

## ED ASNER as FDR

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**Edward Asner** (born November 15, 1929) is an American actor primarily known for his Emmy-winning role as Lou Grant on *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* and its spin-off series, *Lou Grant*. He also appeared as a recurring guest star as Wilson White on the television series *Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip*.

Asner is best known for his character Lou Grant, who was first introduced on the *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* in 1970. In 1977, after the end of the *Mary Tyler Moore* show, Asner's character was given his own show, *Lou Grant*, which ran from 1977-1982. In contrast to the *Mary Tyler Moore* show, which was a thirty minute comedy, the *Lou Grant* show was an hour long award-winning drama about journalism. Asner played the role of Guy Banister, FBI operative associated with the assassination conspiracy, in Oliver's Stone's 1991 movie "JFK".

Asner is also known for his acclaimed role as Captain Davies, from the mini-series *Roots*, the man who kidnapped Kunta Kinte and sold him into slavery, a role that earned Asner an Emmy Award. While Asner's character in *Roots* was highly developed, full of metaphors on tortured ethics and the morality of slavery, biographer Alex Haley would later admit he had no idea who the actual Captain was who had commanded the historic slaver which had kidnapped his ancestor.

Asner was a member of the Playwrights Theatre Company in Chicago, but left for New York before members of that company regrouped as the Compass Players in the mid-1950s. He later made guest appearances with the successor to Compass, Second City, and is considered part of the Second City extended family. Asner has also had an extensive voice acting career. He provided the voices for J. Jonah Jameson on the 1990s animated television series *Spider-Man*, Hudson on *Gargoyles*, Jabba the Hutt on the radio version of *Star Wars*, Master Vrook from *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic* and its sequel, Roland Daggett on *Batman: The Animated Series*, Cosgrove on *Freakazoid*, Ed Wuncler on *The Boondocks*, and Granny Goodness in various DC Comics animated series. Both he and his late friend Linda Gary voiced many cartoons for the Filmation company. In 1993, he narrated the short documentary *Legacy for Efrain*, which explores the impact of the nonprofit world hunger organization Heifer International. In 2001 was the protagonist for "Papa Giovanni XXIII" fiction for Rai One (Italy). He made an appearance on the show *Curb Your Enthusiasm* in 2001.

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Ralph Bellamy, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Greer Garson (filming "Sunrise at Campobello"), Hyde Park, 1960

*Sunrise at Campobello*, Dory Schary's play depicting FDR's early battles with polio, made its Broadway debut on January 30, 1958. Later made into a successful movie, the play chronicles FDR's personal journey.

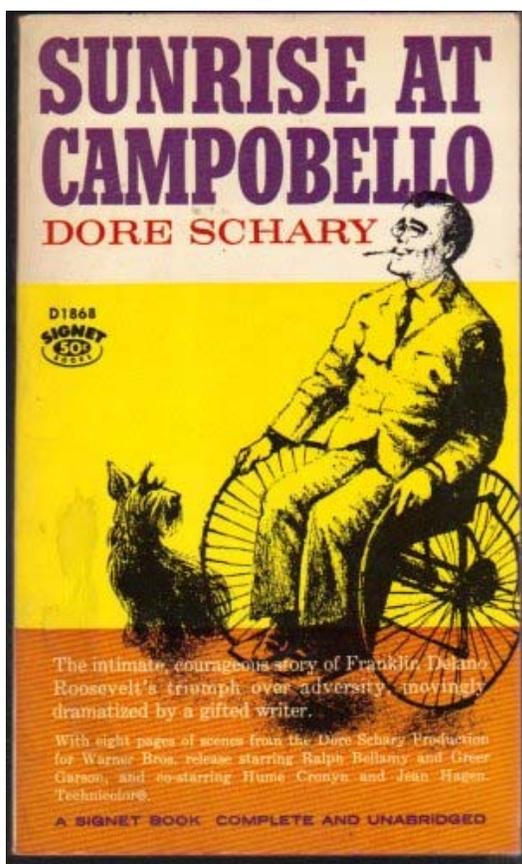
This one-man show takes us through FDR's White House years including the Depression, the steps leading up to WWII and the war years. Ed Asner shows us why this president was know

as "that man in the White House," scorned by many and admired by most.

We see and hear his fireside chats; his controversial packing of the Supreme Court; his personal life with Eleanor and his discreet but definite affair with Lucy Mercer; his courage to break the Neutrality Act; his manipulation of Congress (in order to get the country to have a draft); the Pearl Harbor controversy and the benevolent dictatorship he called the presidency from 1933 – 44, which made him the first man in history to be elected to four terms.

Ed Asner is magnificent as FDR and delivers a fearless performance of this dynamic and powerful world leader.

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The original Broadway production was presented at the Cort Theatre by The Theatre Guild and Dore Schary and directed by Vincent J. Donehue. It opened on January 30, 1958 and closed on May 30, 1959 running for 556 performances. It starred Ralph Bellamy as Roosevelt. Bellamy won a Tony Award for Best Actor. Others in the cast included Henry Jones as Louis McHenry Howe; Mary Fickett as Eleanor Roosevelt; Anne Seymour as Sara Delano Roosevelt and, in his Broadway debut, James Earl Jones.

The production won three other Tonys including Best Play (producers were Lawrence Langner, Theresa Helburn, Armina Marshall and Dore Schary), Best Director of a Play

(Vincent J. Donehue) and Henry Jones won for Tony Award for Best Featured Actor in a Play.. Mary Fickett was nominated for Best Supporting or Featured Actress in a Play.

### *Awards and nominations*

#### Awards

- 1958 Tony Award for Best Play
- 1958 Tony Award for Best Actor in Play - Ralph Bellamy
- 1958 Tony Award for Best Featured Actor in a Play - Henry Jones
- 1958 Tony Award for Best Director - Vincent J. Donehue

#### Nominations

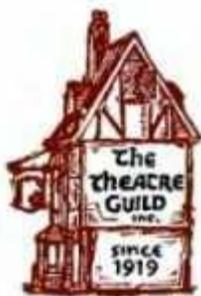
- 1958 Tony Award for Best Featured Actress in a Play - Mary Fickett

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The **Theatre Guild** is a theatrical society founded in New York City in 1919 by Theresa Helburn, Lawrence Langner, and Armina Marshall. It evolved out of the work of the Washington Square Players.

Its original purpose was to produce non-commercial works by American and foreign playwrights. It differed from other theaters at the time in that its board of directors shared the responsibility of choosing plays, management, and production. The Theatre Guild contributed greatly to the success of Broadway from the 1920s throughout the 1970s.

The Guild has produced a total of 228 plays on Broadway, including 18 by George Bernard Shaw and seven by Eugene O'Neill. Other major playwrights introduced to theatre-going Americans include Robert Sherwood, Maxwell Anderson, Sidney Howard, William Saroyan, and Philip Barry. In the field of musical theatre, the Guild has promoted works by Richard Rodgers, teamed with both Lorenz Hart and Oscar Hammerstein II, George and Ira Gershwin, Jule Styne, and Meredith Wilson, all of which have become classics.

Under President John F. Kennedy, the Guild was engaged to assemble a US theatre company, headed by Helen Hayes, to tour the capitals of Europe and South America with works by Tennessee Williams, Thornton Wilder, and William Gibson.

In 1968, the Guild became involved in the travel field by taking 25 of its subscribers to European capitals to see plays. In 1975, it instituted its Theatre At Sea program with a 17-day cruise aboard the Rotterdam with Hayes and Cyril Ritchard. Since then they have hosted more than thirty cruises, each with seven or eight performers. Among them have been Alan Arkin, Zoe Caldwell, Anne Jackson, Cherry Jones, Richard Kiley, Eartha Kitt, Patricia Neal, Lynn Redgrave, Gena Rowlands, Jean Stapleton, Eli Wallach, and Lee Roy Reams, who now serves as the program's resident director.

### *Notable productions*

- 1920: [\*Heartbreak House\*](#)
- 1923: [\*Saint Joan\*](#)
- 1928: [\*Strange Interlude\*](#)
- 1931: [\*Mourning Becomes Electra\*](#)
- 1933: [\*Ah, Wilderness!\*](#)
- 1935: [\*Porgy and Bess\*](#)
- 1936: [\*Idiot's Delight\*](#)
- 1939: [\*The Philadelphia Story\*](#); [\*The Time of Your Life\*](#)
- 1943: [\*Oklahoma!\*](#)
- 1945: [\*Carousel\*](#)
- 1946: [\*The Iceman Cometh\*](#)
- 1947: [\*The Winslow Boy\*](#)
- 1950: [\*Come Back, Little Sheba\*](#)
- 1953: [\*Picnic\*](#); [\*The Trip to Bountiful\*](#)
- 1955: [\*The Matchmaker\*](#)
- 1956: [\*Bells Are Ringing\*](#)
- 1958: [\*Sunrise at Campobello\*](#)
- 1960: [\*The Unsinkable Molly Brown\*](#)
- 1965: [\*The Royal Hunt of the Sun\*](#)
- 1974: [\*Absurd Person Singular\*](#)

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