

# from the FOOTLIGHTS

JULY 2008

"Life shouldn't be all work and no plays."

<http://www.footlightsdc.org>

## JULY 11: *THE TITANS* BY ROBERT McELWAINÉ

JFK: "After the first World War and all the killing and destruction, someone asked the German Chancellor, 'How did it all happen?' and all he could say was 'Ah. If only we knew'."

What do we really know and what can we learn from the interaction of Khrushchev and President Kennedy during the Cuban Missile Crisis? The inevitable tension, uncertainty, and brinkmanship of that time as recorded in declassified documents, memoirs, and related sources are the stuff of *THE TITANS*, McElwainé's play that is having its world premiere in July at The American Century Theater (TACT).

The play was written at the request of Kennedy Center president Roger Stevens while McElwainé was his house playwright. In preparation, McElwainé interviewed many of the participants including Robert McNamara and Dean Rusk, researched available transcripts and other documents, and "ultimately decided that this story didn't need much fictionalizing. Most of the dialogue and speeches in the script are authentic and documented."

Jack Marshall, TACT Director will be the Footlights' guest speaker as we discuss *THE TITANS* on Friday, July 11. Mark Gruenberg will moderate. Marshall who also lectures on leadership, ethics, and crisis management remarked, "In rehearsal, something will happen in a scene that makes me remember how very close we came to the unthinkable...I hope *THE TITANS* will help us all recall the lessons of October, 1962. They are still vital today."

Footlights' dinner discussion of *THE TITANS* will be on **FRIDAY, July 11, 6:30 p.m. at Alfio's**, in the Willoughby Apartments, 4515 Willard Ave., Chevy Chase, MD 20815 (Friendship Heights Metro stop on the Red Line). Dinner is \$12 (includes tip) with several choices of entrées, as well as salad, bread, ice cream and coffee.

Come early if you can but please arrive by 6:15 p.m. to allow sufficient time to get all the entrée orders in to the waiter. The discussion begins at 7:30 p.m. You may come just for the discussion, if you wish. We would appreciate a \$5 contribution to Footlights to help cover our expenses. Your voluntary contribution to Footlights is tax-deductible.

Contact Mark Gruenberg to reserve for dinner at [press\\_associates@yahoo.com](mailto:press_associates@yahoo.com) or 202-898-4825. If you must cancel your dinner reservation, please let Mark know by noon on FRIDAY, July 11.

## READING AND SEEING *THE TITANS*

Because this is the world premiere of *THE TITANS*, the play has not yet been published. The American Century Theatre has made the script available to Footlights members by special arrangement. We are very appreciative of this opportunity for advance insight into the play.

Footlights will see the performance of *THE TITANS* in July at The American Century Theater in The Gunston Arts Center, Theater II, 2700 South Lang Street, Arlington, VA 22206. Details are forthcoming by email.

## SEEING *THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH*

A classic that was innovative when first done on Broadway and now interpreted by an up and coming director at a small theater known for imaginative productions, *THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH* is on the bill for Sunday, July 27 at 2:30 pm. Footlights has reserved seats for Thornton Wilder's *THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH* being done by Rorschach Theater in the air-conditioned Davis Performing Arts Center of Georgetown University.

Rahaleh Nassri, Rorschach Director of *THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH*, won critical acclaim several months ago for her directing of *Beauty, Boom* at Studio Theater and she has just finished directing Shakespeare's *The Tempest* at the Academy for Classical Acting. As our guest speakers, Rahaleh Nassri and Rorschach company member Scott McCormick participated in a wide-ranging discussion on American theater with Footlights members a few months ago. The cast will appear for a talk-back when we see the play July 27. Tickets are \$12. Please send your check to Robin Larkin.

## SEPTEMBER: *THE LIEUTENANT OF INISHMORE*

During the second week of September, Footlights plans to meet to discuss *THE LIEUTENANT OF INISHMORE* by Martin McDonagh. In the past,

Footlights discussed two of his other plays: *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* and *The Cripple of Inishmaan*. As the Wikipedia article says: "McDonagh has his critics - especially within Ireland - who view his work with suspicion. His English birth and London childhood have caused many to question his credentials, validity and sincerity regarding Irish life." But there is no denying his power as a playwright. Martin McDonagh recently also won an Oscar for his short film, *The Six Shooter*.

## **Special Event: AN EVENING WITH TED VAN GRIETHUYSEN**

Footlights has a very special event planned for its 2008-2009 Footlights season: An Evening with Ted van Griethuysen. Originally scheduled for September, the event has been changed to Monday, October 20, 2008. Further details will follow in the next Footlights newsletter..

**Footlights dinner-discussion reservations:** Reserve with Mark Gruenberg, phone 202-898-4825 or email [press\\_associates@yahoo.com](mailto:press_associates@yahoo.com).

**Theater tickets:** Robin Larkin, 240-669-6300 or [robinlarkin@comcast.net](mailto:robinlarkin@comcast.net). Make check payable to **Footlights**. Send to Robin Larkin at her **new address:** 5800 Nicholson Lane, Apt. L07, Rockville, MD 20852.

## **Calendar**

- **July 11 (FRIDAY)** -- Please arrive by 6:15 p.m. for the Footlights dinner discussion of ***THE TITANS* by Robert McElwaine at Alfio's**, in the Willoughby Apartments, 4515 Willard Ave., Chevy Chase, MD 20815 (Friendship Heights Metro stop on the Red Line). Reserve with Mark Gruenberg, 202-898-4825 or [press\\_associates@yahoo.com](mailto:press_associates@yahoo.com).
- **July TBD.** -Performance of ***THE TITANS* by Robert McElwaine at The American Century Theater (TACT) in The Gunston Arts Center, Theater II**, 2700 South Lang Street, Arlington, VA 22206. Details to follow.
- **July 27 (SUNDAY) at 2:30 p.m.** - - Rorschach's Performance of ***THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH* in the Gonda Theater at the Davis Performing Arts Center of Georgetown University**. Tickets are \$12; includes post show discussion. Make your check payable to Footlights, and send to Robin Larkin, 5800 Nicholson Lane, #L07, Rockville, MD 20852.
- **September TBD** - - Footlights dinner discussion of ***THE LIEUTENANT OF INISHMORE* by Martin McDonagh**. Details to follow in the next Footlights newsletter.
- **October 22 (Monday)** - - **Footlights Special Event: An Evening with Ted Van Griethuysen**. Details to follow.

Beatrice Rouse *for* **FOOTLIGHTS**  
P.O. Box 5443  
Rockville, MD 20848-5443

**Happy July 4th**