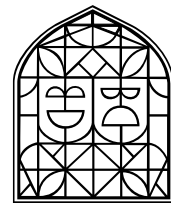


The Libretto



The Footlighters, Inc. Members of ACT-Cincinnati and The Ohio Community Theatre Association

December 2005

“Merry Blah-Blah” A Holiday Delight For Children and Adults

From their seats up close to the Stained Glass Theatre’s lobby stage, children will watch entranced as mean old Aunt Agatha plots to wipe out Christmas. To the rescue: Two smart youngsters, a twinkling Christmas Spirit and jolly Santa Claus himself.

Footlighters’ original holiday musical, “Merry Blah-Blah,” opens Friday, December 2, bringing Christmas magic to please children of all ages. Adults, too, will enjoy the tale of how Agatha – who hates Christmas so much she replaces the word with “blah-blah” – plans to turn the world against Christmas with her cursed egg nog.

“All of us working on this show are excited to be a part of this new musical,” said Lynne Aronson, the show’s director. “It isn’t every day you get the opportunity to work with a talented new playwright and an amazing composer to bring something fresh to the stage.”

The cast of “Merry Blah-Blah” includes a new face to The Stained Glass Theatre and a few people who have graced our stages in the past. Newcomer **Teresa Riestenberg** is the wonderfully nasty old Aunt Agatha. Footlighters’ veterans include **Megan Osborn**, playing Christmas Spirit; **Lily Rogers**, recently in Footlighters’ “Gypsy,” playing Agatha’s great-niece



Laci; and **Paul Hamilton**, just in Footlighters’ “South Pacific,” as great-nephew Nicholas.

Mark Aronson composed the show’s music and also plays Jerry, the DJ, and Santa Claus in our show. (You might remember him from Footlighters’ “Man of La Mancha” as the crazy barber.) **Brian Celce**, a graduate student at the University of Cincinnati, is our playwright.

Making it all happen behind the scenes: **George Fee**, producer; **Linda Abbott**, music director; **Ron Houck**, set construction; **Christine Wolff**, properties design; **Joy Galbraith** with **Costume Gallery**, costumes; **Mark Aronson**, sound design; and **Carolmarie Stock**, house manager.

“I’m grateful to the Footlighters’ family who have been supportive of our efforts,” Lynne Aronson said. “All of us have learned a lot with this project as we have been putting the many pieces together to give you this holiday gift...Come and drink a glass of egg nog with us – or maybe you shouldn’t.”

“Merry Blah-Blah” runs December 2, 3, 4 and December 9, 10, 11. Friday shows begin at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday shows, 4 p.m. and 6 p.m.; and Sunday shows, 5 p.m. Tickets cost \$10 for adults and \$7 for children age 12 and under. Seating is limited; only 50 seats per show. For tickets, call (513) 474-8711.

Come Celebrate The Holidays With Footlighters

The tradition continues in 2005, with the Footlighters’ annual Holiday Party bringing together friends for eating, chatting and sharing show-time memories.

The Holiday Party, combined with an annual membership meeting, will be from **4 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Sunday, December 18**, at the Stained Glass Theatre, 802 York St., in Newport, Ky. All Footlighters’ members and their families are invited.

Footlighters will provide an array of appetizing sandwiches and other finger foods plus drinks for the dinner’s main course. Members are asked to bring other items. (Suggested pattern: Last names beginning with A-G, cold hors d’oeuvres; last names beginning with H-P, hot hors d’oeuvres; and last names, Q-Z, desserts.)

Dinner will be served at 5:30 p.m. Between mouthfuls, members will be casting their votes on acceptance of a new Footlighters’ constitution. (See story inside.)

Two Holiday Party traditions will continue, with many members bringing gifts for the theater and/or for the Brighton Center, a neighborhood agency that helps Newport families who are homeless or in need. Theatre items needed include cleaning supplies, paper towels, toilet tissue, trash bags and office supplies. Also welcomed: gift cards to places such as Home Depot and Lowe’s so crews can buy set-building supplies, etc.

If bringing a gift for the Brighton Center (new toys, clothing, backpacks, etc.), please bring it unwrapped for a child up to age 16. **Please R.S.V.P. for the party by December 13 to Jim Racster, (513) 251-0496.**

WHAT: Holiday Party

WHEN: Sunday, December 18, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

WHERE: The Stained Glass Theatre,
802 York St., Newport, KY

Visit our website at www.footlighters.org

From the President

Greetings!

Yes, it is that time of year again....The holidays are upon us, and another great show is under way here at The Stained Glass Theatre. Come out to catch a performance of "Merry Blah-Blah," and you'll be sure to leave the theatre filled with holiday cheer!

In addition to opening and closing "South Pacific" in October, mounting "Merry Blah-Blah" and casting our winter show, "Love, Sex & The IRS," in November, we have a number of special projects in the works here at Footlighters. First off, we have applied for a \$2-million grant for improvements to our building, and, recently, we (Caryl Hefley and I) gave a presentation about Footlighters and The Stained Glass Theatre to the Washington, D.C. decision-making committee. We're eagerly awaiting news on our status with this grant.

Board members also just completed a review of the strategic planning session held last April (both sessions led by long-time Footlighter, Jay Woffington). Many thanks to Jay for helping us pave the way to a better-defined future for our group. Now the Footlighters' Long-Range Planning Committee will kick in and take this information to complete a draft of a final plan, with a target completion date of April 1, 2006.

Also in the works is a plan to launch online ticket sales for Footlighters' shows. There will be more information coming your way on this very shortly.

Enjoy the holidays, and remember that if you are interested in getting involved here at Footlighters, please let us know because we'd love to hear from you! Whether your urge is to sing, dance or act in the spotlight onstage, or to hammer nails, design props, sew costumes, sell program ads or play in our orchestras – there are so many ways for you and your entire family to get involved at The Stained Glass Theatre.

If you want to do more either on stage or behind the scenes, just give us a call at (859) 291-7464. Visit our Web site, too: www.footlighters.org.

Happy Holidays!

Sincerely,
John Langley

A Look Back At "South Pacific"

By Freida Houck, co-producer

Impressed is the word that comes to my mind as I write this and take a look back at Footlighters' fall production, "South Pacific."

As co-producer, I experienced the personalities, creativity, comedy, hard work, talent and so many other traits of the "South Pacific" staff and cast. Not only did everyone dedicate their time, but they did it with such camaraderie.

The production was excellent, and we definitely made money on this show. But how much more meaningful and fulfilling it was to accomplish this with such friendly people. That's what community theater is all about.

My biggest thrill, besides all the standing ovations, was the response Gary Wettengel, my co-producer, and I received from the cast and crew when it was time to help clean up the theater before the show opened. We were thoroughly impressed with your generosity in giving up part of your Saturday. It's the little things that count.

Thanks to everyone involved in "South Pacific" for your friendship and talents. Please stay connected to the Footlighters, and let's do it again sometime.

'Secret Garden' Auditions In December

Auditions for Footlighters' spring show, the Tony Award-winning musical "The Secret Garden," will be held by appointment in December.

Director Dennis Murphy will cast two children, a girl and a boy, both of whom must play 10 years old. Auditions for the children's parts will be held from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Sunday, December 4, and Monday, December 5, at The Stained Glass Theatre, 802 York Street, Newport, Ky.

Adult roles require nine women and 10 men of various ages and will be auditioned from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. on Sunday, December 11, and Monday, December 12, also at The Stained Glass Theatre.

Participants should bring sheet music for a song that shows voice quality and vocal range, and a photograph and resume. An accompanist will be provided. "The Secret Garden" will run May 4-21, 2006.

To schedule an audition appointment, call Producer Lynne Aronson, (513) 624-8665.

The Libretto

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the footlighters, inc.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lynne Aronson, Don Haas,

Mary Haas, Caryl Hefley,

Ron Houck, Freida Houck,

John Langley, Cathy Lutts,

Dean Rettig, Paul Strabley,

Jim Racster, Gary Wettengel,

Janet Wisner, Christine Wolff,

Linda Young

Work Begins On 'Sexy' Winter Show

The cast has been selected for the Footlighters' winter show, the comedy, "Love, Sex and the IRS," which tells the hilarious tale of two roommates who try to fool the tax man.

The show, which runs February 16 through March 5, 2006, is not as X-rated as its title may imply. The title's "sex" refers to one of the male roommates intentionally filling in the wrong gender on the tax form so the pair could file as a married couple. But, when the tax man cometh to check up on Jon and Leslie, the fear of the IRS puts Leslie in a dress and wig to masquerade as Jon's wife, with an assist from Jon's girlfriend and much to the confusion of Jon's mother.

You get the picture – this is a funny, funny show. The two guys



who will pull it off are veteran Footlighters **Eric Day** as Leslie Arthur and **Jim Curtis** as Jon Trachtman.

Completing the cast are **Jeanette Tacon**, as Jon's girlfriend Kate; **Brian Richardson**, as the IRS investigator; **Jon Vader**, as Mr. Jansen; **Cathy Lutts**, as mom Vivian Trachtman; **Victoria Margroun**, as Connie; and **Jeffrey A. Grooms**, as Arnold Grunion.

The Footlighters' stage will become the very lived-in living room of a New York City apartment in an old building suitable as home for two out-of-work musicians sharing space to save money.

"It's a real bachelor pad, with more feminine touches added as the show goes on," said Dennis Murphy, the set designer.

Footlighters' New Constitution, Bylaws Lead Troupe In New Direction

A revised constitution and updated bylaws to govern the Footlighters Inc. are designed to open the group to more involvement by members and to lead it toward operating an all-star production facility.

"We're changing the climate at Footlighters," said Caryl Hefley, who was the Board's president during the revision. "We're codifying what we have been doing so that we have a constitution and a set of bylaws that really say who and what we are."

Active Footlighters' members will be asked to vote anonymously on acceptance of the new constitution at the membership meeting during the Holiday Party on December 18 at the Stained Glass Theatre. The changes to the bylaws, which do not require membership approval, were accepted in August by the Footlighters' Board.

Copies of the proposed new Footlighters' constitution were sent by e-mail or postal mail to active members in late November for review before voting.

The new constitution and bylaws include numerous changes that would move responsibilities from the Board to the members, encouraging more participation by members for getting shows up and running. The revised constitution also would replace a document that was outdated, contradictory in places, unclear and poorly organized, legally questionable, and, the Board suspects, missing sections that may have been approved by earlier Boards. It was even unclear to the Board when the current constitution had been adopted.

After much discussion among the Board

and long-time members, the revision work began using a 1969 version with amendments that might have been added in 1974.

The constitution's reorganization was so extensive that the Board decided to present to members an entirely new document that would replace the current constitution, rather than trying to accomplish the revision work through amendments.

Work began two years ago, led by then-Board member Joel Lind who brought his legal expertise to the project. The first step, Lind recalled, was to seek guidance from the Board about what kind of organization the

troupe had become and what it wanted to be in the future.

It became clear, Lind said, that the Board no longer saw the group "as a resident performing company," focusing on one show at a time, Lind said.

"They (the Board) decided instead that what we were, and aspired to be, was an all-star production facility, operating to recruit the very best talent in the area and produce the highest level of shows using any resources available," Lind said. "And, the nucleus of the

continued on pg. 4, see "Constitution"

Footlighters' 2006-07 Season Features Familiar And Not So

The Cat in the Hat will lead off the Footlighters' 2006-07 season, which will present four shows that will entertain and challenge audiences.

First off, the fall show "Seussical," directed by Gary Rogers. This musical is based on the works of children's book author Dr. Seuss, but it's more than just a string of stories set to music. It weaves together Dr. Seuss' most famous characters – The Cat in the Hat, Horton the Elephant, Gertrude McFuzz, The and more – in unexpected ways, incorporating elements of 15 books.

Then comes "A Tuna Christmas,"

directed by Norma Niinemets, a play for two men who act out 22 male and female roles about Christmas in tiny Tuna, Texas – with hilarious results.

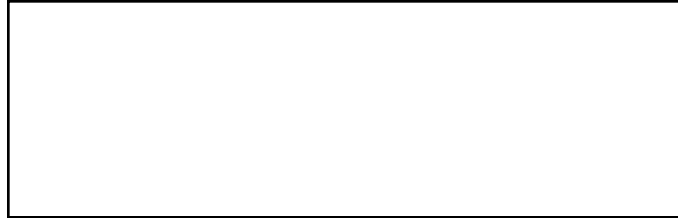
Opening in Winter 2007, is "The Foreigner," directed by Michael Moorehead. A favorite Off-Broadway comedy, this play looks at what happens when a group of devious characters deal with a stranger who they think doesn't understand English.

The season closer will be "Parade," directed by Ed Cohen and Dee Anne Bryll. This tragic and true story tells of the trial and lynching of a man wrongly accused of murder

the footlighters, inc.

THE STAINED GLASS THEATRE
802 York Street
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Footlighters' Footnotes

Congratulations to **Dean Rettig** and wife **Jennifer**, on the very early birth October 12 of son Nathaniel Dean.

Joel Lind ("South Pacific," "Man of La Mancha") can be seen in two upcoming shows: "Barefoot in the Park" in February at Milford Theatre Guild; and "The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged)" in May at Village Players, which is being directed by Footlighter **Dan Cohen**.

Footlighters, let The Libretto know when you are in a show or have news to share. Send information to Chris Wolff: cwolff99@yahoo.com. or (513) 521-8838.

Constitution

continued from pg.3

group (the Board) would be operational rather than participatory, focused on maintaining the infrastructure and functioning of the organization and the building."

The Board's goals for the revision included, Lind said, more democratization but fewer rules for the sake of rules. The Board wanted to remove provisions that were already being ignored, codify what the group was already doing and pay more attention to the long-term viability of both the organization and the building.

Examples of changes to the constitution and bylaws:

- Committee chairpersons no longer have to be Board members.
- A show's set of producers no longer has to include a Board member.
- The group's treasurer and secretary no longer have to be Board members.
- A ban on married couples serving on the Board at the same time was dropped. (Previously, the only couples allowed on the Board together were founding members Ron and Freida Houck and Don and Mary Haas.)
- A vice president in charge of the care and operation of the building has been added.

- A Board member who takes on a paid position in a Footlighters' show (such as music director) will not be paid.
- The selection process for shows and directors has been revamped, including requiring that the next season be approved much earlier and more clearly delineating the process, the selection committee's members and the criteria for picking shows.
- The season may be expanded up to seven shows (from the current practice of three).

New Constitution Up For Vote

Who may vote?

All current paid members (2005-06 season) may vote.

What about household memberships?

Each member of the household may cast a separate vote (providing that household member's name is included on the membership form).

Questions?

Contact Dean Rettig, membership chair, (513) 531-7258.