

from the FOOTLIGHTS

JULY 2016

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

<http://www.footlightsdc.org>

July 11: Dinner-discussion of Anton Chekhov's *The Lady with the Little Dog*, adapted by Stephanie Mumford

"Fate itself had meant them for one another, and they could not understand why he had a wife and she had a husband; and it was as though they were a pair of migratory birds, male and female, caught and forced to live in different cages." — Chekhov's The Lady with the Little Dog

Footlights has previously discussed a few of Chekhov's famous plays – *The Cherry Orchard*, *The Three Sisters*, and most recently, *Uncle Vanya* in all of its re-imaginings last season. But Chekhov is equally celebrated for his short story masterpieces. Quotidian Theatre, which counts Chekhov as one of its "cornerstone" playwrights, will soon produce co-founder **Stephanie Mumford**'s original stage adaptation of one of his most famous short stories, *The Lady with the Little Dog*. She is directing as well.

The plot is deceptively simple. Two strangers meet on holiday in Yalta. They have a brief affair. Anna, the lady with the little dog, is called home to tend to her husband. Gurov returns to his family. They part, never expecting to see one another again. To Gurov's surprise, he finds he cannot stop thinking of Anna and eventually tracks her down. He has fallen in love for the first time in his life. They resume their affair, meeting every few months. As they struggle to resolve their predicament the story ends:

"And it seemed as though in a little while the solution would be found, and then a new and splendid life would begin; and it was clear to both of them that they had still a long, long road before them, and that the most complicated and difficult part of it was only just beginning."

Stephanie Mumford writes in her blog: "I wanted to take a story I felt deeply about, and bring it to life. There are so many elements of beauty and passion that leap off the page for the reader, the best way, I felt, was to adapt it into a theatrical experience, complete with music and art -- elements that Chekhov references throughout. It will be a unique piece, and something in keeping with Quotidian's intimate stagings of truth and beauty in the everyday."

Footlights is pleased to welcome Stephanie, co-founder **Jack Sbarbori**, cast members and others to discuss the play with us on **Monday, July 11**, at Alfio's – located at

4515 Willard Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD, 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 available at Alfio's. Dinner is at 6:30, the discussion begins at 7:30 and ends at 9. (Note: if you know you must leave before 9, please try to sit near the door so you can exit quietly.)

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, please – no credit cards. Wine, beer, cocktails are available from the bar. You may come for the discussion only for just \$5.

Make reservations with Phyllis Bodin, at phylbo@verizon.net or 301-986-1768. Reservations and/or cancellations will be accepted until noon on July 11. If you must cancel, please let Phyllis know as soon as possible since the restaurant needs a complete count. This is a seated, table-service dinner, not a buffet. We may be charged for no-shows and expect you to cover our cost.

Read the story/play. We recommend you read the short story first. *The Lady with the Little Dog* may be found in collections of Chekhov short stories at local libraries or bookstores - also in e-books (Amazon, Barnes & Noble, etc.) There are several sites online that carry it, such as http://www.online-literature.com/anton_chekhov/1297/.

If you have reserved for the dinner-discussion, and wish to receive an e-copy of the adaptation script, please contact Robin, robinlarkin@comcast.net. Please do not distribute it to others.

We will see *The Lady with the Little Dog* at Quotidian Theatre (performing at The Writer's Center in Bethesda) on **Sunday, July 17, 2 p.m.** Tickets are \$15, and include a postshow discussion. Contact Robin Larkin, robinlarkin@comcast.net or 240-669-6300. Send your check, payable to Footlights to Robin Larkin, 5800 Nicholson Ln, Apt L-07, Rockville, MD 20852.

Lady will run from July 8 – August 8, if you are not able to see it with Footlights. Call Quotidian's box office, 301-816-1023 for tickets. For more information see <https://quotidiantheatre.org/>.

August 23: Dinner-discussion of Tony Kushner's *Angels in America*

Mark your calendars now, and make reservations to join Footlights on **Tuesday, August 23**, 6:30 p. m., when we revisit **Tony Kushner's** Pulitzer Prize- and Tony Award-winning ***Angels in America*** on its 25th anniversary.

We are delighted to welcome our guests, Olney Theatre Center Artistic Director **Jason Loewith** and Round House Theatre Producing Artistic Director **Ryan Rilette**. In a bold collaboration to begin the 2016-17 season, Olney and Round House Theatres are co-producing *Angels – Part I: Millennium Approaches* (Loewith directs) & *Part II:*

Perestroika (Rilette directs) in rotating repertory at Round House Theatre, September 7 through October 30.

We'll meet at Alfio's. Reserve with Phyllis, at phylbo@verizon.net or 301-986-1768.

About Footlights

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

Calendar:

- **Monday, July 11**, 6:30 p.m., dinner-discussion of **Stephanie Mumford's** adaptation of **Anton Chekhov's *The Lady with the Little Dog***. Guests: Quotidian Theatre founders **Stephanie Mumford** and **Jack Sbarbori** plus cast members. Robin Larkin moderates. At Alfio's, 4515 Willard Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD. Reserve with Phyllis Bodin, phylbo@verizon.net or 301-986-1768.
- **Sunday, July 17**, 2 p.m., performance of ***The Lady with the Little Dog*** at Quotidian Theatre (at The Writer's Center), 4508 Walsh St, Bethesda, MD. Tickets are \$15. Postshow discussion included. Contact Robin, 240-669-6300 or robinlarkin@comcast.net. Send your check, payable to Footlights, to Robin Larkin, 5800 Nicholson Ln, Apt. L07, Rockville, MD 20852.
- **Tuesday, August 23**, 6:30 p.m., dinner-discussion of **Tony Kushner's *Angels in America***. Guests: **Jason Loewith** and **Ryan Rilette**. Stephanie Olshan moderates. At Alfio's, 4515 Willard Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD. Reserve with Phyllis Bodin, phylbo@verizon.net or 301-986-1768.

Robin Larkin for **FOOTLIGHTS**
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