

from the FOOTLIGHTS

SEPTEMBER 2010

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

<http://www.footlightsdc.org>

Footlights to Discuss *The Talented Mr. Ripley* - September 20

On **Monday, September 20**, Footlights explores how Patricia Highsmith's novel, *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, becomes compelling theater. Our guest will be Helen Hayes' winner, **Karl Miller**, who plays Tom Ripley, a character often called "enigmatic," "one of literature's great anti-heroes; an intelligent, suave, charming psychopath."

For several years now, Round House Theatre has focused on novels adapted for the theater and **Phyllis Nagy's** play based on Highsmith's novel will open their 2010-2011 season.

Footlights members may wonder, with a well-known movie available, why see a play developed from the same material? Many film reviewers have given incisive reasons:

"(the movie) muffles the menace, squanders the tension, throws away the main character and plot engine and turns Ripley into something he never was or should be." (*Chicago Tribune*)

"(In the film,) the character is several shades less loathsome and more conscience-stricken than he was to begin with." (Janet Maslin, *NY Times*)

Others talk about "delicious perversity," "pitch-black humor and blithe amorality."

We will discuss with Karl Miller how he portrays such a character and how we react. Are we supposed to loathe Ripley? Or, do we recognize parts of ourselves?

Footlights suggests that you read Patricia Highsmith's novel before our meeting. The libraries have many copies and the paperback novel is easily available. Then, together we will delve into this fascinating personality and intriguing story.

Please join us for a Footlights dinner-discussion of *The Talented Mr. Ripley* on **Monday, September 20** 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 several entrees, ice cream, and coffee or tea, and the price includes tax and tip. We would appreciate a \$5 contribution to Footlights. Wine, beer, and cocktails are available from the bar.

Phyllis Bodin will take reservations for our dinner-discussion. She may be reached at phylbo@verizon.net or 301-986-1768. You may come for the discussion only if you wish. If you have to cancel, please let Phyllis know by noon on September 20 so we have an accurate count for the restaurant. Charlotte Baer will moderate our discussion.

Ripley at Round House Theatre, Bethesda

The Talented Mr. Ripley will be performed at Round House Theatre, 4545 East-West Highway, Bethesda, September 8 - 26. In addition to Karl Miller the cast includes many of our well-known and favorite actors – Billy Finn, Naomi Jacobson, Marcus Kyd, John Lescault, Kaytie Morris, Sasha Olinick. Blake Robison directs.

Round House lists several audience events of interest to Footlights: Designer Discussion, September 8, 6:45 p.m.; Director Discussion, September 10, 7:15 p.m.; Postshow Talkbacks after Sunday matinées on September 19 and 26. PWYC performances are September 8, 7:30 p.m. and September 11, 3 p.m.

Tickets for Sarah Ruhl's *In the Next Room or the vibrator play*

Footlights is seeing *In the Next Room* at Woolly Mammoth Theatre, 641 D St NW, DC, on Sunday, September 19 at 3 p.m. There are just a couple of seats left for our group – one in row E for \$49 and one in the front row of the "operating theatre/doctor's office" at \$34. Please contact Robin Larkin if you want these tickets - robinlarkin@comcast.net or 240-669-6300.

Scorched in October

Footlights will discuss *Scorched* by **Wajdi Mouawad**. "The peculiar dying wishes of their mother send twins Simon and Janine on a journey to the war-torn Middle-East to unravel the mystery....."

Wajdi Mouawad was born in Beirut, Lebanon, spent his childhood in Paris, France, and his adulthood in Montreal, Canada. He is now a Canadian citizen, a prize-winning playwright, a film director, an actor, and a novelist, and has often written about childhood, war, and exile. *Scorched* is considered to be one of his finest works.

The play will be performed by Forum Theatre. Although a relative newcomer to the DC theater scene, Forum has made quite a name for itself in the past few years. The company won major awards last season for their brilliant production of both parts of *Angels in America*.

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.

You may also phone Robin Larkin at 240 669-6300 or e-mail her at 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. Or if you would prefer just to get the e-mail copy, let Robin know.

Calendar

- Sunday, September 19, 3 p.m., performance of *In the Next Room or the vibrator play* by **Sarah Ruhl**. At Woolly Mammoth Theatre, 641 D St NW, DC. Contact Robin Larkin, robinlarkin@comcast.net or 240-669-6300.
- Monday, September 20, 6:30 p.m., dinner-discussion of *The Talented Mr. Ripley* by **Phyllis Nagy**. Our guest speaker is **Karl Miller**. At Alfio's, 4515 Willard Ave., Chevy Chase, MD, 20815. Reserve with Phyllis Bodin, phylbo@verizon.net or 301-986-1768.
- October date, dinner-discussion of *Scorched* by **Wajdi Mouawad**. Look for details in our next newsletter or on-line.

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