

the
LITERARY HILL



A Compendium of Readers, Writers, Books, & Events

BY KAREN LYON

The Play's the Thing

Anthony E. Gallo was once what some might call a policy wonk. A former agribusiness economist, he spent much of his thirty-six year career writing for the federal government. But no longer. Today his artistic portfolio consists of nearly fifty plays and his works have been performed in such venues as The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Cosmos Theatre, Capital Fringe/Woolly Mammoth Theatre, Universalist Stage, and the Arts Club of Washington. And he has just signed a contract with a



The prolific Anthony Gallo holds claim as Capitol Hill's own playwright in residence.

group in New York City for productions of two of his plays.

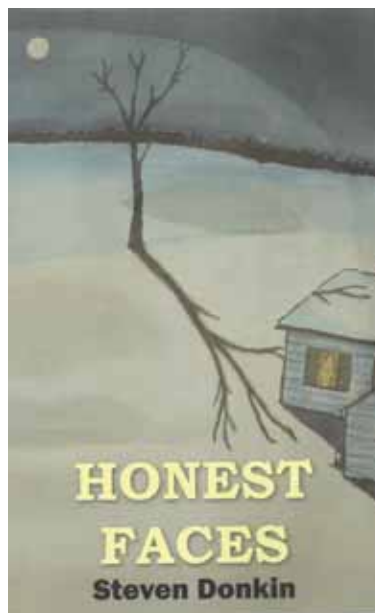
Gallo specializes in dramatizing the Judeo-Christian experience in plays such as the recently-optioned "Eugenio," which takes place in Rome in 1943. The two-act drama explores the theme of forgiveness as a Rabbi suffers a crisis of faith after

the apparent loss of his family in the Holocaust. In the other work, "Margherita," Gallo imagines a meeting between Benito Mussolini and his former lover after a three-year separation. Their sparring encounter reveals the dynamics of their love-hate relationship as the two of them maneuver toward different ends: she to leave the country and he to reclaim the love letters he sent her.

While the group that optioned his plays owns ten theaters on the Great White Way, Gallo remains modest about his prospects. "I do not know if I am 'Broadway-bound,' he demurs. But local theater enthusiasts don't have to wait. The Corner Store (9th and S. Carolina Ave. SE) hosts the premiere of Gallo's "The Botticelli Cruise" on August 26 at 8 p.m. The play features three characters and an elusive captain on board a ship headed for troubled waters. For more information about Anthony Gallo and his plays, several of which will be performed in the metropolitan DC area in August, visit <http://mysite.verizon.net/vz-er9r4g>.

ISO an Honest Man

Jonathan Allerton is on his way to his hometown of Vernon, Ohio, to visit his brother Frank, whom he hasn't seen in forty-seven years. "Will Frank know me? And I him?" he wonders. By the time their emotionally fraught reunion ends, Frank is dead – an apparent suicide – and Jonathan has disappeared. But in "Honest Faces," a new novel by



A debut novel by a former DC school teacher explores the repercussions of a mysterious death in a small Ohio town.

Steven Donkin, nothing is quite what it seems.

A former DC school teacher who taught science at H.D. Woodson, Donkin has pursued a variety of interests over the years, including running for mayor of DC as the 2002 Green Party candidate. But he says that "writing was always something I wanted to do. I worked at it off and on over the years and finally decided to write a novel." "Honest Faces" is his first book.

The hero of the tale is Malcolm Peters, a retired history teacher from DC, who is Vernon's only black resident. A thoughtful and caring man who once "took exquisite delight in [knowing that] knowledge and a love of learning had

been imparted upon young minds," he ultimately was no match for the "glorified ignorance against which he found himself." Weary and widowed, he now lives with deep regret that he was unable to do more for his students.

It is Malcolm who feels compelled to investigate Frank's tragic death – if not for others, then for himself. In the end, he butts up against the disheartening wisdom that "craft and guile... sport honest faces." Reflective, sober, and sincere, "Honest Faces" is both an intriguing mystery and a dramatic study of people seeking the truth, however they define it – and wherever they can find it.

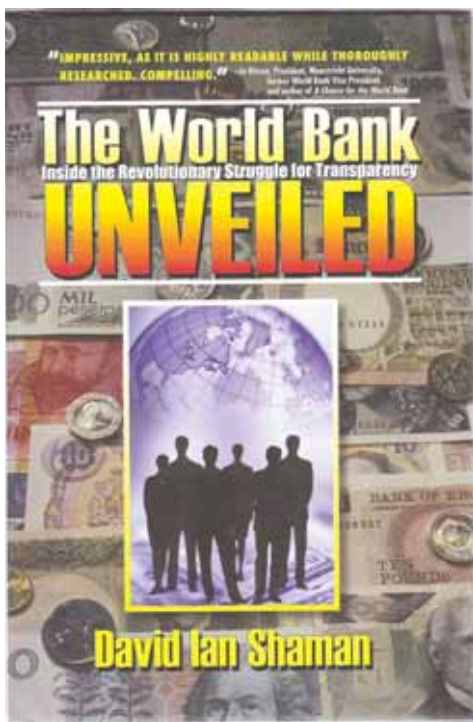
Happy Campers

Running out of ideas to keep the kids occupied this summer? The Young Readers Center at the Library of Congress could be just the ticket. Opened last fall, the Center invites children and teens to read books from a collection of current (non-circulating) titles, view webcasts, and attend a variety of summer reading programs tailored to their age groups and interests.



Emma Lincoln reads a story to Brentwood Elementary kindergartners at the Library of Congress's Young Readers Center. Photo by Abby Brack

Children ages 5 and up can enjoy a daily StoryTime at 10:45 AM., while the 8 and up crowd can select from a menu that includes: the Afternoon Book Buffet, 20-minute samplings of fiction, prose, and poetry (daily at 10:45 AM); Hooked on Books, an introduction to great novels (Mondays and Fridays at 3:15 PM); Reading Destinations: Great Reads About Great Places, which explores the literary traditions and heritage of the U.S.



A local author and World Bank insider reveals the inner workings of this international powerhouse.

(Tuesdays and Thursdays at 3:15 PM); and Poetry Day (Wednesdays at 3:15 PM).

The Young Readers Center, which also has a kid-friendly website (www.read.gov), is located in Room G 31 on the ground floor of the Thomas Jefferson Building (First St. and Independence Ave., SE) and is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. 202-707-1950.

And if the kids are away at camp and feeling homesick, send them a copy of Katy

Kelly's new adventure featuring Capitol Hill's favorite mischief-makers. Signed copies of "Melonhead and the Big Stink" are available at Fairy Godmother, 319 7th St., SE, 202-547-5474.

Opening Doors

The shadowy figures on the cover of "The World Bank Unveiled" hint at the popular perception of this powerful organization: a group of anonymous "suits" making decisions behind closed doors that impact the fate of the world's poorest nations and encourage wealthy governments and multinational corporations to destroy environments and desecrate indigenous cultures. But is that the reality?

Local author David Ian Shaman began working at a research unit in the World Bank in 1993. Toward the end of 1994, he caught wind of something called the Internet. "A light bulb went on," he writes. "Perhaps this new tool could get [others] acquainted with our research." The following year, he and a colleague designed a website, but they soon realized that the Internet held even greater potential. And, as insiders, they were in a unique position to effect real change.

Motivated by a desire to increase transparency and allow those affected by the bank's decisions to participate in the process, Shaman and his colleague launched B-SPAN, a web-based telecast that broadcast unedited bank deliberations worldwide, often in real time.

Thoroughly researched and compellingly told (Shaman is a former newspaper reporter), "The World Bank Unveiled" is a behind-the-scenes story of how this major player in the global economy operates. If you've ever wondered what goes on in that building two blocks from the White House – or why protestors want to break its windows – you need to read this eye-opening book. Signed copies of "The World Bank Unveiled" are available at Capitol Hill Books, 657 C St. SE, 202-544-1621. ★

a space inside

Multi-genre
Reading

Wednesday,
August 25
at
7 p.m.

Mark
Fitzgerald
poet and author of *By
Way of Dust and Rain*

and

Monica F.
Jacobe
nonfiction writer and
series founder

A Space Inside is just that—a place where developing writers, lesser known voices, and the work writers create between books can be heard. It alternates monthly between poetry and prose.

For more information email Monica F. Jacobe at monicafjacobe@usa.net



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