

HIRE POWER

a new comedy by Marya Smith

Opens Friday, August 14th at 8:00pm

**Runs Fridays and Saturdays at 8:00pm, Sundays at 7:00pm
through September 20th at:
Strawdog Theatre, 3829 N. Broadway**

Produced by Hodar Productions

Directed by Nicole Mischler

starring:

Jon Ross
Ingrid Bonne
Gwen Druyor
Tom Hickey
Lily Mojekwu
Andrew Dannhorn
Dawn-Marie Fletcher
Christopher Garrett



"Jesus had the Q factor."

Ticket Price: \$12 general admission
Call (773) 486-4978 for tickets and info

*Group rates available
*Discount for students and seniors

Theater ■ Dance ■ Performance Art ■ Comedy

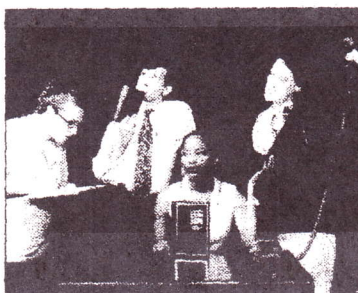
stage



Wheel deal: "HELLCAB" continues to wander across

openingnights

Lawrence Bommer



Ad agency's task: Market the Bible

In today's image-is-everything world, even the Good Book, it seems, is liable for a face lift. "HIRE POWER," a timely comedy by Marya Smith, opens Friday to depict a small ad agency that lands a big account, the Bible. The intrepid staff sets to work to market the Bible as a true testament for our times. But how do you make hype holy? When the agency's creative director actually reads the "product" and takes its words to heart, Smith's comedy of errors suddenly pits instant spirituality against marketing's sleights of hand. Nicole Mischler directs a cast of seven in this premiere from Hodar Productions.

"Hire Power" runs through Sept. 20 at Strawdog Theatre, 3849 N. Broadway; 773-486-4978.

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T H E A T E R

R E V I E W

HIRE POWER, *Hodar Productions, at Strawdog Theatre Company*. Though the premise is inviting enough—a born-again millionaire hires an ad agency to promote the Bible—*Hire Power* could easily have turned into a one-gag sketch. But playwright Marya Smith takes her subject seriously, and with a minimum of biblical citation (none of the hypesters sees any reason to *read* the product) and no more irreverence than you'd find in any scripture-study class, her parable reaffirms the good book's power to benefit humanity while cautioning that the way of the truly righteous is fraught with hazards.

Far from a sugary tract fit only for the choir, this gentle sitcomish satire will nevertheless likely

attract countless church groups. But director Nicole Mischler and her cast also give the script sufficient professional polish to camouflage its awkward spots: a drag turn that borrows heavily from Dana Carvey's church lady, an "astonishing" resolution we see coming for a full 30 minutes, and the implausible assumption that even citizens as secularized as the Jonatom ad-agency employees could be completely ignorant of the Bible. With some editing, however—mostly elimination of the obvious literary devices extending the play to feature length—this uplifting comedy has potential: the Golden Rule is still a sure sell.

—Mary Shen Barnidge