

JUNE: NIXON'S NIXON BY RUSSELL LEES

"I don't feel like I've done anything wrong," the President of the United States is saying peevishly, his mouth puckering into a lemon-sucking pout. "They gave me so much power, why are they surprised I used it?"

When NIXON'S NIXON was first produced by Round House in 1999, it had rave reviews, sold-out performances, and multiple Helen Hayes Award nominations. Lloyd Rose in *The Washington Post* proclaimed: "Round House triumphs... an energetic, live-action political cartoon with surprising undertones of sympathy and sadness...it turns into a meditation on loss and blasted dreams, a little lesson on the mortality of hope." Channing Gray, *Journal Arts* writer, raved "NIXON'S NIXON is a smart, sparkling, funny gem of a play."

In the playwright's note to his play, Russell Lees says "the play is not so much about historical personages and their character traits as it is about the very human and personal struggles involved in retaining or relinquishing great power and coming to terms with one's legacy."

The historical personages are Richard Nixon and his Secretary of State/National Security Adviser, Henry Kissinger and it is the eve before Nixon's resignation. What happened that night? Where were you and what do you think about these historical events? Footlights will discuss the historical, personal, and theatrical aspects of the play with **Mark Gruenberg, political maven and reporter for over 35 years**. With Mark's father reporting on the Sam Ervin hearings and Mark's own editing of the University of Chicago newspaper providing profiles and analyses of Watergate key players and events, Footlights President Mark Gruenberg has much to contribute to our understanding of these historical events in the play. Political power and its personal dimensions will round out the Footlights discussion.

Footlights' dinner discussion of NIXON'S NIXON is **Wednesday, June 11, 6:30 p.m. at CASA FIESTA**, 4910 Wisconsin Ave, NW, Washington, D.C. 20016 (202-244-8888). Friendship Heights Metro stop on the Red Line. The dinner buffet (including tip) is \$15. Contact Mark Gruenberg to reserve for dinner at press_associates@yahoo.com or 202-898-4825. If you must cancel your dinner reservation, please let Mark know by noon on Wednesday June 11. You may come

just for the discussion. We would appreciate a \$5 contribution to Footlights to help cover our expenses. Your voluntary contribution to Footlights is tax-deductible.

READING & SEEING NIXON'S NIXON

NIXON'S NIXON may be ordered from Backstage Books (202-544-5744) or any other bookstore.

Footlights will see the performance of **NIXON'S NIXON on Sunday June 15 at 3 p.m. at Round House Theatre Bethesda** 4545 East-West Highway Bethesda, MD 20814, Tickets are \$45, which includes a post show discussion. Make your check payable to Footlights, and send to Robin Larkin, 5800 Nicholson Lane, #L07, Rockville, MD 20852. Your check must be received no later than June 7.

FOOTLIGHTS ON JULY 11: THE TITANS

It was the tensest point -- and the turning point --of the Cold War. The Titans, U.S. President John F. Kennedy and Soviet Premier and Party Chairman Nikita Khrushchev, were in a tense standoff in October 1962 over Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba, 90 miles from the U.S. Behind the scenes in both capitals, tension was high and the question was: Would we have a nuclear Armageddon? After all, at least one US general, Curtis LeMay of the Air Force, wanted to nuke Cuba. And how about all the back channels Kennedy and Khrushchev used to "talk" with each other, including ABC newsman John Scali? And what did Bobby tell his brother Jack?

That time of tension is what The American Century Theater tackles this summer with its world premiere play of "THE TITANS" by Robert McElwaine, author of "Danny and Sylvia." And that is the topic Footlights will tackle with **American Century Theater Director Jack Marshall on Friday July 11 at Alfio's**. Reservations for our July meeting will start at the close of business on our June meeting, call or e-mail Mark Gruenberg at (202) 898-4825 or press_associates@yahoo.com.

READING THE TITANS

Because this is the world premiere of THE TITANS, the play has not yet been published. ONLY FOOTLIGHTS HAS THE SCRIPT, outside of the cast, of course. It will be available for sale, at cost, at our June 11 meeting, and by other arrangements (watch your e-mails).

SEEING *THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH*:

“Ladies and gentlemen, don’t take this play serious. The world’s not coming to an end – you know it’s not. People exaggerate. Most people really have enough to eat and a roof over their heads. Nobody actually starves – you can always eat grass or something... Sabina, Act 1.

In December, we had a spirited discussion about this funny-serious play with one of Washington's up and coming directors, **Rahaleh Nassri**, and one of the play's leads, **Scott McCormick**. It is being performed by one of the smaller but better-known theaters in the area -- Rorschach. The theater lost its place in a church and had to postpone the production. It now is working in the air-conditioned Gonda Theater at the Davis Performing Arts Center of Georgetown University.

Calendar

- June 11 (Wednesday) at 6:30 p.m. Dinner discussion of *NIXON’S NIXON*, by **Russell Lees** in the upstairs meeting room at **Casa Fiesta**, 4910 Wisconsin Ave, NW, Washington, D.C. 20016 (202-244-8888). Friendship Heights Metro Stop on Red Line.
- June 15 (Sunday) at 3 p.m. Performance of *NIXON’S NIXON* at **Round House Theatre Bethesda** 4545 East-West Highway Bethesda, MD 20814, Tickets are \$45; includes post show discussion. Make your check payable to Footlights, and send to Robin Larkin, 5800 Nicholson Lane, #L07, Rockville, MD 20852. **It must be received by June 7.**
- July 11 (**FRIDAY**) -- Please arrive by 6:15 p.m. for dinner discussion of *THE TITANS* by **Robert McElwaine** at **Alfio’s**, in the Willoughby Apartments, 4515 Willard Ave., Chevy Chase, MD 20815.
- July TBD - Performance of *THE TITANS* at **The American Century Theater (TACT)** at **The Gunston Arts Center, Theater II**, 2700 South Lang Street, Arlington, VA 22206,. Details to follow in July Footlights newsletter.
- 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. Further details available at June Footlights meeting.

We will see the play Sunday, July 27 at 2:30 p.m. We expect that tickets will be under \$15 and are arranging a discussion with the cast after the matinee performance. We will have definite word in our next newsletter.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

AN EVENING WITH TED VAN GRIETHUYSEN:

This coming Fall, Van Griethuysen and Footlights are joining forces in a fund raiser to help modern theatre production in the metropolitan Washington area. Keep tuned.

FOOTLIGHTS NEW SEASON: Ideas, moderators, and volunteers are always welcome as the Footlights Board starts lining up plays and productions for 2008-2009.