

from the FOOTLIGHTS

JANUARY 2014

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

<http://www.footlightsdc.org>

January 13: Dinner-discussion of Mario Vargas Llosa's *The Young Lady from Tacna*

"A writer is someone who writes not what he wants – that's what the normal person does – but what his demons want him to."

– Belisario in *The Young Lady from Tacna*

Footlights is pleased to welcome back **José Carrasquillo** and GALA Hispanic Theatre's **Abel López** to our **Monday, January 13** dinner-discussion at Alfio's. José will be directing the production for GALA. Footlights member Debbie Jackson will moderate our discussion.

Peruvian novelist, playwright, essayist, and sometime politician **Mario Vargas Llosa**, winner of the 2010 Nobel Prize for Literature, has said of his inspiration for writing *The Young Lady from Tacna*: "In the late 1970s, the persistent memory of a hundred-year-old great-aunt, Mamaé, who in the final years of her life cut off her surrounding reality to take refuge in memories and fiction, suggested a story. And I felt, prophetically, that it was a story for the theater, that only on stage would it take on the animation and splendor of successful fictions."

GALA describes the play: "In this tale of how tales are born, we see the past through the imagination of Belisario, a writer trying to create the grand romance of Mamaé, a 90-year-old spinster aunt who ended her engagement with a dashing Chilean captain when she was young. A moving and humorous portrait of a family and its secrets in which memories and the present clash."

La señorita de Tacna was written in 1981. The English translation – *The Young Lady from Tacna* (1990) – is found in a collection titled *Three Plays* by Mario Vargas Llosa, available from online stores in paperback and e-book formats. Check local libraries for copies, as well.

Alfio's Trattoria is located at 4515 Willard Avenue, Chevy Chase, Maryland, on the ground floor of the Willoughby Apartments, a short walk from the north entrance of the Friendship Heights metro stop on the red line. Street parking is limited if you drive, but valet parking is free at Alfio's. Dinner is at 6:30; the discussion begins at 7:30 and ends at 9.

The all-inclusive cost for dinner and discussion is \$20. Dinner is a green salad, choice among six entrées, and spaghetti, green beans, bread and butter, ice cream, and tea or coffee. Alfio's salad bar may be substituted for the entrée if you wish. Cash or check – no credit cards, please. Wine, beer, and cocktails are available from the bar. You may come for the discussion only for just \$5.

Make reservations with Phyllis Bodin, 301-986-1768, or phylbo@verizon.net. Reservations and cancellations will be accepted until noon of the day of the discussion. If you must cancel, please let Phyllis know as soon as possible since this is a seated dinner and the restaurant needs an accurate count for the place settings.

The Young Lady from Tacna will be performed at GALA Hispanic Theatre in Spanish with English surtitles from February 6 through March 9. GALA is located at 3333 14th Street, NW, in DC. See <http://www.galatheatre.org> for more details. A date for Footlights to see the play has not been set yet.

George Bernard Shaw's *Back to Methuselah* Dinner-Discussion on February 3

"You see things; you say, 'Why?' But I dream things that never were; and I say 'Why not?'"

– George Bernard Shaw, *Back to Methuselah*

Back to Methuselah: a Metabiological Pentateuch (1921) by **George Bernard Shaw** consists of a preface and a series of five plays. Shaw examines the human life-span in a series of comic episodes that take us from the Garden of Eden to "as far as thought can reach" in the distant future. It is one of the first works of science fiction ever put on stage. Starting with Adam, Eve and The Serpent in the Garden of Eden, *Back to Methuselah* speeds through several thousands of years of human history.

Who might be able to mount such a challenging drama? Washington Stage Guild, a company specializing in Shaw, is producing *Back to Methuselah* in several installments over a multi-year cycle, culminating with Stage Guild's 30th anniversary. The first installment consists of *In The Beginning* and *The Gospel Of The Brothers Barnabas*.

We will meet at Alfio's on **Monday, February 3**. Our guest will be **Bill Largess**, the Stage Guild's Artistic Director, and director of the upcoming production, February 20 through March 16. Dorothy Marschak will moderate. Make **reservations** with Phyllis, 301-986-1768, or phylbo@verizon.net.

Shaw's *Back to Methuselah* is in the public domain. Find it in libraries or at online sites such as Gutenberg.

See *Our Suburb* at Theater J

Theater J is offering tickets to Footlights members for any performance at 20% off. When ordering your tickets, use the code FOOTLIGHTS20. Here is the link to order:

<https://www.boxofficetickets.com/bot/wa/event?id=225755>. We recommend matinee performances on January 5 or 12. Each of these dates has a post show panel discussion scheduled.

January 5 at 5 p.m. – Free Speech or Hate Speech: A Legal and Historical Perspective.

January 12 at 5 p.m. – The Nazis March on Grover's Corners: Thornton Wilder and *Our Suburb*.

About Footlights

To learn more about Footlights, visit our website at <http://www.footlightsdc.org>. To subscribe to our e-list, go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/footlightsdc/join>, or simply e-mail footlightsdc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

Calendar

- **Monday, January 13**, 6:30 p.m. dinner-discussion of *The Young Lady from Tacna* by **Mario Vargas Llosa**. Director **José Carrasquillo** and GALA Associate Producing Director **Abel López** are our guests. At Alfio's, 4515 Willard Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD. Dinner including discussion is \$20; discussion only is \$5. Reserve with Phyllis Bodin, phylbo@verizon.net or 301-986-1768.
- **Monday, February 3**, 6:30 p.m. dinner-discussion of *Back to Methuselah* by **George Bernard Shaw**. Washington Stage Guild's Artistic Director **Bill Largess** is our guest. Reserve with Phyllis.

Robin Larkin for **FOOTLIGHTS**
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