



## **NEWS for immediate release June 2015**

**Contact** Emily Morrison  
703-998-4555 (TACT Office) or 323-363-4404 (mobile)  
**E-mail** [pr@americancentury.org](mailto:pr@americancentury.org) and [emilylovemorrison@me.com](mailto:emilylovemorrison@me.com)  
**Press photos** <http://www.americancentury.org/photos/men> (available after 7/16)

### **The American Century Theater presents**

#### ***Twelve Angry Men* by Reginald Rose**

The American Century Theater ends its twentieth and final season with the first play it produced in Arlington, VA: Reginald Rose's *Twelve Angry Men*, directed by TACT Artistic Director and Co-Founder, Jack Marshall. The production will run July 17 to August 8, 2015

Now recognized as the iconic jury drama, *Twelve Angry Men* originated as a live teleplay in 1954, and was made into an Oscar-nominated film in 1957. Prior to TACT's 1995 production, Rose's script could not be performed on stage. TACT received special permission from the author to put his screenplay on stage, and the result both launched The American Century Theater's remarkable two decades journey and was chosen by *City Paper* as one of that year's top D.C. area productions.

The famous and much-imitated plot involves an all-male, all-white jury deliberating on the guilt of a non-white teen accused of killing his father. A lone juror votes not guilty in what seems like an easy case. As he struggles to justify his vote, the process reveals the character, biases, weaknesses, and strengths of every juror, as well as the complex, contradictory, and often messy process we call the justice system.

Reginald Rose once described the play as a behavioral science experiment in which twelve random strangers are locked in a box and have to somehow find a way to cooperate and solve a problem in order to get out. The jury construct was secondary. Class, education, worldview, personality, self-confidence, civic responsibility, size, age, self-esteem—all combined to dictate the results. Still, Rose's own vivid experience as a juror greatly influenced his script.

Artistic Director Jack Marshall, whose background as a lawyer and a professional ethicist assists him greatly in the task, is directing the production just as he did the first.

Says Marshall, “I’ve directed over a hundred shows, and this is easily my favorite, in part because I love the subject matter, in part because it is the best ensemble piece ever written, and mainly because I find something new and brilliant in it every time I tackle it, and this is the fourth time.

“This is also a perfect show to demonstrate how TACT’s mission made a difference. When we first performed the show, it really was neglected: if you wanted to see Rose’s script performed, you had to rent the movie or catch it on TV. A few years later, Rose updated the script for a Showtime production. Then his version was played on Broadway for the first time, and was a huge hit. Now the play is performed all over the country as Reginald Rose wrote it. Did TACT’s revival help that happen? I am certain that it did. Rose told us that he was frustrated that the official stage version was not what he intended, and thanked us for doing his script instead. A little later, he decided to take control of the stage version again.”

Departing from the company’s tradition of auditioning the cast of every show, Marshall has cast exclusively veteran TACT actors, what he calls his “dream cast.” The group includes five of the original production’s cast members, all but one in a new role, and the top five male performers in total TACT appearances. The Twelve Angry Men are Craig Miller, Steve Ferry\*, Michael Replogle\*, Joe Cronin, Evan Crump, Michael Sherman, Bruce Alan Rauscher\*, Steve Lebens, Lyle Blake Smithers, David Jourdan\*, Brian Crane, and John Tweel\*.

Their artistic contributions to the American Century Theater legacy span almost 90 roles in 73 productions. (Those noted with an \* performed in the 1995 production.)

TACT resident director Ellen Dempsey will portray the Guard.

Marshall is assisted by longtime TACT collaborator Tom Fuller and by Quinn Anderson. The show’s production manager and sound designer is Ed Moser, with set design by Mike deBlois and props design by Eleanor Gomberg. Lighting design is by Marc Allan Wright and costume design is by Rip Claassen, with Catherine Casino as wardrobe mistress. Lindsey E. Moore is the stage manager.

*Twelve Angry Men* is the final production at The American Century Theater. Since that first production of this show, the company has followed its mission to rediscover classic works of American theater, particularly those first produced during what *Time* publisher Henry Luce called “the American Century.” In these twenty years, TACT has produced over 100 shows, sent two to New York, and created two shows that have evolved into continuously running productions (the current *An Evening with Danny Kaye* and the Clarence Darrow one-man show, *A Passion for Justice*). The final season has included encore productions of some of the company’s most popular shows—*The Seven Year Itch*, *Cops*, *Hello Out There*—and *Broadway Hit Parade*, a revue of songs from musicals produced over the 20-year period. For more information on the closing, visit our [website](#).

## Performance Information

**EDITORS: Please join us for press night on Saturday, July 18 at 8:00 pm** in Gunston Theatre Two, 2700 South Lang Street, Arlington.

***Twelve Angry Men* opens Friday, July 17 and runs through Saturday, August 8 with a Pay-What-You-Can preview on Thursday, July 16, and a PWYC performance on Wednesday, July 22 at 8:00 pm.**

A **talkback** will follow the Thursday, July 23 performance.

**Regular show times** are Thursday through Saturday evenings at 8 pm with Saturday/Sunday matinees at 2:30 pm (no matinee Saturday, June 18). There are two additional performances: Wednesday July 29 and Wednesday August 5, both at 8 pm. Tickets can be ordered online at [AmericanCentury.org](http://AmericanCentury.org) or by calling 703-998-4555.

### Directions

The American Century Theater performs at Theatre Two in the Gunston Arts Center, located at 2700 South Lang Street, Arlington VA 22206. Gunston is roughly ten minutes from downtown Washington DC and minutes from Arlington's Shirlington Village. Free, well-lit parking is available, but please note, the south parking lot is closed for paving. For directions, visit [americancentury.org/directions](http://americancentury.org/directions)

### About TACT

The American Century Theater is a 501(c)(3) professional nonprofit theater company dedicated to producing significant 20<sup>th</sup>-century American plays and musicals at risk of being forgotten. TACT is supported in part by Arlington County through the Arlington Commission for the Arts and Arlington Cultural Affairs, a division of Arlington Economic Development; the Virginia Commission for the Arts; the National Endowment for the Arts; and many generous donors.