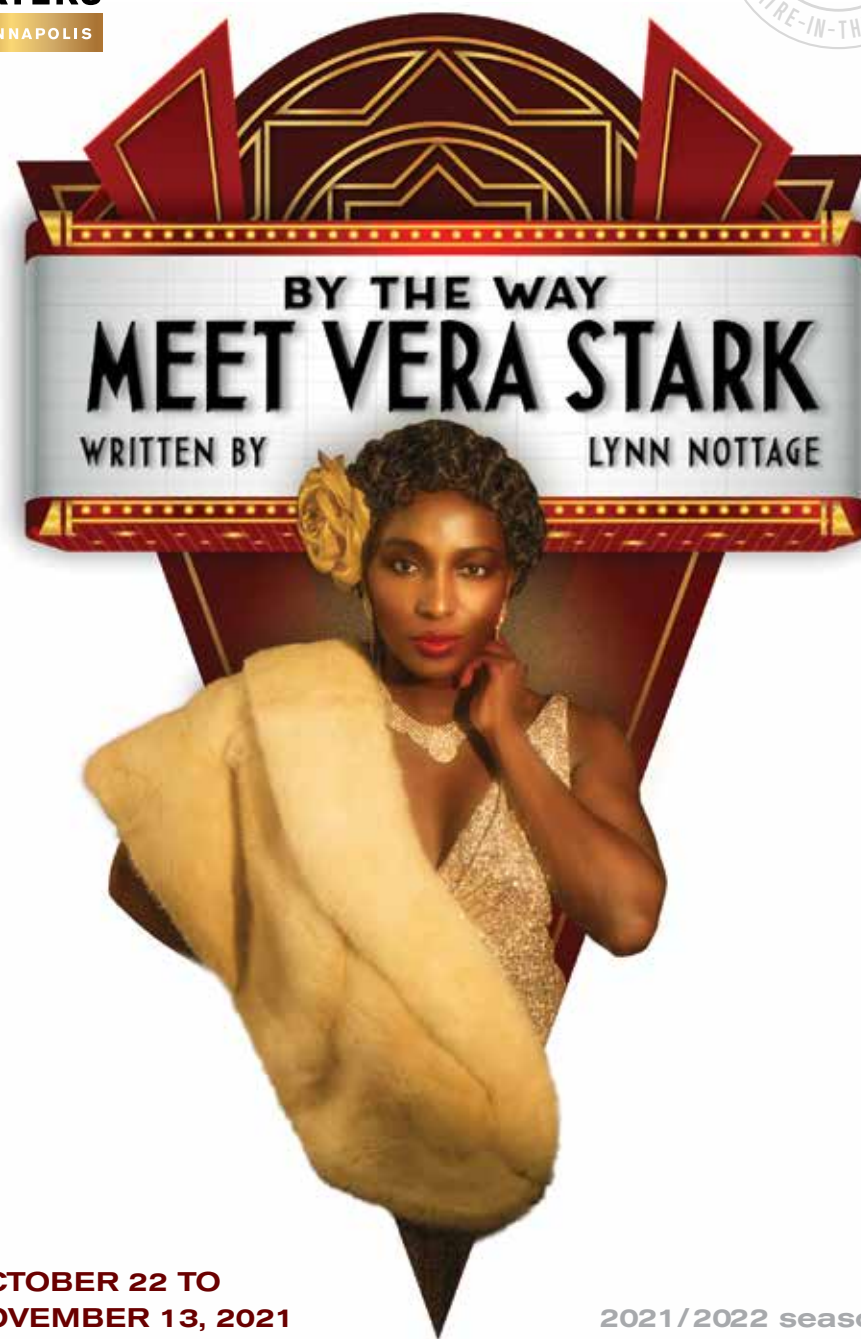


PRODUCTION STAFF

Director.....Eleanore Tapscott
 Producers.....Barbara Marder, Andy McLendon
 Stage Manager.....Hannah Housley
 Set Designer.....Edd Miller
 Costume Designers.....Christina McAlpine, Linda Swann
 Lighting Designer.....Alex Brady
 Properties Designer.....Sue White-Herchek
 Sound Designer.....Ben Cornwell
 Makeup, Hair, Wig Designer.....Christina McAlpine
 Stage Crew.....Nick Beschen, Kris Brown, Dianne Trickey-Rokenbrod
 Lead Carpenter.....Ted Yablonski
 Carpenters.....Tim Brown, Ken Kaiser, Edd Miller, Bob Mumper, Jim Robinson
 Set Painters.....Sue White-Herchek, Edd Miller, Constance Robinson, Tom Stuckey
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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**OCTOBER 22 TO
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2021/2022 season

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

New Faces, New Energy...

One of the things that I've been excited about over these last couple of productions is that we are seeing some new people around CP, as well as some people who haven't worked with us in a while. Like everywhere, it's been hard to find people to staff our activities. Everyone's stressed and looking to simplify their lives. However, we've looked far and wide, asked and recruited, and some folks have even come out of nowhere to volunteer as well! I'm grateful and I'm optimistic that this means good things for the future. CP has always been able to attract talented and committed performers and volunteers from all around the DC and Baltimore region, and I'm particularly thrilled that Vera Stark director, Eleanore Tapscott, is making her CP debut after amassing a very impressive DC-area resume. She brings a wonderfully fresh perspective to this production and our organization. While it is always terrific to see familiar faces on our stage (and backstage too), new faces bring new energy and new ideas.

This notion of new energy is vital. We've got a LOT of history at CP and we should be proud of what we've done over the last nearly 75 years. But we also need to be aware that the "that's the way we've always done it" approach should be challenged occasionally by a fresh outlook. As we come back from COVID and as we approach our 75th anniversary, I am hoping to take a good, hard look at different ways of doing things. We need the constructive criticism and get-it-done attitude that fresh eyes - and fresh energy provide. We may not jump into all of that next week (at least I hope not, I'm already exhausted), but we will be starting once things have stabilized a bit.

So, if you've had a thought or new idea about something we should be doing differently, or even if you really like the way we currently do something, let us know! Just as audience feedback is the lifeblood of a live performance, community feedback is the feedback - and energy - we need to make sure we are being proper custodians of our organization. Suggestions and solutions from YOU are vital to our future, so drop us a line. You can contact us at info@thecolonialplayers.org.

— STEVE TOBIN

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Thank you for your support. Your generous gifts help us to continue to provide educational and training programs, encouragement and entertainment to all who are interested in dramatic arts.

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The Colonial Players gratefully acknowledges the generous bequest from Roland Riley, a longtime patron whose gift helps ensure the future economic viability of our theater.



The Colonial Players gratefully acknowledges the recent gift from the Donald M. Reed Living Trust that made possible the critical upgrade of our stage lighting control system.

The Colonial Players wishes to express heartfelt gratitude to all supporters who donated the value of their tickets when Season 71 came to an abrupt end. Your contributions allowed the theater to continue paying utility bills, award the annual scholarship, and still help us continue to face the unknowns brought on by COVID-19.

Thank you.



THE STAFF (continued)



EDD MILLER
(Set Designer)

Edd has a long history with The Colonial Players as a director, actor, set designer, and volunteer in other areas. His most recent set design was for *Maytag Virgin*, which he also directed. Other recent design credits were for *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, *Calendar Girls*, and *Good People*, another production he directed. Edd was nominated for a Washington Area Theatre Community Honors set design award for *Chapter Two* and won a 2012 WATCH award for best direction of a play for *Going to St. Ives*, which also won awards for best play (out of 83 plays judged) and for best lead actress. Edd has acted in and directed many other shows since joining CP in 1964. His most recent onstage appearance was as Justice Robert Shallow in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.



LINDA SWANN
(Costume Co-Designer)

Linda is enjoying her stint as co-costume designer for this incredible show. It has been a blast playing with live barbie dolls again and working with such incredibly talented individuals. She would like to thank God for this opportunity to play, Christina for keeping her organized, and the director, cast, and crew for their trust during this adventure. Enjoy the show.

OUR JANUARY PRODUCTION

The Colonial Players will welcome the new year with *The Lost Boy*, a heartwarming fictionalized account of author James Barrie, his life, and the creation of the story of Peter Pan and the fascinating characters who inhabited Neverland. Despite finding success and fame as a writer, Barrie is dissatisfied with his work and his life. He returns to his hometown in Scotland to visit his mother, who still blames him for the long-ago death of his older brother in a skating pond. Haunted by the tragic accident and his mother's harsh words, James slowly begins to confront his family's tragic past with the help of an unexpected friendship and his own gift for storytelling. This fictionalized account of the birth of Peter Pan will warm the hearts of audiences everywhere who remember the magic and mystery of *The Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up*.

The Lost Boy, written by Ron Paolilo, opens January 14 and closes February 5. Tickets available at thecolonialplayers.org.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

I was thrilled to have the opportunity to direct *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark*, a funny but moving look at racial stereotypes and misogyny in Hollywood, using different mediums with the language and style of 1930s screwball comedies. The play also provides an insightful look at the power and transcending force of media. Growing up, my parents (particularly my mother) would constantly admonish me to not believe everything you see in the movies (or on television), as it is all make-believe. The reason for this admonishment was to avoid the fate of hapless children who thought they could jump out of a window and fly like Superman or project cobwebs and scale tall buildings like Spiderman. Such is the power of film. In this play, Nottage suggests had not the Hays Code been implemented, "the whole trajectory of Hollywood would have been different, [and possibly race relations] in America would have been different because the representations of people of color and particularly of women would have been much more expansive."

credits) found themselves jockeying for these limiting roles. Those who became successful playing these roles were frequently scorned. (Hattie McDaniel, the first African American to win an Oscar for her portrayal of Mammy in *Gone with the Wind*, famously responded to such criticism by saying, "Why should I complain about making \$7,000 a week playing a maid? If I didn't, I'd be making \$7 a week being one.") Theresa Harris, an African American actress who appeared in over 80 films (pre and post-code) was an inspiration for Vera Stark. Although Vera Stark is fictional, her journey is that of Harris and many other black actresses who found their way to Hollywood looking for their chance to be a star. They found if they wanted to survive, given their limited opportunities, they would have to put on the mask and be slaves and maids. But at what cost? How much of one's true identity should be sacrificed to pursue a life-long dream?

— ELEANORE TAPSCOTT

And what pray tell is the Hays Code? Between the introduction of sound pictures in 1929 and the enforcement of the Motion Picture Production Code (commonly known as the Hays Code), Hollywood enjoyed a brief period during which there was little or no censorship of subject matter and visual imagery. In these pre-code films, bad folks got away with their misdeeds, women were sexual, and African American characters were fully dimensional and interacted with white characters as a friend or confidante rather than a maid. All that changed with the arrival of the Hays Code, which implemented harsh restrictions on the subject matter and visual imagery -- including violence, sex, criminal activity, obscenity, religion, and race -- depicted in films. One clause in the code forbade the depiction of miscegenation, or "the mixing of different racial groups through marriage, cohabitation, sexual relations or procreation."

Post-code films show African Americans as stereotypes, and talented black actors and actresses (many with vaudeville and Broadway



ABOUT THE DIRECTOR



ELEANORE TAPSCOTT is a classically trained actress and director, and a major fan of Lynn Nottage's work. Eleanore has directed for various metro-DC theatres including Little Theatre of Alexandria, Port City Playhouse, Aldersgate Church Community Theater, The Arlington Players, Reston Community Players, and Dominion Stages. Most recently, she directed Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* (Dominion Stages)

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

LYNN NOTTAGE is a Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright and a screenwriter. Her plays have been produced widely in the United States and throughout the world. Sweat (Pulitzer Prize, Obie Award, Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, Tony Nomination, Drama Desk Nomination) moved to Broadway after a sold out run at The Public Theater. Other works: *Ruined* (Pulitzer Prize, Obie, Lucille Lortel, New York Drama Critics' Circle, Audelco, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle Award); *Intimate Apparel* (American Theatre

and August Wilson's *Fences* (Little Theatre of Alexandria). She thanks the CP board for the opportunity to stage this funny and thought-provoking play. Upcoming productions include *Radio Golf* (Peace Mountain Theater), *Playing Juliet*, *Casting Othello* (Providence Players), *Purlie Victorious* (ACCT). She encourages audience members to learn more about Vera's amazing story and career by visiting Rediscovering Vera Stark (<http://www.meetverastark.com/welcome.html>).

Critics and New York Drama Critics' Circle Awards for Best Play); *Fabulation*, or *The Re-Education of Undine* (OBIE Award); *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*; *Las Meninas*; *Mud, River, Stone*; *Por'knockers*; and *POOF!*. For *By The Way, Meet Vera Stark*, she was the recipient of the Lilly Award and earned a Drama Desk Nomination. She is a graduate of Brown University and the Yale School of Drama. She wrote the book for the Arena Stage production of the new musical, *Toni Stone*.

ABOUT OUR NEXT PLAY

The Colonial Players is delighted to bring back the Richard Gessner & Richard Wade version of *A Christmas Carol* this December. This year's production will be directed by Sarah Wade with music direction by Trevor Greenfield. To accommodate the ongoing circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, and to continue our commitment to keep our volunteers and patrons safe and healthy, the show will be presented with some small adjustments. This year's production will be more minimalist than usual. The cast size is reduced, and costumes, props, set design, and choreography will be simplified. Performances will be offered for both live and streaming audiences. Seating capacity will be reduced for in-person performances, with a portion of seats available only on three sides of the theater (in sections A, B, and D).

A Christmas Carol will run from December 2 to December 12, 2021, with performances Thursdays through Sundays. The performance schedule will be as follows:

Thursdays: In-Person and Live Stream at 8:00 p.m.

Fridays: In-Person and Live Stream at 7:00 p.m., Pre-Recorded Stream at 9:00 p.m.

Saturdays: Pre-Recorded Stream at 2:00 p.m., In-Person and Live Stream at 4:30 p.m., In-Person and Live Stream at 8:00 p.m.

Sundays: In-Person and Live Stream at 2:00 p.m., Pre-Recorded Stream at 4:30 p.m.

In-person tickets will be \$10 per person. Streaming tickets will be \$10 for individual viewers, and \$20 per household for two viewers or more. Tickets for in-person performances will go on sale at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, November 20, 2021, in-person at the theater at 108 East Street. The sale will last until 12:00 p.m., or until tickets are sold out. Following the sale, any remaining tickets will be available for sale online at tickets.thecolonialplayers.org beginning at 4:00 p.m. Streaming tickets will go on sale online only at tickets.thecolonialplayers.org at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, November 20, 2021. Full details about the production and ticket sales will be available on our website soon. To get the most updated information about this production, please check our website and social media pages for announcements.



THE STAFF



ALEX BRADY
(Lighting Designer)

Alex has been designing lighting in Annapolis and Baltimore since 2002. He has been nominated for the WATCH Award for Outstanding Lighting Design multiple times, most recently for *33 Variations* and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* at The Colonial Players. He recently directed *The White Rose* at CP. Brady served as the resident lighting designer for the AACCC Dance Company for 15 years and works with various local theaters and high schools. He is an alumnus of the Graduate Institute at St. John's College and also teaches for the Arts Department at Anne Arundel Community College.



BEN CORNWALL
(Sound Designer)

Ben has been working since 2000 with The Colonial Players, where he found a love for sound design working on *Of Mice and Men*. Since then he's designed many shows, most recently, *Casa Valentina*. "I'm glad we are able to do live theatre again! Welcome back!"



HANNAH HOUSLEY
(Stage Manager)

Hannah is very excited to take on the role of stage manager for *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark* after working as crew previously for many other shows at The Colonial Players. She is very grateful to Ernie Morton and Andy McLendon for mentoring her as she takes on this new role.



BARBARA MARDER
(Producer)

Barbara is pleased to again be working with a production for The Colonial Players. As an ardent fan of the work of playwright Lynn Nottage and enamored of shows using mixed media and mixed time sequence, she is excited to be a part of the production company for *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark*. The enthusiasm and dedication of the

cast combined with the knowledge and skill of director Eleanore Tapscott make the process of building this show a delight. Over the last 30 plus years Barbara has served in a variety of roles for The Colonial Players from Board member to director to show producer. Since retiring from Anne Arundel Community College, where she directed numerous plays and musicals as well as serving as chair of Performing Arts, Barbara has enjoyed a variety of volunteer activities, including work with the American Association of University Women, recording for the Maryland Library for the Blind, teaching ESOL for Centro de Ayuda in Annapolis, and working part time as a standard patient for area medical schools.



CHRISTINA MCALPINE
(Costume Co-Designer)

"It is a blessing to be back designing and creating at the theatre!" After an unforgettable year, Christina was excited and daunted at the challenge when she was asked to do this wonderful show. However, she knew she had to commit after discovering the show was a Lynn Nottage play with 1930's gowns and glamour! Previous costume design credits at CP include: co-designer for *Casa Valentina* (Watch nominated); *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*; *The Cripple of Inishmaan*; *Boeing-Boeing*; (Watch Nominated for Makeup); *Dead Man's Cell Phone*; and *The Curious Savage*. Christina holds a BFA in Theatre from the University of West Florida. During the day she works in the veterinary field and is a proud foster kitten mom who works with animal rescues in the Baltimore area. She would like to thank her fellow costumer, Linda for all the positive energy and creativity; our director, Eleanore for being such a lovely human; Amy and Beth for your sewing skills; our fabulous production team, and all our actors for being so positive and kind! Special thank you to her partner, Yanick, for all your love and support.



THE CAST (continued)



SARAH WADE

(Gloria Mitchell)

Sarah is thrilled to be back onstage with *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark*. Prior CP credits include Elaine Harper in *Arsenic and Old Lace*; Honey in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (WATCH award winner for Best Supporting Actress); Gabriella in *Boeing-Boeing*; Cecily Cardew in *Ernest in Love*; twins Sabine and Isabelle in *The Liar*; multiple roles in *A Christmas Carol*; Catherine in *These Shining Lives*; the Star-to-be in *Annie*; Jessica in *Communicating Doors*; and Kitty in *Taking Steps*. She directed the 2019 production of *A Christmas Carol* and is pleased to direct it again this year. She has also been behind the scenes as a sound designer for *Love, Loss, and What I Wore*; *Sex with Strangers*; *Calendar Girls*; *Watch on the Rhine*; and *Side Man*. "Thanks to everyone for understanding that I can't, I have rehearsal. Love always to Eric."



TOM WYATT

(Maxmillian von Oster / Peter Rhys-Davies)

Tom is grateful for the chance to appear on The Colonial Players stage once again, having performed in *Casa Valentina* in 2018 and before that when he was in high school (in the previous century). Favorite roles include Buddy in *Follies*, Ira in *The Tale of the Allergist's Wife*, Lloyd Dallas in *Noises Off*, Rooster in *Annie*, Frederick in *Enchanted April*, and eight roles (all "WASPS") in *The Dining Room*. As a director and choreographer in Baltimore, his recent shows include *Titanic - the Musical*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, and *Little Women* (Dundalk Community Theatre); and *Sister Act*, *The Secret Garden*, and *Curtains* (Cockpit In Court). During the day, Tom works at medical schools (Johns Hopkins University, the University of Maryland, and Georgetown) helping student doctors improve their communication skills and focus on the needs of the patient.



THE CAST



RICK ESTBERG

(Frederick Slasvick / Brad Donovan)

After a 3 1/2 year theater lay-off, Rick is so excited to be back with CP in his seventh show. His favorite roles include Luigi Gaudi in *Lucky Stiff*, Max Tarasov in *Superior Donuts*, John in *Calendar Girls*, and Ziggy in *Side Man*. He recently retired from NSA with 45 years of government service and now spends most of his time tending his Eastern Box Turtles, traveling (most recently to Aruba, Hawaii, the Florida Keys, and the giant redwoods of California), and playing piano. He dedicates his performance to his two sons: Robb and Charlie.



COLLEEN ISAIAH

(Anna Mae Simpkins / Afua Assata Ejobo)

Colleen is thrilled to perform her debut role with The Colonial Players. After a year of virtual shows, returning to live theatre heightens her delight and gratitude for this experience. Her favorite past roles include Mary in *The Blob* (a local, original musical), Andy Lee in *42nd Street*, Sid Sawyer in *Tom Sawyer*, and Sonia in *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*. Offstage, she loves watching The Great British Baking Show and filling her home with adorable projects from Pinterest.



TRACY MCCRACKEN

(Lottie McBride / Carmen Levy-Green)

Tracy is excited about her first production with The Colonial Players. She has done four shows for Memorial Players in Baltimore: *The Wizard of Oz*, *Into the Woods*, *A Christmas Carol*, and *Ragtime*. She appeared in *Hair* for Guerilla Theatre Front and in two productions for On the Road Theater – *Those Cute Boys* and *Negro Water*. Tracy played Motormouth Maybelle in Purple Light Theatre Company's *Hairspray*. She appeared in Silhouette Stages' 9 to 5 - *The Musical*, and as Anastasia in Baltimore Rock Opera Society's *Amphion*. Tracy is thankful to Steve, Maura, India, Kateri, and her family for their love and support.



JOSEPH T. SMITHEY

(Leroy Barksdale / Herb Forrester)

Joseph is honored and excited to make his debut with The Colonial Players. He has acted on and off since 2014, most notably as a co-star in the award-winning independent mockumentary, *Rock & Bowl Express*. During the pandemic, Joseph continued to hone his skills through his completion of the 2020 Honors Acting Conservatory at The Theatre Lab in Washington, D.C., appearing in several virtual and a couple of onstage performances. Joseph is grateful for the hard work of all of his colleagues involved in *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark* and cannot wait to perform for live audiences once again!



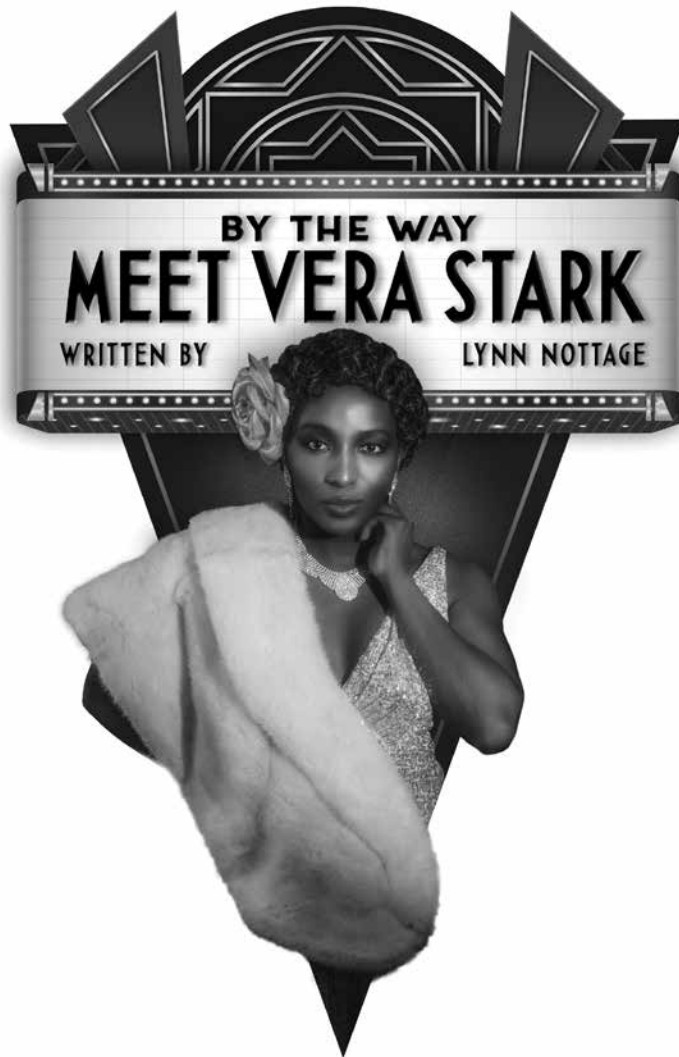
ASHLEY SIMON (NĒE SPOONER)

(Vera Stark)

Ashley is delighted to take the stage as Vera Stark, marking her sixth production with The Colonial Players. Ashley previously played Ginger Reed in the 2020 production of *Book of Days*, as well as Ranger Wilson in the 2017 production of *Shiloh Rules*. She is so very thankful that CP has continually given her the opportunity to play characters with last names. Ashley would like to recognize the tireless work of the cast and production team – you're all rockstars! As always, Ashley is grateful to her mother, family, and friends for their love and encouragement. She would especially like to thank her supportive and loving husband who encouraged her to return to the stage and eagerly took on "daddy daycare" during rehearsals. You are such a blessing to Clara and me!



THE COLONIAL
PLAYERS, INC.
presents



Directed by
ELEANORE TAPSCOTT

Originally produced by Second Stage Theatre, New York City.

THE CAST
(in order of appearance)

Vera Stark.....Ashley Simon
Gloria Mitchell.....Sarah Wade
Lottie McBride / Carmen Levy-Green.....Tracy McCracken
Anna Mae Simpkins / Afua Assata Ejobo.....Colleen Isaiah
Leroy Barksdale / Herb Forrester.....Joseph T. Smithey
Frederick Slasvick / Brad Donovan.....Rick Estberg
Maxmillian von Oster / Peter Rhys-Davies.....Tom Wyatt

PLACE AND TIME

Hollywood

ACT I

1933

ACT II

1933, 1973, 2003

There will be one 15-minute intermission
between Act I and Act II

By the Way, Meet Vera Stark is presented by special arrangement
with Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York.