



**News Release**  
**Virginia Repertory Theatre**

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**Virginia Repertory Theatre**  
**Presents Richmond Premiere of**  
***The Silver Belles***

Richmond, VA – Virginia Repertory Theatre introduces a new work to the Richmond community with ***The Silver Belles***, running November 24 through December 31 at the November Theatre downtown in the Arts District. It's "Golden Girls" meets "Designing Women" with a heaping helping of well-known Christmas tunes and clever, new country and western ditties.

When Oralene, the longtime director of a small town Christmas Pageant suddenly passes away, the Silver Belles must come to the rescue. With the spirit of Oralene looking on, the sterling-hued vixens band together, discover their talents, and pull out all the stops to keep the beloved pageant alive. This play with music contains adult language.

Local actor/director Susan Sanford, who directs *The Silver Belles*, describes the show this way:

"I think one of my favorite things about the show is that it has so much heart in it. And I feel like, especially in Richmond, that people are really going to be able to recognize themselves and recognize traditions... whether it's for the holidays or helping people who are grieving. I think it's a really sweet show that everyone will be able to enjoy, especially at the holiday season."

*The Silver Belles'* book is by Allyson Currin, with music by Matt Conner and lyrics by Stephen Gregory Smith. These theatre professionals have worked together near Richmond, in the Washington, D.C. area, for some time. Conner and Smith also wrote ***On Air***, the play we will present in the spring at Hanover Tavern. *The Silver Belles* is based on an idea by Cathy Alter and Sandra Johnson.

**Currin's credits:** DC AREA: The Welders: The Carolina Layaway Grail; WSC Avant Bard: Caesar and Dada; Doorway Arts Ensemble: Hercules in Russia; The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts: Unleashed!; Pinky Swear Productions: Benched; The American Century Theatre: Treadwell: Bright and Dark; "musica aperta": The Interior Castles (national tour), Six Degrees of Hamlet, Pheasants; Charter Theatre: Church of the Open Mind (Helen Hayes nomination), The Subject; Washington Shakespeare Company: Learning Curves; Source Theatre Company: Amstel in Tel Aviv (Helen Hayes nomination), Dancing With Ourselves. REGIONAL: Cincinnati Playhouse: High School Alien. RESIDENCES: Shenandoah Playwrights Retreat; The Eugene O'Neill Center (Playwright Observer); Theatre J's Locally Grown Initiative; 1st Draft at the Rose. AWARDS: Helen Hayes Awards' John Aniello Award for Outstanding Emerging Theatre Company: The Welders (Founding Member); The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts' Gold Medallion Award. AFFILIATIONS: AEA, SAG/AFTRA, The Dramatists Guild (DC representative).

**Conner's credits:** SIGNATURE: Crossing, The Hollow, Nevermore, Partial Eclipse, The Girl from No Man's Land (Incidental music), Crossing (Shenandoah University workshop). DC AREA: Creative Cauldron: Monsters of the Villa Diodati, The Turn of the Screw, Oliver Twist, The Wind in the Willows, The Dancing Princesses, Arabian Nights, The Jungle Book, Peter Pan and Wendy, Alice in Wonderland, Eddie Allan Poe Academy, Many Moons and Martin: The King of Pizza; GMCW: A Carol Christmas; Shenandoah Conservatory: The Legend of Sleepy Hollow. REGIONAL: Richmond Shepard Theatre, NY; KAT, MD; New Line Theatre, MO: Night of the Living Dead the musical. RECORDINGS: Winter (2010), Snow (2011), Baby Conner(2012), Icicle (2012), Nocturne (2013). AWARDS: American Musical Voices Project: The Next Generation 2008. EDUCATION: BFA, Shenandoah University.

**Smith's credits:** DC AREA: Creative Cauldron: Monsters of the Villa Diodati, The Turn of the Screw, The Selfish Giant, Cole Porter: You're the Top!, Edgar Allan Poe Academy; Shenandoah Conservatory: The Legend of Sleepy Hollow. REGIONAL: Richmond Shepard Theatre; NYC, Kensington Arts Theatre, MD, New Line Theatre, MO: Night of the Living Dead the musical; Riverside Children's Theatre, FL: Edgar Allan Poe Academy. UPCOMING: Creative Cauldron: Kaleidoscope.

**The creative team and cast list is below:**

**Direction & Design**

Direction	Susan Sanford
Music Direction	Jason Marks
Scenic Design	Mercedes Schaum
Costume Design	Jeanne Nugent
Lighting Design	Joe Doran+
Sound Design	Jacob Mishler
Stage Management	Justin Jahnke*

## **Cast**

Ruth Ann	Julie Fulcher-Davis*
Oralene	Jan Guarino*
Gloria	Kimberly Fox Knight
Berneice	Robyn O'Neill
Earl	Joe Pabst
BoJack	Catherine Shaffner*

\*Member of Actors' Equity Association

+Member of USA, United Scenic Artists

## **Ticket Information**

**Box Office:** 804-282-2620

[www.virginiarep.org](http://www.virginiarep.org)

Tickets range from \$39 - \$69 (Discounted Group Rates and Rush tickets available.)

## **Press**

The play is one act and runs 90 minutes with no intermission

Press Kits will be available at <http://va-rep.org/press.html>

Pass code accessible, high resolution photos available to the media.

username = press

password = HiRes121

## **About Virginia Repertory Theatre**

Virginia Repertory Theatre is a regional professional theater headquartered in downtown Richmond, and is one of the largest performing arts organizations in Central Virginia. Virginia Rep will stage productions in four venues in 2023-2024: the **Signature** Season at the Sara Belle and Neil November Theatre, the **Barksdale** Season at the Hanover Tavern. The **Children's** Season at Virginia Rep Center for Arts and Education, 4204 Hermitage Road in Richmond's Northside, and **Partner Productions** in the Theatre Gym located within the November Theatre complex downtown. Virginia Rep also tours children's shows, both virtual and live, and provides educational programming to schools throughout Virginia and to major performing arts centers throughout 32 states.

## **Season Supporters**

Altria

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