



News Release
Virginia Repertory Theatre

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March 16, 2018

Virginia Repertory Theatre Presents
the World Premiere of *River Ditty*

In Partnership with Tony and Olivier Award-Winning
Glass Half Full Productions

Direction by Virginia Rep Artistic Director Nathaniel Shaw

Richmond, VA -- As a part of its New Play Development initiative, Virginia Repertory Theatre, in partnership with Glass Half Full Productions, will present the world premiere of *River Ditty* by **Matthew Mooney Keuter**. The show opens in the November Theatre on Friday, **April 20th**, 2018, and runs through Sunday, **May 6th**, with two preview performances on Wednesday, April 18th and Thursday, April 19th. Virginia Rep's November Theatre/Arenstein Stage is located at 114 West Broad Street, Richmond VA 23220.

Keuter's lyrical Southern drama sweeps us from New Orleans' Storyville district, up the mighty Mississippi, and into the woods of Arkansas. Pursued by their dangerous past, Arlo and Sunshine set off on a journey of self-determination, finding love in the most unexpected of places. This American adventure skillfully weaves many of today's most pressing social issues into a turn of the twentieth century folktale, challenging a new generation to break away from the hatred, violence, and bigotry passed down through family lines.

Virginia Rep is thrilled to have Artistic Director **Nathaniel Shaw** in the director's chair for *River Ditty*. Shaw recently announced his second full season with Virginia Rep, having taken over for Bruce Miller in 2016. He also directed two of Virginia Rep's 2016/17 productions, the world premiere play *The End of War* and the summer smash hit *In the Heights*, which received the 2017 Richmond Theatre Critics Circle Award for both Best Musical and Best Direction of a Musical. Shaw has been involved in the development of this new play for the past six years, and

had this to say about the process, “The journey of *River Ditty* has been as long and winding as the river alongside which Matthew first penned the inspirational poem in 2012. Like a river, with each passing year the play has gained strength and relevance. We are ready now to share it with our fantastic Richmond audience.”

Virginia Rep welcomes a number of hometown favorites in this all-star cast. **Matt Polson** returns to the Virginia Rep stage to play Arlo, after starring in the recent productions of *Beauty and the Beast* and *Violet* (co-produced with Cadence Theatre Company). After completing her run as Ruth Younger in Virginia Rep’s production of *A Raisin in the Sun* just last week, **Katrinah Carol Lewis** will return to the November Theatre as Sunshine, and fresh off the Theatre Gym stage from his performance in *The Christians* (co-produced with Cadence Theatre Company), **Bostin Christopher** will also lend his talents to this story as antagonist Atticus Dye.

2017 RTCC Award-winner **Alexander Sapp** also returns to the November Theatre as Owen. Recent Virginia Rep credits include *1776*, *Summer and Smoke*, and *Croaker*. **Scott Wichmann** will play Toe, returning to Virginia Rep after most recently appearing in *Shakespeare in Love* this past fall. Making their debuts on the November Theatre stage are **Jonathan Burgard** and **Wendy Carter**, who round out this talented company.

Costume Designer **Sue Griffin** and Lighting Designer **BJ Wilkinson** both worked on Virginia Rep’s last world premiere production, *The End of War*, and both Griffin and Wilkinson received Richmond Theatre Critics Circle Awards for their work. Set Designer **Craig Napoliello** will return to Virginia Rep after designing *Peter and the Starcatcher*, and Virginia Rep’s resident sound designer **Derek Dumais** (*A Raisin in the Sun*, *Shakespeare in Love*) will complete the design team. This production features original songs by folk music duo **Red Tail Ring**.

The full creative team and cast list is below.

Ticket Information

Box Office 804-282-2620

www.virginiarep.org

Full Price Tickets: \$30 - \$50

Discounted Group Rates and Rush tickets available.

U-Tix for college and high school students \$15. Available by phone or in person, day of show only. Valid Student ID required.

Performance Schedule

Evening performances at 7:00 p.m. on select Wednesdays and every Thursday

Evening performances at 8:00 p.m. every Friday and Saturday

Matinee performances at 2:00 p.m. on select Wednesdays and Saturdays and every Sunday

Induction Loop

The Sara Belle and Neil November Theatre is equipped with a state-of-the-art induction loop hearing system that is compatible with all telecoil-equipped hearing aids and cochlear implants. A handheld receiver and headphone system is also available free of charge for anyone who is hearing impaired.

Parking

Valet parking is available for \$8 at all performances and free self-park is available for patrons within blocks of the theatre. Valet is complimentary for patrons who dine at Max's on Broad or Tarrant's Cafe before the show. Due to construction on Broad Street, valet will no longer be located in front of the theatre, and has been moved to Jefferson Street.

Press Kits Available at <http://va-rep.org/press.html>

Pass code accessible Hi Res photos available to media.

username = press password = HiRes121

Direction & Design

Direction	Nathaniel Shaw
Assistant Direction	Rachel Dilliplane
Production Stage Management	Jocelyn Thompson*
Set Design	Craig Napoliello
Lighting Design	BJ Wilkinson
Assistant Lighting Design	Matthew Banes
Sound Design	Derek Dumais
Costume Design	Sue Griffin
Dramaturgy	Jane Mattingly
Costume Assistant	Jessica Moreno
Props Master	Josh Blum
Dialect Coach	Karyn Kopryanski

Cast List (in order of appearance)

Arlo	Matt Polson
Sunshine	Katrinah Carol Lewis
Toe	Scott Wichmann*
Harlan	Jonathan Burgard
Atticus Dye	Bostin Christopher
Lily	Wendy Carter
Owen	Alexander Sapp*

* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the U.S.A.