

from the FOOTLIGHTS

FEBRUARY 2017

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

<http://www.footlightsdc.org>

February 28: Footlights' Dinner-discussion of Forum Theatre's Two-Play Repertory

Forum Theatre calls it their #NastyWomenRep – two plays about women, written by women and directed by women:

What Every Girl Should Know by **Monica Byrne** takes place in 1914 and follows four teen girls in a New York reformatory. Together they discover their sexuality and personal power, and reveal the horrifying events that led each of them there. Adopting birth control activist Margaret Sanger as their secret patron saint, they build a communal fantasy life. (The play takes its title from the famous newspaper column published in 1913 by Margaret Sanger, which offered plain-spoken advice on sex and health to young working-class women.)

Dry Land by **Ruby Rae Spiegel** follows the unusual friendship of Ester and Amy. Both competitive swimmers, they're struggling to stay afloat in their daily lives. Ester is plagued by self-doubt, Amy by an unwanted pregnancy. Set largely in the girls' locker room of a Florida high school, this portrait of an unlikely friendship under uncommon pressure is tender, caustic, funny and harrowing, often all at the same time.

Both plays tackle female friendship, bodily autonomy, and resiliency. They embrace the idea that women are full, complex, contradictory beings – in other words #NastyWomen.

Please join us on **Tuesday, February 28** to discuss these plays with our guests: **Michael Dove**, Forum's Artistic Director, and the directors of both plays. **Jenna Duncan** is directing *What Every Girl Should Know*; **Amber Paige McGinnis** directs *Dry Land*. Robin Larkin will moderate our discussion.

Our dinner-discussion is at Alfio's, 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, but valet parking is available at Alfio's. Dinner is at 6:30, the discussion at 7:30 and ends no later than 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, please – no credit cards. Wine, beer, cocktails are available from the bar. You may come at 7:20 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 the day of the dinner-discussion. 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 plays. We encourage you to read the plays before our discussion. Our discussion may include spoilers. Forum has graciously provided playscripts to us. Once you have reserved with Phyllis for the dinner-discussion, let Robin know if you would like pdf copies of the plays emailed to you - robinlarkin@comcast.net.

See the plays. Performances begin March 16 and run through April 15. Forum Theatre is in residence at the Silver Spring Black Box Theatre (formerly Round House Theatre Silver Spring), 8641 Colesville Road, Silver Spring. The schedule of performances is found at <https://forum-theatre.org>.

March 20: Fugard's *The Blood Knot*

The strong critical and audience reaction in 1964 to South African playwright **Athol Fugard's** first play to come to the U.S., ***Blood Knot***, established him as one of the world's leading theater writers. He had produced this sometimes funny, harrowing show of the effects of apartheid in South Africa in 1961. It was closed after one performance because it also included the unheard of casting of a white man and a black man on a South African stage.

In 1967, Fugard went to London for the filming of his play. This time the South African government took away his passport on his return home.

There are two characters in the play, two-half brothers. They had different fathers. One brother is black and the other is light enough to pass for white, which he does for a time in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. He comes back to live with his black brother in a shack in a "colored

only" shanty town of the city with a plan. It is to save enough money to buy a farm where they can have some independence from the crushing system of apartheid.

But, over time the black brother wants something else, the company of a woman. He gets into a pen pal relationship with a white woman, who assumes she is writing to a white man. She writes that she would like to meet him when she visits Port Elizabeth. His brother warns him of how dangerous it would be to try and meet the woman. She later writes that she won't be able to visit after all. Then the play deals drills down into the anger and frustrations of the brothers.

Ari Roth, founding artistic director of Mosaic theater, will be our guest Monday, March 20 at Alfio's. Jerry Stilkind will moderate our discussion. Reserve now.

Blood Knot will play at Mosaic Theater from March 29 through April 30.

About Footlights

To subscribe to our e-list, go to groups.yahoo.com/group/footlightsdc/join, or email any message to footlightsdc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. To learn more about Footlights, see www.footlightsdc.org.

Email copies of the monthly newsletter are sent to the Footlights list and are also available at www.footlightsdc.org.

Calendar:

- **Tuesday, February 28**, 6:30 p.m., dinner-discussion of **Monica Byrne's *What Every Girl Should Know*** and **Ruby Rae Spiegel's *Dry Land***. Guests: **Michael Dove**, Artistic Director, Forum Theatre, and play directors **Jenna Duncan** and **Amber Paige McGinnis**. Robin Larkin moderates. At Alfio's, 4515 Willard Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD. Reserve with Phyllis Bodin, phylbo@verizon.net or 301-986-1768.
- **Monday, March 20**, 6:30 p.m., dinner-discussion of **Athol Fugard's *The Blood Knot***. Guest: **Ari Roth**, Artistic Director, Mosaic Theater. Jerry Stilkind moderates. At Alfio's. Reserve with Phyllis.

Robin Larkin for **FOOTLIGHTS**
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