

from the FOOTLIGHTS

JANUARY 2018

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

<http://www.footlightsdc.org>

Footlights to discuss Jefferson's Garden by Timberlake Wertenbaker on Monday, January 8

Ford's Theatre's entry in the 2018 Women's Voices Theater Festival is *Jefferson's Garden*, which will play January 19 - February 11. **Timberlake Wertenbaker's** play about the nature of freedom is set during the years of the American Revolution, though its reach and resonance are far wider.

We follow the adventures of a young Quaker shoemaker, Christian. Fired up by dreams of liberty and ostracized by his family, Christian meets his hero, Jefferson, and offers his aid to the patriots in their battle against the British. In the process, he falls in love with a black slave, Susannah. But in the aftermath of war Christian sacrifices his personal happiness and Jefferson compromises the principles set out in the Declaration of Independence. We are left to wonder what if America had enshrined the concept of universal freedom in its constitution to begin with?

Timberlake Wertenbaker, though born in New York, is an award-winning British-based playwright, screenplay writer, poet, and translator. Footlights has discussed one of her plays, *After Darwin*, previously. She is best known for *Our Country's Good*, set in an Australian penal colony. Visit literature.britishcouncil.org/writer/timberlake-wertenbaker for more information on her work.

Jefferson's Garden was written in 2015 and performed in the UK. Ford's production is an American premiere.

Making a return visit, Footlights is pleased to welcome back **Patrick Pearson**, director of Artistic Programming at Ford's, as our guest. Robin Larkin will moderate our discussion.

We meet at **Alfio's La Trattoria**, located at 4515 Willard Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD, on the ground floor of the Willoughby Apartments – a short walk from the north entrance of the Friendship Heights metro stop on the red line. Street parking is limited, but valet parking is available at Alfio's. Dinner is at 6:30, the discussion begins at 7:30 and ends by 9.

The all-inclusive cost for dinner and the discussion is \$25. Dinner is a green salad, choice among six entrées, and spaghetti, green beans, bread and butter, ice

cream, and tea or coffee. Alfio's salad bar may be substituted for the entrée if you wish. Cash or check, please – no credit cards, and no cash back. Wine, beer, cocktails are available from the bar. You may come at 7:20 for the discussion only for just \$5.

Make reservations with Phyllis Bodin, at phylbo@verizon.net or 301-986-1768. Reservations and/or cancellations will be accepted until noon on the day of the dinner-discussion. If you must cancel, please let Phyllis know as soon as possible since the restaurant needs a complete count. This is a seated, table-service dinner, not a buffet. We may be charged for no-shows and expect you to cover our cost.

Read the play. *Jefferson's Garden* is published. Paperback and e-book copies are available. In addition, Footlights has permission to distribute a pdf copy of the play to those attending the January 8 discussion. Once you have made your reservation with Phyllis, contact Robin at robinlarkin@comcast.net if you would like a copy e-mailed to you. Please do not share with others. Also note that there are likely to be changes to the script, as Wertenbaker is in residence at Ford's for the American premiere.

See the play. Ford's is offering Footlights a discount of 20% for the January 23 performance of *Jefferson's Garden*. Ticket limit of 4 per order. Not valid in dress circle. Use the code: GARDENFOOTLIGHTS. This performance is the last preview and includes a postshow discussion. See below for other ticket options.

Thursday, February 1: Dinner-discussion of Julia Cho's Aubergine

Olny Theatre's selection for the Women's Voices Theater Festival is a play about food and family, especially the way families use food to say things we can't otherwise say. In this Korean-American family, the father won't accept that the son became a chef, and a French chef at that. Now the father is sick and the son wants to show him that food really matters. Complicating the father-son relations are an uncle from Korea who doesn't speak English, the estranged girl friend who comes to translate, and a hospice nurse.

Aubergine won the 2017 award for best new play in the San Francisco area. Julia Cho has long been

fascinated by language, as in her play, *The Language Archive*, which Footlights discussed in 2012. *Aubergine* is published. Paperback and e-book copies are available.

Our guest will be **Jason Loewith**, artistic director at Olney Theatre Center. Charlotte Baer will moderate our discussion. We'll meet at Alfio's (see info above). Reserve with Phyllis.

2018 Women's Voices Theater Festival Tickets

The Women's Voices Theater Festival returns in January and February, highlighting both the scope of plays being written by women, and the range of professional theater being produced in and around the nation's capital.

Footlights has scheduled three of the festival plays on our dinner-discussion calendar: *Queens Girl in Africa* at Mosaic, *Jefferson's Garden* at Ford's and *Aubergine* at Olney. Discount ticket options are available for these and other WVTF productions at TodayTix.com.

Calendar:

- **Monday, January 8**, 6:30 p.m., dinner-discussion of *Jefferson's Garden* by **Timberlake Wertenbaker**. Our guest is **Patrick Pearson**, Ford's Theatre Director of Artistic Programming. At Alfio's, 4515 Willard Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD, on the ground floor of the Willoughby Apartments. Reserve with Phyllis Bodin at phylbo@verizon.net or 301-986-1768.
- **Sunday, January 28**, 3 p.m., performance of *Queens Girl in Africa* by **Caleen Sinnette Jennings** at Mosaic Theater. See above for ticket information.
- **Thursday, February 1**, 6:30 p.m., dinner-discussion of **Julia Cho's** *Aubergine* with Olney's **Jason Loewith**. At Alfio's. Reserve with Phyllis.

Purchase of a \$15 Festival pass on TodayTix gives you a 25% discount on tickets to any of the Festival plays.

A special note: Mosaic Theater is offering a 50% discount on tickets to Footlights members for any performance (January 4 - February 4) of *Queens Girl in Africa*. We suggest attending the 3 p.m. Sunday, January 28 performance which includes a postshow discussion. Tickets are available online at <http://www.mosaictheater.org> or through the box office at 202-399-7993. Use the code FOOTLIGHTS.

About Footlights

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Robin Larkin for **FOOTLIGHTS**
5800 Nicholson Lane, Apt. L-07
Rockville, MD 20852