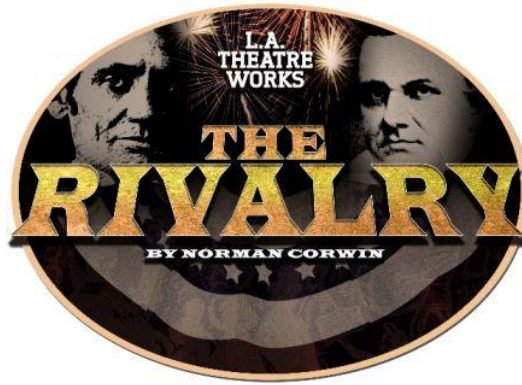
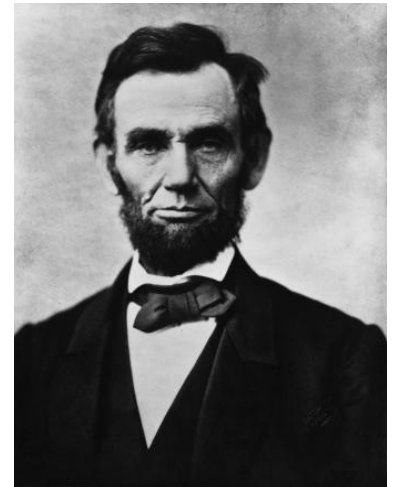


Susan Albert Loewenberg, Producing Director



These speeches of Lincoln will be recognized for a long time to come... and our children will read them and appreciate the great truths which they so forcibly inculcate, with an even higher appreciation of their worth than their fathers possessed while listening to them. They, in fact, are in advance of the age in which they were delivered, and contains those elements which give that vitality to all human productions which carries them beyond the present and makes them useful and beautiful in the future. - Chicago Daily Democrat November 11, 1858

Over one hundred and fifty years ago, Americans struggled with issues of slavery, race, freedom, equality, states' rights, and America's future. In the 1858 Illinois Senate race, as the country steamrolled towards an enormous and costly civil war, Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas embarked on a series of debates. Their epic clash of ideas and oratory forged a future President and a nation. Without access to television, bloggers, and podcasts, the debates were witnessed live by thousands along with written reports transported by railroad and telegraph across the country. A local race quickly became the focus of a divided country, whose future was on the line.



The Rivalry, Norman Corwin's riveting depiction of the Lincoln-Douglas debates, uses dialogue from the original debate transcripts to bring to life the fierce competition between the future President and the incumbent Senator as they tackled the day's most controversial issues - slavery and the American concept of freedom. The play eloquently reminds us of a time when substantive political debate engaged Americans in a way that screeching talking heads and the blogosphere cannot and underscores the impact of words and their effective communication in shaping public policy. *The Rivalry* is also a stunning testament to the willingness of Lincoln and Douglas to put aside their differences and "reach across the aisle" for the good of the country - a painful yet eloquent reminder of what is missing in the partisan politics we see today. Remarking on the governing philosophy of his political role model, President Obama observed, "Whatever personal feelings there were, the issue was how we can get this country through this time of crisis."

The Rivalry raises difficult questions of values and rights that are still being debated and remain unresolved at every level of American government and society: race, social and economic inequity, states' rights and the "proper" role of the federal government in the lives of its citizens.

L.A. Theatre Works (LATW) grants permission to the presenting organization's local public radio station to record the performance for a one (1) time, non-commercial broadcast. This broadcast must take place within thirty (30) days following the performance(s).



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