

New Stage Theatre Opens 53rd Season with *Morningside* by Mississippian Topher Payne



JACKSON—New Stage Theatre presents the new southern comedy *Morningside* by Mississippian Topher Payne September 11-23, 2018. Curtain times and dates for performances are Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. on Sundays. Ticket prices are \$30.00 with discounts available for students, senior citizens and groups. Tickets can be purchased at the box office, located inside the Jane Reid Petty Theatre Center, charged by phone by calling the theatre at (601) 948-3531 or ordered online at www.newstagetheatre.com. Sponsored by Sanderson Farms.

Nine women with secrets. A case of champagne. One unforgettable baby shower. Mississippian Topher Payne's new razor-sharp comedy introduces us to the idyllic neighborhood of Morningside in Atlanta, Georgia. Brought to our stage thanks to our Eudora Welty New Plays Series, this hilarious spin on modern motherhood will have you laughing, crying, and glad you paid a visit to *Morningside*. *Recommended for ages 16+*

Topher Payne, a native of Kosciusko, began his theatre career here at New Stage as a scene shop intern in 1997. He went on to tour with New Stage's Arts-in-Education program, and his first attempt at playwriting was staged in The Hewes Room. Since moving to Atlanta in 1999, he has authored more than twenty plays, which have been produced around the world. Payne was a 2017 Lambda Literary Award nominee for *Perfect Arrangement*, which was also awarded the 2014 Osborn Award by the American Theatre Critics Association. *Perfect Arrangement* had its Off-Broadway premiere in 2015, and is one of three of his titles published by Samuel French. His other works include *Swell Party*, *Tokens of Affection*, *Let Nothing You Dismay*, *Evelyn in Purgatory*, and the upcoming *You Enjoy Myself*. He began writing for television in 2016, and has scripted four films for The Hallmark Channel. Highlights of his directing career include *The Foreigner* at The Hangar Theatre in New York, *Trash* at The Process Theatre in Atlanta, and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* at The State Theatre of Georgia, The Springer Opera House. Payne is this year's inductee into The Georgia Theatre Hall of Fame.

"*Morningside* explores the challenges Southern women face in 2018," says Director/Playwright Topher Payne. "It's the conflict of tradition versus progress, of social expectations versus personal desires, of duty to family – whatever her particular definition of family is – versus the need for individual identity. That sounds like a lot to tackle in one story, but I think that's really the point: these are the choices they're dealing with every day."

"I am so pleased that we are finally producing one of Topher Payne's plays on the main stage at New Stage Theatre. A fully staged production of a Payne play at New Stage is long overdue and *Morningside* is the perfect choice to kick off our "The Power of Place" 53rd Season," says Artistic Director Francine Thomas Reynolds. "Not only did Topher begin his playwriting journey at New Stage, he is a master at creating roles for women. He comes from our place - Mississippi and New Stage - and he skillfully writes about the south's uniqueness as a place of family conflict, comedy, tears, and laughter."

The ensemble cast includes: Ali Dinkins (Jackson) as Grace, Jessica Wilkinson (Florence) as Louise, Jo Ann Robinson (Pearl) as Roxanne, Joy Amerson (Madison) as Felicia, Annie Cleveland (Jackson) as Devyn, Bryn Striepe (Atlanta) as Clancy, Kerri Sanders (Brandon) as Sophie, Hope Prybylski (Brandon) as Mackenzie, and Carolyn Choe (Atlanta) as Elinor. *Robinson appears through the courtesy of the Actors' Equity Association.*

Now YOU can be a part of the worst baby shower ever! Join the cast for a glass of prosecco, deliciously themed food and baby-shower games. Help us celebrate the birth of our 53rd season in truly raucous style! Thursday, September 13 after the performance. \$5 Cover Charge.

NEW STAGE Theatre

1100 Carlisle Street
Jackson, Miss. 39202
Phone (601) 948-3533

Schedule & Ticket Information

Where:

The Jane Reid Petty Theatre Center,
1100 Carlisle Street, Jackson MS 39202

Dates:

Preview: September 11
Open: September 12
Close: September 23

Performance Times:

Tues. Preview: 7:30 pm
Tues. thru Sat.: 7:30 pm
Sundays: 2:00 pm

Tickets:

\$30; seniors/students \$25; group discounts available

Box Office:

Telephone: 601-948-3531
Online: www.newstagetheatre.com
Email: tickets@newstagetheatre.com
Hours: Mon.-Fri. from 10 am – 5 pm

Hours During Show:

Tues. Preview: 10 am -7:30
Tues. thru Fri.: 10 am - 7:30 pm
Saturday: 4 pm - 7:30 pm
Sunday: 1 pm - 2 pm

Tickets Online:

Tickets may be purchased 24 hours a day, seven days a week at www.newstagetheatre.com (a per-ticket service fee of \$3 applies to all online purchases)

Rush Tickets:

One hour prior to curtain for any performance, students with a current academic ID may purchase an available seat for \$10. *Limit one ticket per ID.*

Information:

Call 601-948-3531 or visit New Stage online at www.newstagetheatre.com

Performance Calendar

September

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
		11 Preview 7:30 p.m.	12 Post Show Actor Chat 7:30 p.m.	13 7:30 p.m.	14 7:30 p.m.	15 7:30 p.m.
16 2 p.m.	17	18 7:30 p.m.	19 Post Show Actor Chat 7:30 p.m.	20 7:30 p.m.	21 7:30 p.m.	22 7:30 p.m.
23 2 p.m.						

Production Information

Director

Stage Manager

Scenic Designer

Lighting Designer

Costume Designer

Sound Designer

Topher Payne

Elise McDonald

Richard Lawrence

Bronwyn Teague

Lesley Raybon

Kurt Davis

Cast

Grace Bouchard Driscoll

Louise Bouchard Carlisle

Roxanne Bouchard

Felicia Taggart

Devyn Driscoll

Clancy Driscoll

Sophie Navarro

Dr. Mackenzie Novak

Elinor Hughes

Ali Dinkins

Jessica Wilkinson

Jo Ann Robinson

Joy Amerson

Annie Cleveland

Bryn Striepe

Kerri Sanders

Hope Prybylski

Carolyn Choe