HADESTOWN

By ANAÏS MITCHELL
Developed with and directed by RACHEL CHAVKIN

Choreographed by DAVID NEUMANN
Music Direction by LIAM ROBINSON

Set Design by RACHEL HAUCK
Costume Design by MICHAEL KRASS
Lighting Design by BRADLEY KING
Sound Design by NEVIN STEINBERG

Arrangements and Orchestrations by MICHAEL CHORNEY
Additional & Co-Arrangements & Orchestrations by TODD SICKAFOOSE
Co-conceived by BEN T. MATCHSTICK
Dramaturgy by KEN CERNIGLIA

Produced in association with
DALE FRANZEN, MARA ISAACS, HUNTER ARNOLD, TOM KIRDAHY
WILETTE & MANNY KLAUSNER, LAURIE DAVID, BENJAMIN LOWY & ADRIAN SALPETER
and New York Theatre Workshop

Casting by STEWART/WHITLEY
Duncan Stewart, CSA; Benton Whitley, CSA;
Paul Hardt; Christine McKenna; Danny Dunitz

Hadestown received its World Premiere at New York Theatre Workshop on 23rd May 2016, JIM NICOLA, Artistic Director, JEREMY BLOCKER, Managing Director

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# Table of Contents

- **Theatre Etiquette** 4
- **Who’s Involved** 5
- **About the Author** 6
- **About the Production** 7
- **Creation Timeline** 8
- **About the Director** 9
- **Director’s Note** 10
- **Script References** 11-13
- **Synopsis** 14
- **Themes** 15-17
- **Production Elements** 18
- **Discussion Questions** 19
- **Further Reading/References** 20
- **Curriculum Alignment** 21-22
Going to the theatre is an engaging and interactive experience. We want you to be an active participant when you see our shows; laugh when it’s funny, cry when it’s sad, gasp when it’s shocking, and enjoy the experience as much as possible. But we want you to do this in the most respectful way possible, for both the performers and your fellow audience members.

To ensure the most positive experience, please review the following information prior to arriving at the theatre.

The following items are not allowed in the theatre:

- Food and drink (except that which is sold during intermission and/or permitted by the Citadel Theatre, such as bottled water and ice cream).
- Cameras and other recording devices (please note that taking photographs or other recordings in the theatre is strictly prohibited by law).

Basic courtesy:

- Turn OFF and put away all electronic devices such as cell phones, iPods, video game systems, etc. prior to entering the theatre.
- Do not place your feet on the seat in front of you.
- The actors onstage can see and hear the audience during the performance – it is important that audience members not talk, move around, or fidget during the performance, as this can be distracting for the actors, as well as fellow audience members.
- There is no dress code at the Citadel Theatre, but we respectfully request that patrons refrain from wearing hats in the theatre.
- For the safety of those with allergies, please refrain from using perfumes or scented products before coming to the theatre.
- Please do not place backpacks or other bags in the aisle in front of your feet, as this may impair the ability of persons to exit the row in an emergency.

Inappropriate behaviour:

Citadel Theatre representatives watch carefully during performances for inappropriate behaviour, especially behaviour that could endanger an actor or audience member. Inappropriate behaviour includes, but is not limited to:

- Talking in the audience
- The use of laser pointers or other light or sound-emitting devices
- Interfering with an actor or the performance (tripping, throwing items on or near the stage, etc.)

Audience members identified as engaging in this type of behaviour will be removed from the theatre during the performance or at intermission.
CAST

VANCE AVERY: Worker
JEWELLE BLACKMAN: Fate
ANDREW BRODERICK: Worker
REEVE CARNEY: Orpheus
T.V. CARPIO: Eurydice
AMBER GRAY: Persephone
KIRA GULOIEN: Fate
TARA JACKSON: Worker
EVANGELIA KAMBITES: Fate
KINGSLEY LEGGS: Hermes
PATRICK PAGE: Hades
HAL WESLEY ROGERS: Worker

CREATIVE TEAM

Writer/Composer: ANAÏS MITCHELL
Director: RACHEL CHAVKIN
Arranger and Composer: MICHAEL CHORNEY
Additional &Co-Arrangements & Orchestrations: TODD SICKAFOOSE
Choreographer: DAVID NEUMANN
Music Director: LIAM ROBINSON
Scenic Designer: RACHEL HAUCK
Costume Designer: MICHAEL KRASS
Lighting Designer: BRADLEY KING
Sound Designer: NEVIN STEINBERG
Associate Choreographer: KATIE ROSE MCLAUGHLIN
Associate Music Director: NATHAN KOCI
Associate Sound Designer: JESSICA PAZ
Assistant Director: KARTHY CHIN
Assistant Choreographer: AINSLEY HILLYARD
Assistant Lighting Designer: NICK SOLYOM
Lighting Programmer: BRIDGET CHERVENKA
Dramaturg: KEN CERNIGLIA
Stage Manager: LISA RUSSELL
Assistant Stage Manager: SANG-SANG LEE
Apprentice Stage Manager: LORE GREEN
Dance Captain: TARA JACKSON
Hudson Scenic Consultant: TODD FRANK
PRG-Scenic Technologies - Automation Consultant: ISABELLA STADLER
Anaïs Mitchell is a Vermont and Brooklyn-based singer-songwriter who comes from the world of narrative folksong, poetry and balladry. She recorded for Ani Difranco’s Righteous Babe Records for several years before starting her own Wilderland label in 2012. Among her recorded works are six full-length albums, including 2010’s sensationally-reviewed Hadestown, a folk opera based on the Orpheus myth; 2012’s Young Man in America, which was described by the UK’s Independent as “an epic tale of American becoming,” and 2013’s Child Ballads, a collaboration with Jefferson Hamer, which won a BBC Radio Two Folk Award for Best Traditional Track.

Mitchell has headlined shows worldwide, as well as supporting tours for Bon Iver, Ani Difranco, The Low Anthem (all of whom appear as guest singers on Hadestown), Josh Ritter, and Punch Brothers. Her stage production of Hadestown, which was 10 years in the making, opened Off-Broadway in May 2016 to rave reviews. The New York Times called it “inventive, beguiling and spellbinding,” while Vogue announced that “Hadestown will be your new thea[re] obsession.” The show was extended twice as a result of critical success and sell-out performances. If there’s a common thread in Mitchell’s work - from her earliest acoustic records to the Hadestown show - it’s that she’s as interested in the world around her as the one inside her. She has a way of tackling big themes with the same emotional intimacy most artists use to describe their inner lives. That’s perhaps why the New York Times noted that her songs “address contemporary angst with uncanny vision … a formidable songwriting talent.”

Biography courtesy of http://www.anaismitchell.com/media
**HADESTOWN**

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

*Hadestown* is Anaïs Mitchell’s folk opera, based on the Orpheus myth and set in a Depression-erasesque political dreamscape. Recently, *Hadestown* was produced Off-Broadway at New York Theatre Workshop (NYTW) in Spring/Summer 2016. This production was developed with and directed by Rachel Chavkin and produced by NYTW, Dale Franzen and Mara Isaacs, and Paula Marie Black. Now, *Hadestown* is at the Citadel’s Shoctor Theatre for its Canadian premiere before it heads to Broadway. This is Canadian audiences’ chance to see the show before it becomes a Broadway hit!

*Hadestown* began in 2006-2007 as a DIY community theatre project in the state of Vermont. The creative team included primary arranger/orchestrator Michael Chorney and original director/designer Ben t. Matchstick, and the cast and crew were all local Vermont artists. The early shows were made possible in part by grants from the Vermont Community Foundation, the Vermont Arts Council, producing partner Higher Ground Music, and many individual supporters.

In 2010, a studio record of *Hadestown* was released by Righteous Babe Records. Anaïs worked with producer and co-arranger/orchestrator Todd Sickafoose on the album, which featured guest vocalists Justin Vernon (Bon Iver) as Orpheus, Ani Difranco as Persephone, Greg Brown as Hades, Ben Knox Miller (the Low Anthem) as Hermes, and the Haden Triplets as the Fates. For several years, Anaïs, Michael Chorney, and the Hadestown Orchestra performed with guest singers in different cities in the U.S., U.K., and Canada to present concert versions of the show.

In 2013, Anaïs began the process of expanding and adapting the work into a full-length professional theatrical production. She worked closely with director Rachel Chavkin, dramaturg Ken Cerniglia, and the producers, workshopping the piece multiple times. *Hadestown* was developed with funding from the Eli and Edythe Broad Stage at the Santa Monica College Performing Arts Centre under the supervision of Dale Franzen and Mara Isaacs (Octopus Theatricals). The project was further developed in collaboration with the Broad Stage through NYTW's Artist Workshop programming, including the annual Usual Suspects Summer Residency at Dartmouth College and the Larson Lab Studio. Additional development was provided by New York Stage and Film and Berkeley Rep Ground Floor. *Hadestown* was selected by a jury of the American Academy of Arts and Letters to receive the Richard Rodgers Award in 2016.

The NYTW debut of the piece included arrangements/orchestrations by Michael Chorney, co-arrangements/orchestrations and music supervision by Todd Sickafoose, music direction by Liam Robinson, sound by Rob Kaplowitz, sound/music consulting by Or Matias, sets by Rachel Hauck, lights by Tony-award winner Bradley King (*Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812*), props by Noah Mease, stage management by Lindsey Turteltaub, performers Nabiyah Be, Damon Daunno, Lulu Fall, Amber Gray, Patrick Page, Jessie Shelton, Chris Sullivan, and Shaina Taub, and musicians Michael Chorney, Brian Drye, Marika Hughes, Dana Lyn, Robinson Morse, and Ben Perowsky.

Photograph by Joan Marcus. ©2016.

Damon Daunno and Nabiyah Be from the New York Theatre Workshop production of the musical *Hadestown*.
HADESTOWN

TIMELINE

2006/07: Anaïs Mitchell and members from various Vermont-based bands, along with director Ben Matchstick, start a DIY Theatre Project about the Greek myth of Orpheus and Eurydice.

2010: Mitchell writes the concept album, *Hadestown*, and gets Ani Difranco, Greg Brown, Justin Vernon (Bon Iver), the Haden Triplets, and Ben Knox Miller from The Low Anthem to record a studio album of *Hadestown*. The album is produced by Todd Sickafoose and released by Difranco’s record label, Righteous Babe Records.

2010-13: There’s a concert tour of the album, with no sets or costumes. Mitchell asks local artists in each city she visits to join her to sing the various parts on the album.

2013: Rachel Chavkin comes on board as a collaborator and director to turn the album into a musical. Dale Franzen and Mara Isaacs become lead producers. The team workshops *Hadestown* at New York Theatre Workshop.

May 2016: Sold out performances of *Hadestown* at the New York Theatre Workshop take place. The show is held over twice.


February 2017: Citadel Theatre’s Artistic Director, Daryl Cloran, announces that *Hadestown* will be a part of the 2017/18 season, the first he’s programmed for the Citadel. The production is intended to be in preparation for a future Broadway run.

May 2017: Mitchell and Chavkin (fresh off her Tony award nomination for *Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812*) travel to Canada for *Hadestown* auditions in Edmonton and Toronto.

October 2017: The live cast recording of the *Hadestown* album is released.

November 11, 2017: The Canadian Premiere of *Hadestown* takes place at the Citadel Theatre in Edmonton, Alberta.
Rachel Chavkin is a director/dramaturg/writer, and the founding Artistic Director of the TEAM. Since its founding in 2004, Rachel has directed/co-authored all of the TEAM’s work, including RoosevElvis (which recently completed a sold-out run in NYC as part of PS122’s COIL Festival and which is now touring nationally and internationally), and Mission Drift, created by the company with composer Heather Christian and playwright/dramaturg Sarah Gancher (last seen a sold-out run at London’s National Theatre).

Outside of the TEAM, Rachel also regularly collaborates with writers and composers on new work. She has had multiple collaborations with composer Dave Malloy, including the critically acclaimed and immersively staged electro-pop opera Natasha, Pierre, and the Great Comet of 1812 (Ars Nova, Kazino) which made Top Ten 2012 and 2013 lists at The New York Times, Time Out New York and New York Post, and which earned Rachel and Dave an Obie Award. Their most recent project, Preludes, about Rachmaninoff and hypnotism, premiered Spring 2015 at LCT3. Additional freelance: Bess Wohl’s Small Mouth Sounds (Ars Nova), Marco Ramirez's The Royale (Old Globe), the English National Tour of Joseph Heller’s adaptation of Catch-22 (Northern Stage, Newcastle, UK); Confirmation, which Rachel developed with British writer/performer Chris Thorpe, and which was awarded the 2014 Edinburgh Fringe First Award (produced by China Plate, co-commissioned by the Warwick Arts Centre and Battersea Arts Centre); Meg Miroshnik’s The Fairytale Lives of Russian Girls (Yale Rep); Lauren Yee’s The Hatmaker’s Wife (Playwrights Realm); storyteller James Monaco’s Reception (TerraNOVA soloNOVA Festival at the New Ohio Theatre) and his collaboration with composer Jerome Ellis’ entitled Aaron/Marie, co-directed with Annie Tippe (Ars Nova ANTFest 2013, and Under the Radar Incoming); Rick Burkhardt, Alec Duffy and Dave Malloy’s Three Pianos for which Rachel and the writer/performers were collectively awarded a Obie (Ontological Incubator, NYTW, A.R.T.); and multiple collaborations with playwright/performer/activist Taylor Mac including his extravaganza The Lily’s Revenge (World Premiere, Act II at HERE Arts Center, Obie Award to Taylor Mac) and Peace, co-written by Mac and Chavkin (Workshop, HERE Arts Center).

Recently, Rachel collaborated with folk singer Anaïs Mitchell to adapt her album Hadestown for the stage. Hadestown premiered at New York Theatre Workshop in May 2016, where it played to critical acclaim and sold-out houses. Rachel came to Edmonton, Alberta, to direct the Canadian premiere of Hadestown at Citadel Theatre in November 2017.

Upcoming projects include Anne Washburn’s new transadaptation of Euripides’ Iphigenia at Aulis for Classic Stage Company and several new works with Dave Malloy.

Rachel is an NYTW Usual Suspect, an Artistic Associate at London’s Gate Theatre, an alum of Soho Rep’s Writer/Director Lab, the Drama League Directors Project, the Women’s Project Director’s Lab, and a New Georges Affiliate Artist. She has also taught directing and performance at NYU, Pace, and other colleges, as well as workshops with the TEAM about their collaborative process. And she has served as a Shakespeare coach to Mandy Patinkin and other artists. B.F.A. NYU, M.F.A. Columbia.
Since the premiere of *Hadestown* last summer at New York Theatre Workshop, numerous things have evolved: a full song was cut, and more sections were added; Anaïs revised rhymes and melodies to bring themes or characters more into focus; and we re-imagined the entire physical production for a proscenium house. Perhaps the biggest change is the addition of the Worker’s Chorus. This is a character we’ve long discussed, and their presence now refracts the central love stories in a profound way. Orpheus’ and Eurydice’s walk out of Hadestown is now not only for the two of them - it is for all the souls in this oppressive industrialized landscape who are wondering if they can change the rules.

The beauty of Anaïs’ adaptation is to take this ancient narrative twist – that Hades tells Orpheus he can take Eurydice back to the land of the living, so long as he doesn’t look at her on the ascent - and reify it thru the lens of loneliness and solidarity. This is a play about a cosmic love story, and it’s also become one about fellowship, and thus trust: trust in your lover, and trust in your fellow workers. Anaïs’ rhymes are exhilarating on a line-by-line basis, with their unexpected slants and mixture of cleverness and earnestness, but they also accumulate into a larger thematic picture of barrenness and abundance, generosity and selfishness, love and fear. The themes of how oppressive regimes sow division between people to maintain power feel even more timely now than the original production, and my heart fills at the show’s final prophecy that “spring had come again.” It’s been a balm to continue our work this year, and to do so here in Edmonton. I’m grateful to the Citadel for being such a good home at a pivotal moment for the journey of this work.

-Rachel Chavkin

Amber Gray in *Hadestown* at the NYTW. Photo by Joan Marcus.
The Myth of Orpheus and Eurydice

The story of Orpheus and Eurydice is the ultimate tragic story. Perhaps one of the most famous Greek myths, it has inspired many important painters, such as Peter Paul Rubens and Nicolas Poussin. Moreover, many operas, songs and plays have been composed to honour these two great lovers who tragically lost the chance to enjoy their love. The story of Orpheus and Eurydice has been told in many versions with a few differences between them. The earliest account comes from Ibycus (circa 530 BC), a Greek lyric poet.

The Charming Orpheus

Orpheus is known as the most talented music player of the ancient times. It is said that the god Apollo was his father, from whom he took his extreme talent in music, and the muse, Calliope, was his mother. He was living in Thrace, on the northeastern part of Greece. Orpheus had a divinely gifted voice that could charm everyone who heard it. When he was presented first the lyre as a boy, he mastered it in no time at all. The myth says that no god or mortal could resist his music, and even the rocks and trees would move themselves to be near him.

According to some ancient texts, Orpheus is accredited with teaching agriculture, writing, and medicine to the mankind. He is also attributed with having been an astrologer, a seer, and founder of many mystic rites. However, apart from having a musical talent, Orpheus was also adventurous. He was believed to have taken part in the Argonautic expedition, which was the voyage of Jason and his fellow Argonauts to get to Colchis and steal the Golden Fleece. In fact, Orpheus played a vital role during the expedition because, by playing his music, he put to sleep the “sleepless dragon” that was guarding the Golden Fleece and thus Jason managed to get the Fleece. Moreover, the music of Orpheus saved the Argonauts from the Sirens, the strange female-like creatures who were seducing men with their nice voices and then killing them.

Love at First Sight

Orpheus used to spend much of his early years in the idyllic pursuits of music and poetry. His skill had far surpassed the fame and respect of his music. Humans and beasts alike would be enchanted by it and often even the most inanimate of objects would yearn to be near him. Well into his youth, he had mastered the lyre and his melodious voice garnered him audiences from near and afar. It was at one such gathering of humans and beasts that his eyes fell on a wood nymph. The girl was called Eurydice; she was beautiful and shy. She had been drawn to Orpheus, enamored by his voice and such was the spell of beauty in music and appearance that neither could cast their eyes off each other. Something inexplicable tugged the hearts of the two young people, and soon they fell dearly in love, unable to spend a single moment apart. After a while, they decided to get married. Their wedding day dawned bright and clear. (Continued on the following page)
Hymenaios, the god of marriage, blessed their marriage and then a great feast followed. The surroundings were filled with laughter and gaiety. Soon the shadows grew large, signaling an end to the revelry that had lasted much of the day and the wedding guests all took leave of the newlyweds, who were still sitting hand-in-hand and starry eyed. They soon both realized that it was time they were on their way and departed for home.

The Snake-bite

However, things would soon change and grief would ensue. There was a man who despised Orpheus and desired Eurydice for his own. Aristaeus, a shepherd, had plotted to conquer the beautiful nymph. And there he was, waiting in the bushes for the young couple to pass by. Seeing that the lovers were approaching, he intended to jump on them and kill Orpheus. As the shepherd made his move, Orpheus grabbed Eurydice by the hand and started running through the forest. The chase was long and Aristaeus showed no signs of giving up or slowing down. On and on they ran and suddenly, Orpheus felt Eurydice stumble and fall, her hand slipping from his grasp. Unable to comprehend what had just happened, he rushed to her side but stopped short in dismay, for his eyes perceived the deathly pallor that suffused her cheeks. Looking around, he saw no trace of the shepherd, for Aristaeus had witnessed the event and had left. Few steps away, Eurydice had stepped on a nest of snakes and had been bitten by a deadly viper. Knowing that there was no chance of survival, Aristaeus had abandoned his attempt, cursing his luck and Orpheus.

A Supernatural Plan

After the death of his beloved wife, Orpheus was no longer the same carefree person he used to be. His life without Eurydice seemed endless and he could do nothing more than grieve for her. This is when he had a great but yet crazy idea: he decided to go to Underworld and try to get his wife back. Apollo, his father, would talk to Hades, the god of the Underworld, to accept him and hear his plea. Armed with his weapons, the lyre and his voice, Orpheus approached Hades and demanded entry into the Underworld. None challenged him. Standing in front of the rulers of the dead, Orpheus said why he was there, in a voice both mellifluous and disquieting. He played his lyre and sang out to King Hades and Queen Persephone, asking that Eurydice be returned to him. Not even the most stone-hearted of people or Gods could have neglected the hurt in his voice. Hades openly wept, Persephone's heart melted and even Cerberus, the gigantic three-headed hound guarding the entry to the Underworld, covered his many ears with his paws and howled in despair.

The voice of Orpheus was so moving that Hades promised this desperate man that Eurydice would follow him to the Upper World, the world of the living. However, he warned Orpheus that for no reason must he look back while his wife was still in the dark, for that would undo everything. With great faith in his heart and joy in his song, Orpheus began his journey out of the Underworld, joyful that he would once again be reunited with his love. As Orpheus reached the exit of the Underworld, he could hear the footfalls of his wife approaching him. He wanted to turn around and hug her immediately but managed to control his feelings. As he was approaching the exit, his heart was beating faster and faster. The moment he stepped into the world of the living, he turned his head to hug his wife. Unfortunately, he got only a glimpse of Eurydice before she was once again drawn back into the Underworld. When Orpheus turned his head, Eurydice was still in the dark; she hadn't seen the sun and, as Hades had warned Orpheus, his sweet wife was drawn back to the dark world of the dead. (Continued on the following page)
Waves of anguish and despair swept over him and, shuddering with grief, he approached the Underworld again but this time, he was denied entry. The gates were shut and Hermes, sent by Zeus, wouldn't let him in.

**The Death of Orpheus**

From then on, the heart-broken musician wandered disoriented, day after day, night after night, in total despair. He couldn’t find consolation in anything. His misfortune tormented him, forcing him to abstain from contact with any other woman. Slowly but surely, he found himself shunning their company completely.

His songs were no longer joyful but extremely sad. His only comfort was to lay on a huge rock and feel the caress of the breeze; his only sight was the open sky. Eventually, a group of irate women, furious about his scorn towards them, chanced upon him. Orpheus was so desperate that he did not even try to repulse their advances. The women killed him, cut his body into pieces and threw them and his lyre into a river. It is said that his head and his lyre floated downriver to the island of Lesbos. There, the Muses found them and gave Orpheus a proper burial ceremony. People believed that his grave emanated music, plaintive yet beautiful. His soul descended down to Hades, where he was finally reunited with his beloved Eurydice.

**The Comparison to a Bible Scene**

If you observe the above myth closely, you will find a comparison between this ancient Greek myth and a scene from the Bible. The myth of Orpheus and Eurydice is similar to the story of Lot. The analogy of “not looking back” is of great importance to both stories. In the Book of Genesis, when God decided to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, two cities drowned in sins, he ordered a good man, Lot, to take his family and leave the area. God told them to head for the mountains without looking back the city being destroyed. While they were leaving the city, Lot’s wife couldn’t resist and turned around to see the burning cities. She was immediately transformed into a pillar of salt. This may be inferred as a direct and terrifying consequence of disobedience towards God.

*Source: [www.greeka.com](http://www.greeka.com)*
**HADESTOWN**

**SYNOPSIS**

*Hadestown* opens above-ground, with Eurydice worrying about how her lover, Orpheus, will provide for her in this poverty-stricken post-apocalyptic world. Orpheus, a singer-songwriter, spends his time playing songs for his love instead of providing for her, leaving her hungry and cold. They arrive at an old train depot, where everyone’s talking about Hadestown, a walled city under the ground. Hades, the enigmatic king of Hadestown, comes calling for Eurydice when Orpheus is gone and seduces her with promises of the wealth and security of his underworld. Distraught that he has lost his lady love, Orpheus decides to go after her. With directions from Hermes, who acts as a sort of narrator throughout the story, Orpheus follows Eurydice underground.

Meanwhile, in Hadestown, Hades indoctrinates his worker-citizens, but when he turns his back, his wife, Persephone, subverts his efforts by plying Eurydice with contraband from the outside world in a hidden speakeasy. Persephone, who is allowed to go above ground six months a year, takes an interest in the newly arrived Orpheus. Eurydice, unaware that her lover is near, laments her decision to follow Hades. Orpheus moves toward her, but is intercepted by the Fates, who tell him struggling is pointless. Orpheus challenges the Fates, and, shortly thereafter, Hades discovers both Orpheus and the speakeasy.

In the royal bedroom, Persephone appeals to her husband on Orpheus’s behalf. Orpheus, too, appeals to Hades, and his singing starts a riot in Hadestown. Desperate, Hades comes up with a plan: Orpheus can have Eurydice back if he can walk out of the underworld ahead of her without turning around to make sure she’s there. Orpheus and Eurydice begin their ascent, but when Orpheus reaches the surface, he immediately turns around. Since Eurydice is still in the underworld, she becomes permanently trapped there, and Orpheus is left to walk the earth alone.
THE JAZZ AGE

Before the Great Depression came the Jazz Age of the Roaring 1920s. The 1920s were an age of dramatic social and political change. For the first time, more Americans lived in cities than on farms. The nation’s total wealth more than doubled between 1920 and 1929, and this economic growth swept many Americans into an affluent but unfamiliar “consumer society.” People from coast to coast bought the same goods (thanks to nationwide advertising and the spread of chain stores), listened to the same music, did the same dances and even used the same slang! Many Americans were uncomfortable with this new, urban, sometimes racy “mass culture;” in fact, for many - even most - people in the United States, the 1920s brought more conflict than celebration. However, for a small handful of young people in the nation’s big cities, the 1920s were roaring, indeed.

During the 1920s, many Americans had extra money to spend, and they spent it on consumer goods, such as ready-to-wear clothes and home appliances like electric refrigerators. In particular, they bought radios. The first commercial radio station in the U.S., Pittsburgh’s KDKA, hit the airwaves in 1920; three years later there were more than 500 stations in the nation. By the end of the 1920s, there were radios in more than 12 million households. People also went to the movies: Historians estimate that, by the end of the decades, three-quarters of the American population visited a movie theatre every week.

But the most important consumer product of the 1920s was the automobile. Low prices (the Ford Model T cost just $260 in 1924) and generous credit made cars affordable luxuries at the beginning of the decade; by the end, they were practically necessities. In 1929, there was one car on the road for every five Americans. Meanwhile, an economy of automobiles was born: Businesses like service stations and motels sprang up to meet drivers’ needs.

Cars also gave young people the freedom to go where they pleased and do what they wanted. (Some pundits called them “bedrooms on wheels.”) What many young people wanted to do was dance: the Charleston, the cake walk, the black bottom, the flea hop. Jazz bands played at dance halls like the Savoy in New York City and the Aragon in Chicago; radio stations and phonograph records (100 million of which were sold in 1927 alone) carried their tunes to listeners across the nation. Some older people objected to jazz music’s “vulgarity” and “depravity” (and the “moral disasters” it supposedly inspired), but many in the younger generation loved the freedom they felt on the dance floor.
POVERTY AND THE GREAT DEPRESSION

The Great Depression, which lasted from 1929 to 1939, peaked between 1932 and 1933 in the United States. It was the longest economic downturn in the history of the industrialized western world. It started soon after the stock market crash of 1929, and spiraled out of control as spending and investing went down. The average family income dropped by 40 per cent from 1929 to 1932. At its worst, 13 to 15 million people were unemployed. Thousands of people were homeless, many camping out in Central Park in New York or moving into shantytowns.

The Great Plains were hit particularly hard during the Great Depression, with severe drought impacting crops. Farmers, who were already struggling due to a long period of drought in the 1920s, couldn’t afford to harvest their crops and had to leave them rotting in the fields, while people starved. The area became known as the Dust Bowl. The 150,000-square-mile area, encompassing the Oklahoma and Texas panhandles and neighboring sections of Kansas, Colorado, and New Mexico, has little rainfall, light soil, and high winds, a potentially destructive combination. When drought struck from 1934 to 1937, the soil lacked the stronger root system of grass as an anchor, so the winds easily picked up the loose topsoil and swirled it into dense dust clouds, called “black blizzards.” Recurrent dust storms wreaked havoc, choking cattle and pasture lands and driving 60 per cent of the population from the region. Most of these “exodusters” went to agricultural areas first and then to cities, especially in the Far West. By 1940, 2.5 million people had left the Great Plains. About 200,000 of those people moved to California.

HELL

Hades, the god of the Underworld, is also the god of wealth. He represents not only Hell but also commerce, greed and evil (but he doesn’t represent death — that’s another god, Thanatos). In Hadestown, Hell, or the Underworld, is represented as another town — a factory town where workers toil and slave away for money without relief. In the Greek myth, Eurydice dies on her wedding night after stepping on a poisonous snake, and is sent to Hell. In Hadestown, Eurydice goes to the Underworld willingly, by using the train ticket Hades has provided. She is seduced to leave above ground and go to Hadestown by the charming Hades, who promises she will never go hungry if she works for him. In order to follow her to the Underworld, Orpheus must take the long route and walk, as he can’t afford a train ticket (and wants to be able to return — Hell is supposed to be a one-way ticket). Hell and wealth are closely intertwined in Hadestown, in sharp contrast to the Depression/Dust Bowl era atmosphere we see above ground, where there is no food or work, but there is love and some happiness. The show features some traditional elements that we associate with Hell — for example, Persephone complains about the extreme heat. But don’t expect to see Hades with devil horns and a pitchfork — he may be the overlord of Hell but he’s also a businessman.
LOVE

Love is a common theme in Greek mythology but many of those love stories do not end happily. Tragedy, another popular theme in Greek mythology, often collides with love, resulting in heartbreak. The tale of Orpheus and Eurydice is no exception. The two lovers face many challenges together and try to overcome them, but are ultimately doomed to be apart. Love is so strong in *Hadestown* that it initially causes Eurydice to ignore logic and follow her heart (she marries Orpheus knowing he is a poor singer who is prone to caring more about his music than working). Love is what motivates Orpheus to follow Eurydice to the Underworld, even though he knows it is risky and he may not be able to come back. And love (and empathy) is what ultimately motivates Persephone to take up Orpheus’s cause, resulting in her begging Hades to allow Eurydice to leave with him.

The Greek goddess of love, Aphrodite, isn’t mentioned in the myth or in *Hadestown*. In the original Greek myth, the wedding of Orpheus and Eurydice is attended by Hymen, the god of marriage. (He doesn’t bless the union though, likely because he knows it is doomed.) Is Aphrodite’s absence a way of showing that the love between Orpheus and Eurydice isn’t real? Likely not — Aphrodite is actually rarely mentioned in most Greek myths, and often, when she is, she is consorting with Ares, the Greek god of war. It seems that happy endings aren’t necessarily the point of Greek myths involving love — rather, the passion and power of love is what takes centre stage. The rest is just tragedy.

DEATH

Speaking of tragedy, death is also very common in Greek mythology. In the original story, Eurydice dies by accident but for *Hadestown*’s purposes, she is seduced into going to the Underworld on a train, with a ticket given to her by Hades himself. In both the Greek tale and the musical, Orpheus doesn’t have to die to visit the Underworld; instead, he walks there. It’s a tough journey, but he’s willing to do it for his love (he’s just not willing to die). Near the end, when Orpheus looks back at Eurydice, he dooms her to death (or at least a life in the Underworld — same thing). Ironically, Orpheus can go back to his life above ground, but he wastes it — he’s not happy without Eurydice. For him, death is the ultimate release because it means he gets to go back to Hades and can therefore be with his love. In the Greek myth, Orpheus wanders the world miserable and alone, refusing all female company. Eventually, a pack of women, fueled by wine, lust and anger (at being rejected) literally tear Orpheus to pieces. In *Hadestown*, we don’t see Orpheus’ life after his first trip to the Underworld. He looks back at Eurydice, she is lost to him — and that’s all, folks.
HADESTOWN

PRODUCTION ELEMENTS

PROSCENIUM STAGE

A proscenium theatre is a specific style of theatre. Several features define a proscenium theatre, and this particular theatre layout is extremely common; if you have ever been to see a live performance, especially in a high school auditorium, chances are high that you have seen a proscenium theatre. In addition to proscenium style theatres, it is also possible to find black box theatres, theatres with thrust stages, theatres in the round, and numerous other configurations of stage and audience.

The classically defining feature of a proscenium theatre is the proscenium arch, which frames the stage for the audience. In addition, the audience faces the stage directly, with no audience on the sides of the stage, and the stage in a proscenium theatre is typically raised, allowing the audience to see more clearly. Modern proscenium theatres sometimes lack the proscenium arch, but they are still called “proscenium theatres” because they retain the other characteristics of this style of theatre.

Proscenium theatres originated in the 1600s, and became immensely popular by the 1700s. There are certain advantages of a proscenium theatre, such as the fact that the stage doesn't have to be as open, allowing people to conceal props, sets, and orchestras in the wings or near the stage without having these things visible to the audience. A proscenium theatre also creates a sense of staged grandeur, with the proscenium arch acting almost like a picture frame, giving the audience the sense that they are looking into a scene.
1. What elements of the classic Greek Orpheus myth do you see throughout *Hadestown*?

2. In what ways does *Hadestown* differ from the Greek myth?

3. Should Eurydice have married Orpheus? Why or why not?

4. Why does Eurydice decide to leave Orpheus for the Underworld? What does she feel is missing from her life and what is she looking for in the Underworld?

5. Eurydice doesn’t seem completely happy above ground or in the Underworld. What are the benefits and drawbacks of being in each place?

6. Was it smart for Orpheus to follow Eurydice to the Underworld? What are the pros and cons of his plan?

7. Why do you think Orpheus looks back at Eurydice before it is safe to do so? Do you think he forgot his promise or was it simply a mistake?

8. Orpheus uses music to express himself, including his feelings for Eurydice. Is this an effective method of communication? What are some of the other ways he shows Eurydice he loves her?

9. Persephone and Hades have a troubled relationship. What are some of the signs that each of them is unhappy?

10. Do you think Persephone and Hades truly love each other? What are some of the ways they express their feelings for each other?

11. Persephone changes the seasons when she comes and goes above ground. What does this symbolize?

12. How do the setting and music of *Hadestown* underscore the show’s themes?

13. What other Greek myths would you like to see as a production with music? Why?

14. Hero myths usually feature a protagonist with several defining characteristics, such as seeking fame, glory and honour, being on a quest, having a superpower of some kind and having a weakness. Does Orpheus fit this model? What is his “superpower” and what is his weakness?

15. What role do The Fates play in *Hadestown*? Why are they an appropriate choice for that role?

16. In Greek mythology, Hermes is the god of commerce, as well as a messenger between the gods of Olympus and the mortals on earth. Is he a good choice for a narrator for *Hadestown*? Why or why not?

17. What parallels can be drawn between what is happening in the play and what is currently happening in the United States under the new government?

18. *Hadestown* pits commerce against creativity — work versus music — as if there is only one choice. Do you feel that is a fair representation of what life is really like? Why or why not?
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Curriculum Connections:
Participation as an audience member at the Citadel Theatre aligns with the Alberta Education Curriculum. We outline below some (*but not limited to*) objectives which are developed through the viewing of live theatre:

**Drama (Elementary)**

**Third Goal**
To foster an appreciation for drama as an art form

**Objectives**  
The child should:

1. develop an awareness of an respect for potential excellence in self and others
2. Develop a capacity to analyze, evaluate and synthesize ideas and experiences
3. Develop an awareness and appreciation of the variety of dramatic forms of expression.

**Specific Learner Expectations:**

- Intellectual—develop and exercise imagination; develop concentration
- Emotional—explore emotion; control emotion; express emotion
- Social—understand others; discipline self; develop appreciation of the work of self and others; cope with emotional responses
- Integrative—learn to respond to stimuli; e.g., music, pictures, objects, literature; test and reflect on the consequences of dramatic decisions

**Drama (Junior High)**

**GOAL I**
To acquire knowledge of self and others through participation in and reflection on dramatic experience.

**Objectives**  
The student will:

- strengthen powers of concentration
- extend the ability to think imaginatively and creatively
- extend the ability to explore, control and express emotions
- extend the ability to explore meaning through abstract concepts
- develop the ability to offer and accept constructive criticism

**GOAL III**
To develop an appreciation for drama and theatre as a process and art form.

**Objectives**  
The student will:

- develop awareness of various conventions of theatre
- develop awareness of drama and theatre by viewing as great a variety of theatrical presentations as possible
- develop the ability to analyze and assess the process and the art
- develop recognition of and respect for excellence in drama and theatre
GOAL I
To acquire knowledge of self and others through participation in and reflection on dramatic experience.

Objectives
The Student will:

- extend the ability to concentrate
- extend understanding of, acceptance of and empathy for others
- demonstrate respect for others — their rights, ideas, abilities and differences (S)
- demonstrate the ability to offer, accept, and reflect upon, constructive criticism.

GOAL II
To develop competency in communication skills through participation in and exploration of various dramatic disciplines.

Objectives
The Student will:

- demonstrate understanding of integration of disciplines to enrich a theatrical presentation.

GOAL III
To develop an appreciation of drama and theatre as a process and art form.

Objectives
The student will:

- explore various conventions and traditions of theatre
- broaden knowledge of theatre by viewing as great a variety of theatrical presentations as possible
- demonstrate the ability to assess critically the process and the art
- demonstrate recognition of and respect for excellence in drama and theatre
- develop an awareness of aesthetics in visual and performing arts.