

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Very few Americans know what it is like to have their freedom threatened. Until recently even the word *terror* was foreign to us. But for many people in this world today and many more throughout history, terror was a constant thing, a truth of daily life, as they always knew it. To see guards and gulag towers against the horizons was normal. To face fences and checkpoints at every road was routine. And to watch rules and laws change at the whims of tyrannical rulers was natural.

In 1943 during the years of World War II, George Orwell decided to speak out against the totalitarian governments of the world and, more importantly, fight against the complacency of other nations toward these dictator lands. He felt strongly that it was wrong for free nations such as America and England to just watch from a distance the cruelties of movements such as the Nazi and Communist regimes. Living so complacently was certain to threaten their own future and personal freedom. Masking his message in an obvious allegory and satire, Orwell sought to deliver a strong image of the horrors that not only happened to the people who suffered under Stalin, but the horrors that could arise anywhere when the ideals of freedom and revolution and leadership were distorted.

Though the reading level of the novel is easy and the storyline of the play simple, *Animal Farm* is a complex work of art. On one level it represents the history of the Communist movement, with characters and settings and words representing specific correlations to Communism. But on a more important level, it represents all of humanity. It is not a comfortable production. And we have sought to remind you of that. We don't want you to fall into the metaphor and be swept away simply at the tragedy of the animals on Animal Farm, we want you to always remember that Orwell's characters are representations of mankind. Mirrors of you. And we hope that you are willing, even for this short time, to place yourself behind the barbed fences and in the shadows of the guards, and exist for a moment in a world turned upside down. And when it is over, we trust that you will better understand what it is like to have your individuality stripped from you, and that you will realize what it is like to believe that you are nothing, and that you will experience what it means to have no freedom, and that you will know what it is like to be in constant search for hope and security. But more importantly, when it is over, we hope that you will stop for just a moment, look around your own world, and thank God for what you do have.



Jeremy Schnofala