

ENRICHMENT GUIDE



By **LYNN NOTTAGE**

Directed by **VALERIE PLANCE**

Set Designer **SHIZUKA KAI**

Costumer Designer **JENIFER DARBELLAY**

Lighting Designer **DANIELA MASELLIS**

Sound Designer **MISHELLE CUTTLER**

Presented in partnership with Arts Club Theatre Company

Play Guides sponsored by



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THEATRE ETIQUETTE

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:

- No outside food or beverages. Only beverages purchased in the lobby and placed in a Citadel Sippy and bottled water will be allowed in the theatre. Unwrapped ice cream bars may be taken into the theatre. Please enjoy all other snacks in the lobby.
- 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, CREATIVE TEAM AND CHARACTERS

CAST

LORA BRAVOLD	Jessie
ANDREW CHREIGHTNEY	Chris
CHRIS W. COOK	Jason
ALEN DOMINGUEZ	Oscar
MARCI T. HOUSE	Cynthia
ANTHONY SANTIAGO	Brucie/Evan
NICOLE ST. MARTIN	Tracey
ASHLEY WRIGHT	Stan

CREATIVE

Director	VALERIE PLANCHE
Set Designer	SHIZUKA KAI
Costume Designer	JENIFER DARBELLAY
Lighting Designer	DANIELA MASELLIS
Sound Designer	MISHELLE CUTTLER
Vocal Coach	ALISON MATTHEWS
Resident Director	RACHEL PEAKE
Fight Director	JONATHAN PURVIS
Assistant Director	JAY NORTHCOTT
Assistant Costume Designer	ALAIA HAMER
Stage Manager	RICK RINDER
Assistant Stage Manager	RACHEL DAWN WOODS

CHARACTERS

Tracey: Jason's mother. She is friends with Cynthia and Jessie, and is a long-time worker at Olstead's factory. She becomes jealous when Cynthia receives a promotion at work.

Cynthia: Chris' mother. She is friends with Tracey and Jessie, and is also a long-time worker at Olstead's factory. She is estranged from her husband Brucie, as he struggles with addiction. She is given a promotion at work, which causes tensions between the group of friends.

Jessie: A friend of Tracey and Cynthia, and a long-time worker at the factory.

Jason: Tracey's son, and Chris' best friend. He is 29 years old and was recently released from jail.

Chris: The son of Cynthia and Brucie, and Jason's best friend. He also spent time in jail.

Oscar: A man who works at the bar and is silent throughout the majority of the play; largely ignored by the other characters.

Evan: The parole officer who questions Jason at the beginning of the play.

Brucie: Cynthia's estranged husband. He struggles with addiction after his union was locked out at the textile mill at which he worked. Cynthia has kicked him out of the house.

Stan: The manager of the bar in which the play takes place. He previously worked at the same plant for 28 years, before he was injured on the job.

ABOUT THE PLAY AND PLAYWRIGHT

About *Sweat*

Sweat is the 2017 Pulitzer Prize-winning drama by Lynn Nottage. In the spring of 2017, *Sweat* (Pulitzer Prize, Obie Award, Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, Tony Nomination, Drama Desk Nomination) moved to Broadway after a sold out run at The Public Theater. It premiered and was commissioned by Oregon Shakespeare Festival American Revolutions History Cycle/Arena Stage.

This production at the Citadel Theatre is presented in partnership with Arts Club Theatre Company. The Canadian premiere took place in Vancouver at the Arts Club Theatre Company in fall of 2018, then moved to Edmonton in January 2019.

The play tells the story of a group of friends who have spent their lives sharing drinks, secrets, and laughs while working together on the factory floor. When layoffs and picket lines begin to chip away at their trust, however, the friends find themselves pitted against each other in a heart-wrenching fight to stay afloat.

Meet the Playwright



Lynn Nottage is a Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright and a screenwriter. She is an Associate Professor of Theatre at Columbia University and a lecturer in playwriting at the Yale School of Drama. Her plays include *By The Way*, *Meet Vera Stark* (Lilly Award, Drama Desk Nomination), *Ruined* (Pulitzer Prize, OBIE, Lucille Lortel, New York Drama Critics' Circle, Audelco, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle Award), *Intimate Apparel* (American Theatre Critics and New York Drama Critics' Circle Awards for Best Play), *Fabulation*, or *The Re-Education of Undine* (OBIE Award), *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*, *Las Meninas*, *Mud, River, Stone*, *POOF!*, and *Por'knockers*.

She developed *This is Reading*, a performance installation based on two years of interviews, at the Franklin Street, Reading Railroad Station in Reading, PA in July 2017.

Nottage won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 2009 for *Ruined*. In 2016, she won the Susan Smith Blackburn prize and, in 2017, again won the Pulitzer for *Sweat*; she is the first woman to be awarded the latter twice. She has also been the recipient of a MacArthur "Genius Grant" Fellowship.

She is working with composer Ricky Ian Gordon on adapting her play *Intimate Apparel* into an opera, commissioned by The Met/LCT. She is currently an artist-in-residence at the Park Avenue Armory. Nottage is currently writing the book for the world premiere musical adaptation of Sue Monk Kidd's novel *The Secret Life of Bees*, with music by Duncan Sheik and lyrics by Susan Birkenhead. It will premiere at the Atlantic Theatre Company starting on May 10, 2019, directed by Sam Gold.

SYNOPSIS: ACT 1

Sweat is set in Reading, Pennsylvania and fluctuates in time between 2000 and 2008.

The play opens on September 29, 2008 with Jason and his parole officer, Evan. As they go about their conversations, it becomes clear that Jason is avoiding Evan's questions. After much prying, he finally opens up to his parole officer regarding a recent encounter with Chris. At the mention of this event, the scene shifts. Now Evan sits with Chris, sharing a similar dialogue. However, Chris is more willing to communicate with Evan. By the end of the first scene, Chris also mentions that he saw Jason recently. There is a heavy air of mystery surrounding the significance of this event, as well as the two ex-convicts relationship to each other.

Scene Two takes place eight years prior in 2000. Cynthia, Tracey, and Jessie are drunk at the local bar celebrating Tracey's birthday. Stan and Oscar, the bar employees, are also present. Stan is actively involved in the ladies' conversation, whereas Oscar is consistently overlooked by the group. Stan, Tracey, and Cynthia share town gossip and recent developments at Olstead's plant. The audience learns that the plant is hiring a manager and might be promoting one of the floor employees. Cynthia voices her interest in the job. Tracey is reluctant, but decides to apply as well.

Scene Three takes place with Jason and Chris at the bar. The audience learns that Tracey is Jason's mother. The boys talk with Stan about their financial struggles and working at Olstead's. Chris shares that he is interested in going to college to be a teacher. Jason quickly dismisses Chris's dream, yet is upset that his friend did not share these plans sooner.

Scene Four opens with Brucie (Cynthia's unemployed, addict husband) at the bar. Brucie is chatting with Stan when Cynthia, Tracey, and Jessie enter. There is immediate hostility in the room. Cynthia has not seen Brucie since he stole from her over the holidays. The couple becomes confrontational, but ultimately Brucie is apologetic for his actions. Cynthia cannot reconsider a relationship with him until he is off the drugs and employed again.

Scene Five opens after the record setting stock market drop of 2000. Tracey and Oscar share a cigarette outside the bar. Cynthia has received the promotion and the gang is celebrating inside. Tracey is annoyed by all of this and it shows in her actions. Her conversation with Oscar is laced with sarcasm and criticism. Oscar discloses vital information: Olstead's plant is hiring non-union workers. There was a flyer displayed at the local Latino Community Center. Tracey is upset by this news, and tells Oscar not to apply for the job.

Scene Six occurs at a time when Reading is \$10 billion in debt. Jessie sits alone with Stan at the bar. It is her birthday and her friends are late to the celebration. Jessie tells Stan that Tracey has been spreading rumors that Cynthia was only promoted because she was black. Eventually Cynthia, Jason, and Chris join Jessie at the bar. Tracey arrives much later and there is tension from Cynthia when she enters. They get into an argument and Tracey asks if Cynthia has heard of the recent changes in Olstead's employment. She then shows Cynthia the flyer that Oscar had presented earlier.

Scene Seven takes place just outside the bar. Jason and Chris are rushing to the plant when they run into Brucie. Brucie asks the boys where they are going; Olstead's has moved out three of the factory machines and posted a list of names on the door. They are hurrying over there to see what has happened. Brucie advises the boys not to strike against Olstead's but rather to take a pay cut when the time comes.

SYNOPSIS: ACT 2

Act Two begins in 2008. Jason is visiting his mother at her apartment after recently being released from prison. He asks to borrow money, but Tracey only has five dollars to lend him. Jason notices that his mother is high. The scene shifts to Cynthia's house; Chris is seeing his mom for the first time since prison. They discuss recent changes and how Chris has found religion to be helpful. The two share an uncomfortable conversation about the past.

Act Two, Scene Two is back at the bar in July of 2000. Chris, Jason, Jessie, and Tracey are all yelling at Cynthia. They want answers about Olstead's plans for layoffs. Cynthia finally succumbs to the peer pressure and tells her friends that they will be asking employees to take a 60 per cent pay cut in order to stay. The floor workers announce their plans to fight back and strike with the union.

The following scene features Cynthia at the bar alone on her birthday. She makes small talk with Stan, when Jessie and Tracey enter. There is hostility that grows in the room. Cynthia's friends blame her for the recent cuts at Olstead's. Tracey then shares a story about her relationship with Cynthia from years ago, and ends by asking her friend to fight management with them. Cynthia says that she will not be leaving her new job to help the union strike.

Act Two, Scene Four finds Brucie at the bar with Jason and Chris. Brucie has been heavy into the drugs again. Chris talks with his dad about this, when the conversation turns to changes at Olstead's. Brucie tells the boys to take the concessions rather than strike. Brucie has been out of work for nearly two years due to a similar situation. It is not worth the fight.

A month later, Stan confronts Oscar at the bar. Oscar has taken a job at Olstead's. Stan believes this will cause him trouble and advises him against accepting the position. Oscar does not agree with Stan's opinion and plans to work at the plant. Tracey enters the bar and becomes aggressive toward Oscar for the exact reason Stan had warned him. This is a very personal situation.

Tensions escalate in the following scene. Jason, Chris, Jessie, and Tracey are at the bar when Oscar enters. They are upset with Oscar for crossing the picketing line and working the floor at Olstead's. Just as Oscar is about to leave, Jason blocks his way. Stan and Chris attempt to defuse the situation to no avail. A fight ensues, and all of the men are involved. Amidst the chaos, Jason accidentally hits Stan in the head with a baseball bat. Stan falls to the floor with severe injuries.

Act Two, Scene Seven takes place in October of 2008. Chris and Jason are in separate, yet parallel meetings, with Evan. Both of the boys discuss the incident in the bar and their feelings on the tragic event. In the final scene of the play, Jason and Chris end up at the bar. Oscar is the bartender and is immediately cautious about their presence. As the three men take in this awkward encounter, Stan enters the bar. He is unable to effectively form words and moves very slowly around the room due to his injury. They all share an uncomfortable moment in each others' presence as the play comes to a close.

Source: <http://www.bookrags.com/studyguide-sweat-play/#gsc.tab=0>

PRODUCTION ELEMENTS

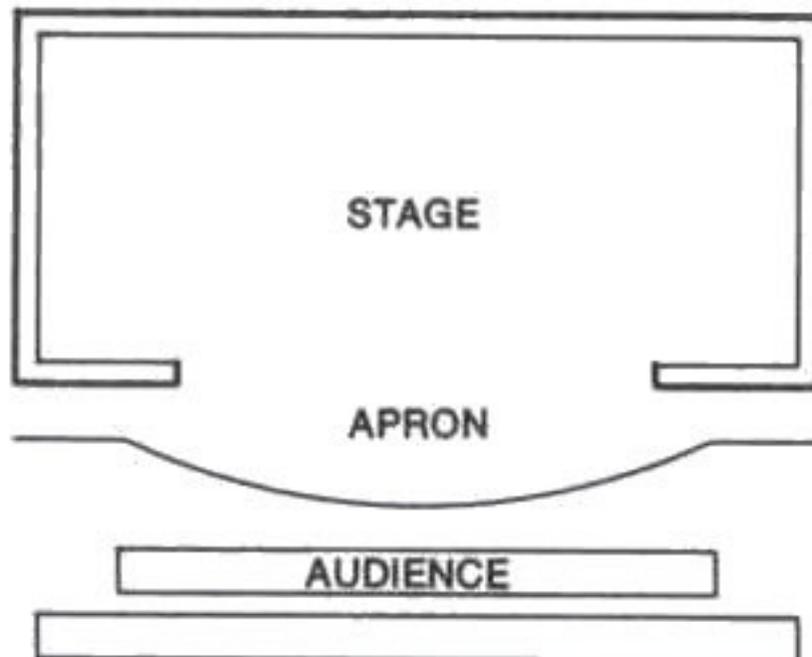
PROSCENIUM STAGE

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.

Proscenium Theatre





DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

PRE-SHOW DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you seen any live performances on stage before? What are your expectations about what you will see on stage in this production?
2. What do you already know about the play, including the plot, production elements (such as lighting, sound, costumes, and sets) and the characters? How do you anticipate that these elements will come together in the play?
3. How do you cope with stress and/or hardship? Have your methods or strategies changed over time? How do times of stress and hardship affect your relationships with others?
4. What do you already know about the concept of intersectionality? How do you think that this theme will emerge within the play?
5. The story takes place during a time of de-industrialization, and an unstable economy. What do you predict will happen to the relationships between the characters in the play, based on these economic factors?

POST-SHOW DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What ideas or themes did the play make you think about?
2. What metaphors and symbols did you notice in the play?
3. What did you notice about the ways in which each character communicated with one other?
4. What did you notice about the ways in which the characters displayed their emotions?
5. What did you think about the technical elements of the production: which elements stood out to you the most, and why? What effects did this have on your understanding of the play?
6. What emotions did you feel after having watched the play? Did you feel disappointed? Shocked? Surprise? Hopeful? Inspired? Explain your answer.
7. Which part of the play resonated with you the most?
8. Imagine that you could meet with members of the cast, crew, artistic team, or production team. What questions would you ask them about the choices and elements in the production?
9. What connections can you make between the themes of the play and current events in our society today?
10. Why do you think the playwright chose a fluctuating time frame for the play, between 2000 and 2008? What effect did this have on the way the story was told?

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CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

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

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



CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

Drama 10-20-30

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.