

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

525 Arch Street | Independence Mall
Philadelphia | PA 19106 | T 215 409 6600 | F 215 409 6650
www.constitutioncenter.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Denise Venuti Free
Director of Public Relations
215.409.6636
dvfree@constitutioncenter.org

“THE WEST WING” ACTRESS, WRITERS TO APPEAR AT NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER FOR DISCUSSION, SCREENING

Philadelphia, PA (April 15, 2005) – Lights. Camera. Action. Article II. Separation of powers. How do you write about the Constitution for a prime time, network television show that draws a mass audience? And get the Constitution right? On Thursday, May 5, 2005, at 6:30 p.m., “The West Wing” actress Melissa Fitzgerald, and script writers Josh Singer and John Sacret Young will explain during a FREE screening and discussion at the National Constitution Center. The program, “Constitution on TV: Writing ‘The West Wing’” is open to the public, but reservations are required. For tickets, email nationalprograms@constitutioncenter.org or call (215) 409-6700. Following the program, Young will sign copies of his new book, *Remains: Non-Viewable*.

In addition, visitors can witness an unveiling of a special “The West Wing” exhibit at 3:30 p.m. in the Grand Hall Lobby. The exhibit features props from the December 1, 2004 episode, “A Change is Gonna Come,” that mentioned the National Constitution Center, including: a copy of the script, a signed letter from President Bartlett invoking the 25th Amendment (signed by Martin Sheen), the pen he used to sign it, and a DVD loop of the episode. The exhibit will remain in the Center’s Grand Hall Lobby, which is free and open to the public, through Labor Day.

Melissa Fitzgerald has appeared in numerous theatrical productions both regionally and in New York (where she started the Our Gang theater company in 1990). She has also performed on many of Los Angeles’ stages including the Coronet (with Eric Roberts, Donald Moffat and Frances Sternhagen) and in Sean Penn’s production of *Remembrance* with James Gandolfini. Her film credits include *Monument Ave.* and *Frequency*. Currently she appears as Carol on NBC’s “The West Wing.” Melissa is also a co-founder of a non-profit organization called Voices in Harmony that uses theater to work with at-risk teens. Melissa received her BA in Literature

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ADD ONE/WEST WING RELEASE

from the University of Pennsylvania before completing the Neighborhood Playhouse School of Theater's 2 year conservatory program. She is a Philadelphia area native.

John Sacret Young has just been nominated for his sixth Writers Guild Award for this past season's finale of "The West Wing." His new book, *Remains: Non-Viewable*, will be published this spring, on the thirtieth anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War, by Farrar, Straus and Giroux. It has been hailed by Scott Turow as "an exceptional memoir about one family and a generation. It is a compelling portrait of many worlds—Yankee New England, Vietnam, and Hollywood—and of high adventure, antic moments, and the cycles of love and grief. Every page is wrought with indelible grace and the restless energy of emotions that even the passage of time cannot quell." Young also co-created and served as executive producer of the landmark series *China Beach*. For his work on the series Young received a Golden Globe Award, a People's Choice Award, five Emmy nominations, and four other nominations from the Writers Guild of America.

Josh Singer sang his way through Yale with the Alley Cats and Whiffenpoofs and then spent a few years as an analyst at McKinsey & Company in New York City. After escaping "the Firm" in 1997, he did a brief stint working for the COO of Children's Television Workshop before entering Harvard, where he completed his JD/MBA in 2001. After spending time at Nickelodeon and The Disney Channel, he decided he wanted to practice neither law nor business and began down the route of starving artist. Fortune (and John Wells) smiled upon him in May of 2003 and he was hired to write for "The West Wing." He has written for the show for the past two years. Singer is also a Philadelphia area native.

Admission to the National Constitution Center is \$7 for adults and \$5 for seniors ages 62 and up, children ages 4-12, and military personnel. Group rates are also available. For more information, call 215.409.6600 or visit www.constitutioncenter.org.

The National Constitution Center, located at 525 Arch St. on Philadelphia's Independence Mall, is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing public

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understanding of the U.S. Constitution and its relevance to Americans' daily lives. Opened on July 4, 2003, the museum dramatically tells the story of the Constitution from Revolutionary times to the present through more than 100 interactive, multimedia exhibits, film, photographs, text, sculpture and artifacts, and features a powerful, award-winning theatrical performance, "Freedom Rising". The Center also houses the Annenberg Center for Education and Outreach, which serves as the hub for national constitutional education and debates, and as a home for visiting scholars. Also, serving as a nonpartisan forum for constitutional debate, the Center presents – without endorsement – programs that contain diverse viewpoints on a broad range of issues. For more information, call 215.409.6600 or visit www.constitutioncenter.org.

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