



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: 01.13. 2025

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## **ArtsWest Announces *COVENANT* by York Walker**

**SEATTLE, WA** (January 13, 2025) – ArtsWest presents the West Coast Premiere of **COVENANT** by York Walker, directed by Nicholas Japaul Bernard. The cast features Simone Alene, Deja Culver, Felicia Loud, Donovan Mahannah, and Kaila Towers. COVENANT performs at ArtsWest from February 6 – March 2, 2025. Tickets are available online at [artswest.org](http://artswest.org) or by phone at (206) 938.0963.

**In this Southern gothic thriller**, a struggling guitarist returns to his small Georgia town a blues star and rumors begin swirling that he may have made a deal with the devil to attain his musical genius. Before long, however, it becomes clear he's not the only one with a secret. **A mythic and suspenseful new play** that delivers one devilish twist after another, York Walker's COVENANT explores the power of belief and the thin line between rumor and truth.

**This production welcomes back three stand-out theater artists to ArtsWest**, including Felicia Loud who portrayed Billie Holiday in the 2018 production of LADY DAY AT EMERSON'S BAR AND GRILL. Loud also wrote and performed in her original show HERE THERE BE DRAGONS: CHASING MY VOICE along with her Black Stax counterpart Jace Ecaj in 2022. Deja Culver returns after starring in CLYDE'S (2024) as Letitia. COVENANT marks **Nicholas Japaul Bernard's directing debut at ArtsWest**. Bernard portrayed the titular character in HEDWIG AND THE ANGRY INCH twice in ArtsWest's 2018 and 2023 productions.

When asked what drew him to directing COVENANT, Nicholas remarked, "I was drawn to this script - by how lush and tight York Walker made it. There's so much to dig into and so many questions to ask but York kept a vice grip on what he wanted to say, what he didn't want to say, and what he meant to imply. **It's clear he wrote this script for actors and I love a playwright who takes care of his actors.**"

The 2024-2025 Season at ArtsWest is titled '*The Family of Things*,' a nod to Mary Oliver's poem *Wild Geese*. Like the poem, **each of the five plays this season explores the role love plays on the path to finding belonging**. Nicholas hopes audiences walk away from COVENANT "considering those they love, despise, look up to, and disagree with and the fact that those people have vast internal lives you will never be able to fully comprehend," and asking, "How do we reconcile that truth with the human need for connection and empathy? What are the physics of compassion when true understanding is a fool's errand?"

ArtsWest will present COVENANT Thursday through Saturday at 7:30pm and Saturday through Sunday at 3pm.

## **CAST**

Simone Alene ... Avery

Deja Culver ... Violet

Felicia Loud ... Mama

Donovan Mahannah ... Johnny

Kaila Towers ... Ruthie

## **CREATIVE TEAM**

Nicholas Japaul Bernard ... Director

Kimberly Le ... Stage Manager

Ben & Jess Radin ... Scenic Designers

Trevor Cushman ... Lighting Designer

Madelyn Zandt ... Sound Designer

Janelle Kimbrough ... Costume Designer

Jack Bateman-lino ... Properties Designer

Marquicia "QuiQui" Dominguez ... Dramaturg

Jasmine Lomax ... Intimacy / Violence Choreographer

Greg Fields ... Composer

## **About the Production**

*Covenant* by York Walker and directed by Nicholas Japaul Bernard plays February 6 – March 2, 2025 at ArtsWest (4711 California Ave SW, Seattle WA 98116). Tickets (ranging from \$15 - \$46) may be purchased online at [www.artswest.org](http://www.artswest.org), by phone at 206.938.0339, or at the Box Office Thurs. - Sat. 2:00 - 7:00pm, Sundays 11:00 am-3:00 pm.

## **Press Information**

Press tickets are available Opening Weekend, February 6 - 9. Please contact Rachel Ewen at [rachele@artswest.org](mailto:rachele@artswest.org) to arrange. Press & Production photos available by request to Corinne Park-Buffelen – [corinnep@artswest.org](mailto:corinnep@artswest.org) . Photo Credit John McLellan. Full production photos available by February 10th.

## **About ArtsWest**

ArtsWest is a vibrant center for both theater and visual arts located in the West Seattle Junction. This 149-seat theatre provides a unique setting for audiences and artists as stories of human emotion unfold in an intimate space. Winner of the American Theatre Wing's National Theatre Company Award, and winner of multiple Gregory Awards, ArtsWest has produced work by such varied playwrights as Dominique Morisseau, Henrik Ibsen, Annie Baker, Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, Taylor Mac, and David Henry Huang. ArtsWest produces artistic events that provoke conversation, incite the imagination, and use live theater as a powerful agent of change. [www.artswest.org](http://www.artswest.org)

**For Calendar Editors:**

**Who:** ArtsWest

**Where:** 4711 California Ave SW Seattle, WA 98116

**What:** *Covenant* by York Walker and directed by Nicholas Japaul Bernard

**When:** February 6 – March 2, 2025, Thursday – Saturday at 7:30pm, Saturday and Sunday at 3:00pm

**Tickets:**

General Admission: \$46 | Senior: \$41 | Inclusion: \$15

Tickets online at [www.artswest.org/theatre/buy-tickets/](http://www.artswest.org/theatre/buy-tickets/) by phone at 206-938-0339, and at the box office, 4711 California Ave SW, Seattle, WA 98116 , Thursday - Saturday 2 - 7pm, Sundays 11am - 3pm.