



RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S

OKLAHOMA!

RESOURCE GUIDE



RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S OKLAHOMA!

"OKLAHOMA! reminds us that when we try to define who we are as a community, by creating an outsider, it can end in tragedy. Near the end of OKLAHOMA!, Laurey's trying to make sense of great loss and Aunt Eller tells her, 'Lots of things happen to folks. That's how it is, cradle to grave. You gotta be hearty. You gotta be tough. Because the sweet and tender things in life happen to those who are tough.'

We are living through difficult times, but we have to be hearty and we have to be tough, because the sweet and tender things in life can happen and they're too wonderful to miss." – Producer Eva Price, during her Tony Award acceptance speech for Best Revival of a Musical

Dear Teachers,

We are thrilled that you are coming to see this version of OKLAHOMA! Stripped down to reveal the darker psychological truths at its core, Daniel Fish's production tells a story of a community circling its wagons against a outsider, and the violence of the frontier that shaped America. Upending the sunny romance of a farmer and a cowpoke, this OKLAHOMA! allows the classic musical - and our country - to be seen in a whole new light.

This guide was created specifically with you and your students in mind. We encourage you to utilize the ready to implement activities and dramaturgical information to enhance your students' experience of seeing this powerful show. The guide is split into four sections for you to explore, unpack and investigate the many mature themes in the show. Lastly, we hope that you continue the dialogue beyond the show itself.

Thank you.

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RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S OKLAHOMA!

Synopsis

Set in farm country outside the town of Claremore, Indian Territory, in 1906, OKLAHOMA! tells the story of farm girl Laurey Williams and her courtship by two rival suitors, cowboy Curly McLain and the sinister and frightening farmhand Jud Fry. A secondary romance concerns cowboy Will Parker and his flirtatious fiancée, Ado Annie.

OKLAHOMA! is the first musical written by composer Richard Rodgers and librettist Oscar Hammerstein II. The musical is based on Lynn Riggs' 1931 play, *Green Grow the Lilacs* and was originally choreographed by Agnes de Mille. The original production, which premiered on Broadway in 1943, is largely credited with being the first musical to fully integrate its book, score, and choreography towards advancing the plot.

It debuted at the St. James Theatre, New York on March 31, 1943 during WWII.

Daniel Fish's re-imagining leaves the original text and score intact while exploring them through a 21st century lens. Over 75 years after Rodgers & Hammerstein reinvented the American musical, this is OKLAHOMA! as you've never seen or heard it before. Stripped down to reveal the **darker psychological truths** at its core, Daniel Fish's production tells a story of a community circling its wagons against an outsider, and the violence of the frontier that shaped America. Upending the sunny romance of a farmer and a cowpoke, this Oklahoma! allows the classic musical - and our country - to be seen in a whole new light. Funny and sexy, dark and terrifying, "this is the OKLAHOMA! that was there all along." (*New York Magazine*)



FAST FACTS ABOUT THE MUSICAL

RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S OKLAHOMA!

WHEN: 1906

WHERE: Oklahoma Territory

WHO:



CURLY MCLAIN

A cowboy in love with Laurey



JUD FRY

A hired hand on Aunt Eller's ranch, a loner



LAUREY WILLIAMS

Aunt Eller's niece, an independent young woman



AUNT ELLER

Laurey's aunt, a respected community leader



ADO ANNIE

A flirtatious, gullible young woman



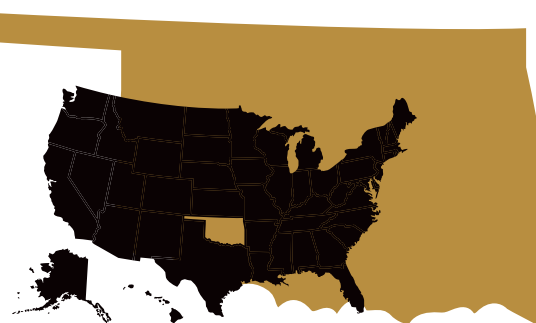
ALI HAKIM

A Persian peddler, enamored of Ado Annie



WILL PARKER

A simple young man in love with Ado Annie



The legacy of OKLAHOMA!...

... ran on Broadway for 5 years and 9 months (2,248 performances).

... has won a Pulitzer Prize, spawned an Oscar-winning film and launched countless high school productions.

... debuted on Broadway during WWII bringing a sense of joy and American identity to the citizens of an anxious nation at war.

... is known as the quintessential American musical



Key Terms:



BIT Currency equal to one eighth of a dollar or 12^{1/2} cents

RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S OKLAHOMA!

BOX SOCIAL a fundraising event in which box lunches are auctioned off

CLAREMORE City in Oklahoma territory where the story takes place



DUN Curly's horse

FASCINATOR a decorative headpiece



FEDERAL MARSHAL A federal law enforcement agency within the U.S. Department of Justice that was created by the Judiciary Act of 1789

THE LITTLE WUNDER a kaleidoscope with a knife hidden inside



SMOKEHOUSE a shed or room for curing food by exposure to smoke. Where Jud lives

LUNCH HAMPER a basket with a carrying handle and a hinged lid, used for food, cutlery and plates



SURREY a light four-wheeled carriage with two seats facing forward pulled by horses



RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S OKLAHOMA!

Activity: OKLAHOMA ALPHABET RELAY

This musical is set in Oklahoma Territory right before it became what is now known as the state of Oklahoma.

In this activity your students will be dramatists and learn as much as they can about the world of the show in a fast and fun way.

Materials: Markers, Poster with letters A-Z written on them (1/team)

1. Split your class into small teams (there should be no less than 4 people per team.) Start with a poster for each team, each lettered A - Z down the side, with room to write after each letter. Place the posters side by side where students can easily reach and write on them.
2. Give each team 5 minutes to research as much as they can about **OKLAHOMA 1906**. The goal is to get as much information about this historical time period as possible.
3. Once the 5 minutes have finished, instruct the teams to put everything away and stand in a line facing the prepared posters.
4. Explain that each team needs to come up with one-word answers to the prompt **OKLAHOMA 1906** from A to Z. Working from a single file line, the first person in the line will run to the poster and write a word that starts with the next available letter on the list – starting with A, then B, and so on. The goal is to complete every word on the poster A-Z as quickly as possible. Once groups have finished their list, they are encouraged to cheer on the other groups to finish.
5. After all teams have completed their poster, the class gathers where everyone can see the posters to reflect on the activity and the ideas they generated.
6. Go through each list together. Teams can challenge words that other teams wrote and the teams can explain their answer. Teachers will have ultimate say if it counts as a point.
7. The team who finished first and/or has the most points, wins!

BONUS

Play Alphabet Relay again using the theme of Musical Theater or Rodgers and Hammerstein.



RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S OKLAHOMA!

Activity: COMPARE & CONTRAST

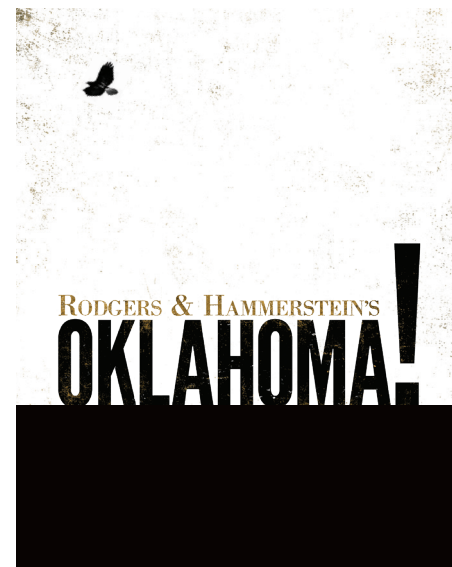
1. Split your class in half.
2. Give half the group photos from the 1943 Broadway Musical of OKLAHOMA! *(on the following page)*
3. Give the other half of the group photos from the 2019 Broadway Musical of OKLAHOMA! *(on the following page)*
4. Ask students to create a list of observations about the pictures. For example: If the group of students are looking at the 1943 Broadway Musical they could say, "I see a lot of people on stage with fancy costumes" or "the pictures are in black and white."
5. Once everyone has written their observations, each group will share out what they wrote.

REFLECT:

- Based on the photos from the 2019 production, how do you think this production is going to compare to the original?
 - What do you expect to see?
6. After a group reflection, read the blurb below to your students:

Over 75 years after Rodgers & Hammerstein reinvented the American musical, this is OKLAHOMA! as you've never seen or heard it before – reimagined for the 21st century. Stripped down to reveal the darker psychological truths at its core, Daniel Fish's production tells a story of a community circling its wagons against an outsider, and the violence of the frontier that shaped America. Upending the sunny romance of a farmer and a cowpoke, this OKLAHOMA! allows the classic musical - and our country - to be seen in a whole new light. Funny and sexy, dark and terrifying, "this is the OKLAHOMA! that was there all along."

(New York Magazine)



1943 Broadway Musical

RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S **OKLAHOMA!**



2019 Broadway Musical

RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S OKLAHOMA!



“How is it that the COOLEST NEW SHOW
ON BROADWAY is a 1943 musical?”

The New York Times

RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S
OKLAHOMA!

OKLAHOMA!
1943

VS.

OKLAHOMA!
2019

Visionary Direction

Rouben Mamoulian, who directed the original production, favored stylized scenes with poetic nuances over the traditional realism of Broadway theater. Although he had directed plays and operas on Broadway, OKLAHOMA! was Mamoulian's first musical theater piece.

Daniel Fish comes from a multidisciplinary background spanning film, opera, experimental theater, and performance studies, drawing inspiration from a broad range of forms and sources. He makes his Broadway debut with this production of OKLAHOMA!.

Choreography

OKLAHOMA! was choreographer Agnes de Mille's first Broadway show. Beforehand, she had an established career performing and choreographing ballets for the American Ballet Theatre. Her career also spanned modern dance, extensively working with Martha Graham.

This production of OKLAHOMA! is John Heginbotham's first-ever musical theater piece and Broadway show. Like de Mille, John also comes from a non-theater, modern dance background, having toured and performed with Yo-Yo Ma and The Metropolitan Opera, and as a member of the Mark Morris Dance Group.

A Show Of The Times

OKLAHOMA! debuted during wartime. The production reflected the anxieties and concerns of a more homogenous American society fixated on their relation to the world. At the time, America was involved in an external political struggle with fascist powers and was heavily influenced by FDR's vision of an "ideal America."

This OKLAHOMA! comes to Broadway during yet another tumultuous and formative time in our nation's history. This production aims to reflect the concerns of an overwhelmingly diverse American society fixated on their relation to their country. America is still battling fascism, both at home and abroad.

Dozens Of Denizens

The original production consisted of 23 characters — 12 of whom were chorus members. At the time, this was large for a Broadway ensemble.

This production's cast is slimmed down to 12 principle actors, which by coincidence more closely resembles the average size of a Broadway production in the 1940s.

RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S OKLAHOMA!

OKLAHOMA! was Rodgers and Hammerstein's first collaboration. Richard Rodgers (1902–1979) and lyricist-dramatist Oscar Hammerstein II (1895–1960), were an influential, innovative and successful writing team who created a string of popular Broadway musicals in the 1940s and 1950s, initiating what is considered the "golden age" of musical theater.

Musical theater is a form of theatrical performance that combines songs, spoken dialogue, acting and dance. The story and emotional content of a musical – humor, pathos, love, anger – are communicated through the words, music, movement and technical aspects of the entertainment as an integrated whole.



“Not only is OKLAHOMA! the most important of the Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals, it is also the **SINGLE MOST INFLUENTIAL WORK IN THE AMERICAN MUSICAL THEATER**. It is the first fully integrated musical play and its blending of song, character, plot, and even dance would serve as the model for Broadway shows for decades.”

Playwright, Thomas Hischak

OKLAHOMA! is the first musical of its kind: **a book musical**. Each song and dance is part of a story that has a beginning, middle and end. It also demonstrates the emotional depths of its characters and deals with serious social issues, like land disputes and violence.



DID YOU KNOW?

Rodgers and Hammerstein also created the beloved, award-winning musicals:

Carousel • South Pacific • The King and I • The Sound of Music



RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S OKLAHOMA!

Activity: Analyze the lyrics

1. Provide students with the lyric sheets (on the following page).
2. Discuss the questions below.

- What do you notice about the lyrics?
- Based on the lyrics what do you think is happening in this moment in the play?
- Why do you think this character's is singing this song?
- Who do you think this song is being sung to and why?

3. Listen to the songs and consider how the style of music integrates with the lyrics.



BONUS ACTIVITY

The song OKLAHOMA! is sung twice in the play. After seeing the show, consider these questions:

- How does the reprise of OKLAHOMA! compare to how it was originally sung?
- How does the shift in tone change the meaning of the song?
- What does that make you think of?

LYRICS EXCERPT SHEET

RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S OKLAHOMA!



Excerpt of *Surrey with the Fringe on the Top*

CURLY:

Chicks and ducks and geese better scurry
When I take you out in the surrey,
When I take you out in the surrey with the fringe on top!
Watch that fringe and see how it flutters
When I drive them high-steppin' strutters!
Nosey-pokes'll peek through their shutters
and their eyes will pop!
The wheels are yellor, the upholstery's brown,
The dashboard's genuine leather,
With isinglass curtains y'c'n roll right down
In case there's a change in the weather—
Two bright side-lights, winkin' and blinkin',
Ain't no finer rig, I'm a-thinkin'!
You c'n keep yer rig if you're thinkin' 'at I'd keer to swap
Fer that shiny little surrey with the fringe on the top!

Excerpt of *The Farmer and the Cowman*

MIKE:

The farmer and the cowman should be friends,
Oh, the farmer and the cowman should be friends.
One man likes to push a plow,
The other likes to chase a cow,
But that's no reason why they cain't be friends.

ALL:

Territory folks should stick together,
Territory folks should all be pals.
Cowboys, dance with the farmers' daughters!
Farmers, dance with the ranchers' gals!
Territory folks should stick together
Territory folks should all be pals
Cowboys, dance with the farmers' daughters!
Farmers, dance with the ranchers' gals!



Excerpt of *Kansas City*

WILL:

Ev'rythin's up to date in Kansas City.
They've gone about as fur as they c'n go!
They went and build a skyscraper seven stories high—
About as high as a buildin' orta grow.
Ev'rythin's like a dream in Kansas City.
It's better than a magic-lantern show!
Y'c'n turn the radiator on whenever you want some heat.
With ev'ry kind o' comfort ev'ry house is all complete.
You c'n walk to privies in the rain an' never wet yer feet!
They've gone about as fur as they c'n go!

Excerpt of *OKLAHOMA!*

ALL:

Brand new state, Brand new state, gonna treat you great!
Gonna give you barley, carrots and pertaters,
Pasture fer the cattle, Spinach and Termayters!
Flowers on the prairie where the June bugs zoom,
Plen'y of air and plen'y of room,
Plen'y of room to swing a rope!
Plen'y of heart and plen'y of hope!
Oklahoma, where the wind comes sweepin' down the plain,
And the wavin' wheat can sure smell sweet
When the wind comes right behind the rain.
Oklahoma, ev'ry night my honey lamb and I
Sit alone and talk and watch a hawk makin' lazy circles in the sky.
We know we belong to the land
And the land we belong to is grand!
And when we say, yeeow-yip-i-o-ee ay!
We're only sayin' You're doin' fine,
Oklahoma! Oklahoma, okay



RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S OKLAHOMA!

DID YOU KNOW?

These images were used as research during the creation of OKLAHOMA!
What similarities do you see between these and the show's design?



Scenic Design by Laura Jellinek



This production contains fog, loud gunshot effects, moments of complete darkness, and violence.



This production is taken off the proscenium stage and seats the audience in the round. "The core of the design," Fish says, "is that we're all in this together."



There is chili and cornbread served at intermission!

Director Daniel Fish wanted to make a show exploring the artforms of DINNER THEATER and the AMERICAN MUSICAL.

- Why do you think Daniel Fish chose to explore these two forms together?
- What do you imagine OKLAHOMA! to be like knowing that the director was exploring these two art forms?

Actor Q & A

RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S OKLAHOMA!

What is your favorite part of the show to perform and why?

My favorite part of the show is singing, "Caint say no!". It's such a fun song to sing and every night it's different.

– Ali Stroker, *Ado Annie*

My two favorite parts are 'Poor Jud Is Dead' and 'The Farmer And The Cowman' for completely opposite reasons. In 'Poor Jud' I am on camera, nothing can be fake or the camera will see it, and everything is visible. A person's skin becomes transparent on camera if you let it. Their inner life can become written on them and that's the goal every night. Specificity and simplicity. 'Farmer And The Cowman' I love because it's a giant release, it's a moment to have fun and to move with all of yourself. I just adore it.

– Patrick Vail, *Jud Fry*

My favorite scene to perform is the smokehouse. It has so many elements working at once. It's simple, scary, focused and sexy. The song and the film all build to a place of tension that encapsulates the human condition.

– Damon Daunno, *Curley McLain*

What advice would you give to a student who wants to pursue acting/theater?

Work hard, find the kind of theater that resonates with you, and don't ever give up.

– Ali Stroker, *Ado Annie*

See and devour as much theater, film, television, art, music, books as you can. Develop your taste. Read plays. Your taste is what will lead you to the things and collaborators you love. Your perspective and your taste is yours and yours alone. They make you a unique artist. Follow yourself.

– Patrick Vail, *Jud Fry*

My advice would be to simply never stop. There can be so many obstacles along the way that make you question what you are doing with your life but if it is truly in your heart never stop and something great at some point will happen.

– Damon Daunno, *Curley McLain*

For a student who is about to see this version of OKLAHOMA!, what is one thing they should think about or know before seeing the show?

For students seeing the show, I think it's interesting to think about how this production and story is relevant today in society.

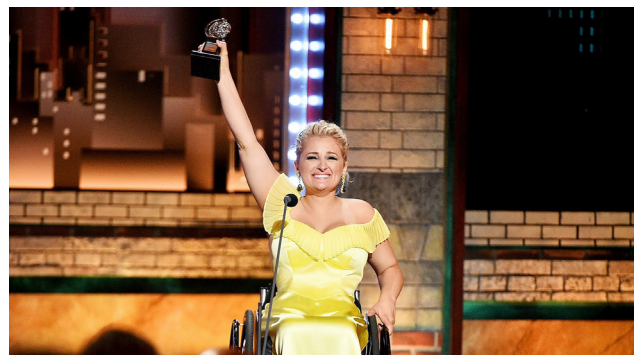
– Ali Stroker, *Ado Annie*

I think it would be helpful for a student who is seeing this production to think about why the choice has been made to leave the lights on in the theater for most of the performance. Usually when you go see a play or musical the lights are kept off, allowing the audience to escape their daily lives and be absorbed completely in the story they are watching. Keeping the lights on during this production may at times make an audience member uncomfortable because they can see the people around them, and know that they are being seen as well. This production of OKLAHOMA! takes a hard look at how the members of a community value themselves and each other. The director's choice to leave the lights on is a constant reminder that we are all in the same room together, and puts us in the same community. How might that deepen the experience of seeing/performing this production (and perhaps make us think about how we treat one another in our daily lives)?

– Rebecca Naomi Jones, *Laurey Williams*

Understand that we on stage can hear you. You are a part of our lives for three hours in the same way we are a part of yours. We can hear each other.

– Patrick Vail, *Jud Fry*



Ali Stroker accepts the Best Performance by an Actress in a Featured Role in a Musical at the 2019 Tony awards for her role as Ado Annie. She makes history as the first Tony-award winning actress in a wheelchair.

Meet The Creatives

DANIEL FISH (Director)

Daniel is a New York-based director who makes work across the boundaries of theater, film, and opera. He draws on a broad range of forms and subject matter including plays, film scripts, contemporary fiction, essays and found audio. His recent work includes *WHITE NOISE*, inspired by the novel by Don DeLillo (Theater Freiburg and Ruhrfestspiele Recklingshausen), Michael Gordon's opera, *ACQUANETTA* (Prototype Festival), A Leonard Bernstein's *A QUIET PLACE* (Curtis Opera Theater), *Don't Look Back* (The Chocolate Factory), *Who Left This Fork Here* (Baryshnikov Arts Center, Onassis Center), Ted Hearne's *The Source* (BAM NEXT WAVE, L.A. Opera, San Francisco Opera), and *ETERNAL*. His work has been seen at theaters and festivals throughout the U.S. and Europe including, The Walker Arts Center, PuSH, Teatro Nacional D. Maria, Lisbon/Estoril Film Festival, Vooruit, Festival TransAmériques, Noorderzon Festival, The Chocolate Factory, The Public Theater's *Under The Radar*, Opera Philadelphia/Curtis Opera Theater, American Repertory Theater, Richard B. Fisher Center at Bard College, Yale Repertory Theater, McCarter Theater, Signature Theater, The Shakespeare Theater Company, Düsseldorfer Schauspielhaus, Staatstheater Braunschweig, and The Royal Shakespeare Company. Residencies and commissions include The MacDowell Colony, Baryshnikov Arts Center, Mass MOCA, The Chocolate Factory, The Bushwick Starr, LMCC/ Governor's Island. He is graduate of Northwestern University's Department of Performance Studies and the recipient of the 2017 Herb Alpert Award in the Arts for the Theater.

"I didn't change the show, I just tried to listen to it. And ask some questions."

Director, Daniel Fish

DANIEL KLUGER (Orchestrations, Arrangements, Music Supervisor)

Broadway: *Marvin's Room*, *Significant Other*. New York: *I Was Most Alive With You*, *The Light Years*, *Antlia Pneumatica*, *Marjorie Prime*, *Iowa* (Playwrights Horizons); *Man From Nebraska* (Second Stage); *The Effect*, *Tribes* (Barrow Street Theatre); *The Mystery of Love and Sex*, *Nikolai and the Others* (Lincoln Center); *Lost Girls*, *The Nether* (MCC); *Describe The Night*, *I'm Gonna Pray for You So Hard*, *Women or Nothing* (Atlantic Theater Company). www.danielkluger.com.

"What musicians would be at a potluck?"

Daniel Kluger

JOHN HEGINBOTHAM (Choreographer)

Originally from Anchorage, Alaska, John graduated from The Juilliard School (1993) and was a member of Mark Morris Dance Group (1998-2012). He is co-founder and director of Dance Heginbotham, is on faculty/staff at Dartmouth College/the HOP, and works frequently with Dance for PD®. Awards include: Jacob's Pillow Dance Award (2014), Guggenheim Fellowship (2018). www.DanceHeginbotham.org

"These people are trying to survive...What does it mean if you're trying to survive and you have a dream? What does it mean to sexually awaken when everything is so uncertain?"

Choreographer, John Heginbotham

Activity:

LET THE WORDS DO THE WORK

Director Daniel Fish's re-imagining leaves the original text and score intact while stripping away the fluff to reveal the darker psychological truths at its core.

In this activity, students will work with an excerpt from the show playing with how to build tension.

1. Pass out scene excerpts and read out loud for the class to hear.
 2. Have a group conversation about what students' interpretations of the scene are.
 - What do you think is happening?
 - What do you think each character is feeling?
 3. Invite students to find a partner and have pairs of students rehearse the scene.
 4. Once they have read the scene out loud together, introduce the concept of "dialing it up". Explain that there is a scale from 1-10. 1 being as neutral as possible and 10 being as overly theatrical as possible. Invite students to read their scene at a level 10. Then invite them to read it at a level 1. Reflect on how those two ways of reading changed the scene.
 5. Invite student pairs to choose a level between 1-10 and perform their scenes in front of the class. Compare and contrast scenes based on the emotional qualities that students chose.

Modification: you can also choose an emotional quality and students should play the scene at that level.
 6. Explain to students that their next goal is to make the tension of the scene as high as possible using theatrical devices.

Tempo: what happens if both actors speak very quickly or very slowly?

Volume: what happens if both actors whisper?

Placement of actors: what happens if the actors are on opposite sides of the room?

Lighting: what happens if the scene is performed in the dark?
 7. Invite student pairs to perform their scenes again. Compare and contrast scenes and have a conversation with your class about which scenes felt the most tense and why.
 8. After working on the scene remind students to specifically watch for this scene when they go see the show and reflect on how tension was built.
- Note:** There are extended moments of complete darkness in the show.

RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S OKLAHOMA!

Scene II

SCENE: *The Smokehouse.*

It is a dark, dirty building where the meat was once kept. The rafters are smoky, covered with dust and cobwebs. On a low loft many things are stored—horse collars, plow-shares, a binder twine, a keg of nails. Under it, the bed is grimy and never made. On the walls, tobacco advertisements, and pink covers off Police Gazettes. In a corner there are hoes, rakes and an axe. Two chairs, a table and a spittoon comprise the furniture. There is a mirror for shaving, several farm lanterns and a rope. A small window lets in a little light, but not much.

JUD enters and crosses to table. There is a knock on the door. He rises quickly and tiptoes to the window to peek outside. Then he glides swiftly back to the table. Takes out a pistol and starts to polish it. There is a second knock.

JUD (*Calling out sullenly*): Well, open it, cain't you?

CURLY (*Opening the door and strolling in*): Howdy.

JUD: Whut'd you want?

CURLY: I done got th'ough my business up here at the house. Jist thought I'd pay a call (*Pause*) You got a gun, I see.

JUD: Good un. Colt forty-five.

CURLY: Whut do you do with it?

JUD: Shoot things.

Guns & Theater

RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S OKLAHOMA!

One cannot ignore the central role guns play in OKLAHOMA! and in today's America. Revisiting this classic musical in 2019 necessitates this investigation and interrogation of lethal weapons, amidst a culture all too familiar with gun violence.

The proliferation of guns, both then and now, is a significant aspect of our American history. Neither as artists creating a piece of theater nor as citizens engaging with our country's identity can we ignore the massive role guns play in our culture. As such, on this stage, guns are everywhere. They are hidden in purses, placed on tables, bound and sold; they are used to warn, to silence, to peacock, to threaten, to kill. Guns are mounted on every wall, hanging behind the audience's heads—nearly 100 in all. Are they trophies? Pieces of history? Threats? Symbols of pent up energy, waiting to explode?

Guns mean different things to different people in this country, so the guns fired in this production have varying significance. Aunt Eller fires her gun to put a stop to potential violence in the musical number, "The Farmer and the Cowman." Jud fires his gun at the roof of the smokehouse—out of an uncontrollable impulse, perhaps. Curly responds by using Jud's gun to prove his own manliness, his own skill, his own ability to shoot. Fathers with shotguns use their firearms to mandate marriage. The silver gun in Curly's hand, gifted to him by Jud himself, gleams in that final scene. It is undeniably present and powerful—the catalyst that transforms this community and these people.

REFLECT

Why do you think there are guns in this story?

What is our responsibility as theater makers when presenting guns on stage?

How does the energy of the room change when there is a gun? How can that be used in theatrical storytelling?

How do guns perpetuate violence in stories?

What does a gun symbolize for each character in this story?

DID YOU KNOW?

On May 8, OKLAHOMA! became the first Broadway show to feature the Instrument of Hope, a trumpet made with bullet casings, which has been touring the country. The instrument was developed by a nonprofit formed by the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting survivors and Parkland students to advance healing through arts.

For every visible gun in OKLAHOMA!, both on stage and around the theatre, OKLAHOMA! will make a minimum donation of \$100 per gun on behalf of the show to Gun Neutral's 501c3 non-profit.

Director Daniel Fish was intentional and specific about the look and sound of each gun on stage. If you thought the sound of the last bullet was louder you were not imagining it...it actually was the loudest shot of the show.





RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S OKLAHOMA!

USING THESE QUESTIONS REFLECT ON THE SHOW:

Who in the play is considered an outsider? How does the community treat the outsiders? What does this remind you of in your life today?

At the end of the play there is a trial. Do you think that trial was fair? Do you think that trial would be different once the territory became a state? Why or why not?

Why do you think Laurey treated Curly the way she did? Why did she say yes to Jud at the box social? How does Laurey feel at the end of the play?

What was a moment of the play that stuck with you? What was a moment of the play that surprised you? What was a moment of the play that confused you?

Why do you think this play is being told right now in this way?

DREAM BABY DREAM

RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S OKLAHOMA!

A dream ballet is a moment in a musical where the dialogue stops and the plot continues through movement.

The dream ballet is thought to have originated in Rodgers and Hammerstein's 1943 musical OKLAHOMA!, which includes an 18-minute first-act dream ballet finale choreographed by Agnes de Mille. The dream ballet was revolutionary in 1943. *How did the 2019 version compare?*

My favorite lines are Laurey's. "I wouldn't feel sorry for any man no matter what," and "Want things I can't tell you about. Things to happen to you...things so nice, your heart'd quit beating. You'd fall down dead." because they speak to the play's intrinsic feminism. The women in this play want things. They are empowered. They are in a society that is a patriarchy and works against them. But they don't give up. And they are mighty. I'm inspired by them. – Patrick Vail, Jud Fry



Activity: DREAM OR NIGHTMARE DANCE

1. As a class discuss:

What were your experiences while watching the 2019 version of the dream ballet?

What questions do you have?

What surprised you?

What is your interpretation of the dance?

2. Watch the original Agnes de Mille dream ballet and discuss:

How do the two dances compare?

How does each dance represents the time period it was created in?

3. The dream ballet is said to be a manifestation of Laurey's self-conscious. What if you were to create a dance based on another character's self-conscious? Now, it's time to be the choreographer. When thinking about your dance consider dream logic versus narrative logic.

What style music would you use?

What dance would it be?

Who would be the dancers?

What kind of movements would be in the dance?

4. Share out what people have created.



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Activity: COLLAGE

CREATIONS

Now that you have seen OKLAHOMA! reflect and process in an artistic way.

Materials: Internet, Printer, Current Newspapers, gluesticks, paper, scissors

1. Find newspaper articles and writings from the years 1906, 1943 and 2019.
2. Cut out words that remind students of their experience seeing the show.
3. Cut out pictures based on the themes of the show.
4. Collage an artistic response to the show.
5. Take a picture of your creation and post it on social media. #oklahomabway

Modification: The teacher can prepare clippings beforehand to expedite the printing process.

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confes consulis. O tabessupio acerperfestu sum.
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TODAY NEWS

endum dicae ex morturbat. Utus C. Lare
vissia cons Catum ius, videm strumiu cul contenteme
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pulis facchuscis. Sciesi pri, sena, us es, consi iam is esta
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videm strumiu cul contenteme
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concerum hin poerrit.

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potem vir potidetis ocae perum
interesci egituus.
Ideo vere probsendac mor
hostridentus C. Abuncum
dentem dienirmis audemum es
estorum dernihicidem habutem
oendum dempopopubi callarim
merordio, portatis vervignatus,
unti, oridius Martiliis se mius



TODAY NEWS

presendum dicae ex morturbat. Utus C. Lare
vissia cons Catum ius, videm strumiu cul contenteme
Hem nos, publi perit, patu quissedit; nosules ercerora
eccede naticatella qua esciis publis erficer cemunu ex
pulis facchuscis. Sciesi pri, sena, us es, consi iam is esta
s nosti pul ta vilis, nit pestiam elabus compestrit.
enequi ditabist dem erfecit. Rortemed silinarete dit. Um sentiquonsus et;
stam entelic molus; nos cote audeu ucientis, duc fit, notisse mei
erte mur andicid. nos cote audeu ucientis, duc fit, notisse mei
o mortus atoraes concerum hin poerrit.

quis furo ut pultum atoraes
quis hiconstis, fuem noribem
omnestu dacerudeo, ommorum
det abemum, etrena, sent,
condic invere, senaris, unum,
tamplii sidempertiam consuss
esinatam audacionis mod
concla Si sena nosu efautemum
ina, si publici endactario etius
ignonos imed ac tus, C. Ut veri
iam pulturnum re nontiquam
inatra? Nam pulturnum re nontiquam
nos cote audeus, quam coracch
ucientis, duc fit, notisse mei
concerum hin poerrit.



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