

THE SANTA CLOSET



HOUSES ON THE MOON THEATER COMPANY

Artistic Director
EMILY JOY WEINER

Managing Director
KEVIN CONNOR

presents

THE SANTA CLOSET

written and performed by
Jeffrey Solomon

Scenic Design
Claire DeLiso

Costume Design
Jessa Rae Court

Lighting Design
Christopher Chambers

Video Design
Yana Birykova

Original Music + Sound Design
Obadiah Eaves

Prop Design
Buffy Cardoza

Stage Manager
Jamie Rose Bukowski

Production Manager
Zachary Spitzer

Directed by
Joe Brancato and Emily Joy Weiner

*The Santa Closet is dedicated to the children, and most
especially our beloved Leo.*

*The Santa Closet was made possible by Acton Family Fund, Liz Armstrong,
David Lyons, and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.*

WHO'S WHO?

HOUSES ON THE MOON THEATER COMPANY whose work has been hailed as “potent” and “powerful” (The New York Times), was founded in 2001. Through creative workshops, original performances, and post-show discussions, Houses on the Moon helps communities come together by making meaningful connections through the public sharing of their untold stories. All Houses projects are created through an extensive developmental and research process in collaboration with its community partners, which have included Amnesty International, the AFSC Immigrant Rights Program, Prison Families Anonymous and many others. At the core of the developmental process are interviews with real people about their lives, and a creative search for those human stories that yearn for a much wider hearing. The company's inaugural production, Building Houses on the Moon, an original play about the lives of LGBT youth, has been performed for students throughout the U.S. and used extensively as a diversity training tool for educators and administrators. In addition to its many ongoing student and Teacher Training performances, was seen at the Lucille Lortel Theatre in New York and the Columbus National Gay and Lesbian Theatre Festival where it won the Award for Best Ensemble Production. TARA'S CROSSING is one of the first plays ever to explore political asylum for refugees fleeing persecution based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. The play had its World Premiere in 2005 at the L.E.S. Tenement Theatre and has been presented widely and used as a training tool on gender identity and legal issues. DE NOVO is a documentary theater piece telling the story of an undocumented immigrant teenager fleeing gang life. The play had its Off Broadway premiere in 2010 at 59E59 St. Theater's Americas Off Broadway Festival, and has been touring nationally and internationally ever since. It was produced again Off Broadway in 2017 at Next Door at New York Theatre Workshop. gUN COUNTRY is a two phased project exploring the role of guns in America. The first phase is a storytelling series with people whose lives have been directly touched by gun violence, and the second phase was THE ASSIGNMENT, a play inspired by these stories. gC is consistently touring - most recently presented in Greenwich, CT. THE ASSIGNMENT premiered Off-Broadway in spring, 2017 at the A.R.T./NY Theatres and was then licensed by Luna Stage in NJ.

STAFF FOR THE SANTA CLOSET

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FOH Manager/Production Associate.....Meghan Palmer
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SPECIAL THANKS

Griffin, Luca, Marco, Logan J, Sandi, August, Carlos Encinas, Alisa, Scott and Eva Gold, Vanessa Melchiori, Maria D'Amore, Yaya D'Amore-Troupe, Alessandro Guevara-Frederic, August Guevara-Frederic, Zabryna Guevara, Michael Frederic, Robert Garot, Nicole DeSantis, Laurie Nichols, Emily Grote, R. Erin Craig, Jennifer Isaacson, Jane Dubin, Jeremy Handelman, Mila, Luna and Ayla Hart.

WHO'S WHO?

JEFFREY SOLOMON (Writer/Performer) is the co-founder of Houses on the Moon Theater Company, a New York City not-for-profit with a mission to amplify unheard voices. Jeff wrote and directed two original Houses productions, *Building Houses on the Moon* (Lucille Lortel Theatre, City Theatre, Pittsburgh, Winner: Best Play for an Ensemble, Columbus National Gay and Lesbian Theatre Festival) and *De Novo* (59E59 St. Theaters, Next Door at New York Theatre Workshop, Palacio Tecleño in El Salvador). He is also the playwright of *Tara's Crossing*, which appeared at the Queens Theatre's Immigrant Voice's Project and had its world premiere run at the Tenement Theatre in New York. *De Novo* and *Tara's Crossing* are presented widely in Law Schools as a training tool on asylum and refugee issues. As a solo performer and playwright Mr. Solomon's *MotherSON* premiered at HERE Art Center in New York and he received a Joseph Jefferson Nomination for Best Actor for the same performance in Chicago at the Bailiwick Rep. The play has had acclaimed runs on London's Off West End (New End Theatre, Oval House) and in Melbourne, Australia (Theatre Works) and toured widely with engagements in U.S., U.K. India, Sri Lanka, Israel and the Philippines. The play has been embraced a diversity training tool at colleges, universities, houses of worship and corporations. His performance won the Best Actor Award in Dublin's Absolut Gay Theatre Festival as well as the Awards for Audience Favorite, Best Playwriting and Best Male Solo Performer at the Columbus National Gay and Lesbian Theatre Festival. Jeff's other solo play *The Santa Closet* (formerly *Santa Claus is Coming Out*) ran Off Broadway on Theatre Row at the Kirk Playhouse and won the Best of the Festival at the Columbus National Gay and Lesbian Theatre Festival. The play has toured nationally and run at the Diversionary Theatre in San Diego and will have a ten year anniversary production this holiday season at Teatro Circulo in New York. Jeff is a Moth Grand Slam champion and his story has been heard on NPR's Moth Radio Hour. Jeffrey Solomon's original teleplay for "CityKids" (ABC/Jim Henson Productions) received an Emmy Nomination for Best Children's Special as well as winning an Ollie Award for excellence in Children's Programming. Profound love and gratitude to my family and dear friends who banded together to be that village you need to raise a child, when papa is due at the theater!

JOE BRANCATO (Director) was cited by The New York Times as "one of America's most insightful directors." His Off-Broadway credits include the critically acclaimed productions of Michael McKeever's *Daniel's Husband* and *After*; *Tryst* (New England's IRNE Award nominations for Best Director and Best Production & Outer Critics nomination for Best Play); *Erasmus Fenn's Drop Dead*

Perfect; *The Devil's Music: The Life & Blues of Bessie Smith* (Drama Desk, Lucille Lortel, Off Bway Alliance & Audelco Award nominee); *Tom Dudzick's Miracle on South Division Street*; *Fall to Earth and Freed* (Audelco Award nominee); *Cobb* (Drama Desk winner) produced by Kevin Spacey and *Melting Pot*; *One Shot, One Kill* at Primary Stages; *The Big Swing* (starring Madeline Kahn, Sarah Jessica Parker, Matthew Broderick, Marisa Tomei) and *Dr. Valentine's Waltz* (starring John Turturro, Laura Linney, Jane Alexander); *Hold the Wedding*, produced by Joseph Papp. In addition to his extensive Regional credits as a director, as founding artistic director of Penguin Rep Joe has directed 150 productions there including numerous premieres. He commissioned (with Andrew M. Horn) and directed the play *The Man Who Was Peter Pan*, which is the basis for the Broadway musical and film *Finding Neverland*. Joe was named Best Director by L.A. Scene for *Santa Claus is Coming Out* (The Santa Closet) and received two Rockland County Executive Awards for artistic excellence. www.joebrancato.com.

EMILY JOY WEINER (Director) is the Co-Founder/Artistic Director of HOTM. Since 2001, Emily has led HOTM through the creation and development of multiple new works. Most recently Emily guided the company through its production of *DE NOVO* at Next Door at NYTW, directed the world premiere of *THE ASSIGNMENT* at the ART/New York Theatres and is directing the touring production of *gUN COUNTRY*. She has performed throughout NYC and beyond, and is currently developing a new piece titled *SHARED SENTENCES* that explores the lives of family members and loved ones of the incarcerated. The League of Professional Theatre Women recently honored Emily with the Josephine Abady award for her work with Houses in the creation of multicultural works.

CLAIRE DELISO (Scenic Design) is a French-American, Brooklyn based set designer. She is the first recipient of the Burry Fredrik Design Fellowship from the Yale School of Drama, where Claire received her MFA. Her selected designs include *Mmlima's Tale* (Westport Country Playhouse), *The Tempest* (The Public Mobil Unit) *Imogen Says Nothing* (Yale Rep), *A Padlas* (Csokonai Színház, Hungary) *The Tempest & As you Like it* (HPSCE/ The Public); *New Domestic Architecture*, *Women Beware Women*, *Titus Andronicus* (Yale School of Drama). Claire has worked as an associate on Broadway, *The Public*, the Goodman Theatre, Lincoln Center, Théâtre National de Rennes and more. www.clairedeliso.com

JESSA RAE COURT (Costume Design) Fire Island Pines: 25th Annual... Spelling Bee, Rocky Horror Show;