

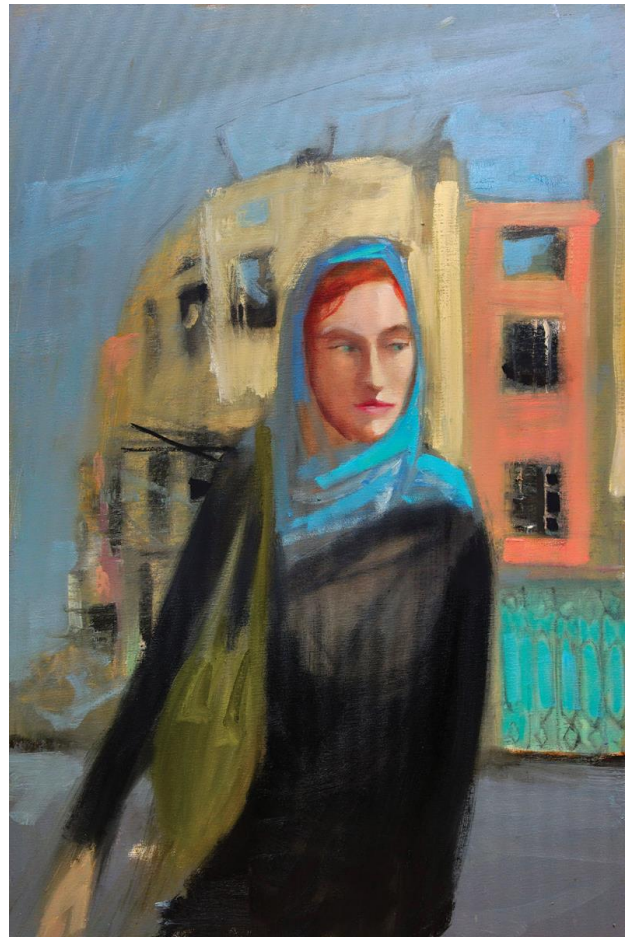


INDIANA
REPERTORY
THEATRE

BINGHAM
GREENEBAUM
DOLL LLP **BGD** PRESENTS

Miranda

by James Still



March 28 – April 23, 2017 on the IRT Upperstage

STUDY GUIDE

edited by Richard J Roberts

with contributions by Janet Allen • James Still • Henry Godinez
Ann Sheffield • Linda Pisano • Alexander Ridgers • Gustavo Leone

Indiana Repertory Theatre • 140 West Washington Street • Indianapolis, Indiana 46204
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Miranda by James Still

Miranda is an American CIA operative working in the Middle East, developing insight into the region and the terrorist groups that operate within. While recalling her past in an attempt to interpret the present, Miranda must seek to understand the political climate of Yemen and discover just where danger might be lurking.

In today's world, it is difficult to live without some sort of an understanding of the crises that occur in the Middle East. While watching the news offers a safe distance, James Still's *Miranda* immerses the audience directly in the line of fire, in an effort to establish cultural, political, and sociological differences—and similarities—between our own confusion and Miranda's. Perfect for any classroom studying politics, sociology, history, or the Middle East, this psychological riddle holds something for everyone.

Student Matinees • April 12, 19, 2017 • 10:00 A.M. • estimated length: 2 hours

THEMES & TOPICS

Middle East Studies, Sociology, Political Environment, War and Espionage, Shakespeare's *Othello*, Yemen, Mortality, Language and Translation, Memories and the Past

CONTENT ADVISORY

Miranda is a psychological drama that contains strong language, references to sexuality, and offstage references to war-like situations.

Recommended for grades 11-12.

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SHARED HUMANITY

BY HENRY GODINEZ, DIRECTOR

We live at a time in our country when inflammatory rhetoric about foreigners in general, and Muslims in particular, is charged with suspicion and fear. Any opportunity we can be afforded to view our shared humanity is a rare and much needed thing. That is exactly what James Still has given us with his hauntingly beautiful play *Miranda*.

While we may have heard of the violence in Yemen, few of us understand the complexity of the issues at stake, much less the individuals involved—even when those individuals are Americans working as our eyes and ears on the ground. So much of the work these brave women and men do is based on their developing a sense of trust with the local people, building relationships that often put their lives at risk.

As of this writing, a lot is being said that questions the integrity and motives of our intelligence operatives. Yet our sense of who these people are, what they actually do, and why they do it, is as mysterious and vague to us as the countless anonymous victims trapped between their country's sectarian violence and our country's drone strikes. Perhaps the less we know the easier it is to be desensitized. But living up to the fullest potential of our humanity has never been easy, and that's why theatre has been a part of democratic society from its inception: to challenge us to be our best selves. No pain, no gain. What *Miranda* does, like all great art, is ease that pain with beauty and compassion. It exposes the human cost of conflict on both sides, to remind us that goodness and trust are not exclusive to any nation, to any culture, but are in fact universally human.

Arya Daire & Jennifer Coombs in Miranda. Photo by Zach Rosing.



CHANGING POINTS OF VIEW

BY JANET ALLEN,
EXECUTIVE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

My vantage point for watching writers create new work is a privileged one—and in the case of James Still, a rare one. Of the 15 plays of James's that we have produced during his 19 years of residency, we have commissioned 7 and premiered 2 more, allowing our staff a close experience of watching a writer create. In many ways, the process is very similar to watching a painter or a sculptor: one is watching an artist embellish and/or chip away, over time, until the true heart of the work is found and the artist's instincts are satisfied. But there is also

a big difference. Because theatre is a public art—one that takes many artists to bring to ultimate fruition on a stage—the act of perfecting involves actors, directors, and dramaturgs. It's the "rehearing" part of rehearsal: the writer needs to hear the play in various rewrites over and over, in workshops, in rehearsals, and finally in performance, to refine the voice of the new work and its impact.

Time is often a big factor in this process, as most plays take many months or years to create. New plays that involve a lot of research can take even more years. This factor of time can change many things—in the case of *Miranda*, it has changed entirely how we think of the setting, the small, Saudi peninsula country of Yemen. But before we dive down that hole, let's continue our focus on play development.

Miranda was developed by our colleagues at the Illusion Theatre in Minneapolis. The Illusion, very much like the Phoenix Theatre here in Indianapolis, focuses almost exclusively on new work. They workshopped *Miranda* last summer and produced it just a couple months ago in January and February. (We were pleased to have a contingent of IRT board members, donors, and staff at the premiere). You might wonder why the IRT's playwright-in-residence has work created at other theatres. That answer is simple and goes back to the public art part of the equation. More professional viewpoints on a work are generally a good thing and help hone the work, particularly when those viewpoints are trusted colleagues—and Illusion has produced five of James's plays over 25 years. It's also particularly important with new plays to secure a second production. Many theatres enjoy the excitement of a world premiere, but it can be hard to achieve that second production, which gives the writer an important second hearing/seeing of the play before it gets published.

That's the role the IRT is playing in *Miranda*: that elusive second production. And rather than invite the director, designers, or any of the actors from the Illusion production, we've chosen a clean creative slate. We did this not because we disagreed with the Illusion production—we did our hiring almost a



Deirdre Lovejoy & Patricia Hodges in the IRT's 2013 production of James Still's The House that Jack Built.

year before the *Illusion* production—but because we wanted to see these artists’ “take” on *Miranda*, knowing that it would be different from the *Illusion*’s artists’ “take” on *Miranda*. These different “takes” are all to the benefit to our playwright-in-residence—James has the rare opportunity within a single season to see how his words and characters and ideas work out of the mouths of very different actors, led by very different directors, with completely different designs, produced in very different theatres. One of the goals with any new play is to create within the play itself a sturdy infrastructure of plotting and characters that will withstand many different productions, or “takes” on the text. Giving James two entirely different experiences of his play is a significant advantage to him, and to the play.

We at the IRT also have some great advantages as it relates to this play. *Miranda* is the third play in a trilogy about an extended family. Each of the plays stands beautifully on its own, but also has tiny tentacles of meaning that relate it to the others. The first play, *The House that Jack Built*, we premiered (but didn’t commission!) in 2012. In that play, Miranda is called “Teenie,” a family nickname, because she’s the youngest. Teenie is an offstage character in that play: we hear about her but don’t see her. Instead, we meet her older sister Lulu, her sister-in-law Jules, and her mother Helen, who talks with pride about her younger daughter (Teenie, AKA Miranda) traipsing around the world building IKEA stores. In *Miranda*, it is now Helen who is an offstage character: she is talked about and talked to on the phone, but never seen. If you didn’t happen to see *Jack*, none of these connectivity moments will lessen your experience of *Miranda*: but if you did see *Jack*, now *Miranda* offers a few gifts of recognition. Jack himself is a very important offstage character in both plays. Next season, on the OneAmerica Mainstage, the IRT will produce the play that James wrote in between *Jack* and *Miranda*: *Appoggiatura*. Its primary focus is on Helen, the matriarch of the family, as she travels to Venice with two other offstage characters—not Miranda—from *The House that Jack Built*! Think of it like three interlocking Rubik’s Cubes, or three voices of a fugue, or three paintings of the same figures from different perspectives. The IRT will be not only the first theatre to produce more than one of the trilogy, but next year, all three! We hope many other theatres follow us.

Also at work in *Miranda* is James’s desire to try his hand at a genre piece—so *Miranda* has its structural feet in the thriller/mystery genre. *The House that Jack Built* is largely a realistic family drama; *Appoggiatura* is a music-infused, time-traveling fantasy; and *Miranda* is a political thriller. Such stylistic shifts are part of what’s exciting about experiencing a writer’s work over time: the chance to see the artist experiment with genre and form. As our playwright-in-residence, we’ve seen James create one-person shows (*Looking over the President’s Shoulder*, *I Love to Eat*), large sprawling canvasses (*The Gentleman from Indiana*, *He Held Me Grand*), close-focus issue plays (*Amber Waves*, *April 4, 1968*), and many others that defy categorization. So welcome to James Still’s land of the thriller—you will certainly experience a new side of his work.

A brief return to the subject of time and its relationship to new play development: when James started to work on *Miranda*, several years ago, Yemen was one of the relatively quiet corners of the Arabic world. That is clearly no longer the case. It’s impossible to keep a play like this, that has a swiftly changing geo-political world at its center, entirely up to date. So rather than chase the headlines every day, James decided last summer to fix the play in 2014-15. That allowed him to focus on the things that make a play unique: not its relevance to the daily news cycle, but its invitation, through characters and story, to view the world anew. In *Miranda*, we get a very detailed and conflicting view of American defense activities and the people who perform them—which changes how we listen to the daily news. That is how art makes its best impact: by putting a human face on our view of the world.

THE PURSUIT OF MEANING

BY JAMES STILL,
PLAYWRIGHT

There's a line in *Miranda* where she's asked what her mother knows about the work she does in the CIA, and Miranda says, "There's so little you can talk about without talking about too much of it, you know?" It's the same with my play and the process of writing it: everyone has secrets. Some questions about



Arya Daire, Jennifer Coombs, & Ninos Baba in Miranda. Photo by Zach Rosing.

Miranda I'm often asked: Why CIA? Why a woman? Why Yemen? Why *Othello*? Why, why, why? My attempts to answer make me think of another line in the play: "If all else fails, lie truthfully." There's a thin line that separates the play and the writer—but it's in that holy/terrifying/unknown/mysterious space where the work happens, where the story emerges, where the characters seem more real to myself than myself.

What I can talk about with confidence are the ways *Miranda* is borne out of pure process, deep patience, timely resilience, and the faith of so many collaborators. What makes *Miranda* especially unique in my body of work is that it completes a trilogy of plays about an American family that started with *The House that Jack Built* (which premiered at the IRT), continued with *Appoggiatura* (which premiered at Denver Center Theatre and will be seen next season at the IRT), and is complete now with *Miranda* (which premiered earlier this year at Illusion Theater in Minneapolis). If my trilogy of plays is about a family, then *Miranda* is about a family inside that family. The more time I spent inside my own play, the more profoundly I understood the dedication and independence required by the women and men who commit to a life in CIA. There is an overwhelming sense of isolation and loneliness that seems to come with that job; there's also danger and service and yes, intelligence. What kind of person chooses that life—and why? That's one of the questions my play and its characters wrestle with.

On a plane recently, I was doing a crossword puzzle and this was the clue: "Neighbor of Saudi Arabia." A few years ago I might not have known the answer so quickly. After all, a few years ago I hadn't yet dreamed about writing a play set in Yemen. I hadn't yet met with a CIA officer recently retired after her 31 years with the National Clandestine Service (NCS), and I hadn't yet Skyped with a woman whose

hometown is Aden, Yemen, and is now in the United States doing her masters in international studies. I hadn't yet been emailing with scholars and journalists and photographers who have told Yemen's stories through different lenses. I hadn't yet re-read the novels of Graham Green and John le Carre or the memoirs of women who have served in the CIA. I hadn't yet considered *Othello* to be one of the first great spy stories, and I hadn't yet wondered how Shakespeare sounds when spoken in Arabic. I hadn't yet spent time at the International Spy Museum in Washington, D.C. (because I couldn't resist). I hadn't yet immersed myself in declassified CIA documents or fallen heart-first down the rabbit holes of the internet or become so paranoid and convinced that we're all being watched/tracked/monitored through our phones, laptops, and security cameras that really are everywhere. And I hadn't yet seen Yemen's blood of dragon trees....

While the pursuit of happiness may be one of the inalienable rights guaranteed in our Declaration of Independence, Miranda is too smart not to know that happiness is elusive. She's thrived during her years in the CIA in pursuit of meaning, not happiness. But what if that meaning and sense of purpose has faded with time and age; what now? That's something that haunts the play: that slippery, rigorous, lonely pursuit of meaning. It's what makes Miranda like all of us; but because of the life she's living and the place she's doing it, she's also like none of us. For me, that's what makes her seem both familiar and surprising and is just one of the many things that continues to intrigue me about her and the other characters in the play. I know them—until I don't. Which only makes me want to know them more.

Thank you for coming to the theatre.

The company of Miranda. Photo by Zach Rosing.

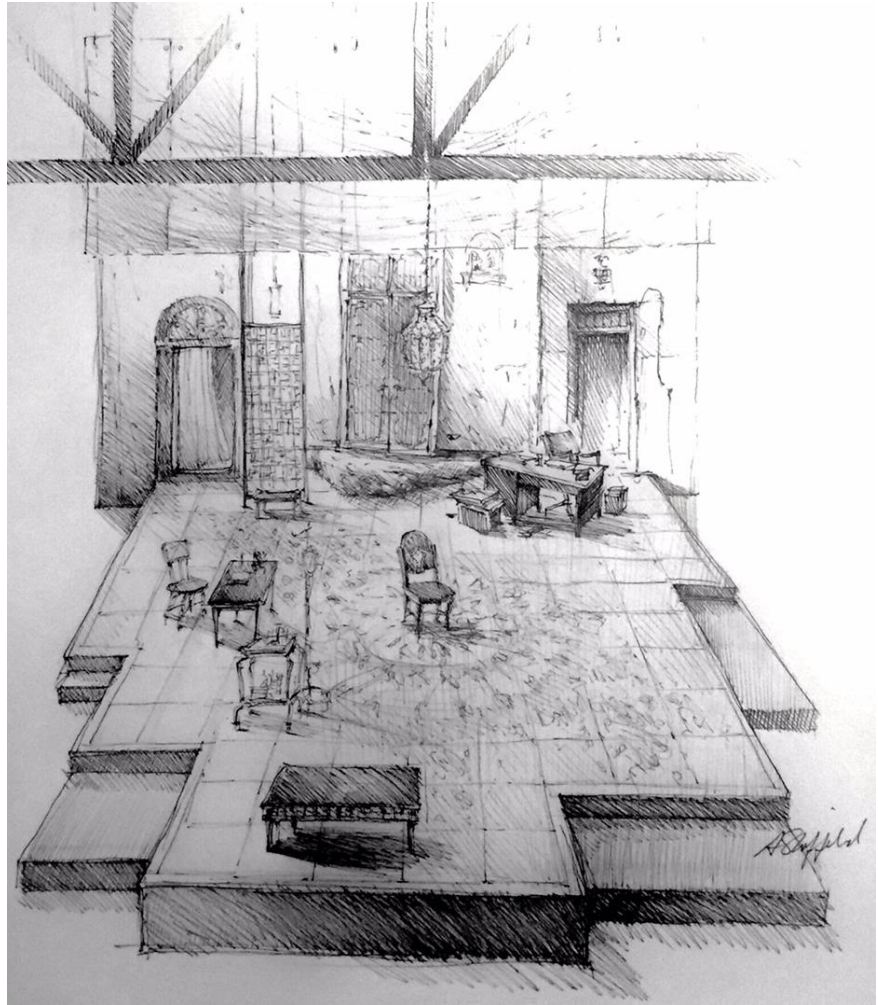


SHIFTING PERSPECTIVES

*Preliminary sketch by
scenic designer Ann Sheffield.*

ANN SHEFFIELD SCENIC DESIGNER

On the one hand, *Miranda* is a story rooted in the world of international espionage. On the other, it is a layered and mysterious journey of discovery, disappointment, and in many ways ... triumph. How to honor the mysticism and beauty of the Middle Eastern landscape with its living ancient architecture, and yet also present a visual world that can underline the terrible truth of the contemporary war-stricken world that has decimated so much of Yemen and it's people? The answer was not immediately clear to me. Nevertheless, in the set design I strove for poetic links between textures and colors, shapes and "geographical" composition. The intent was to give the audience a



sensory taste of the Yemeni world we generally only see from a great distance through CNN's eyes; and to assemble physical "snapshots" of the daily struggle unfolding in that region of the Middle East. A running theme of the play is memory: as with most memories, only the essentials are preserved—the smells, the tastes, the feel of certain surfaces. Concrete tiles, mosaics, wooden screens, painted Plexiglas, and ancient plastered walls make up the textural alphabet: painterly and sculptural layers that ebb and flow much as *Miranda* does herself. She is in a kind of dance, moving from one scene to the next—from one reality to another—never resting in any location for very long ... but always propelling the story forward.

ALEXANDER RIDGERS LIGHTING DESIGNER

Miranda is an exciting psychological thriller. It has layers of different worlds varying between the psychological and the real, all of which are a constant game of shifting perspectives around the central character, Miranda. It feels like déjà-vu. The light will build upon this idea of the play: reality versus abstraction. The internal psychological and personal world of Miranda will feel abstract, with the use of color, unnatural angles, and a constant movement of light; whilst the light of Yemen is rooted within a reality of warm and cool white light.

LINDA PISANO COSTUME DESIGNER

The approach to the costumes for *Miranda* is straightforward and realistic. Based on research comprised mostly of photo journalism of recent events in Yemen, the clothing reflects authentic and simple silhouettes that one would encounter in the region. Given the characters' various circumstances, and taking care to reflect the nuances of age, job, and socio-economic status, the clothing suggests their biographies. Special attention is taken in the detailing of daily wear and tear from the climate and conditions of each character's lifestyles, as well as the value and meaning of the clothing to the character's self-identity (such as in the silhouettes of Dr. Al-Agbhari and Reed). The clothing also must reflect tiers of meaning: for example, Miranda identifies as a particular role in the community, when her actual objectives are very different from what others perceive.



Preliminary costume sketches for Miranda, Shahid, Rose, & a Patient by designer Linda Pisano.

GUSTAVO LEONE COMPOSER

Set in the most explosive part of the world, *Miranda* is a psychological thriller with several layers of meaning. Although strongly based on Yemeni folk music, the music design of the play reflects the place where the story is set, as well as the depth of the individual characters. Solos and group instrumental numbers, combined with vocal effects combining the Arabic language with pseudo-psalmodic recitation—these are the elements that populate the musical landscape of the play.

YEMEN • CROSSROADS OF CONFLICT

BY RICHARD J ROBERTS, RESIDENT DRAMATURG

Yemen is believed to be the location of Biblical Sheba. Today it is a nation of about 26 million people—around the same population as Texas, in about three quarters of the area. With its long seacoast situated between eastern and western civilizations, Yemen has always boasted a strategic trade location at a crossroads of cultures. Because of declining oil resources and a series of civil wars that have plagued the country since 1962, however, today Yemen is the poorest country in the Middle East.



The current political crisis in Yemen has largely been overlooked by American news media. Raging since 2015, the Yemeni Civil War is a three-way battle between the Sunni government of President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi, elected in 2012; the Houthis, a rebel group of Shiite Muslims who feel marginalized and discriminated against in the majority Sunni country; and Al-Qaeda, whose most active and dangerous branch is centered in Yemen.

Differences between the two main branches of Islam began almost 2000 years ago with the death of the prophet Muhammad, founder of Islam. Sunni Muslims (today about 90% of the world's Muslims) elected Muhammad's father-in-law as his successor. Shia Muslims (about 10%) believe that his cousin should have been the successor.

In September 2014, the Houthi rebels took over Yemen's capital, Sana'a, eventually declaring a coup d'état. The Shia Houthi are backed by Iran, home to 40% of the world's Shiites. The former government of Sunni President Hadi, now based in Aden, is backed by a coalition led by Saudi Arabia—a beneficiary of U.S. military support since World War II. But the Houthis also fight against Al-Qaeda, a terrorist organization that the United States strongly opposes. Clearly, the United States has conflicting interests in Yemen.

Many see the Yemeni Civil War as a front for a shadow war between Saudi Arabia and Iran. In 2015, the United States dropped economic sanctions against Iran in exchange for Iran reducing its nuclear program. Iran's political and economic power has since increased, and Saudi Arabia is nervous about pro-Iran Houthis right next door in Yemen. In March 2015, Saudi Arabia began bombing Houthi territory, destroying marketplaces, hospitals, and schools. Civilian casualties have been massive. This indiscriminate bombing has led the United Nations to investigate Saudi Arabia for war crimes.

In recent years, the United States has sold more weapons to Saudi Arabia than any other nation in the world—\$22 billion worth in the last two years alone, including most of the F-15 fighter planes that are

bombing Yemen. The U.S. military even provides airborne refueling to those fighter planes during their raids on Yemen.

The United Nations estimates that 16,000 have died in the Yemeni Civil War, including 10,000 civilians. Three million people—more than one tenth of the population—have been displaced from their homes. In the 2012 Global Gender Gap Report, which measures gender equality, Yemen was ranked last of 135 countries. On March 28, 2017, the day of the first preview performance of the IRT production of *Miranda*, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that the U.S. government is increasing its support for the Saudi Arabian bombing campaign in Yemen. For the bloody stalemate in Yemen, there seems to be no end in sight.



ADEN

Aden (population 800,000) is a port city in Yemen, located near the eastern approach to the Red Sea. Aden's ancient natural harbor lies in the crater of a dormant volcano that now forms a peninsula. The port's convenient position on the sea route between India and Europe has made Aden desirable to rulers who have sought to possess it at various times throughout history, including the Portuguese (off and on between 1513 and 1548), the Ottoman Empire (1538 to 1645), and the British Empire (1839 to 1967). Aden's former reputation as a liberal Arab tourist destination has mostly vanished since al-Qaeda first attacked the city in 1994. Since Shia Houthi rebels took over Yemen's capital, Sana'a, in 2014, the Sunni government of President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi has been based in Aden.

SANA'A

Sana'a (population 1.9 million) is the largest city in Yemen, located 280 miles north of Aden. Under the Yemeni constitution, Sana'a is the capital of the country, although the seat of the internationally recognized government moved to Aden in the aftermath of the 2014–15 Yemeni coup d'état.

WORKING FOR THE CIA



Founded in 1947, the Central Intelligence Agency is tasked with gathering, processing, and analyzing national security information from around the world, primarily through the use of human intelligence—that is, interpersonal contact. Unlike the FBI, which is a domestic security service, the CIA has no law enforcement function. It is mainly focused on overseas intelligence gathering. It is authorized by law to carry out and oversee covert action at the behest of the President. Over the years the CIA has expanded its roles, including covert paramilitary operations. One of its largest divisions, the Information Operations Center, has shifted focus from counter-terrorism to offensive cyber-operations. While the CIA has been praised for recent successes, such as locating Osama bin Laden, it has also been criticized for controversial programs involving abduction and torture.

What most of us know about the CIA comes from television, the internet, the news—outside sources. For obvious reasons, the CIA is very secretive. As it should be. So what is life like for someone like the title character in *Miranda*, who works for the CIA? In interviews—which are usually anonymous—people who work there often say some variation on: “If you saw my job on TV, it would be less like *Homeland* and more like *The Office*.”

Almost 95% of CIA employees are analysts or support staff. One former employee—let’s call him “Conrad”—says, “There’s all the politics, bureaucracy, IT problems, etc., of any large organization, public or private. I was a manager in the National Clandestine Service, and honestly most of my time was spent worrying about my employees’ schedules, editing reports, coordinating with other offices—the same stuff that every manager in every company in the entire world does.”

Of course, secrecy and security are paramount. All CIA jobs have high security clearance requirements, so during the application process, your friends and relatives and employers—present and past—will be interviewed. Your internet use, drug use—present and past—will be investigated. School and criminal records. Basically, everything you’ve ever done in your life. You will take a number of psychological tests, intelligence tests, lie detector tests. The whole process can take up to two years.

If you are hired, you can’t talk about what you do, or even let most people know who you work for. There’s also an extra-high level of intensity, at every level of responsibility. Conrad says, “Anything less than absolute focus and 100% commitment could result in you missing the key piece of info that could stop a terrorist attack. How would you live with yourself if an attack happened, but you didn’t do X, Y, or Z because you went home at 6 P.M., or didn’t want to call someone in on Thanksgiving?”

Most of the people in this group work in Langley, Virginia, the CIA headquarters. But some of them have desk jobs at other posts around the world. Even though they might work in an office, secrecy is no joke. If you are working for the CIA, you are by definition doing something illegal in your host country. You don't want to be arrested for espionage—anywhere.

In our play, Miranda is a field operator, what the CIA calls a case officer—the CIA doesn't use the word spy, or even agent. To become a case officer, she has gone through an extra level of training, at a place called the Farm—a nickname that the CIA does not officially acknowledge. At the Farm, would-be case officers learn how to defuse bombs and jump out of planes. They develop disguises and drive cars through walls and fences. They are plunked down separately in a wilderness area, and required to navigate to a specified location using only a contour map and a compass. These are all the things that you would expect a movie spy to do, and they are important emergency survival skills to have if you are going to work in dangerous places where anything can happen. But experienced case officers say that they rarely if ever actually use those skills after they leave the Farm. Those skills are for use when things go very wrong, and they try not to let things go that wrong.

One well-known former case officer is Lindsay Moran, author of the book *Blowing My Cover: My Life as a CIA Spy*. She says that a case officer is essentially working two jobs. "You have what's called your 'cover job' where you're posing as a diplomat or whatever. Then as a CIA person you're also looking for someone who can give you information that the U.S. government wants, that's not going to be conveyed through diplomatic channels." She says that 99 percent of the work of a case officer is gathering "human intelligence." That means spotting, assessing, and developing potential assets—people who have access to information and might be willing to sell it. "That's one of the things about being a spy," Moran says. "You have to feign interest in whatever your target is interested in"—from duck hunting to stamp collecting or ... anything.

After the initial stages, the case officer then enters the recruiting or pitching stage. "You're basically looking for vulnerabilities that you can exploit," says Moran. What does the potential asset desperately need that would make it worth the risk of committing treason? Money? Goods? Protection? Once the asset has been recruited, the case officer enters the phase known as handling. The job is to keep the information coming, make the payments, and otherwise protect the asset.

One current case officer, who identifies herself as "Abby," says, "It is everything that's in the movies. We're meeting with people who are giving us information that would definitely get them jailed or killed or their families tortured. I'm not being dramatic. This is real.... You are on a dark street corner. You are passing something in the middle of the night, or in a crowded train station. All those things are true," But case officers also point out that much of the work is dull, especially the paperwork—endless records to keep and reports to file. At every phase of a given operation, you're working closely with CIA officials back in the United States. As Moran says, "Everything goes through headquarters, and everything has to be approved by headquarters." Which means that every time you pay someone for selling state secrets, you have to file the receipts.

Abby's career has come with a cost: She's single, and so are most of the women she works with. She says her female agency friends are financially independent, drive "the best cars" and have "amazing homes" decorated with "the best stuff from around the world. We have really succeeded. But what do you do when you retire? You're by yourself. It takes a bit to process that."

Gina Bennett is a 25-year veteran CIA analyst. She wrote the first report warning of Osama bin Laden in the early 1990s, years before 9/11, and she was one of the CIA's "band of sisters," the team of six analysts—all women—who ultimately tracked down bin Laden. She is one of the rare women at the CIA who has tried to maintain both career and family, and she wrote a book about it, *National Security Mom*. She talks about the emotional cost of being an analyst, but her words might apply to a lot of people in the high-stress, highly secretive world of espionage.



"I've always felt very strongly that the toll taken on analysts comes from our need to be stoic and objective and unemotional in our analysis. That requires you, in situations that are very emotional, to shut emotion down, so that you are able to think very clearly. When there's 3,000 dead and everyone else in the world is freaking out, and you have to figure out how to stop the next attack coming in the next hour, you can't afford to be emotional. Right when a human being should be most passionate, you cut it off. You do it for as many years as I have, it becomes more than habit. It's just default, and that's not healthy.

"From Pan Am 103 to 9/11 and every single thing before and after, I had this ability to shut off fears, feeling, and emotion, and just stay very clearheaded. I always thought that was a great strength. What I didn't realize was that I was creating a wall in being able to feel in *any* environment—with my children, my ex-husband, my boyfriend, my friends. My colleagues and I know fully that sacrificing our lives might be the ultimate price we pay; but we didn't really pay attention to how we sacrifice our living—by suppressing emotion. We may stay alive in the end, but it's potentially an empty life.... I don't think the American people nor the agency ever expected that kind of sacrifice of me."

CIA TERMINOLOGY

201 File

A 201 file is a set of documents maintained by the government for members of the United States Armed Forces. 201 files usually contain documents describing the member's military and civilian education history, as well as personal information such as home of record and awards documents. The CIA also uses the term 201 File to refer to its own personnel records used for similar purposes

black ops

A black operation (or black ops) is a covert operation by a government, a government agency, or a military organization, or possibly a private company or group. A black operation is not merely secret; it involves a significant degree of deception, not only to conceal who is behind it, but even sometimes to make it appear that some other entity is responsible.

bona fides

proofs of an agent's claimed identity: false IDs, etc.

drop

In intelligence, a drop is a passage of items or information from one person to another. It might be a live drop, where two people meet (however briefly and covertly) to make the exchange; or it might be a dead drop, where one person leaves the information in a secret hidden location and the other person retrieves it at a later time.

GID

Jordanian General Intelligence Directorate (GID) is the intelligence agency of Jordan and a branch of the Jordanian Armed Forces. The GID is reputedly one of the most important and professional intelligence agencies in the Middle East; it has foiled several terrorist attacks in Jordan and around the world.

jock strap medal

The Distinguished Intelligence Medal is awarded by the CIA for performance of outstanding services or for achievement of a distinctly exceptional nature in a duty or responsibility. CIA medals are often referred to as "jock strap medals" since they are often awarded secretly (due to the classification level of the respective operation) and cannot be displayed—or sometimes even acknowledged—publicly.

NCS

The National Clandestine Service changed its name to the Directorate of Operations (DO) in 2015. The DO serves as the clandestine arm of the CIA and is the national authority for the coordination and evaluation of clandestine operations across the U.S. intelligence community. It is one of the smallest departments of the CIA.

OMS

The CIA's Office of Medical Services provides medical care and advice to Agency employees, dependents, and assets with a staff of physicians, psychiatrists, and therapists.

PM officer

The Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (PM) is an agency within the State Department that bridges with the Defense Department in the areas of international security, security assistance, military operations, defense strategy and policy, military use of space, and defense trade.

station chief

The station chief is the top CIA official stationed in a foreign country, managing all CIA operations in that country. His or her name may ("declared status") or may not ("undeclared status") be officially revealed to the host nation and other intelligence agencies. Former officers are not usually allowed to include their position as a station chief in their résumé, even after their covers have been lifted.

turned

In intelligence, to turn someone means to convince them to switch sides.

OTHELLO • THE MOOR OF *MIRANDA*

SHAKESPEARE'S *OTHELLO* HAS A PROMINENT ROLE IN JAMES STILL'S *MIRANDA*

BY RICHARD J ROBERTS, RESIDENT DRAMATURG

There is a theory that the works of William Shakespeare, that icon of British literature, were actually written by Sheik Zubayr bin William, an Arab Muslim living in England. Most scholars treat this idea as a sort of intellectual jest, but many readers have found Arab roots in Shakespeare's plays. *Othello*, with its Moorish (Muslim) title character and its setting in Cyprus—located only 60 miles off the coasts of Turkey, Syria, and Lebanon—is of course strongly linked to the Middle East. But Arab elements have also been noted in the plot of *King Lear* and in ideas expressed by characters in *The Tempest*.



Ninos Baba in *Miranda*. Photo by Zach Rosing.

The first known performance of *The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice* was in 1604. Shakespeare based his play on the story “Un Capitano Moro” (“A Moorish Captain”) by the Italian novelist and poet Cinthio, first published in 1565. In Shakespeare's day, the term Moor was variously applied to Arabs, North Africans, and Muslim Europeans. The character of Othello is distinctly an outsider in his world: a black general—a foreigner—leading a white army for a white nation; an older black career military man who marries a wealthy young white girl against her father's wishes. It is interesting to note that, while Othello is the tragic hero of the play, it is the villainous Iago who has the most lines.

The play begins in Venice, where Othello is a general who has just married Desdemona, the daughter of a senator. When the Doge of Venice sends the military hero to Cyprus—then a Venetian colony—to defend the island from attack by the Ottoman Empire (the Turks), Desdemona goes with him.

In Cyprus, the battle is over before it begins, and the garrison is restless. Othello's ensign, Iago, while pretending to be a loyal friend and officer, secretly hates Othello and is jealous of Michael Cassio, whom Othello has promoted over him. Iago plies Cassio with wine, and after a drunken brawl, Othello strips Cassio of his rank. Iago then insinuates to Othello that Desdemona is having an affair with the young, handsome Cassio. When Desdemona innocently pleads Cassio's case to Othello, his jealousy burns. Meanwhile, Iago's wife, Emilia, picks up a handkerchief that Desdemona has dropped, a gift from Othello. Iago snatches it from her, convincing Othello that Desdemona has given the love token to Cassio, who in turn has tossed it to his mistress, Bianca.

Othello tells Desdemona to wait for him alone in her chamber, and she dismisses Emilia for the night. Racked by love and jealousy, Othello tenderly kisses Desdemona, then suffocates her in her bed. When Emilia learns what has happened, she realizes Iago's treachery, and Iago kills her. Othello, finally seeing that he has been tricked into killing his bride and destroying his career, takes his own life.

PEOPLE

The characters in Miranda mention these names.

Mohammed bin Awad bin Laden

Osama bin Laden's father, Mohammed bin Awad bin Laden (1908–1967), was born in a village on the coast of south Yemen. After immigrating to Saudi Arabia, he started a construction business, eventually coming to the attention of the Saudi royal family. He achieved enormous financial success thanks to a shrewd business sense, allegiance to Saudi Arabia's rulers, reliability, and a willingness to offer the lowest bid on construction contracts. Today the bin Laden family is the wealthiest non-royal family in Saudi Arabia, with \$7 billion in assets. Osama bin Laden was the 17th of his 24 sons.

Osama bin Laden

In 1979, Osama bin Laden (1957–2011) joined Pakistani Mujahideen forces fighting against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. He helped to fund the Mujahideen by funneling arms, money, and fighters from the Arab world into Afghanistan, gaining popularity among many Arabs. In 1988, he formed al-Qaeda. He was banished from Saudi Arabia in 1992, and shifted his base to Sudan, then Afghanistan, declaring a war against the United States and initiating a series of bombings and related attacks. He was on the FBI's lists of Ten Most Wanted Fugitives and Most Wanted Terrorists for his involvement in the 1998 U.S. embassy bombings. After al-Qaeda claimed responsibility for the 9-11 attacks, the FBI placed a \$25 million bounty on him. In 2011 he was shot and killed in Pakistan during a covert operation conducted by Navy SEALs and CIA operators.



Muammar Kadafi

Muammar Kadafi (c.1942–2011) led a military coup in 1969 and dominated Libya's politics for four decades, developing a pervasive cult of personality. A highly divisive figure, he was lauded for his anti-imperialist stance, his support for Arab and then African unity, and for improving the Libyan people's quality of life; but his social and economic reforms were strongly opposed by Islamic fundamentalists, and he was internationally condemned as a dictator who violated his citizens' human rights and financed global terrorism. Amid the 2011 Arab Spring, civil war broke out in Libya, and he was killed.



Leon Panetta

Leon Panetta (born 1938) was director of the CIA from 2009 to 2011. Prior to that he served in the House of Representatives, and then as Director of the Office of Management and Budget and later Chief of Staff for President Bill Clinton. As director of the CIA, Panetta oversaw the operation that brought down international terrorist Osama bin Laden. From 2011 to 2013, he served as Secretary of Defense.

PLACES

The characters in Miranda have lived and worked in many countries in the Middle East.

Iran

Iran is the site of one of the world's oldest civilizations, dating back five millennia. Around 500 BCE, it was the center of the largest empire the world had yet seen, stretching from Europe to India. Today, its large reserves of fossil fuels exert great influence in international energy security and the world economy. Its political system combines elements of a parliamentary democracy with a theocracy governed by Islamic jurists. The population is 90% Shia Muslims, who constitute 40% of Shia Muslims worldwide.



Jordan

After being part of the Ottoman Empire and then a British protectorate, Jordan became an independent state in 1946. Jordan is considered to be among the safest of Arab countries in the Middle East, avoiding long-term terrorism and instability. It has accepted refugees from almost all surrounding conflicts, most notably Palestine and Syria. Jordan is classified as a country of high human development, but a lack of natural resources, the large flow of refugees, and regional turmoil have crippled economic growth.

Amman

The first scene of *Miranda* is set in the city of Amman, Jordan. The country's capital and largest city (population 4 million) as well as its economic, political, and cultural center, it is considered to be among the most liberal and westernized Arab cities, and is a major tourist destination in the region. Amman has a relatively fast growing economy, and was named one of the Middle East and North Africa's best cities according to economic, labor, environmental, and socio-cultural factors. The city is among the most popular locations in the Arab world for multinational corporations to set up their regional offices, behind only Dubai.

Kuwait

Kuwait is the second most democratic country in the Middle East (behind Israel). One quarter of its population are Kuwaitis and three quarters are expatriates. Its high income economy (fourth highest in the world per capita) is backed by the world's sixth largest oil reserves. The capital is Kuwait City.

Libya

Libya is located on the northern coast of Africa, just west of Egypt. Tripoli is its capital and largest city. Libya is the fourth largest country in Africa, but is very sparsely populated. Since the death of Muammar Kadhafi in 2011, Libya has been torn among numerous rival armed militias in a political struggle between Islamist politicians and their opponents; the central government has been unable to exert its authority.

Oman

In 2010 Oman was ranked as the most improved nation in the world in terms of development during the preceding 40 years. A significant portion of its economy is tourism and trade of fish, dates, and certain agricultural produce; this diversity sets it apart from its neighbors' solely oil-dependent economies.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia covers the bulk of the Arabian Peninsula; geographically it is the second-largest nation in the Arab world. Most of its terrain consists of arid desert or barren landforms. It is the world's largest oil producer and exporter, controlling the world's second largest oil reserves and the sixth largest gas reserves. It has attracted criticism for its treatment of women and use of capital punishment. It has the fourth highest military expenditure in the world, and is the world's second largest arms importer.

Syria

Syria borders the Mediterranean Sea, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq, Jordan, and Israel. Its capital Damascus and largest city Aleppo are among the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world. A country of fertile plains, high mountains, and deserts, Syria is home to diverse ethnic and religious groups. The Ba'ath Party has been in power since 1963, maintaining Emergency Law and effectively suspending most constitutional protections for citizens. Since 2011, Syria has been embroiled in a civil war and become one of the most violent countries in the world.

Tunisia

Tunisia is located on Africa's north coast, just west of Libya. It is considered to be the only full democracy in the Arab World, and it has a high human development index. Its capital, Tunis (population 2.7 million), has recently experienced rapid expansion and modernization. Tunisia was the site of ancient Carthage, one of the leading cities of the ancient world; today Carthage is an upscale suburb of Tunis. Sidi Bou Said, where the characters Rose and John once lived, is a seaside artists' haven known for its picturesque blue and white structures.

United Arab Emirates

The United Arab Emirates (UAE), is a federation of seven emirates established in 1971 (something like the union of states into the United States). The UAE's economy is the most diversified in the Gulf Cooperation Council, but still the country remains principally reliant on its export of petroleum and natural gas. The UAE is criticized for its human rights record. Its most populous city, Dubai, is an important global city, known for tourism, aviation, real estate, financial services, and the world's tallest building, the Burj Khalifa. Nearby Sharjah is the third largest city in the United Arab Emirates, a center for industry and the cultural capital of the UAE.

TERMS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST

Allah

Allah is the Arabic word referring to the God of Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam); but in the English language, the word traditionally refers to the God of Islam.

al-Qaeda

Al-Qaeda (translation: “The Base,” “The Foundation,” or “The Fundament”) is a militant Sunni Islamist multi-national network of extremist, ultra-conservative jihadists, founded in 1988 by Osama bin Laden and other Arab volunteers who fought against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. With the loss of key leaders, including bin Laden, al-Qaeda’s operations are no longer controlled from the top down, but are initiated by franchise groups and lone-wolf operators. Characteristic techniques employed by al-Qaeda include suicide attacks and the simultaneous bombing of different targets. Al-Qaeda ideologues envision a complete break from all foreign influences in Muslim countries, and the creation of a new caliphate ruling over the entire Muslim world. (A caliphate is an Islamic state led by a group of religious authorities under a supreme leader—the caliph—who is believed to be the successor to Prophet Muhammad.) Among the beliefs ascribed to al-Qaeda members is the conviction that a Christian-Jewish alliance is conspiring to destroy Islam. Al-Qaeda believes that the killing of non-combatants is religiously sanctioned. It also opposes what it regards as man-made laws, advocating a strict form of sharia (divine) law. Al-Qaeda has not only carried out many attacks on targets it considers *kafir* (unbelievers), it also regards liberal Muslims, Shias, Sufis, and other sects to be heretics, and has attacked their mosques and gatherings. The al-Qaeda presence in Yemen is believed to be the most active of the organization’s branches, as well as the most dangerous, due to its emphasis on attacking “the far enemy” (non-Muslim nations) and its reputation for plotting attacks on overseas targets.

Al-Sahab

The Al-Sahab Foundation for Islamic Media Publication is the media production house of al-Qaeda, used to relay the organization’s views to the world, mostly through video and audio media.

Blood of Dragon tree

The dragon blood tree is native to Socotra, an island off the south coast of Yemen in the Arabian Sea. The tree has a densely packed curved crown of upturned succulent leaves, giving the tree the shape of an open umbrella. The species is named for its dark red resin, known as dragon’s blood. In ancient times the resin was believed to have magical and medicinal properties. People still use it today as a pigment for art, a dye, and a medicine.



hijab

A hijab is a veil, usually covering the head and chest, traditionally worn by Muslim women in the presence of adult males outside of their immediate family. The term can further refer to any head, face, or body covering worn by Muslim women that conforms to a certain standard. The Qur'an instructs Muslim women to dress modestly.

Some Islamic legal systems define this type of modest clothing as covering everything except the face, hands up to wrists, and feet. Others believe that the Qur'an itself does not mandate that women wear hijab. In recent times, wearing hijab in public has been required by law in Iran and Saudi Arabia. Other countries have passed laws banning some or all types of hijab in public or in certain locales. Women in different parts of the world have also experienced unofficial pressure to wear or not wear hijab, including physical attacks.



ISIS

ISIS originated in 1999, pledging allegiance to al-Qaeda and participating in the Iraqi insurgency following the 2003 invasion of Iraq by Western forces. The organization gained global notoriety in early 2014 when it drove Iraqi government forces out of key cities in Western Iraq, followed by its capture of Mosul and the massacre of 5,000 men in Sinjar. The group's stated goal is to restore a Sunni Islamic state across the entire area from Turkey to Egypt. It is widely known for its videos of beheadings of both soldiers and civilians, including journalists and aid workers, and its destruction of cultural heritage sites. Today it directly controls a vast landlocked territory in western Iraq and eastern Syria. Additionally, branches are believed to be operational in 18 countries across the world.

jihadi

Jihad is an Arabic word that literally means striving or struggling, especially with a praiseworthy aim. It can have many shades of meaning in an Islamic context, such as struggle against one's evil inclinations, or efforts toward the moral betterment of society. In classical Islamic law, the term refers to armed struggle against unbelievers. The term has gained additional attention in recent decades through its use by terrorist groups. *Jihadism* (along with its variants, such as *jihadist*) is a newly developing 21st-century term used in Western languages to describe militant movements perceived as being rooted in Islam and threatening to the West. The term first appeared in South Asian media and was adopted by Western journalists in the aftermath of 9-11. It has since been applied to various insurgent and terrorist movements whose ideology is based on the notion of *jihad*.

Yahweh

Yahweh is a form of the Hebrew name of God used in the Bible. The name came to be regarded by Jews as too sacred to be spoken, and today the vowel sounds are uncertain. The name Jehovah is a variant of Yahweh.

ALIGNMENT GUIDE

Seeing a performance at Indiana Repertory Theatre is a great way to help make connections for students and facilitate their understanding of a text. Some key literature standards to consider on your trip would be:

Reading – Literature

- RL.1 – Read and comprehend a variety of literature independently and proficiently
- RL.2 – Build comprehension and appreciation of literature by analyzing, inferring, and drawing conclusions about literary elements, themes, and central ideas
 - Sample: 9-10.RL.2.2: *Analyze in detail the development of two or more themes or central ideas over the course of a work of literature, including how they emerge and are shaped and refined by specific details.*
- RL.3 – Build comprehension and appreciation of literature, using knowledge of literary structure and point of view
 - Sample: 11-12.RL.3.2: *Analyze a work of literature in which the reader must distinguish between what is directly stated and what is intended (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement) in order to understand the point of view.*
- RL.4 – Build comprehension and appreciation of literature by connecting various literary works and analyzing how medium and interpretation impact meaning

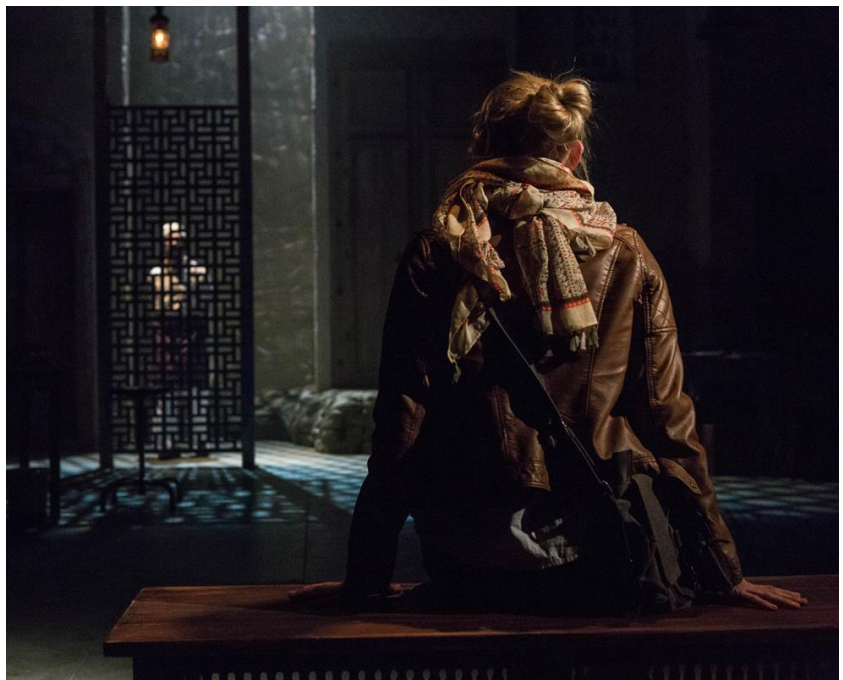
Reading – Nonfiction

- RN.2 – Extract and construct meaning from nonfiction texts using a range of comprehension skills
 - Sample: 8.RN.2.3: *Analyze how a text makes connections and distinctions among individuals, events, and ideas.*

Reading – Vocabulary

- RV.3 – Build comprehension and appreciation of literature and nonfiction texts by determining or clarifying figurative, connotative, and technical meanings
 - Sample: 9-10.RV.3.3: *Interpret figures of speech (e.g., euphemism, oxymoron) in context and analyze their role in the text.*

Ninos Baba & Jennifer Coombs in Miranda. Photo by Zach Rosing



PRE-SHOW QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES

Discuss the Middle East. What do we know, vs. what we think we know? In what ways does this region on the other side of the world affect our lives here in the United States? The history and politics of this region can be very complex; what are the drawbacks in deciding the subject is too complex and ignoring it?

After seeing the play, discuss how students' viewpoints might have changed. How does having a more personal, specific connection affect one's perspective on a broad issue?

Have students read the article on Yemen on pages 10 and 11. How is the situation in Yemen, extreme as it is, comparable to conflicting viewpoints in the United States? How is it different? How do students feel about U.S. support of Saudi Arabia in terms of how it affects the people of Yemen?

Have students read the article on the CIA on page 12 to 14. What are the attractions of such a career? What are the drawbacks? What other careers have students considered that involve great risk—financial, emotional, physical? What makes risk worthwhile?

Have students read Shakespeare's *Othello* or watch a good film or video version. Discuss some of the play's themes: loyalty vs. disloyalty; honesty vs. dishonesty; deception; racism; the role of women in a male-dominated society.

To give the class more specific context about the Middle East, divide into pairs or small groups. Have each choose one of the Middle Eastern locations mentioned in the play (listed on pages 18 and 19). Have each group do research and create a presentation for the class about the locale's people, history, culture, geography, plants and animals, language, economy, etc. As class, discuss the similarities and differences among the nations in the region.

POST-SHOW DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

How does *Miranda* resemble other espionage stories that students have seen or read? How is it different? Does the reality of the contemporary setting make for a different response than other, less realistic spy stories? Why or why not?

The Building Bridges program in the play is a front, a cover story to mask intelligence gathering. If it were real, how effective do you think that such a program might be in dangerous place like Yemen? How can art affect and enhance the lives of people at risk?

Discuss Shahid's analysis of *Othello* and *Iago*. Are his points valid? Why or why not?

Lauren asks Miranda to tell her a joke or tell her a dream. She says, "One of those two things usually tells me just about everything I need to know about a person." How might this practice work? What might a person reveal about him or herself in each of those things?

How would you interpret Miranda's dream? What might it say about various areas of her life: family, career, relationships, etc.

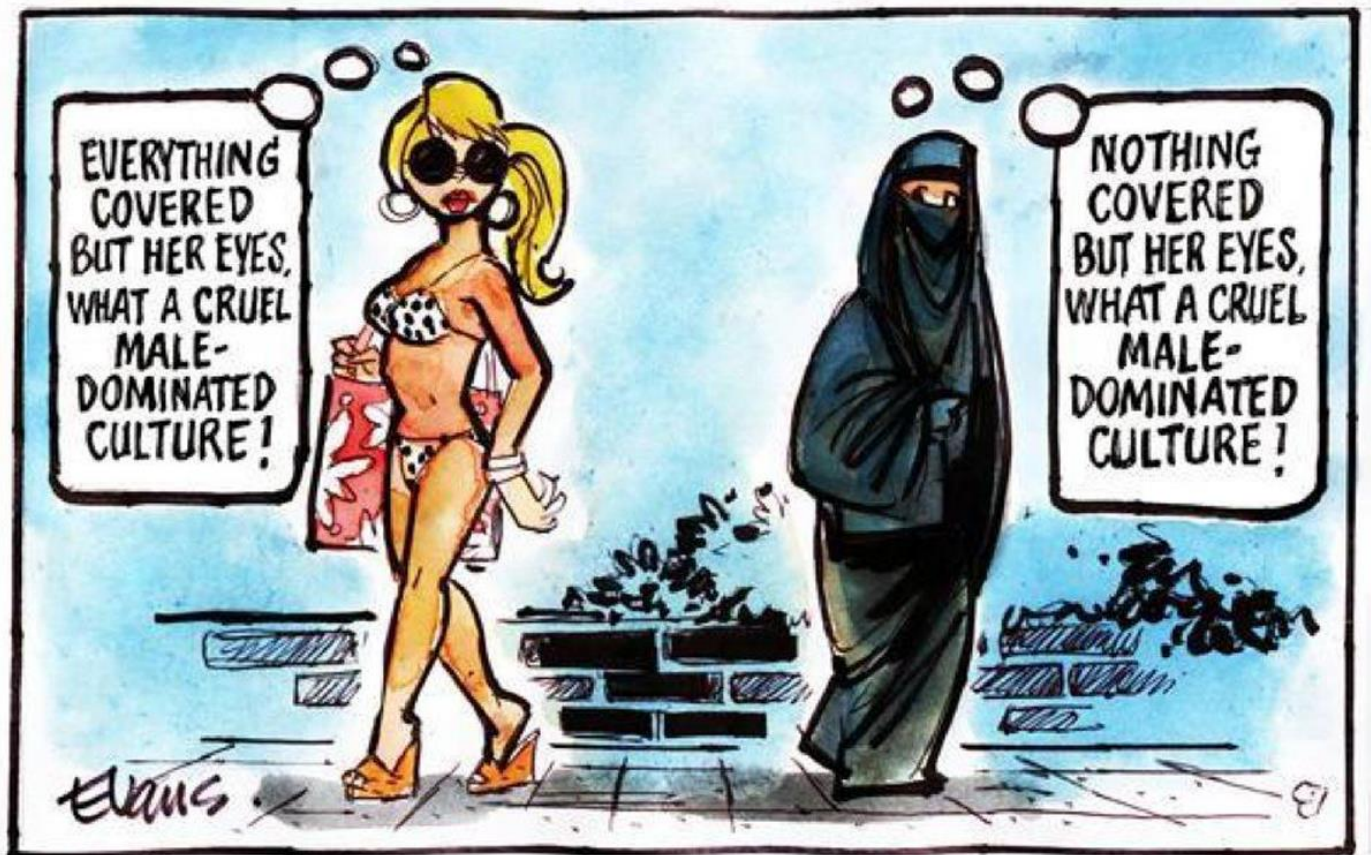
Discuss Miranda's effectiveness as a CIA operative. Does she seem to be good at her job? Why or why not? What are her weaknesses and strengths? How well does she seem to be coping with the stresses of her career? What do you see as Miranda's future, after the play?

Lauren orders Miranda to spy on Reed. Discuss how you would deal with this ethical conflict between duty, friendship, and loyalty.

Discuss the play's structure—scenes that happen simultaneously or non-chronologically, a scene that is shown twice in different forms, etc. Was it challenging to follow the story? Why or why not? What questions did students have along the way? Did they feel these questions were eventually answered or left unresolved? If there were unanswered questions, did this create a satisfying mystery or a sense of incompleteness? What are varying ways one can respond to ambiguity in art?

How do the scenery, lighting, and music help or hinder the students' ability to follow the story? How do they create atmosphere and mood?

What are students' perceptions about the *hijab* and the *burka*? After an initial discussion, have students do research (for a start, see page 21). How accurate were their assumptions? How do different views and cultural backgrounds affect perceptions? Show students the cartoon below and discuss.



WRITING PROMPTS

Imagine that you are the actor playing Shahid. Create a backstory for the character, starting with his family background, his earliest childhood memories, his experience as a boy in the military. What might his political beliefs have been at that time? What are they now? Why have they changed—or not changed? What has he been doing since he was injured? What happens to him during the play itself—how and why is he “turned” as an asset? What does he have to offer the CIA? What does he want in return? What will happen to him after the play ends?

At the end of the play, Miranda learns that her brother, Jack, was also a CIA case officer. Write a letter from Miranda to Jack. What might she want to say to him about their “shared” experiences in the same business? Will this new knowledge about her brother help Miranda to make peace with her feelings about his death? Why or why not?

Write a review of the play. A well-rounded review includes your opinion of the theatrical aspects—scenery, lights, costumes, sound, direction, acting—as well as your impressions of the script and the impact the story and/or themes and the overall production had on you. What moments made an impression on you? How do the elements of scenery, costumes, lighting, and sound work with the actors’ performance of the text to tell the story? What ideas or themes did the play make you think about? How did it make you feel? Did you notice the reactions of the audience as a whole? Would you recommend this play to others? Why or why not? To share your reviews with others, send to: education.irt@gmail.com

ACTIVITIES

In the play, Reed says, “The hurrier I go, the behinder I get.” This is an expression that many people may use without realizing it is a quote from *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll. Have each student find an unusual or funny expression that people often use, research its origin, and share with the class.

In the play, three characters play a game where each says what book he wishes he or she had written. They name the following books:

The Book of Revelations in the Bible

Strunk & White’s *The Elements of Style*

Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown, illustrated by Clement Hurd

On the Origin of Species by Charles Darwin

The Exorcist by William Peter Blatty

What might each of these books suggest about the person naming it? How would “the book you wish you had written” be different from “your favorite book”? Why? Have each student make a short presentation or write a brief essay on the “The Book I Wish I Had Written.”

RESOURCES

BOOKS

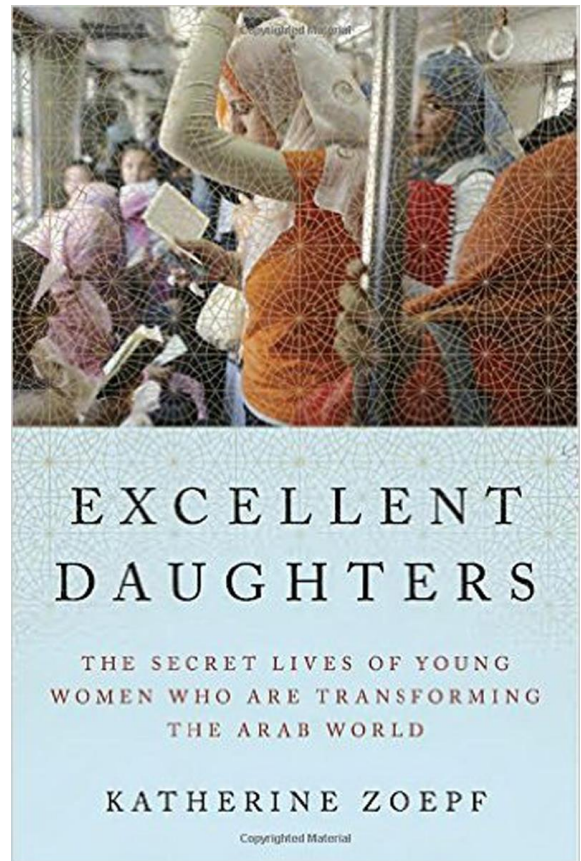
The Middle East: A Brief History of the Last 2,000 Years
by Bernard Lewis

Lawrence in Arabia: War, Deceit, Imperial Folly, and the Making of the Modern Middle East by Scott Anderson

A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East
by David Fromkin

The Lemon Tree: An Arab, a Jew, and the Heart of the Middle East by Sandy Tolan

Excellent Daughters: The Secret Lives of Young Women Who Are Transforming the Arab World
by Katherine Zoepf



A Rage for Order: The Middle East in Turmoil, from Tahrir Square to ISIS by Robert F. Worth

Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA by Tim Weiner

The Art of Intelligence: Lessons from a Life in the CIA's Clandestine Service by Henry A. Crumpton

National Security Mom by Gina M. Bennett

Blowing My Cover: My Life as a CIA Spy by Lindsay Moran

The Last Refuge: Yemen, al-Qaeda, and America's War in Arabia by Gregory D. Johnsen

Yemen: Dancing on the Heads of Snakes by Victoria Clark

Othello by William Shakespeare

No god but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam by Reza Aslan

A History of God: The 4,000-Year Quest of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam by Karen Armstrong

Destiny Disrupted: A History of the World through Islamic Eyes by Tamim Ansary

Princess: A True Story of Life behind the Veil in Saudi Arab by Jean Sasson

WEBSITES

the official CIA website

<https://www.cia.gov/index.html>

an Arabic network based in Qatar

<http://www.aljazeera.com/topics/regions/middleeast.html>

Human Rights Watch

<https://www.hrw.org>

<http://www.folger.edu/othello>

Many major news organizations have pages devoted to the Middle East, Yemen, and the CIA.

FILMS

The 39 Steps (1935)

Lawrence of Arabia (1962)

The Spy Who Came In from the Cold (1965)

The Conversation (1974)

Three Days of the Condor (1975)

Eye of the Needle (1981)

Othello (1995)

Ronin (1998)

Spy Game (2001)

Tailor of Panama (2001)

Syriana (2005)

The Good Shepherd (2006)

Munich (2006)

Breach (2007)

Body of Lies (2008)

Fair Game (2010)

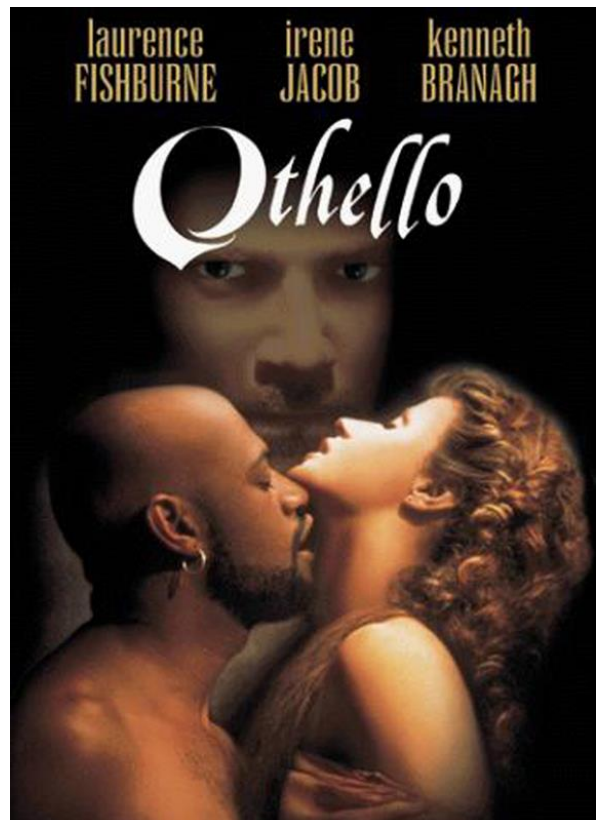
Knight and Day (2010)

Mission Impossible: Ghost Protocol (2011)

Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy (2011)

Argo (2012)

Zero Dark Thirty (2012)



GLOSSARY

acoustic trauma

Acoustic trauma is an injury to the inner ear that is often caused by exposure to a high-decibel noise.

Samuel Beckett

Samuel Beckett (1906–1989) was a Nobel Prize–winning avant-garde novelist, playwright, theatre director, and poet, an Irishman who wrote in both English and French. He is widely regarded as among the most influential writers of the 20th century. His work offers a bleak, tragicomic outlook on human existence, often coupled with black comedy and gallows humor. His play *Waiting for Godot* (1953) is considered by many to be the most significant English language play of the 20th century.

frankincense

Frankincense is an aromatic resin used in incense and perfumes, obtained from the *Boswellia* tree. It has a balsamic-spicy, slightly lemony fragrance with a conifer-like undertone.

IKEA

There are currently 16 IKEAs in the Middle East.

nihilist

Nihilism (from the Latin *nihil*, nothing) is a philosophical doctrine based on the lack of belief in the reputedly meaningful aspects of life. Existential nihilism argues that life is without objective meaning, purpose, or intrinsic value. Moral nihilism asserts that there is no inherent morality, and that accepted moral values are abstractly contrived.

Peace Corps

The mission of the Peace Corps is to provide technical assistance, to help people outside the United States to understand American culture, and to help Americans to understand the cultures of other countries. The work is generally related to social and economic development. After three months of training, volunteers spend two years abroad working with governments, schools, not-for-profit organizations, non-government organizations, and entrepreneurs in education, business, information technology, agriculture, and the environment. The program was established by President John F. Kennedy in 1961 and is run by the U.S. government. Since then, nearly 220,000 Americans have joined the Peace Corps and served in 141 countries.

Rosetta Stone

Rosetta Stone is a computer-assisted language learning software that uses images, text, and sound to teach words and grammar by repetition, without translation. The software's name alludes to the Rosetta Stone, an ancient stone slab on which the Decree of Memphis is inscribed in three writing systems.

sensorineural hearing loss

Sensorineural hearing loss occurs when there is damage to the inner ear (cochlea), or to the nerve pathways from the inner ear to the brain. Usually it cannot be medically or surgically corrected.

The Role of the Audience



You, the audience are one of the most important parts of any performance. Experiencing the theatre is a group activity shared not only with the actors, but also with the people sitting around you. Your attention and participation help the actors perform better, and allow the rest of the audience to enjoy the show. Here are a few simple tips to help make each theatre experience enjoyable for everyone:

Leave mp3 players, cameras, mobile phones, and other distracting and noise-making electronic devices at home.

You may think texting is private, but the light and the motion are very annoying to those around you and on stage. Do not text during the performance.

Food and drink must stay in the lobby.

The house lights dimming and going out signal the audience to get quiet and settle in your seats: the play is about to begin.

Don't talk with your neighbors during the play. It distracts people around you and the actors on stage. Even if you think they can't hear you, they can.

Never throw anything onto the stage. People could be injured.

Remain in your seat during the play. Use the restroom before or after the show.

Focus all your attention on the play to best enjoy the experience. Listen closely to the dialogue and sound effects, and look at the scenery, lights, and costumes. These elements all help to tell the story.

Get involved in the story. Laugh, cry, sigh, gasp—whatever the story draws from you. The more emotionally involved you are, the more you will enjoy the play.

Remain at your seat and applaud during the curtain call because this is part of the performance too. It gives you a chance to recognize a job well done and the actors a moment to thank you for your attention.