

WINTER 2007

A LOOK BEHIND...

HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR 2005-2006 SEASON, FROM ARLINGTON TO HONG KONG AND BACK

- ✓ Young Playwrights Project, consisting of two one-act plays by two, new, young playwrights, *Conversing Elevens*, by David Cahill, and *Not So Soft*, by Jonah Sea Knight. After a solid run in at Theatre on the Run in Arlington, cast and crew headed to Hong Kong, as invited guests, to perform at the Faust International Festival for seven more performances in June 2005
- ✓ *The Children's Hour* by Lillian Hellman opened in July 2005 at Theatre on the Run. Our cast, included Mollie Clement, recently featured in the *Washington Post*, Ali Miller, Christian Gearhart, Wendy Wilmer, and Heather Sanderson received positive outstanding reviews and sold out performances. Reviewers included the *Washington Post*, *Washington City Paper*, *Sun Gazette*, *Potomac Stages*, and *Curtain Up!*
- ✓ Firebelly launched the Great Literature Series committed to offering "great literature," classics, "required reading" and targeting young audiences as we develop the next seasons. Top of the list of productions was *To Kill a Mockingbird* based on the award-winning book by Harper Lee.
- ✓ May 2006, *To Kill a Mockingbird* opened with a sold out house of 78 8th-grade students from Indiana, and the momentum never stopped. Five sold out performances followed.



To Kill a Mockingbird, Mollie Clements and Andy Brownstein.



From *Proof*, October 2006

- ✓ *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* closed our 2006 season. Another powerful social justice story again gained Firebelly great reviews, solid attendance (despite the summer draught), and opened up new opportunities for collaboration and expansion. Several cast and crew worked at Shakespeare Theatre Co. in Washington; many actors from the cast were new to the area, so each contributed in new ways.

For reviews, photos, and cast lists of *all* our productions, visit www.firebellyproductions.net

HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR 2006-2007 SEASON AND THE SHAKESPEARE IN WASHINGTON FESTIVAL

Firebelly again blended classic literature with some contemporary pieces in its 2006-07 season and again offered casting opportunities to young performers.

- ✓ **PROOF** by David Auburn, directed by Ali Miller, Nov. 1-19, 2006
Winner of the 2001 Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award for Best Play, "[A] wonderfully funny...ambitiously constructed work..." *Variety*
What can we believe without proof? Catherine, newly 25, has spent the last 5 years caring for her father, a renowned mathematician, while his mental health declined. How will she handle the challenges of potential love and success without proof that she will avoid her father's fate? This production was well received by the press and had many well attended performances, giving our young director and cast much recognition.
- ✓ *Twelfth Night* by William Shakespeare, directed by Akiva Fox, Feb. 14 - March 3, 2007
Twelfth Night is perhaps Shakespeare's most complete comedy. The characters move from mourning through marriage with all the complexities inherent in that journey. Shakespeare connects us on a human level, showing the ridiculous or painful truths about love. Our contribution to

the Shakespeare in Washington Festival was a tremendous success with many sold out performances and glorious reviews. For Director Akiva Fox's debut in the DC area and the young talented cast, Firebelly provided a great springboard for future work. Firebelly encouraged families and students to attend (youngest child to attend was 4 years old) and provided study and discussion guides plus many "talk back" sessions with audience.



From *Twelfth Night*

✓ SHELTER

Directed by Kathi Gollwitzer and Ali Miller,
July 20- Aug. 5, 2007.

In this playbuilding project, Firebelly brings together an ensemble of artists to build an original piece of theatre through creative writing, improvisation, and historical research. This provides an unique and rich opportunity for cast and audience, as well. **The story.** Two isolated individuals forge an unlikely friendship in the midst of the Third Reich. Each is a shelter for the other as they drift in an out of each other's lives until the chaos surrounding them forces these two ships to collide. *Shelter* is an examination of the nature of duty, loyalty, sacrifice, and friendship.

2007-2008 Season

Firebelly continues its mission to offer young adults opportunities in professional theatre and to reach out to those in the community. Our fall and winter productions are directed by two new young directors and bring new and "old" classics to the community.

Oct. 11-Nov. 4 **Nothing Sacred** by George F. Walker, based on Dostoyevsky's *Fathers and Sons*

Feb. 14- Mar 4 **As You Like It** by Wm Shakespeare (to confirm)

June 27 to July 20, **Down the Road** by Lee Blessing

Firebelly is Growing... fast

Testifying at a recent Arlington County Board meeting Winter 2007, Barbara Walthall, Producer, urged the County to find much needed space as the theatre "district" in Arlington grows. "We have worked hard. In 2004 Firebelly offered 36 performances with an audience of 724; in 2006 we offered 49 performances with an audience of 1755. That represents audience growth of 147 percent in just two years' time."

Our "numbers" for 2007 will be strong, too. Thank you, our patrons for coming back and bringing others.

TOADS...WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Because many of our Actors and Technicians are students, they move on to additional performance opportunities and careers. A sampling of where our young "toads" are:

Nick Yenson (*Sylvia, Of Mice and Men*) graduated from the University of Limerick (Ireland) with a degree in Irish music and dance. He is currently performing in Riverdance in Ireland and the UK.

Philip James Brannon (*Of Mice and Men, Waiting for Godot*) graduated from DePaul University as a Goodman Fellow. He performed at Chicago's Goodman Theatre f *A Christmas Carol* and has strong prospects for future work.

Kristin Villanueva (*Sylvia, Waiting for Godot*), graduated from Syracuse University, recently received rave reviews in Colorado for her performances in *Comedy of Errors*. "The New York-based Villanueva's performance ... makes this production a "don't you dare miss it" offering."

Brennan Ballas, (sound engineer, *Sylvia, Lend Me A Tenor*) begins his final year at the New York University Film School.

Michael Eggleston, (*Of Mice and Men, Waiting for Godot*, and technical crew for *The Children's Hour*) joined the class of 2010 at Yale University in September 2006.

James Shirey (*Of Mice and Men*) enters the freshman class of Harvard University in September 2007.

New Partners

InstantSeats offering online ticket purchase power, and Gold Star Events, offering theatre for less, have helped move us into cyber-ticket land. We appreciate their working with us closely and offering help and suggestions for better service to our patrons. Visit them at www.instantseats.com and www.Goldstarevents.com

(photos by Ray Gniewek for Firebelly Productions)

BE A TOAD. HELP SUPPORT A PRODUCTION

We have many needs, and you can perhaps help us meet just *one* of them. Donors of more than \$100 receive 2 tickets to any upcoming performance; donors of \$250 or more receive 4 tickets to upcoming performances; donors of \$500 received 6 tickets to upcoming performances; and donors of \$1000 or more receive 10 tickets to upcoming performances. Donate \$10,000 and have dinner with the cast and 12 tickets to upcoming performances. Businesses that donate \$500 or more receive advertising space in our program as well.

- I donate \$25 to pay an actor for one performance
- I donate \$50 to pay our program printing for one performance
- I donate \$75 to pay one Sunday matinee space rental charges
- I donate \$100 to pay for costume costs for a week
- I donate \$200 to pay for postcard printing for a production
- I donate \$250 to pay for postage for publicity mailings
- I donate \$300 to pay the light designer for one production
- I donate \$400 to pay for one actor for the 16-performance run
- I donate \$500 to pay for Costume design, costumes, and small props
- I donate \$600 to pay the Light and Sound Designers for one production
- I donate \$700 to pay for set supplies, and construction
- I donate \$800 to pay for advertising cost for 3 ads in Guide to the Lively Arts, Washington Post
- I donate \$900 to pay for ticket surcharges and Sunday Space rental fees to Arlington County
- I donate \$1000 to pay royalties for 16-18 performances
- I donate \$5000 to pay all cast, crew, and technical staff for one performance
- I donate \$10,000 and pay for all production costs, cast and crew costs, and publicity for an upcoming production

Our needs are as varied as your budget. Become a toad! Join our special Canopy of Support and help support our next productions.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

e-mail: _____

Send payment, payable to Firebelly Productions, to 4908 North 17th Street, Arlington, VA 22207.

Let us know how to reach you via phone, or e-mail:

Name: _____

Mailing address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

e-mail address: _____

Your donation is tax deductible. Firebelly Productions, Inc. is a 501 c 3 non-profit organization. Your tax-deductible contributions help us to continue with our mission statement, grow artistically, and expand our outreach during the 2006-2007 season.

Checks should be made payable to Firebelly Productions, Inc. and mailed to 4908 North 17th Street, Arlington, VA 22207.

We appreciate your support!