

Press Release: Tennessee Stage & Film Co. - Nashville, Tennessee - Nov. 18, 2018

On Sunday, the 16th of December, at 2:30 in the afternoon, Tennessee Stage and Film Co. will premiere a stage play entitled "Christmas Writings" It is a compilation of six short original vignettes written and crafted for the stage exclusively by Nashville Authors. While the show is being produced by Tennessee Stage & Film, it is being sponsored by the Metropolitan Nashville Library on their main stage @ 615 Church St. Nashville, Tennessee.

During the past four years the two organizations have partnered on several productions centered around historical entertainment, and then presented such productions free to the general public. This Christmas show is no exception. However, the Sunday Matinee performance is the only showing, and seating is limited. Interested parties should call early for **Reservations (615) 847-8007**.

The works are presented in verse and music from many times and places. In the first piece, "Sarah's 1844 White House Christmas", First Lady Sarah Childress Polk, a noted concert pianist of the nineteenth century, will delight you with her stories of the time and her favorite Christmas Carols. A century later, in "A Cup for Aunt Birdie" a small wisp of a girl from Appalachia will amuse your heart with her migration story to Nashville so her father could get his new job and the extended family could have 'nicer' things. Come see who Aunt Birdie really was, is, or could be.

In this production of "A Cup for Aunt Birdie", The wisp of a girl is portrayed by Hendersonville middle-schooler Presley Higdon. The author, Tom Dolan, met miss Higgins in 2014 when her 'Mina' brought her to a film shoot for "The Ryman Diaries" (*the story of Captain Tom and Wife Bettie Baugh Ryman*) Miss Presley fit right into the needed part of a seven year old, and has since been seen by hundreds of audience attendees in film, now you can come see her live on stage as she very expressively delivers "Marsha's" story.

The story itself evolved from an incident on a cold Nashville Christmas Eve in 1989. As the author was driving down a side street near his home in early morning, he in-counterred several children and a dog playing along side the street with a nerff ball. Invariably, as he passed by, the ball flew into the street, immediately followed by the children and the dog. Jerking the car to a halt, he noticed that two of the children were small girls, adorned in what could only be described as very experienced winter coats, simple cotton dresses to their knees, sandals, and bare legs – it was 5 degrees. But with rosy cheeks and smiley eyes, they could be no happier.

Just before 5 O'clock that very evening in the coffee/tea section of Piggly Wiggly, the author was pondering should his purchase be green or black tea, when tearing down the aisle came the same two small girls from early morning, same coats, same dresses, no dog. They commenced pulling down every cup and mug on the near by rack, checking prices, and were continually dismayed. Finally their eye caught a glimpse of the last two cups, the most gaudy pinkish purple cups imaginable. Sighing, thinking they were a most impossible buy, as obviously they were hands down the most beautiful, they slowly turned the cup reading the bottom label. 49 cents. From that they deduced they could buy two, giving one to Mom and one to Aunt Birdie. But how then could the ladies tell them apart. Well that was a no brainer. They would paint the names on the cups using Aunt Birdies Passion Pink finger nail polish, as it never comes off anything. As the store closing announcement was made, they rushed to the counter, dropped a crumbled dollar before the clerk, and dashed into the darkness, and from the night air came a faint gleeful reply: *"and we got a cup for Aunt Birdie to."*

And in the days and weeks and months to follow, the author learned a lot more of these recent new comers, and how could he help to do anything but write the story. Since its premier 28 Christmas' ago, there have been eight productions of the story, with eight young ladies in "Marsha's" portrayal.

Additional pieces of "Christmas Writings" include "Christmas on the Titanic" circa 1910. A lowly carpenter working on the gigantic vessel entices his wife aboard to show her his handy work and to encourage her to travel to America when the ship is sea worthy – does she coalesce? "Dinah Sings Again", snippets of Dinah Shore's 1950's Christmas TV show. "Willy's Coming Home" The Civil War era story of a soldier's Christmas letter home, and his Mother's anxious anticipation of his return in the spring. And, Sunday ends with preview scenes of a brand new work in progress, "Once Upon A Train". A story from Debbie Mathis Watts chronicling the episodes surrounding the troop train depot stopovers during World War II. The friendships made, the loves lost and found, and the music that tied it all together. Come see "Christmas Writings"