

# from the FOOTLIGHTS

AUGUST 2010

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

<http://www.footlightsdc.org>

## Footlights to discuss Sarah Ruhl's *In the Next Room or the vibrator play*

Our play for discussion on **Sunday, August 22** will be *In the Next Room or the vibrator play* by **Sarah Ruhl**. Our speaker is director **Aaron Posner**.

*In the Next Room or the vibrator play* marked Sarah Ruhl's Broadway debut, but we in this area have been privileged to see many of her quirky plays in the past few years: *Passion Play* at Arena, *The Clean House* and *Dead Man's Cell Phone* at Woolly Mammoth, and the fascinating *Eurydice* (which Footlights discussed in February 2009) at the Round House.

Reviews from the New York City production include words such as *provocative, funny, touching* and *witty*. Theater-goers watched the doctor treat both women and men for the vague ailment known as *hysteria* with a newfangled electrical contraption called a vibrator, while his unhappy wife longs for some connections (but not necessarily electrical ones) with her husband. The play was a finalist for a 2010 Pulitzer Prize for Drama and was nominated for a Tony for Best Play.

Sarah Ruhl is considered one of the most promising of all our young playwrights. She wrote her first play in fourth grade. It was not produced and she decided to become a poet instead. Her second play, written when she was in college, was produced. She has not stopped writing since.

Footlights is delighted to announce that director **Aaron Posner** will be our guest speaker on Sunday August 22, just hours before Woolly Mammoth's production of Sarah Ruhl's play *In the Next Room or the vibrator play* opens, featuring local favorites Sarah Marshall and James Konicek among others.

If you saw *Measure for Measure* or *Arcadia*, *The Tempest*, *Macbeth*, or *Melissa Arctic* or *Orestes*, a Tragic Romp at Folger, you have seen just a tiny portion of the work Aaron Posner has done in this

area. He worked with author Chaim Potok to turn the latter's novel *My Name is Asher Lev* into Round House Theatre's recent production, and has done the same with Potok's *The Chosen*, which Theater J will perform at Arena Stage next Spring.

Aaron Posner is not only a director and a playwright, but an actor, composer, teacher, and consultant. Although originally from the West Coast (Oregon) he has spent years living and working on our coast, founding theater companies, directing plays, and winning awards. He says he always tries to think of the spouse who is positive he/she will be bored with the play, and then works hard at it to be sure this does not happen, whether by cutting out characters, updating dialogue, using puppets, or whatever it takes.

Please join us for a Footlights dinner-discussion of *In the Next Room* on **Sunday, August 22, 6 p.m.** at Alfio's Trattoria, located on the ground floor of the Willoughby Apartments at 4515 Willard Avenue in Chevy Chase, MD 20815 (phone 301 657-9133) - two blocks from the Friendship Heights metro station. Street parking is limited but valet parking is free at Alfio's. The cost for dinner is only \$13, for salad, bread, choice among six entrees, ice cream, and coffee or tea, and the price includes tax and tip. We appreciate a \$5 contribution to Footlights. Wine, beer, and cocktails are available from the bar.

Mary Ann Wren is taking reservations again this month. You can reach her at [wjwren@erols.com](mailto:wjwren@erols.com) or 301 770-4572. Mary Ann will moderate our discussion on August 22.

**Dinner is at 6 p.m. The program starts at 7, and it ends no later than 9 p.m. These are slightly earlier hours than usual, because we are meeting on a Sunday evening.** You may come for the discussion only if you wish. If you have to cancel, please let Mary Ann know by noon on August 22, so we will have an accurate count for the restaurant.

## Read *In the Next Room*

Copies of the play may be ordered directly from Samuel French.  
([http://www.samuel french.com/store/product\\_info.php/products\\_id/8593](http://www.samuel french.com/store/product_info.php/products_id/8593)). The cost with first-class shipping is \$12.70.

## See *In the Next Room*

*In the Next Room or the vibrator play* opens at Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company (641 D St NW, Washington, DC 20004, Box Office: 202-393-3939) on August 23 and closes September 19. Footlights may get group tickets, date and price unknown at this time.

## Calendar

- Sunday, August 22, 6 p.m., dinner-discussion of *In the Next Room or the vibrator play* by **Sarah Ruhl**. Our guest speaker is **Aaron Posner**. At Alfio's, 4515 Willard Ave., Chevy Chase, MD, 20815. Reserve with Mary Ann, [wjwren@erols.com](mailto:wjwren@erols.com) or 301-770-4572.

## About Footlights

For more information about Footlights, check our website: <http://www.footlightsdc.org>. To subscribe to our e-list and monthly newsletter, go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/footlightsdc/join>, or send any message to [footlightsdc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:footlightsdc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).

You may also phone Robin Larkin at 240 669-6300 or e-mail her at [robinlarkin@comcast.net](mailto:robinlarkin@comcast.net) and she will add your name to the mailing list. If you prefer a paper copy of the newsletter rather than receiving it on-line, let Robin know your address.

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