

from the FOOTLIGHTS

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

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NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2004

Ferenc Molnár's *Liliom* on November 22

On **Monday, November 22**, we will discuss Hungarian playwright **Ferenc Molnár's** classic bittersweet fantasy romantic play, *Liliom*, the inspiration for the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical *Carousel*.

Written in 1909, *Liliom* is a fascinating theater piece, in that it is seven scenes with a pantomime for a prologue, instead of a play broken into three acts. Ferenc Molnár (1878-1952) wrote it at a time when Vienna and Budapest were theater Meccas, in the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, pre-W.W.I. Life was a party; it had to be light-hearted, filled with wit. Plays had to be about the good life, good living in a continuous Mardi Gras.

But along comes Molnár who probes beneath the surface in what he called his comedy of manners about "little people" and their dreams. *Liliom's* first production was a flop, until it was produced again in 1919, after W.W.I. Then the play became a hit, the "must see" play of Europe. Thereafter, it was produced in London and New York City in the 1920s.

Footlights will meet to discuss *Liliom* on **Monday, November 22 at 6:30 p.m.** at **Alfio's** in the Willoughby Apartments, 4515 Willard Ave, Chevy Chase, MD (301-657-9133), two blocks from the Friendship Heights Metro. Street parking is limited; Alfio's offers complimentary valet parking. Turn into the circular driveway of the Willoughby and follow it around to Alfio's for valet parking. Arrive at 6:30 for dinner; our meeting begins at 7:30 and goes no later than 9:30. You may arrive at 7:30 for the meeting only; extra chairs will be available.

We have arranged a fixed price meal at Alfio's. For only \$12 (tax and service charge included) you will have salad, entree, ice cream and coffee or tea. Cash is preferred, but you may use credit cards to pay your server. An additional \$5 donation to Footlights is encouraged.

Reservations are required. Call or e-mail Mark Gruenberg (202-898-4825 or gruenberg@footlightsdc.org) for reservations. If you must cancel for any reason, be sure to notify Mark so that someone else can attend.

Liliom is available at "our" bookstores: Olsson's Dupont Circle, 1307 19th St., NW (202-785-1133); Olsson's Bethesda, 7647 Old Georgetown Rd. (301-652-3336); and Politics & Prose, 5015 Connecticut Ave., NW (202-364-1919).

Footlights member Rosalind Lacy MacLennan will moderate our discussion of *Liliom*. Our special guest for the evening is **Brad Watkins**, director of Olney Theatre's current production of *Carousel* and Olney Theatre Center's Producing Director. After graduation from the University of Maryland. Mr. Watkins became Associate Producer for the Harlequin Dinner Theatre where he staged *Same Time, Next Year*, and *Carousel*. His original revue *Dear Mr. Ziegfeld* toured the U.S. with Columbia Artists Theatricals. He directed *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *West Side Story*, and *The Gifts of the Magi* for OTC. Mr. Watkins serves on the board of directors for the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County, and continues as Casting Director for the national tours of Phoenix Productions.

***Carousel* at Olney Theatre December 11**

Footlights will see *Carousel*, the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical adaptation of *Liliom*, at Olney Theatre Center, 2001 Route 108, Olney, MD (301-924-3400) on **Saturday, December 11 at 2 p.m.** with post-show discussion included. Tickets are **\$26**. Payment deadline is November 29. Send your check, payable to 'Footlights,' to Robin Larkin, 5403 Nibud Ct, Rockville, MD 20852. For further information, contact Robin at 301-897-9314 or rlarkin@footlightsdc.org.

Note special offer: Footlights offers persons 30 or under tickets to *Carousel* for only \$13 **if** you attend our discussion meeting on November 22.

Footlights in December

On **Monday, December 13** our play for discussion will be *The Front Page* by **Ben Hecht** and **Charles MacArthur**. “Set in the press room of the Criminal Courts Building in Chicago, it stirs up reporters, criminals, politicians, wives and sweethearts into a steaming broth of excitement and comedy” (*New York Times*). Mark Gruenberg will moderate our discussion.

We will meet again at Alfio’s. After November 22, make reservations with Charlotte Baer. Call or e-mail Charlotte at 202-244-8203 or charlotte4103@yahoo.com. Send e-mail anytime, but if you call, between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. only, please.

January 2005: *Cloud 9* by Caryl Churchill.

Robin Larkin *for* FOOTLIGHTS
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About Footlights

To get Footlights updates on-line, send any message—even blank—to join@footlightsdc.org. Subscribers can post to our on-line list by sending brief messages to list@footlightsdc.org. Visit our website at www.footlightsdc.org. Address inquiries to Mark Gruenberg, 202-898-4825.

Please support Footlights, a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization. Send your tax-deductible contributions to Footlights, c/o Robin Larkin, 5403 Nibud Ct., Rockville, MD 20852.

Tax time is coming! Make your Footlights donation now for a deduction on your 2004 return.

 **U·S AIRWAYS**

OFFICIAL FOOTLIGHTS AIRLINE

Calendar

Monday, November 22, 6:30 p.m., dinner and discussion of *Liliom* at Alfio’s. Reserve with Mark.

Saturday, December 11, 2 p.m., see *Carousel* at Olney Theatre Center. Tickets are \$26. Send checks to Robin by November 29.

Monday, December 13, 6:30 p.m., dinner and discussion of *The Front Page* at Alfio’s. Reserve with Charlotte.

Upcoming in 2005: January 24 dinner-discussion of *Cloud 9*; location TBD. See *Cloud 9* at Catalyst Theatre; date TBD.