

NO, VIRGINIA

A Grown-Up Holiday Farce





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NO, VIRGINIA

A Grown-Up Holiday Farce

BY J.D. SIVERT

featuring

Matt Bannister

Lucy Campbell

Camilo Eraso

Laurn Gill

Caitlyn Joy

Jeremy Myers

Katie Rattigan

Laura Stark

Playwright

J.D. Sivert

Director

Tabetha White

Stage Manager

Eli Bendel-Simso

Assistant Stage Manager

Miranda Trautman

Scenic Designer

David DiFalco

Lighting Designer

Will Heyser-Paone

Costume Designer

Autumn Carter

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Julie Herber

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FROM MET'S ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Dear METster,

Thank you, SO MUCH, for joining us during this difficult time for our entire industry. MET has worked, very hard, to create the safest environment possible for theatre to thrive and survive!

During the theatre shut-down, MET was forced to build original pieces and adaptations that were done safely and presented in mediums that were very new to all of us. We met that challenge and are all very proud of that work.

With *No Virginia*, we continue a MET tradition: giving birth to new work. Our first play on stage was a MET original devised piece in the summer of 1997 with *Finally Heard* and now we raise the work of company member J.D. Sivert to the MainStage with a very fun holiday farce!

J.D. helped guide our play development program METLab for many years which has yielded many new plays, some of which you may have already seen on a MET stage. *No Virginia* was first developed in METLab and now gets a performance with a full LIVE cast in a LIVE theatre setting with a play-building process (weeks of rehearsal and full design) that further energizes our ensemble. Our group thrives on having people “in the room” where plays are rehearsed, built, and performed; it connects us, the entire team, to the play and finally to the audience. We hope you feel the wonderful energy “in this room” and are as excited as we are in premiering this new holiday play!

Tad Janes
Producing Artistic Director

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FROM MET'S MANAGING DIRECTOR



Welcome (back)! Maryland Ensemble Theatre (MET) has been enabling our community to feel more, think deeper, and laugh longer for 24 seasons. Dedicated to providing the highest quality theatrical experiences, MET is a professional ensemble theatre and 501(c)(3), comprised of twenty-three professional performers, directors, dramaturgs, musicians, designers of all things scenic, lighting and sound as well as master technicians. MET provides theatrical experiences & programs such as: MET's Mainstage season, curated each year with contemporary and stimulating theatrical productions; MET's Fun Company,

our Theatre for Young Audiences; MET's Ensemble School, a launching pad for young and old alike who want to learn more about making people laugh and cry through theatre and improv classes; MET's Fun Company In-School Programming, serving primary and secondary schools with fully-produced theatre right at their home school & starring the kids; and MET's Comedy Night, a season full of diaphragm cramp-inducing, "I can't breathe!" exclaiming improv and comedy shows.

All of us at MET thank you: it is through your patronage as well as your generous donations, that we will continue to ensure all who engage with MET each year enjoy and be emotionally affected by theatre, as we have for the last two-plus decades.

Kathryn Vicere
Managing Director

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FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT



A few years ago, my parents hired a Santa Claus for their grandchildren and their little friends to come take pictures at a Christmas party. He was an hour late, was demanding about the picture taking, and eventually told my mother to “Shut Up.” After a few ponderous months, I told my wife I finally had a new idea for a Christmas play. That winter, at a MET retreat, we read the first version of this play. Nearly four years later, *No, Virginia* is receiving its world premiere with many of the same cast members as that first read-through in 2019 as part of the METLab: Plays in Progress

Festival. It was METLab that brought me to Maryland Ensemble Theatre in 2016 thanks to a friend needing help with some new-play dramaturgy. New works are the lifeblood of theatre. There may be familiarity and new insight found in revisiting great titles of the theatrical canon, but there are new stories to tell, new perspectives to consider, and new writers to illuminate, all philosophies sacred to METLab.

Little did I know that my meager contribution would be a comedy about Santa Claus. Little did I know this comedy would force me to reckon with my belief in, well, everything. Belief in God. Belief in people. Belief in Santa Claus! You better get yourself on the “nice list” or you won’t get what you want for Christmas! *No, Virginia*’s protagonist, Tiffany, has been “nice” her entire life at a great price. After a dramatic incident last Christmas at church, Tiffany must reckon with her lifetime of being “nice”. THIS Christmas will be different. To me, being “nice” is far different now than it was when I began this play. About a bad Santa Claus. Well, at least one bad Santa Claus...

Thank you for supporting this new work. I wish you the very best holiday season filled with love and understanding.

J.D. Sivert
Playwright

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FROM THE DIRECTOR



*Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus.
He exists as certainly as love
and generosity and devotion exist,
and you know that they abound
and give to your life its highest beauty and joy.*

-The Sun
September 21, 1897

The Yes, Virginia editorial, famously printed in The Sun in 1897, ignites imagination and childlike wonder, but in our lives we are far too often faced with “No” instead of “Yes!” J.D. Sivert has given us a play in which we can explore the consequences of being told “No” to something we believe in, and how we can say “Yes” to the world in response.

The editorial goes on to say ‘Alas how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus.’ It is the happiness he brings which brightens the dark winter nights, and our play takes place on the darkest night of the year. Let’s hope we have (at least one) Santa joining us tonight!

Thank you for joining us for *No, Virginia: A Grown-Up Holiday Farce!* Your presence here is the magic that makes live theatre so special, we are so glad to share this production with you. I hope you feel free to laugh out loud while you are here (you might even groan or gasp!), we sure did during rehearsals. Feeling the joy of shared humor is the best gift I could have asked for this season, and doing so with this cast and crew has been so much fun!

Tabetha White
Director

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

Tiffany..... Caitlyn Joy
Grey..... Jeremy Myers
Colleen..... Laura Stark
Mo..... Katie Rattigan
Sandy..... Camilo Eraso
Bill..... Matt J. Bannister
Wren..... Lucy Campbell, Lauryn Gill

Setting:
December 21 – Winter Solstice

There will be one 15 minute intermission.



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LAWYERS



Matt J. Bannister



Lucy Campbell



Camilo Eraso



Lauren Gill



Caitlyn Joy



Jeremy Myers



Katie Rattigan



Laura Stark

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

Matt J. Bannister (Bill) is in his 3rd mainstage production at MET having previously appeared as Harry Dangle, *One Man Two Guvnors* and Fred, *Fred's Diner*. Other credits include, Charles Condomine, *Blithe Spirit* (Other Voices) Dr. Givings, *In The Next Room* (Silver Spring Stage) and Lloyd Dallas, *Noises Off* (Cumberland Theatre)

Lucy Campbell (Wren) is excited to be premiering in her first Mainstage show with MET! She is an eighth grader at Monocacy Middle and has performed at MET since she was 7. MET credits include *Young Camelot*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Shrek The Musical*, and *Midsummer: A Most Rare Vision*.

Camilo Eraso (Sandy) is delighted to be making his debut with MET. Most recently he appeared in *The Frenchman*. Prior credits include; *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, *A Look in the Rearview*, and several other stints on camera. He would like to thank the cast, the crew, and Tabettha White for their support and encouragement.

Lauryn Gill (Wren) lives in Urbana, Maryland and is a 7th grader at The Legacy School in Eldersburg. Lauryn attends theatre class at MET's Ensemble School. This is her Mainstage debut and she is thrilled to be part of it.

Caitlyn Joy (Tiffany) MET: *End Days*, *Lieutenant of Inishmore*, *Twelfth Night*, *A Revolutionary Christmas*, *The Arsonists*, *Frankenstein*, *Stupid*

*F*cking Bird*, *Oedipus Rox*, *Peter and the Starcatcher*. Regional: *Shovel In The Dirt*, *Titus Andronicus*, *How I Learned to Drive*.

Jeremy Myers (Grey) is a teaching artist and ensemble member at MET. Previous MET credits include *Rocky Horror Show*, *A View From the Bridge*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Peter and the Starcatcher*, and *Bad Jews*. Numerous Chicago stage credits. BFA Musical Theatre from Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University.

Katie Rattigan (Mo) is an improviser with Oh Crit the D&D Improv Show! She's also a potter, an art teacher, a tea leaf reader, and company member with Maryland Ensemble Theatre. Past MET credits include *Top Girls*, *Magnificent Mouse Detective Agency*, *The Arsonists*, and *James and the Giant Peach*.

Laura Stark (Colleen) is a MET Company Member. Performing Credits include: *Rapture Blister Burn*, *Superior Donuts*, *Finally Heard*, *End Days*, *25th Annual . . . Spelling Bee*, *Into the Woods*, *Merrily We Roll Along*, *Fiddler on the Roof* and the 50th Anniversary Tour of *Oklahoma*. She has performed with Gotham City, Washington Improvisational Theatre as well as MET's own Comedy Pigs. She currently teaches MET's Adult Improv Class.



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WHO'S WHO ON THE PRODUCTION TEAM

J.D. Sivert (Playwright) came to MET in 2016 to work on the METLab: Plays in Progress Festival. He served as dramaturg and producer for four years and playwright for one year while developing this play, his mainstage playwriting debut. Onstage MET Credits include *1984*, *The Pillowman*, and *Radium Girls*.

Tabetha White (Director) is a company member at Maryland Ensemble Theatre and a member of the steering committee for the Women+ in Theatre Conference with a BFA in Theatre Design and Technology from West Virginia University. Previous MET credits include Directing *Loving Frederick*, and Lighting Design for *The Arsonists*, *Bad Jews*, *Top Girls*, and *Fred's Diner*.

Eli Bendel-Simso (Stage Manager) has previously worked with MET on *The Light Princess* (MET Fun Company) and *Angels in America* (unopened due to COVID). They are so happy to be back in the theatre.

Autumn Carver (Costume Designer) is a recent graduate of West Liberty University. She is thrilled to have a chance to be the costume designer. She's worked on shows such as *Secret in the Wings*, *Alice @ Wonderland*, *Honey in the Rock*, *Tarzan: The Musical*, and *Romeo & Juliet* (Twice).

David DiFalco (Set Designer) is excited to be designing his first show with Maryland Ensemble Theatre. David's recent designs include *Shakespeare in the Park* for MEG Theatre, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* for MEG Theatre, *Nickelodeon Live Slimming Show*, elements for *The Blue Man Group* National Tour, and other various Feature Films and TV shows.

Shayden Jamison (Properties Designer) is a MET Ensemble member. He is currently studying theatre design at Towson University. Past MET Credits include: *Three Little Birds*, *Midsummer: A Most Rare Vision*, *The Tempest*, *Victory is Within Our Grasp*, *Balloonacy*, *Junie B. Jones: Jingle Bells*, *Batman Smells*, *Sweat, Pride & Prejudice*, and *Radium Girls*.

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WHO'S WHO ON THE PRODUCTION TEAM

Will Heyser-Paone (Lighting Design) previously designed lights for *The Ultimate Christmas Show (Abridged)* at MET. Other design credits include *The Light Princess* (MET Fun Company), *Bonnie and Clyde* (Washington County Playhouse), *Grey Gardens* (Old Opera House Theatre Co.), and *It's a Bird... It's a Plane... It's Superman* (Being Revived).




Ken Poisson (Sound Design) is a company member at Maryland Ensemble Theatre and is thrilled to be working with such a talented cast and

crew. MET credits include *A Christmas Story*, *Family Holiday*, *The Gifts of the Magi*, *A Revolutionary Christmas*, *Santaland Diaries* and *The Eight Reindeer Monologues*.

Miranda Trautman (ASM) is a student at FCC majoring in both theatre and education. She has been involved theatre for 8 years. Her most notable performing credits are Ariel in *The Little Mermaid* at Middletown High and Queen Gertrude in *Hamlet* with Riotous Youth. She was also the assistant director of *Nunsense* at Other Voices Theatre.



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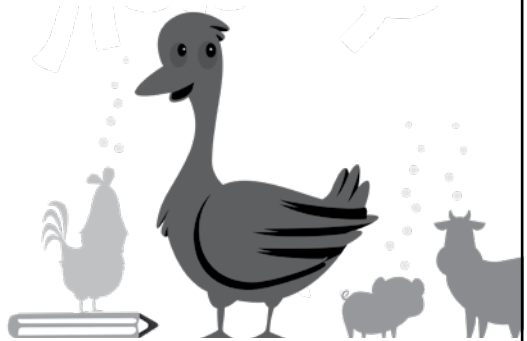
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