cast members. Post-show discussions occur directly following the 7:30 p.m. performance on Wednesday, May 16 and following the 2 p.m. performance on Sunday, May 20.

Inside Story
Join us 45 minutes before any performance for a talk led by a member of McCarter’s artistic staff. Hear about what inspired the play, its unique creation and style, and much more. All Inside Story talks will take place in the Berlind Theatre unless otherwise noted in the lobby upon arrival.

PLEASE NOTE: This play contains mature themes and potentially disturbing content, including references to gun violence and domestic abuse. If you have questions or require additional information, please call the Ticket Office at 609.258.2787 or email sales@mccarter.org.

For further inquiries and more information, contact: Tom Miller, Director of Public Relations tmiller@mccarter.org | 609.258.6524 | 91 University Place, Princeton, NJ 08540 | mccarter.org