



Arts Engagement
and Education

MS. SUN

“Mr. Pulaski! Hi, it’s Nilaja Sun from Bergen Street.”

From *No Child...*

By Nilaja Sun https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nilaja_Sun

Gender: Female/Feminine Presenting

Style: Contemporary Dramatic

Age Range: 20’s-30’s

Link to Buy Script www.amazon.com

Play Synopsis

No Child is a one woman show that looks at a rough high school in the Bronx, and the students and faculty who comprise the community. Sun plays nearly a dozen of these characters, including herself; she is at the school as a teaching artist under a grant to facilitate the production of a play with a particularly challenging sophomore class. With all hope and good faith, Sun optimistically embarks on the task, only to learn it won’t be nearly as easy to engage her students as she previously thought.

From the class’s timid first-time teacher, to the students themselves, to the assertive principal, to the elderly janitor who serves as the story’s narrator, Sun assumes a wide smattering of personalities, and transitions between them instantaneously. The ease with which she embodies the characters and lets the story unfold is remarkable. And her energy never waivers. In reality, Sun is an adult African American woman, but in *No Child* she puts on these other individuals with such truthfulness that her own characteristics become invisible. And these transformations occur from physicality and voice alone as there are no costume changes or props to speak of.

At this moment

The show has just been introduced by the Janitor and Ms. Sun is in the Hallway before classroom.

Ms. Sun is on the phone with her landlord, stalling her rental payments.

Monologue (Scene 2)

(On phone) Mr. Pulaski! Hi, it’s Nilaja Sun from Bergen Street. 280 Bergen. Apartment four? Hey! Mr. Pulaski, thanks for being so patient, I know how late my rent is...by the way, how’s your wife Margaret? Cool. And your son Josh? Long Island University. That’s serious. Oh he’s gonna love it and he’ll be close to home. But yes, I apologize for not getting you last month’s rent on time, but see the IRS put a levy on my bank account and I just can’t retrieve any money from it right now. Well, it should be cleared by Tuesday but the real reason why I called was to say that I’m startin’ a new teaching program up here in the Bronx and it’s a six-week long workshop and they’re paying me exactly what I owe you so... What’s that? Theatre. I’m teaching theatre. A play, actually. It’s called *Our Country’s Good*...have you heard of it? Well, it’s about a bunch of convicts who put on a play...So the kids are actually going to be doing a play within a play within...What’s that? Ah, yes. Kids today need more discipline and less self-expression. Less “lulalula” and more daily structure like Catholic school during Pope Pius the Twelfth. On the flip side of the matter, having gone to Catholic school for thirteen years, I didn’t even know I was black until college! *(She laughs.)* Sir?... Sir, are you still there? *(Bell rings.)* I gotta go teach sir. Are you cool with getting that money by the twenty-fifth?

Helpful Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nPv5Q1liTTs>