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## ‘Act of God’ timely, thought-provoking ark full of laughs

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If you are looking for a word to describe the Almighty's humor in *An Act of God*, "wry" might be the one. "Self-deprecating" also springs to mind. And He could not have chosen a better actor through whom to deliver His running commentary on the human condition than Miguel Cintron, who is the epitome of irony, sardonicism and, yes, gracious humility.

Cintron is crafting quite the reputation for monologues and soliloquys. He was masterful in Theatre



Conspiracy's production of E.M. Lewis' *The Gun Show* in September of 2016. Here, Cintron is more inclined to riff than diatribe. The effect is more contemplative and introspective than profane or blasphemous – although some may quibble with this conclusion when they hear the Almighty ask himself repeatedly, "What's wrong with me?" as he recounts, a' la Cintron, examples of his wrath, petulance and perverse sense of humor. (Just look at what he did to Job, Jonah and



Robert Barone.)

It's a central problem. The Almighty freely admits that he has wrath-management issues. But more, "I made mankind in my image, and I'm an asshole," He continues. That means, then, that the devil doesn't necessarily make us do bad deeds. Instead, it's part of our genetic, er, spiritual make-up. We all emulate traits we've seen



in our parents, and our Father in ultimate role model.

heaven is, by that measure, our

But why has He decided to visit us now, in 2017, and at Lab Theater of all places? Simply put, God has a chisel to hammer. He's as weary of the ten edicts he gave Charlton Heston, er, Moses as Don McLean grew of "American Pie." So he's come to Fort Myers and inhabited Cintron's body and soul to update the Ten Commandments and clear up some ambiguities and anomalies about His last-word non-fiction work, The Bible (which, with more than 6 billion copies in distribution, tops everybody's bestseller



list).

With a nod to Steve Jobs, God gives us The Ten Commandments 2.0, and some of the new and improved commands are downright hilarious. They include such new gems as “Thou shalt not tell me what to do.” Cintron slays it as he grouses about, chiding mankind for incessantly telling Him who to bless, whose soul to rest and who or what to damn or forbid. “When someone sneezes, the work you’re looking for is Gesundheit.”



Other newbies but goodies include “Thou shalt not seek a personal relationship with me,” “Thou shalt not kill in my name” (He says he doesn’t need any help in this department) and, a personal favorite, “Thou shalt not tell others whom to fornicate.” Not only is the latter grammatically correct, it’s PC too. Who knew that the Almighty originally created Steve from one of Adam’s nonstructural ribs or that He regrets not entrusting the Garden of Eden to lesbians (they would have been, after all, more reliable)?



Cintron is wonderful in the role of a peevis Creator. He handles the part with the aplomb of a Latino Jon Stewart, which makes sense since *Act of God* playwright David Javerbaum cut his teeth writing one-liners for *The Daily Show* (among others).

But it is in his interactions with his archangels where Cintron and the show really take flight.



Dave Yudowitz plays Gabriel, the archangel who keeps God in stitches and plies him with dry martinis (shaken, never stirred). Yudowitz's angel is as completely contented to do God's bidding as Vanna White is to turn letters for Pat Sajak – with one important difference. White's 6,500 couture gowns shimmer with color. Gabriel's gown is pure white.

Yudowitz plays the part perfectly – as evidenced by the fact that as the show wears on, Gabriel wears on the audience's last nerve as the obsequious, submissively subservient heavenly yes man who blissfully does as he



is t old.

Then there's Michael, played to the hilt by Rob Green. He's mankind's stand in (and literally stands with us in the audience pit). He voices our doubts, asks all the hard questions, articulates the paradoxes we find so incomprehensible. How can carbon-dated rocks millions of years old be squared with creationism? Where was God during the Holocaust? And does God answer prayers?



It turns out that God doesn't like to be questioned, and Michael suffers the consequences of challenging the ultimate authority figure. But don't worry. Green has experience being used and abused. After all, he was Blanche to Randall Kenneth Jones' Baby Jane Hudson (*Whatever Happened to Baby Jane: A Parody of the Horror*), and he has the scars to prove it!

God saves his best new commandment for last. Spoiler alert, it's sort of Nietzschean when reduced to its bare essence. Which is ironic, as the 19<sup>th</sup> German philosopher is the one who announced that God is dead. David Javerbaum's God is very much alive. But He says that we spend too much time depending on Him to



save our asses. It's high time we depend on each other. It's time we believe in ourselves.

Kudos to director Mitch Haley and the entire Lab Theater board. Once again they've managed to find a play that combines timeliness with an ark full of laughs that makes us think to boot.

Go see *An Act of God*. Consider it a new commandment.



*November 22, 2017.*

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- [Miguel Cintron is the Almighty in Lab's 'An Act of God'](#)
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## About the Author



Tom Hall is both an amateur artist and aspiring novelist who writes art quest thrillers. He is in the final stages of completing his debut novel titled "Art Detective," a story that fictionalizes the discovery of the fabled billion-dollar Impressionist collection of Parisian art dealer Josse Bernheim-Jeune, thought by many to have perished during World War II when the collection's hiding place, Castle de Rastignac in southern France, was destroyed by the Wehrmacht in reprisal for attacks made by members of the Resistance operating in the area. A former tax attorney, Tom holds a bachelor's degree as well as both a juris doctorate and masters of laws in taxation from the University of Florida. Tom lives in Estero, Florida with his fiancée, Connie, and their four cats.

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