

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 28, 2010

WHAT: L.A. Theatre Works: *RFK: The Journey to Justice*
WHEN: Tuesday, February 23 at 7:30 PM
WHERE: UMass Amherst Fine Arts Center Concert Hall
University of Massachusetts Amherst
TICKETS: Call 1-800-999-UMAS or 545-2511 for tickets or go online to <http://www.umasstix.com/>
IMAGES: To download images relating to this press release please go online to <http://www.fineartscenter.com/centerwide/pressRoom/>

(L.A. THEATRE WORKS PRESENTS INSIGHTFUL LOOK AT RFK'S ENGAGEMENT WITH THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT)

What began in 1960 as a decade of hope with the election of John F. Kennedy, ended with America embroiled in an impossible war, her streets filled with riots, and the history changing loss of three important figures. It is a decade often studied, debated, celebrated, and mourned - even a half-century later. And now, as those who lived, governed, and shepherded change during the 60's are passing, L.A. Theater Works presents a major new docudrama focused on Robert F. Kennedy's personal and political journey. *RFK: The Journey to Justice* will be performed on Tuesday, February 23 at 7:30 PM in the Fine Arts Center Concert Hall. *RFK: The Journey to Justice* is produced by Susan Albert Loewenberg and was written by Murray Horwitz and Jonathan Estrin. There will be a pre-performance talk by UMass Theater Professor Harley Erdman at 6:30 in the rear seating area of the Concert Hall. This performance will be simultaneously interpreted into American Sign Language.

L.A. Theatre Works productions feature a first-rate cast and live sound effects, and are usually recorded live for radio broadcast, just like in the "Golden Age of Radio." The cast includes well known film and television actor John Heard as John F. Kennedy, Henry Clarke as RFK, John Wesley as Louis Martin, Ross Hellwig as Harris Wofford, and Kevin Daniels as Martin Luther King.

In June 1968, the assassination of senator and presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy stunned the world. Kennedy's death, coming so shortly after the assassination of his colleague Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and only five years after the death of Kennedy's older brother John, left the nation—regardless of political convictions—uncertain of the future during the most tumultuous time in American history since the Civil War.

RFK: The Journey to Justice chronicles Kennedy's transformation from discomfort with and indifference towards the Civil Rights Movement to a champion and crusader. His story provides a compelling and dramatic illumination of this crucial decade, enabling a new generation to hear the words, feel the tension, and explore the issues that still resonate today.

The relationship between Kennedy, King, and the movement was complicated. Despite beginnings anchored in mistrust, the relationship ultimately evolved as RFK's voice became an important force in the fight for civil rights. Both King and Kennedy made strides for civil rights through different means and by very different paths—King with his powerful oratory and public leadership and Kennedy, initially, through quiet tactical maneuvers behind the closed doors of his brother's White House. In L.A. Theatre Works' new docudrama, the challenges, victories, and defeats of that period are refracted through RFK's experiences. The performance will include simultaneous translation into American Sign Language. Please see below for special pricing for the interpreter viewing section.

A special matinee performance of *RFK: The Journey to Justice* for school-age children (recommended for grades 9 through 12) will be presented on Wednesday, February 24 at 10 AM in the Concert Hall. The ticket price for this two-hour production is \$8 for both students and adults.

In anticipation of the performance, the Fine Arts Center will present a community forum titled "Our Moment: RFK and Our Shared Civil Rights Legacy" on Tuesday, February 16 at 7 PM at First Churches in Northampton. The forum is presented in collaboration with the RFK Children's Action Corps. To date, panelists include Shahid Buttar, executive director of the Bill of Rights Defense Committee and the People's Campaign for the Constitution, Adrienne Williams, Director of RFK's Child Welfare Services, Dr. Arlene Rodriguez, Dean of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences at Springfield Technical Community College, and Phil Johnston, founder of the Robert F. Kennedy Action Corps. Moderator will be local attorney Bill Newman, who practices Civil Litigation; Civil Rights; Labor and Employment, and Criminal Law, and is also director of the Western Regional Office of American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts.

Additionally, there will be a free screening of the documentary *American Experience: RFK* on Thursday, February 18 at the Augusta Savage Gallery in New Africa House on the UMass campus, beginning at 7 PM. More information on these events, and on the L.A. Theatre Works performance, may be found at <http://www.fineartscenter.com/calendar/centerseries/events/LA.html>. On Wednesday, February 24 at 12:30 PM three cast members from L.A. Theatre Works will discuss the production *RFK*:

The Journey to Justice and their acting careers in theatre, television, and film. The discussion will be held at Bartlett Hall, Room 65, on the UMass campus and is free and open to the public.

On Tuesday, February 23, prior to the L.A. Theatre Works performance, the UMass University Club is offering a "Global Gourmet: Taste of the Times" meal for a prix fixe of \$25. Please call 413-545-2511 for more information. *RFK* is an *Arts Give Back* event. Audience members are asked to bring an item that will meet the needs of families in transition at Jessie's House. For a complete wish list, visit <http://www.jessieshouse.org/>. Needed items include kitchen and household supplies, children's supplies, and personal hygiene products.

Tickets for *RFK: The Journey to Justice* are \$35, \$25, and \$15; Five College/GCC/STCC and youth 17 and under are \$15. Special pricing for the ASL interpreter viewing section is \$15 for adults and \$10 for youth 17 and under. Tickets are available from the Fine Arts Center Box Office at 545-2511 or 1-800-999-UMAS, or on the Fine Arts Center ticket website at <http://www.umastix.com/>.

The L.A. Theatre Works' *RFK: The Journey to Justice* is a commission led by the University of Notre Dame's DeBartolo Performing Arts Center and co-commissioned by the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center at the University of Maryland, Stanford Lively Arts at Stanford University, and the Modlin Center for the Arts at the University of Richmond. The Fine Arts Center performance is sponsored by WFCR/WNNZ, *The Rainbow Times*, and the UMass Alumni Association.

Images suitable for press coverage are available at the Fine Arts Center website:

<http://www.fineartscenter.com/centerwide/pressRoom/>.

FOR JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS THE LEGACY OF ROBERT F. KENNEDY

"Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance."

Robert F. Kennedy
Capetown, June 6th 1966

"OUR MOMENT: RFK AND OUR SHARED CIVIL RIGHTS LEGACY"

Tuesday, February 16 at 7PM, First Churches of Northampton

129 Main Street, Northampton, MA, Free and open to the public

Please join us for a community forum featuring a panel of speakers/performers that will touch on Robert F. Kennedy's political legacy. The panel will also speak to the historical role of the arts in social change and the civil rights issues that we face today - another pivotal moment of American history.

Presented by the UMass Fine Arts Center in collaboration with The RFK Children's Action Corps

FILM SCREENING: "AMERICAN EXPERIENCE: RFK"

Thursday, February 18 at 7PM, Augusta Savage Gallery, New Africa House, Free
Utilizing interviews and archival footage, this film offers an inspiring portrait of the influential leader--from his visionary politics to his interpersonal relationships and the tragic 1968 assassination that cut short a brilliant life and promising career.

SPECIAL MATINEE FOR SCHOOL AUDIENCES

**L.A. THEATRE WORKS, SUSAN ALBERT LOEWENBERG, PRODUCING DIRECTOR,
PRESENTS " RFK: JOURNEY TO JUSTICE"**

Wednesday, February 24, Concert Hall

This production is a perfect experience for history, social sciences, government, media and theater students. Recommended for grades 9-12. This is a 2 hour production.

\$8 students, \$8 adults

**L.A. THEATRE WORKS, SUSAN ALBERT LOEWENBERG, PRODUCING DIRECTOR,
PRESENTS " RFK: THE JOURNEY TO JUSTICE"**

by Murray Horwitz and Jonathan Estrin

Tuesday, February 23, 7:30 PM, Concert Hall

A behind-the-scenes story of a high-stakes political drama that dared the country and its citizens to look into the mirror -- and change. An L.A. Theatre Works performance is immediate, spontaneous, and features a first-rate cast, live sound effects, and a connection to the audience rarely felt in a traditional theater setting.

\$35, \$25, and \$15; Five College/GCC/STCC and youth 17 and under are \$15. Call the Fine Arts Center Box Office at 545-2511 or 1-800-999-UMAS, or go online to www.umasstix.com

Commissioned by L.A. Theatre Works and a collaboration of university arts presenters including Stanford and Notre Dame.

Pre-performance talk by UMass Theater Professor Harley Erdman at 6:30 PM in the Concert Hall.

The Arts Give Back: Please bring an item that will meet the needs of Jessie's House. Visit

www.jessieshouse.org for a wish list.

INSIDE ACTING PANEL

Wednesday, February 24 from 12:30 to 1:10 PM

Bartlett Hall, Room 65, 130 Hicks Way, UMass, Free and open to the public

Join three cast members from L.A. Theatre Works as they discuss the production RFK: Journey to Justice and their acting careers in theatre, television, and film.

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