



INDIANA REPERTORY THEATRE

# AN ILIAD

adapted from Homer  
by Lisa Peterson and Denis O'Hare  
translated by Robert Fagles

October 16 – November 16, 2013 on the IRT's Upperstage

## STUDY GUIDE

edited by Richard J Roberts & Milicent Wright

Contributors: Janet Allen, Fontaine Syer,  
Robert Mark Gordon, Guy Clark, Betsy Coopridge-Bernstein, Andrew Hopson,  
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## ***An Iliad***

**adapted from Homer by Lisa Peterson & Denis O'Hare, translated by Robert Fagles**

Homer's saga of the Trojan War is brought to life by a lone poet telling tales of human loss and folly, connecting it to our era with searing images and words of war and bloodshed.

Estimated length: 100 minutes

This play will help meet Common Core Standards / Indiana Standards in English/Language Arts, History/Social Studies, & Theatre Arts

Recommended for students in grades 10-12 (due to strong language & adult situations)

Themes & Issues:

- oral history & storytelling
- glory of war vs. horrors of war
- Greek mythology
- celebration of heroism and honor

Student Matinees: October 23, 29, & 30; November 6, 12, 15 at 10:00 am

### **Contents**

From the Artistic Director	3
Between the Blows	4
Director's Note	6
The Actor	7
Designer Notes	8
The Authors	10
The Trojan War	12
Homer and the <i>Iliad</i>	15
Characters in the Story	16
State Standards	22
Discussion Questions	23
Writing Projects	24
Activities	24
Resources	25
Glossary	28
Going to the Theatre	34

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## Bringing Homer to Life

by Janet Allen, Executive Artistic Director

I have been searching for a suitable piece of Greek literature to perform on one of our stages for many years, but it's been an uphill battle. The core stories are brilliant and compelling; the poetry is glorious in short swathes. But the Greeks' love of the lengthy recitation of the gods, and their frequent invocation of minute attributes of those gods, leave most of us who aren't Greek scholars feeling left out in the cold—or at the very least, longing for footnotes! And being constantly thrown out of the story by references to gods and events we don't understand is no way to enjoy a play.



Henry Woronicz in *An Iliad* at La Jolla Playhouse

Enter *An Iliad*, an adaptation of Homer's amazing heroic poem. The adaptors are director Lisa Peterson and actor Denis O'Hara. What they have done with this work is no less than miraculous: it takes a piece of literature, really a series of verse stories, and pushes it through a contemporary viewpoint that reveals the power of the original while making it crystal clear in modern terms. For those of you, like me, who have battled their way through reading bits of the *Iliad* over decades, it's a big "Aha!" moment; suddenly, what animates Homer's writing jumps up off the page. It is a story about war: how it is personal, how it is public, how it is heroic, how it is prosaic. And how it simply continues through human history. The play seems to lay bare Homer's story in a way that also energizes its poetry. And, given that it was crafted by a director and an actor together for performance, it is eminently and thrillinglyactable.

We also have the great good fortune to have enticed actor Henry Woronicz to take it on again. Many of you will remember Henry from his delightful performance as Bottom in our *A Midsummer Night's Dream* last spring. Henry performed *An Iliad* on the West Coast at Berkeley Rep and La Jolla Playhouse last fall. After you see the play, you'll realize why he needed to think it over a bit before agreeing to do it again; it is an emotional and physical obstacle course, requiring intense focus, full-out commitment, and the vocal range of an opera singer. But Henry, who makes his home down the road in Bloomington, graciously agreed to build the performance anew for us, his home audience, to share this magnificent and timeless story with his community. This is also what Homer (or many story tellers?) did almost 3,000 years ago: tell the story of the fall of Troy over and over and over.

I have many times opened the *Iliad* randomly and read a passage; recently I opened to this:

*Even for generations still to come,  
to learn that Achaean armies so strong, so vast  
fought a futile war... We are still fighting it.*

That pretty much sums it up. This is an experience you will not soon forget.

## Between the Blows

by Richard J Roberts, Dramaturg

If war is the ultimate expression of human conflict, and if conflict is the essence of drama, then it is not surprising that war has so often been the subject of drama. From the biting satire of *Lysistrata* to the stirring rhetoric of *Henry V* to the astonishing puppetry of *War Horse*, theatre artists have searched for effective ways to bring the massive scale of war to the limited footage of the stage. Homer's *Iliad*, the Western world's first and perhaps greatest war epic, contains 15,693 lines of text. Reading the entire poem aloud would take about 24 hours; the play you are about to see lasts 100 minutes.



*Achilles slaying Hector, Greek vase, fifth century B.C.E.*

Today, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, along with the Bible, are considered foundational works of Western literature. Although the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are credited to an Ancient Greek poet named Homer, scholars are unsure if such an individual actually existed. While some believe that the blind poet of legend was a real person, many historians think that the two epic poems are a compilation of stories told over the years by a long line of poets. In either case, evidence suggests that the poems were committed to paper around 800 BCE—about 400 years after the events they depict are thought to have taken place.

While the *Odyssey* takes its name from its central character, Odysseus, the *Iliad* takes its name from Ilion, an alternate name the Greeks used for the city of Troy. The Ancient Greeks thought that the Trojan War was a historical event; by the end of the Renaissance, both the war and the city were widely believed to be myth. In the 1860s, however, archeologists discovered ruins in Asia Minor (modern Turkey) that scholars today accept as the remains of ancient Troy.

Unlike the *Odyssey*, which sprawls across ten years of action and adventure, Homer's *Iliad* concentrates on just a few weeks near the end of the war, focusing on Achilles, his conflict with Agamemnon, and his defeat of Hector. But within this brief span, Homer provides plenty of backstory: how Paris kidnapped Helen (or how she ran away with him), how the Greek armies assembled to bring her back, how two armies fought for nearly a decade. The *Iliad* actually ends before the Trojan War is over; the story of the Trojan Horse is detailed in the *Odyssey*.



For almost three millennia, the *Iliad* has been read and re-read by students, scholars, and passionate readers alike. Its stirring depiction of heroism has shaped every war story ever told and every action-adventure movie ever made. But its violence and bloodshed are tempered by stories of friendship and loyalty, courage and self-sacrifice. This epic tale of massive armies locked in a ten-year struggle has inspired writers, composers, painters, and sculptors. *Troy*, starring Brad Pitt as Achilles and Eric Bana as Hector, filled cinemas with wide-screen spectacle in 2004. But *An Iliad*, adapted for the stage by Lisa Peterson and Denis O'Hare using the acclaimed 1990 translation of Robert Fagles, returns the story to its origins: a single voice captivating a rapt audience.

In creating the play, actor Denis O'Hare worked with director Lisa Peterson, reading portions of the *Iliad* aloud. Taping their sessions, the two artists improvised: discussing, analyzing, responding to the text. Eventually they transcribed their work, dissecting and re-assembling what they had created. O'Hare says, "About a third of [the text] is Fagles's verse, some of which we chopped and edited; a third is transcriptions of improves that [Lisa and I] did together; and a third is original writing to get us from one place to the next." The play premiered at Seattle Repertory Theatre in 2010 and made its New York debut off-Broadway in 2012.

As a one-man show, the play not only returns Homer's epic to its story-telling roots, it also suggests the tale's early history: a variety of poets, each having his own take on the story, with his own perspective and his own commentary. The indefinite article of the play's title points us toward this element of personal choice. It's not *The Iliad*, it's *An Iliad*—one of many possible *Iliads*. O'Hare says, "We've sort of carved out our version. We've decided to focus on war and its meaning, and the waste of war and the human propensity for violence."

Throughout the *Iliad*, scenes of bloodshed are interlaced with profound questions about the moral choices we make. What are the ethics of war? What is the value of honor? What is the individual's place in society? There are no easy answers. The *Iliad* portrays a world where war is inevitable. As we look around us, we must ask: are things really all that different today? But while the ancient poet glorifies the flash of armor, the crash of bronze, and the heroism of combat, he also reminds us of the very real human cost of war.



*United States forces  
in Afghanistan*

# Irrationality

by Fontaine Syer,  
Director

Guernica (1937) by  
Pablo Picasso.



Most of the time, as we live in the world, we proceed through our days believing and behaving as though we are rational beings. We think things through, we weigh options, and we make decisions. We are very good at rationalizing our choices, in explaining why we did thus and so, why we settled on this course of action instead of another. Rational implies consideration and balance. Then along comes an event, a remark, a situation that drives all that rationality right out the window. We shoot the finger at the driver who cuts us off; we mutter, or yell, “Up yours” as the driver accelerates in front of us. We give the driver a drop-dead look when we pull up beside him at the next light. Or, as often happens, the offending driver zooms ahead, never giving our irate expressions a thought or a backward glance. You see, there’s a reason it’s called road rage.

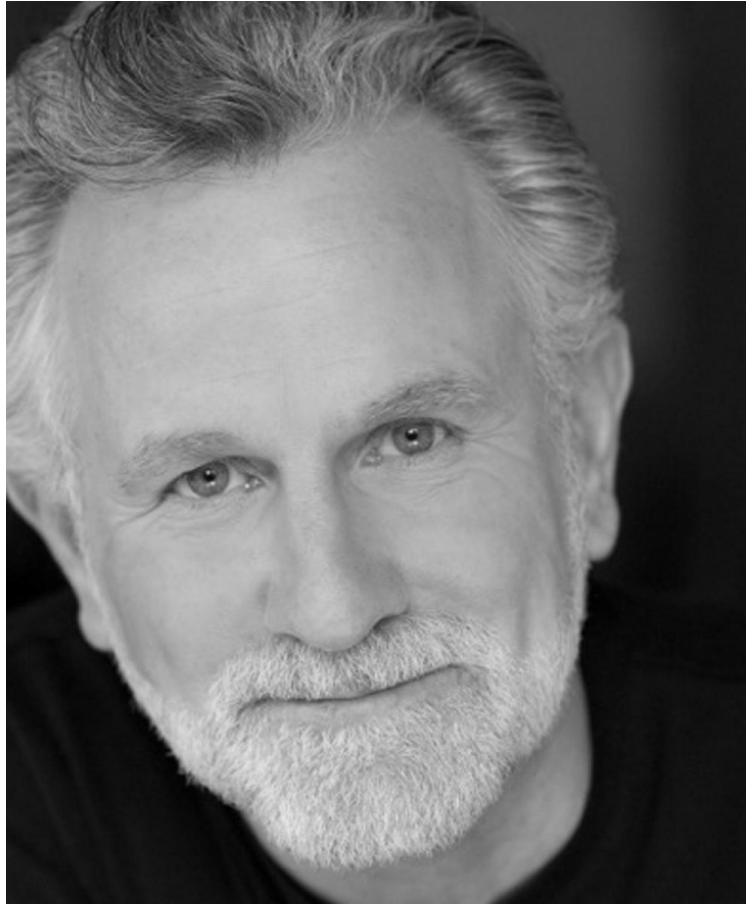
Homer, or the collection of poets and singers we call Homer, set his remarkable poem in the last year of the ten years of the Trojan War. The gods and men (and women) who people this story form our collective mythology. The Greeks imagined the gods in their pantheon to be just like humans, only with enormous, magical powers at their fingertips. The gods wield their powers capriciously, randomly changing sides, often inflicting horrors on humans to spite another resident of Olympus. When rage consumes us—gods and humans—rationality disappears, and we are capable of anything. Rage is the first word in Homer’s *The Iliad*. Not just rage, but the rage of Achilles, half man and half god, the greatest warrior who ever lived. But, you see, to be the greatest warrior who ever lived, you have to fight battles and wage wars.

War is the complete irrationality, giving us opportunities to express the best and the worst of our fundamental natures. It is replete with mutually exclusive beliefs. We praise peace, but when someone attacks us, we defend ourselves. We try to rationalize the irrational. Winning a certain piece of ground makes us want to win more. Losing that same piece of ground makes us defend the ground we still have all the more fiercely. Often, we keep the war going to justify the fact that we began to fight in the first place. We glorify the soldier, but we condemn what the soldier actually does. We honor the warrior, yet say we hate the war. We send the children of others to die on the battlefield, struggling to keep our own in safety. You see, war is irrationality made manifest, and eventually, all wars take their place on the list of wasted energies.

*An Iliad* tells this timeless story through the prism of the Greeks, the Trojans, their gods, and the exhausted, peripatetic, old Poet, who has seen too much and sung his heart-breaking song for as long as humans have peopled the earth, always hoping that this time will be the last time. You see?

## Henry Woronicz as the Poet

Henry Woronicz has appeared at the IRT as Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, as Simon in ... *Young Lady from Rwanda*, and as Kent in *King Lear*. Regional acting and directing credits include Actors Theatre of Louisville, American Conservatory Theatre, American Players Theatre, Arden Theatre Company, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Boston Shakespeare Company, Center Stage, Delaware Theatre Company, Hong Kong Repertory Company, La Jolla Playhouse, Meadow Brook Theatre, Syracuse Stage, The Shakespeare Theatre, and the Alabama, Illinois, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Utah Shakespeare Festivals. He was seen on Broadway in *Julius Caesar* with Denzel Washington. Television credits include *Seinfeld*, *Ally McBeal*, *Cheers*, *Pickett Fences*, *Third Rock from the Sun*, *Star Trek*, and *Law & Order*. At the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, he was a resident actor and director from 1984 to 1991 and artistic director from 1991 to 1995. He was executive producer at Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival from 2008 to 2009, and the head of M.F.A. Acting at Illinois State University from 2009 to 2012.



### Reviews for Henry Woronicz's performance in *An Iliad* in California in 2012—

at Berkeley Rep: "Absolutely riveting.... Henry Woronicz gives a tour de force performance as he holds the stage almost alone for 100 uninterrupted minutes. He embodies the Trojan War, from the horrors of hand-to-hand carnage to the serenity of a pastoral lull, his body seeming to swell into the great warrior Achilles or coil into a seductive Helen of Troy.... He's mesmerizing from the moment we first see him."

—*San Francisco Chronicle*

at La Jolla Playhouse: "Henry Woronicz summons the kind of performance you might wait a lifetime (or three) to see."

—*The San Diego Union-Tribune*

## Envisioning the Story

### Robert Mark Morgan Scenic Designer

In *An Iliad*, we have a single character who crosses time and space from present to past and back again. Why is he here? Is he homeless? A street preacher? A time-traveler? A prophet? Does he see us? And, as an audience, who are we? Are we passers-by, are we merely observers, are we hidden or are we not? Like the Poet, the space itself needs to evoke an honest authenticity that at least initially appears as some kind of safe haven ... from what we're not sure. The design team looked at a lot of imagery: "Perhaps it's a subway, an abandoned warehouse, a library?" We seemed to have as many questions about where we are as about who the Poet is. What rings true are the common elements in all these types of spaces: large clerestory windows, staircases, ironwork, architectural details.... The stage could be all of these spaces and none of them—at the same time! In every case, we come back to the idea that ultimately it doesn't matter. At its core, the play is one man telling one marvelous story to an audience who will find themselves mesmerized. So that's where we are: a sacred space for a lone poet to tell an epic tale and connect with an audience. Nothing more and nothing less.



*Rendering by scenic designer Robert Mark Morgan.*



**Guy Clark** Costume Designer

In *An Iliad*, a ragged poet steps out onto yet another stage like a road-weary rock star on an endless farewell tour. For centuries, he has traveled the world, in times of struggle and peace, singing his song of war wherever he finds an audience. Throughout his journey, he travels light, picking up a new pair of boots in a Civil War army camp, trading in his threadbare coat a hundred years later at a London flea market, never collecting more than he can carry.

**Betsy Coopridner-Bernstein** Lighting Designer

A bare stage with one actor: *An Iliad* is a lighting designer's dream! The powerful script is both exciting and full of deep sorrow. It resonates with me as a legacy of our unlearned past. The set designer has created a wonderful environment for this atmospheric piece, in which the changes in the lighting can mirror the moods of the Poet. The lighting can be highly stylized, but it needs to be rooted in realism, which grounds the audience's experience of what they see and hear. It's almost as if the lighting is another character for the actor to play against. My goal is that together we create something so compelling that it remains with you in your mind's eye for a long time to come.

**Andrew Hopson** Composer

The music in this production represents the storyteller's muse; it is there to inspire, comment upon, and enhance the story he is telling. In Greek mythology, the goddesses of art, knowledge, and honorable war are all female, so it seems that scoring this production with a female texture—whatever that means—would be appropriate. I am also trying as I write to reflect the music of Ancient Greece. The problem with this approach is that our idea of what Ancient Greek music sounded like is—at best—an educated guess. The advantage is that I am free to explore and create a score that is not tightly constrained by reality. And after all, the music represents muses who, being goddesses, probably aren't very constrained by reality either.

*Rendering by costume designer Guy Clark.*

## The Authors

**Denis O'Hare** Co-Playwright  
Actor-playwright Denis O'Hare won the Tony, Outer Critics Circle and Drama Desk Awards for his performance in the hit Broadway play *Take Me Out*. Other Broadway productions include *Assassins* (Tony nomination), *Sweet Charity*, and *Inherit the Wind*. *An Iliad* is his debut as a writer for theatre. He has written two screenplays, as well as short stories and poetry.



*Denis O'Hare in An Iliad.*

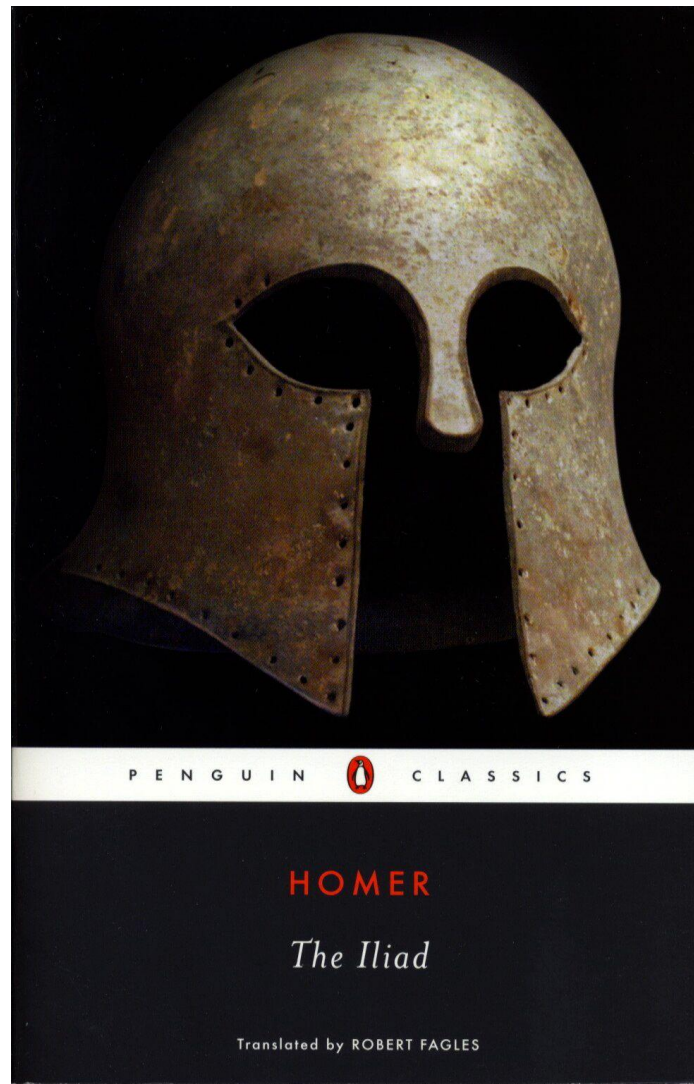
While at Northwestern University pursuing an acting degree, he followed the poetry writing program for two years. He has appeared on Broadway and off-Broadway numerous times, as well as in many regional theatres. He has appeared in many films, including *Milk*, *Michael Clayton*, *Charlie Wilson's War*, *A Mighty Heart*, *Duplicity*, *An Englishman in New York*, *21 Grams*, *Garden State*, and *Eagle*. His television work includes roles on *Brothers and Sisters*, *CSI Miami*, and all of the *Law & Order* franchises. He is perhaps best known as the Vampire King Russell Edgington on *True Blood*.



**Lisa Peterson** Co-Playwright  
Director-playwright Lisa Peterson's New York credits include *Shipwrecked* and *The Model Apartment* at Primary Stages; *End Days* for EST; *The Poor Itch*, *Tongue of a Bird*, and *The Square* at the Public Theater; *The Fourth Sister* and *The Batting Cage* at the Vineyard; *Birdy* and *Chemistry of Change* at WPP/Playwrights Horizons; *Collected Stories* at MTC; *Tight Embrace* at Intar; *Sueno* at MCC; *Bexley, Oh, Slavs!*, *Traps*, *Light Shining in Buckinghamshire* (Obie Award), and *The Waves* at NYTW; and *The Scarlet Letter* at CSC. Her regional work includes the Mark Taper Forum (Resident Director 1995-2005), La Jolla Playhouse, Seattle Rep, Berkley Rep, Intiman, South Coast Rep, CalShakes, OSF, Guthrie Theatre, Dallas Theater Center, Arena Stage, McCarter, Center Stage, Yale Rep, Hartford Stage, Long Wharf, the Huntington, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Philadelphia Theater Co., Sundance Theater Lab, O'Neill Playwrights Conference, and Midwest Playlabs.

**Robert Fagles** Translator of *The Iliad*

Robert Fagles (1933–2008) was an American professor, poet, and academic, best known for his many translations of Ancient Greek and Roman classics, especially his acclaimed translations of the epic poems of Homer. He taught English and comparative literature for many years at Princeton University. He was nominated for the National Book Award in Translation and won the Harold Morton Landon Translation Award of the Academy of American Poets in 1991 for his translation of the *Iliad*. He received the PEN/Ralph Manheim Medal for lifetime achievement in translation and a National Humanities Medal from the National Endowment for the Humanities.





# The Legend—and History—of the Trojan War



*Helen by Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1863)*

## Helen and the Oath of the Suitors

Helen of Sparta was the half-divine daughter of Zeus, leader of the gods, and Queen Leda of Sparta. Tyndareus, the king of Sparta and Leda's husband, adopted Helen as his own daughter. Because of her extraordinary beauty, dozens of heroes and princes came to court her when she reached marriageable age. Fearful of starting a bloody fight between the suitors, Tyndareus was unwilling to pick a husband for her. The warrior Odysseus proposed a solution. Before a husband was chosen, each suitor would swear an oath to be the ally and protector of Helen and her future husband. Each man agreed to the terms, and Tyndareus chose Menelaus of Mycenae to wed Helen. Tyndareus died shortly after the wedding, and Menelaus and Helen became king and queen of Sparta.

## The Judgment of Paris

All the gods were in attendance at the wedding of the mortal king Peleus and the sea nymph Thetis—all except Eris, the goddess of discord, who had not been invited. Angered over the snub, she set out to cause a bit of trouble. Eris rolled a golden apple into the room upon which was inscribed "to the fairest." The apple landed in the middle of three goddesses: Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite. The three squabbled over the apple before asking Zeus to mediate. Unwilling to insert himself into the fight, Zeus recommended Paris, a mortal prince of the city Troy who had a reputation for honest judgment. The three goddesses appeared to Paris and commanded that he pick the most beautiful. Each offered gifts to sway him. Hera offered political power and longevity; Athena offered cunning and prowess in battle; and Aphrodite, the goddess of love, promised him the love of the world's most beautiful woman: Helen, Queen of Sparta. Even though Helen was married, Paris proclaimed Aphrodite the fairest and set sail for Greece to claim his prize.

Under the guise of a diplomatic journey, Paris arrived in Sparta. He was welcomed into Menelaus's home with fanfare as a treasured guest. As Aphrodite had promised, Helen immediately fell in love with the handsome prince of Troy. Soon after Paris's arrival, Menelaus received notice that his grandfather had died in Crete. He promptly left for the funeral, leaving Helen in Sparta to entertain their guests. Shortly after Menelaus's departure, Paris and Helen left for Troy.

Eventually, Menelaus returned from Crete and discovered that his wife was missing. When he learned of Paris's betrayal, he declared war on Troy. Menelaus and his brother, Agamemnon, rallied the former suitors of Helen and set sail. When the army reached Troy, Menelaus demanded the return of his wife. Priam, king of Troy, denied his request.

## The Story as Told in Homer's *Iliad*

The *Iliad* begins nine years into the war: the battle has been constant, with neither side holding the upper hand for long. A plague hits the Greek camp, sent by the gods because Agamemnon, the leader of the Greek army, has taken the daughter of a priest of Apollo as a war spoil. In an officers' meeting, the Greeks' best fighter, Achilles, calls for the girl's return. Agamemnon angrily concedes, taking Achilles's prize, a woman named Briseis, as a replacement. Achilles vows to fight no more for the Greeks, and the tide of the war turns in favor of the Trojans. Finally, Patroclus, Achilles's closest friend, takes the field dressed in Achilles's armor. The Trojans are beaten back, but with Apollo's help, the Trojan prince Hector kills Patroclus. Achilles returns to the battlefield to avenge his friend's death and kills Hector, dragging the body around the city behind his chariot. Priam, the king of Troy and father of Hector, crosses the battle lines to appeal directly to Achilles through a father's love. Achilles returns Hector's body and allows a temporary cease-fire so that Troy may properly grieve and bury Hector.

## The Trojan Horse and the Sack of Troy

Legend tells us that on the eleventh day of the cease-fire, the Trojans awoke to find that the Greeks were gone. Their camps were abandoned and their ships were no longer floating in the bay. In their stead stood an enormous wooden horse with an inscription dedicated to Athena, the Greek goddess of honorable warfare. The Greeks had gone home, leaving this gift—a nod to the Trojans' famed equestrian skills—for the citizens of Troy. The Trojans rolled the horse into their gates and celebrated with dancing, feasting, and drinking: the grueling, decade-long war was finally at an end! Once all the Trojans were asleep or passed out, the Greek soldiers who had been hiding inside the horse quietly slipped out. They opened the gates of Troy to their brothers, who had only pretended to sail home, and their army proceeded to loot, rape, murder, and burn their way through Troy. Priam and his sons were killed in their beds. Menelaus reclaimed Helen. Hector's infant son Astyanax was thrown to his death from the city walls. Once they had razed the city, the Greeks sacrificed Priam's youngest daughter to the gods for favorable winds and set sail for home. The adventures of Odysseus on his ten-year voyage home are told in Homer's *Odyssey*. The story of Aeneas, Hector's cousin who escaped Troy and eventually landed in Italy and founded Rome, is told in Virgil's *Aeneid*.



Scene from the 2004 film *Troy*.



## The Rediscovery of Troy

The Ancient Greeks thought that the Trojan War was a historical event; by modern times, both the war and the city were widely believed to be myth. The city of Troy was said to sit on the banks of the River Scamander in northwestern Asia Minor (modern Turkey). It was believed that the Romans built their legendary city of Ilium directly on top of the ashes of Troy. Archaeologists and explorers searched for the ruins of both legendary cities for years.

In 1865, English archeologist Frank Calvert began to dig for Troy in a region of northern Turkey known as Hisarlik. He was later joined by German archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann. The two men discovered layers of ancient ruins: evidence of a city rebuilt several times, one on top of the other. The two men were certain they had found the site of Troy. Excavations continue in the area to this day. It has been widely accepted by the historic community that the ruins are the remnants of Troy and Ilium. The seventh layer of the city (known as Troy VII) is thought to be the Troy of the *Iliad*. Artifacts in this layer match chronologically with the *Iliad*'s timeframe (approximately 1200 B.C.E.), and the city appears to have been destroyed in a great fire.

—*Olivia Sweets, Dramaturgy Intern*

*The ruins of Troy today.*



## Homer and the *Iliad*

*Artist Joongwon Jeong painting Homer, 2013.*

Although relatively few people in Ancient Greece were able to read, everyone knew the old myths and fables of their ancestors. These stories were repeated and passed from generation to generation by poets



who helped to spread these oral stories around the known world. These traveling storytellers sang these popular tales, accompanied by music from a lyre or small harp. Each poet knew the popular stories: the labors of Heracles (known to the Romans and the Western world as Hercules) and the adventures of Jason and the Argonauts were famous in every city.

Each individual poet had his own version of a story. The very nature of oral storytelling led to variance between tellings, as the speaker committed certain phrases to memory and paraphrased others. Hearing the different anecdotes and details in each poet's telling of the same story was considered part of the story's appeal. When the supposed author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* put his poems to paper, he took what was once ethereal and ever-changing and made it concrete and constant.

So who was Homer? What do we know about him? Although the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are credited to Homer, scholars are unsure if such an individual ever existed. Some historians suggest that the two epic poems are a compilation of many poems told over the years by many poets. Others maintain that Homer was the singular Greek poet we envision wandering from city to city, telling his epic poems. At any rate, evidence suggests that the poems were committed to paper around 800 BCE—about 400 years after the events they depict are thought to have taken place. While the *Odyssey* takes its name from its central character, Odysseus, the *Iliad* takes its name from Ilion, an alternate name the Greeks used for the city of Troy.

Today, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, along with the Bible, are considered foundational works of Western literature. Throughout the centuries, the *Iliad* has been read and re-read by students, scholars, and passionate readers alike, not only for its stirring depiction of heroism in war, but also for its profound questions about the moral choices we make.

—**Olivia Sweets, Dramaturgy Intern**

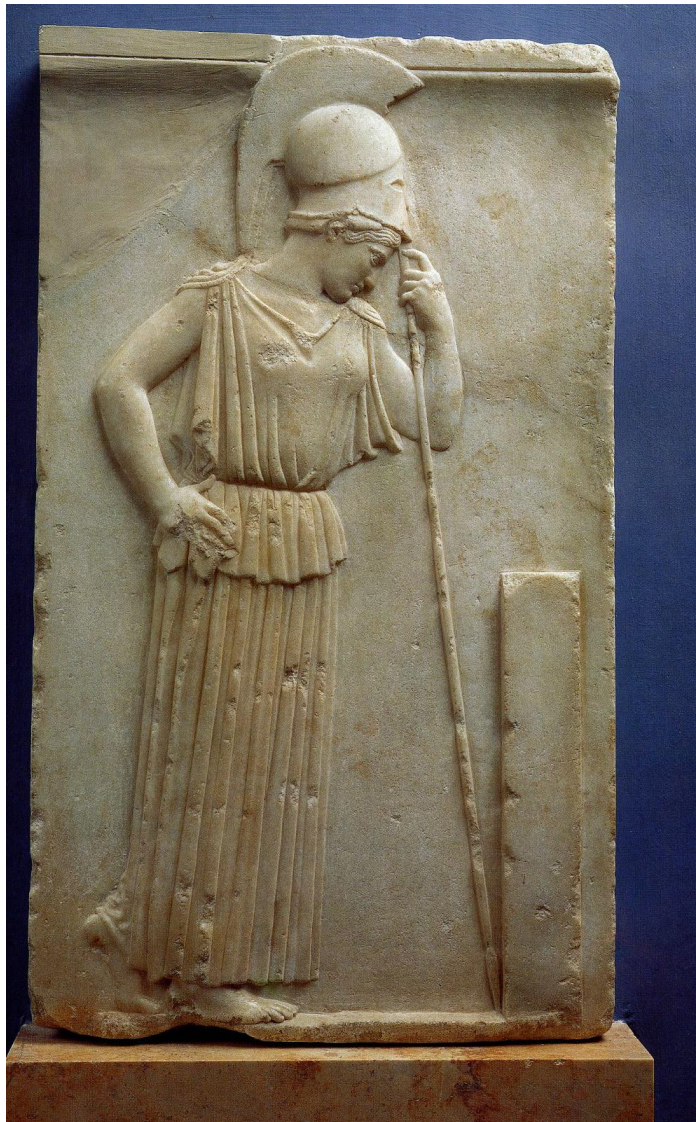


## Characters in the Story

### Gods

**Zeus** (ZY00S) – The king of the Greek gods, and husband of Hera. Zeus has innumerable children, most of them resulting from his many affairs, including Apollo, Artemis, the Muses, Hermes, Dionysus, Heracles, and Helen of Troy. Although he favors the Trojans (and his daughter Helen), Zeus attempts to remain neutral in the war.

**Hera** (HEHR-ah) – The queen of the gods and wife (and sister) to Zeus. Her children with Zeus include Ares, Eris, Hephaestus, and Hebe. Hera is known as the goddess of mothers, marriage, and fertility. She is vindictive, and extremely jealous of Zeus's many lovers. She hates the Trojans, particularly Paris, and sides with the Greeks.



**Athena** (ah-THEE-nah) – The oldest daughter of Zeus. She is the goddess of wisdom, truth, discipline, and honorable war. A counter to her brother Ares, Athena represents the discipline and art of battle. Athena serves Achilles and the Greeks, often fighting with them in battle.

**Aphrodite** (af-roh-DY-tee) – The goddess of love, lust, and beauty. Aphrodite is the wife of Hephaestus, though she is unfaithful to him. She takes a particular interest in the Trojans, and particularly Paris. It was Aphrodite who originally promised Helen to Paris.

**Hephaestus** (hah-FES-tahs) – The god of fire, and the son of Zeus and Hera. When he was born, Zeus declared Hephaestus hideous and tossed him from Mount Olympus, crippling him in the process. He was raised by Thetis (a sea nymph), and later returned to Olympus. He is the husband of Aphrodite, who is often unfaithful to him. He serves as the blacksmith to the gods, making all their armor and weapons.

*Athena, fifth century B.C.E.*



*Ares as  
envisioned by  
Marvel Comics.*

*Hermes by  
Giambologna,  
late 16th  
century.*

**Ares** (*EHR-eez*) – The god of courage, masculinity, and war. The opposite of his sister Athena, Ares represents the violence and savagery of battle. Ares lives for war and the pillaging that happens after the battle. He occasionally fights for Hector and the Trojans.

**Hermes** (*HER-meez*) – An illegitimate son of Zeus, Hermes is the god of travelers and mischief. He is known for his cunning and swiftness. Hermes acts as a messenger for Zeus and as a guide for lost mortals.

**Apollo** (*ah-POL-loh*) – An illegitimate son of Zeus, Apollo is the god of the sun, medicine, and archery. His twin sister, Artemis, is the goddess of the moon. Apollo is the patron god of the city of Troy, and often interferes in battle on behalf of the Trojans.

**Thetis** (*THEE-tis*) – A sea nymph, Thetis is the wife of Peleus and the mother of Achilles. When Hephaestus was cast off Mount Olympus, Thetis took him in, raising him as her own son.





## Mortals–Greek

**Atreus** (*AY-tree-ahs*) – The former king of Mycenae, father of Agamemnon and Menelaus. The House of Atreus is one of the pivotal mortal families in Greek mythology, committing unspeakable crimes against each other that provided perfect fodder for the ancient Athenian writers of tragedy.

**Agamemnon** (*ag-ah-MEM-nahn*) – King of Mycenae and the supreme commander of the Greek army at Troy. Older brother of Menelaus, the king of Sparta.

**Chryseis** (*kris-AY-is*) – Daughter of a priest of Apollo, stolen by Agamemnon as a spoil of war. He must give her up to end the plague sent by the gods.

**Peleus** (*peh-LAY-ahs*) – King of the Myrmidons and father of Achilles.

**Achilles** (*ah-KIL-eez*) – The son of Thetis and Peleus, Achilles is the commander of the Myrmidons. It was prophesied at his birth that he would either lead a long, dull life or a short, glorious one. He is the best warrior the world has ever seen; just the sight of Achilles on the field can help turn the tide of battle. It is Achilles' endless rage that drives him. Although the death of Achilles is not presented in the *Iliad*, other sources state that he was killed near the end of the Trojan War by Paris, who shot him in the heel with an arrow. Later legends stated that his mother had dipped him in the River Styx as a baby, holding him by one heel; thus he was



*Mask of Agamemnon, 16th century B.C.E.*



invulnerable in all of his body except for that heel. This is how the term *Achilles' heel* has come to mean a person's point of weakness.

*Achilles  
by Richard  
Westmacott,  
Hyde Park,  
London, 1822.*





*Menelaus supporting the body of Patroclus, 16th-17th century.*

**Patroclus** (*pah-TROHK-lahs*) – An accomplished warrior in his own right, Patroclus's prowess dims in comparison to his close friend and cousin Achilles. He fights for Menelaus, but his first loyalty is to Achilles.

**Menelaus** (*men-ah-LAY-ahs*) – King of Sparta, younger brother of Agamemnon, and husband to Helen. When Helen was stolen by Paris of Troy, Menelaus appealed to his many allies for help.

**Odysseus** (*oh-DIS-ee-ahs*) – King of Ithaca, known for his prowess on the battlefield and his cunning mind.

**Nestor** (*NES-tor*) – King of Pylos. Though he is already quite old when the war starts, Nestor is noted for his bravery and speaking ability.

**Briseis** (*brih-SAY-is*) – Stolen by Achilles as a spoil of war, she has come to be his lover.

**Ajax** (*AY-jax*) – King of Salamis; strong, vicious, and powerful; after Achilles, the most valuable warrior among the Greeks.

**Diomedes** (*dy-oh-MEED-eez*) – King of Argos, the youngest amongst the Achaean warrior-kings; the most valiant soldier of the war, powerful and wise beyond his years.

## Mortals–Trojan

**Priam** (*PRY-am*) – The king of Troy, Priam has fifty sons and several daughters. He is widely known for his fair and just leadership.

**Hecuba** (*HEK-yoo-bah*) – The queen of Troy, Hecuba is wife to Priam and mother to Hector and Paris. She regularly watches the battles from the city walls, and leads the city's women in prayers to the gods.



**Hector** (*HEK-tor*) – The oldest son of Priam and Hecuba, and heir apparent to Troy. Although he is known to be a great warrior, Hector disagrees with war. He harbors dislike for his younger brother Paris, who started the war when he stole Helen of Sparta. Hector is the husband of Andromache and father to the infant Astyanax. Medieval scholars praised Hector not only for his courage but also for his noble and courtly nature. Homer portrayed Hector as peace-loving, thoughtful as well as bold, and as a good son, husband, and father.

**Andromache** (*an-DROM-ah-kee*) – Hector's wife and mother of Astyanax. She fears for Hector's life as the war continues.

**Astyanax** (*as-TY-an-ax*) – The infant son of Hector and Andromache, thrown by the Greeks from the walls of Troy.

Hector and Andromache  
by Giorgio de Chirico, 1912.

**Paris** (*PEHR-is*) – A prince of Troy, Paris is the son of Priam, and a younger brother to Hector. He is known for his handsome face and unwillingness to fight. The goddess Aphrodite promised Paris the love of the most beautiful woman in the world, Helen. Paris's abduction of Helen from Sparta began the Trojan War.





(left)  
Priam at the  
feet of Achilles  
by Alessandro  
Padovanino,  
17th century.

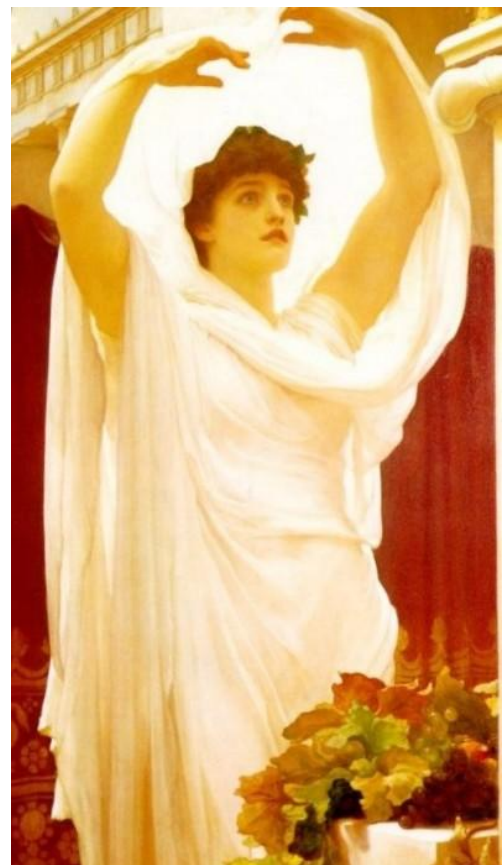
(below)  
Cassandra as  
depicted by  
Frederic  
Leighton in his  
1872 painting  
Invocation.

**Helen** (*HEL-en*) – Queen of Sparta and wife to Menelaus, Helen is an illegitimate daughter of Zeus, and said to be the most beautiful woman in the world. She loves Paris, and it is said that she willingly followed him to Troy, but she loathes the war that is being fought over her. After the war she returns to Sparta with her husband, Menelaus.

**Cassandra** (*cas-SAHN-drah*) – A princess of Troy, daughter of Hecuba and Priam, and favorite sister of Hector. Apollo blessed her with the gift of prophesy, then cursed her so that no one would believe her visions.

**Aeneas** (*an-NEE-ahs*) – Leader of the Trojans' Dardanian allies, third cousin and principal lieutenant of Hector. In Virgil's *Aeneid*, he escapes Troy and eventually becomes the legendary founder of Rome.

—*Olivia Sweets, Dramaturgy Intern*



## Common Core & Indiana State Standards

Attending the play along with using the discussion questions, writing projects and activities in the study guide can link your lessons to the following

Common Core/IN State Standards:

Language Arts:

Reading Standards for Literature/Reading Comprehension  
& Analysis of Literary Text

Reading Standards for Literature/Craft and Structure

Writing Standards/Research to Build and Present Knowledge

Social Studies/ World History and Civilization:

Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Key Events and Details

Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Writing Standards/ Research to Build and Present Knowledge

Theatre Arts:

Analysis and Response

History and Culture

Performance Style

*fallen warrior from the east pediment of the Parthenon*



## Discussion Questions

*An Iliad* tells the story of two great warriors: Hector and Achilles. In Ancient Greece, warriors were often revered as heroes, loved by thousands. Do we still have universally loved heroes today? Who is considered such a hero in modern-day America? What makes this modern hero “noble” or “heroic”? Beyond the popular realms of athletics and movies, where can we find heroes today?

The Trojan War lasted almost 10 years. Do you think the outcome of the war was worth the time and lives lost? If you were in charge of the Greek armies, would you have persevered, or given up? At what point, if any, would you have ended the war to return home? Do you think such wars as the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, World War I, or World War II were worth fighting? Why or why not?

Why do you think this story is presented in a one-man format? What would the story gain or lose if it were presented traditionally, with separate actors portraying each character?

What does *An Iliad* have to say about the topic of war? How does it glorify warfare? How does it condemn warfare? Can these two opposing viewpoints be presented side-by-side? How?

Co-playwright Lisa Peterson once stated that *An Iliad* is more about Homer than it is about the Trojan War. What do you think she meant by this? Do you agree with her? Why or why not?

Agamemnon won a girl, Chryseis, as a war prize. When forced to return her, he took Briseis, Achilles’s war prize, as a replacement. Do you think this action was fair? Was Achilles justified in his response? What does this episode suggest about the power of women in this era? Are there situations today where people might be treated like possessions? What can be done about such situations?

Examine the action of the Greek gods in the story. How did they affect the outcome of the war? How would the war have been different if each specific god had not been present? How are the actions of the gods fair or unfair? To whom?



## Writing Projects

Have students write a short essay focusing on the backstory of *An Iliad's* mysterious Poet. Who is he? Where did he come from? How old is he? How many times has he told this story? Why is he in the theatre, telling this tale? Encourage creative answers backed by research.

Have students write a diary entry in the voice of a civilian from Troy or an un-named soldier from Greece. What is going on in the minds of the common people, caught up in a war they didn't start? Are they still loyal to their leaders, or angry at the length of the war? Amid the affairs of great cities and armies, what are the individual's personal concerns?

Have students write letters to soldiers who are currently fighting overseas. Visit <http://letterstosoldiers.org/site/> or similar organizations for further information.

## Activities

Have each student select a different section from *The Iliad*. One student might perform solo, in the style of the ancient poets. Another might rewrite his or her section and perform it as a rap. Another might turn his section into a play and assemble a group of classmates to perform it together.

Have students pick a section they remember from *An Iliad* and focus on the emotion of the section, such as the rage of Achilles or the grief of Priam. Have students create a collage or write a poem or a piece of music that explores the emotion.

Ask students to consider *An Iliad* in three separate ways (for example, a story about war, a story about rage, or a story about loss). Students should present arguments for all three. (Why is it a story about war and not about loss or rage? Why is it a story about rage and not about war or loss?) Engage the class in a three-sided debate.

## Resources

### Books

Homer. *The Iliad*

Many translations are available. Among the most popular is that by Robert Fagles (1998), the basis of this play. This translation is valued for its use of free verse to maintain Homer's original poetic characteristics; at the same time, it avoids archaic vocabulary and complicated syntax, making it more approachable for the modern reader.

### Nonfiction

D'Aulaire, Edgar Parin & D'Aulaire, Ingrid: *D'Aulaires' Book of Greek Myths*

Schmidt, Michael: *The First Poets: Lives of the Ancient Greek Poets*

Warry, John: *Warfare in the Classic World*

### Fiction

Geras, Adele: *Ithaka*

Geras, Adele: *Troy*

Renault, Mary: *The King Must Die*

Shanower, Eric: *Age of Bronze, Vol. # 1: A Thousand Ships*

Sutcliff, Rosemary: *Black Ships Before Troy: The Story of the Iliad*

Cooney, Caroline B.: *Goddess of Yesterday: a Tale of Troy*

Virgil: *The Aeneid*

Remarque, Erich Maria: *All Quiet on the Western Front*

O'Brien, Tim: *The Things They Carried*

### Article

Hsu, Jeremy: "The Secrets of Storytelling: Why We Love a Good Yarn"

*Scientific American*, August 2008

This article from *Scientific American* discusses the tradition and science behind storytelling traditions. Why we love stories, where these came from, how storytelling has evolved, and how modern researchers study storytelling are all covered.

Available online: <http://www.westonschools.org/westonschools/file/storytelling.pdf>

## Websites

<http://blog.oup.com/2013/05/trojan-war-fact-or-fiction/>

The blog of the Oxford University Press – a short essay on fact v. fiction in the case of the Trojan War.

[http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/young\\_explorers/childrens\\_online\\_tours/the\\_trojan\\_war/the\\_trojan\\_war.aspx](http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/young_explorers/childrens_online_tours/the_trojan_war/the_trojan_war.aspx)

An online exhibit by the British Museum. The story of the Trojan War, accompanied by ancient Greek artifacts and trivia.

<http://www.theoi.com/greek-mythology/olympian-gods.html>

Brief “biographies” of the Ancient Greek gods.

<http://www.poets.org/poet.php/prmPID/288>

A short explanation of the entity known as “Homer,” and an introduction to the Homeric Question.

<http://www.pantheon.org/areas/mythology/europe/greek/>

An expansive online encyclopedia covering the myths and gods of Ancient Greece.

<http://www.storytellingcenter.net/>

The website of the International Storytelling Center; an organization that promotes the traditional art of storytelling.

<http://www.webexhibits.org/poetry/background.html>

A short study in the history of poetry and storytelling

[http://www-tc.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/media/uploads/special\\_features/download\\_files/warletters\\_transcript.pdf](http://www-tc.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/media/uploads/special_features/download_files/warletters_transcript.pdf)

A transcript of the PBS documentary *War Letters*: the letters of American soldiers – from nearly every war in American history – describing their days, their actions, and their feelings on the war they’re fighting.

<http://www.vietvet.org/pocindex.htm>

Paul O’Connell shipped out to Vietnam after dropping out of school at the age of 18. This is an archive of letters he wrote home, as well as his thoughts as he archived them in 1996.

<http://atwar.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/27/the-financial-costs-of-war-beyond-the-battlefield/>

At War: *NY Times* Blog. This article, written by a former soldier, discusses PTSD and the way it is downplayed in the US, by both government officials and soldiers themselves.

## Movies

*O Brother, Where Art Thou?* (2000) (PG-13)

A re-telling of the *Odyssey* set in the Depression-era American South.

*The Odyssey* (1997) (PG-13)

This television miniseries tells the story of Odysseus heading off to the Trojan War, and his struggles returning home after the war's end.

*Ancient Mysteries: The Odyssey of Troy* (1995)

In this 1995 documentary, archaeologists and historians visit the ruins of Troy. Later, new discoveries and hypothesis about the nature of the Trojan War are revealed, and compared to the Troy of legend..

*In Search of: The Trojan War* (1985)

*America's Iliad: The Siege of Charleston* (2007)

*Trojan Women* (1971)

Stars Katherine Hepburn, Vanessa Redgrave. Movie version of the popular play.

*Troy* (2004)

Though there are quite a few differences between *The Iliad* and this film, it is the most recent (and possibly the most ambitious) adaptation of the traditional story.

# Glossary

## Achaeans

Homer often refers to the Greeks as the Achaeans in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. At that time, Achaea was a region in the north central part of the Peloponnese.

## Alexandria; “Alexandria, all that history lost”

Alexandria was founded by Alexander the Great in the fourth century B.C.E. The Royal Library of Alexandria was one of the largest libraries of the ancient world. It is famous for being burned, resulting in the loss of many scrolls and books, and has become a symbol of knowledge and culture destroyed.

## Argives

In the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Homer uses “the Argives” as he does “the Achaeans,” to refer to the Greeks. Located at a strategic location on the fertile plain of Argolis, Argos was a powerful rival of Sparta.

## Arne

In Greek mythology, Arne was the ancestress of the Boeotians. A city named after her was recorded in the *Iliad*’s catalogue of ships that has been tentatively identified with the ruins of Gla.

## Aulis

Ancient Aulis was a Greek port-town, located on the east coast of Boeotia in central Greece. Aulis belonged to Thebes. According to legend, the Greek fleet gathered in Aulis to set off for Troy.

## Aztec temples, razed

The siege of Tenochtitlan, the capital of the Aztec Empire, was led by Spanish *conquistador* Hernán Cortés in 1521. As many as 240,000 Aztecs are estimated to have died during the 80-day battle. Even after the Aztecs surrendered, Spanish forces continued to slaughter and loot.

## Babylon

Babylon was an ancient city-state located in present-day Iraq. At one time the largest city in the world, it was dissolved by the Muslim Empire in the seventh century C.E..

## Boeotian

Boeotia is a region of central Greece, one of the earliest inhabited regions of prehistoric Greece. It includes a large portion of the peninsula that connects the Peloponnese to the mainland. Its largest city is Thebes. The legends of Oedipus and Antigone as well as Dionysus originated in this region.



**boss on welded boss**

A shield boss is a round, convex, or conical piece of material at the center of a shield. The boss was designed to deflect blows from the center of round shields and provide a place to mount the shield's grip.

**bronze**

Bronze is an alloy consisting primarily of copper, usually with tin as the main additive. It is hard and tough, and it was so significant in antiquity that the Bronze Age (3200–600 B.C.E.) was named after the metal. The Trojan War fell near the end of the Bronze Age, when use of the alloy was at its height.

**centaur**

A centaur is a mythological creature with the head, arms, and torso of a human and the body and legs of a horse. Centaurs are considered as wild as untamed horses.

**Constantinople, burning for weeks**

Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine empire, the holy center of the Eastern Christian Church, was filled with art treasures. In 1203, during the Fourth Crusade, Crusaders of the Western Christian Church sacked the city, desecrating churches, raping nuns, burning libraries, slaughtering civilians, melting down artworks for their materials, destroying or stealing everything they could lay their hands upon.

**cope**

a covering that conceals

**Dardan**

The Dardanoi were a people closely related to the Trojans. The Dardanoi derived their name from Dardania, an ancient city in the Troad. The man who wounded Patroclus was Euphorbus.

**Dardan Gates**

the main gate into the walled city of Troy, also known as the Scaean Gates

**Dresden**

Dresden, Germany, was a major communications hub and manufacturing center, as well as a leading European center of art, classical music, culture, and science. In February 1945, the Allies dropped thousands of tons of explosives on Dresden. The ancient city center was almost wiped out. Today it is estimated that 25,000 people—mostly women and children—were killed.

**Diocletian**

Diocletian was a Roman emperor in the third century C.E., known for his efficient government and persecution of Christians.

**fate**

Traditional usage defines fate as a power or agency that predetermines and orders the course of events. Classical and European mythology features three goddesses dispensing fate. They determine the events of the world through the mystic spinning of threads that represent individual human fates.

**gall**

bitterness of spirit or rancor, or a brazen boldness coupled with impudent assurance and insolence

**Gaul**

Gaul was a region of Western Europe during the Iron Age and Roman era, encompassing present-day France and parts of other countries.

**Gray-uh**

Graea or Graia is a region or a city of ancient Greece. It has been conjectured that men from Graia were among the first Greek visitors to early Rome; they would have said that they were Graikoi, that is, people from Graia. From the Latin "Graeci" we may have derived the word "Greek."

**greaves**

shin armor

**Hate**

Erida is the Greek goddess of hate, the sister and companion of the brutal war god, Ares. Her wrath is unyielding; her screaming makes soldiers long for the sweetness of battle.

***Hektoros hippodamoio.* Hector breaker of horses.**

Troy was known for raising exceptional horses.

**Heracles**

Heracles is a divine hero in Greek mythology, the son of Zeus and Alcmene. He was the greatest of the Greek heroes, a paragon of masculinity. In Rome and the modern West, he is known as Hercules.

**heron ... egret**

Hérons and egrets are both long-legged, long-necked, freshwater, coastal birds. They have a similar appearance. Egrets are smaller and are mainly white, with or without decorative plumage. Herons are generally gray, white, black, blue, or brown, sometimes in striking patterns.

### **Hiroshima**

On August 6, 1945, an American plane dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, killing an estimated 80,000 people. By the end of the year, injury and radiation brought total casualties to as much as 140,000—more than one third of the population. Almost 70 percent of the city's buildings were destroyed.

### **House of Death**

In Greek mythology, the underworld (sometimes known as Hades) was the place where souls went after death, the Greek idea of afterlife.

### **Hyria ... Myka-less-us ... Harma ... Il-e-si-on ... Er-y-three ... Co-pae ... Eu-tree-sis ... Thisbe ... Coronea ... Haleartus ... Plataea ... Glisas**

Hyria, Mycalessus Harma, Eilesium, Erythrae, Copais, Eutresis, Thisbe, Coronea, Haleartus, Plataea, and Glisas were all cities or towns in ancient Boeotia.

### **Kabul**

Following the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989, fighting between Afghan guerrillas continued in Kabul. More than 50,000 people lost their lives during the Mujahideen infightings on the streets of Kabul between 1992 and 1996. By 1996, when the Taliban militia took control of Kabul, the city lay in ruins.

### **Lay-i-tus and Pen-e-lay-os: Ar-se-si-lay-us and Proth-o-ee-nor and Clonius**

Leitus, Peneleos, Arcesilaus, Prothoenor, and Clonius were Boetians, several of them past suitors of Helen, all of them commanders of multiple ships.

### **Menina ... (Greek text)**

*Rage—Goddess, sing the rage of Peleus' son Achilles  
Murderous, doomed, that cost the Achaeans countless losses,  
Hurling down to the House of Death so many sturdy souls,  
Great fighters' souls—*

### **muses**

In Greek mythology, the muses were the goddesses of the inspiration of literature, science, and the arts.

### **Mycenae**

One of the major centers of Greek civilization in the second millennium B.C.E., by 500 B.C.E. the city was in ruins.

### **Olympus**

In Greek mythology, Olympus was the home of the 12 Olympian gods of the ancient Greek world.

**On-kee-stus the holy, Poseidon's sun-filled grove**

Poseidon's sanctuary was located at Onchestus in Boetia.

**Pelian ash spear**

A huge weapon made from an ash tree grown on Mount Pelion; only Achilles was capable of using this spear, which was said to have healing properties.

**pike**

A pike is a pole weapon, a long thrusting spear formerly used extensively by infantry. Unlike many similar weapons, the pike was not intended to be thrown; it was wielded by foot soldiers deployed in close order.

**purple**

Purple was one of the first colors used in prehistoric art. Phoenicians used a sea snail called the spiny dye-murex to make a deep, rich purple dye. The process of making the dye was long, difficult, and expensive, limiting its use to kings, nobles, priests, and magistrates all around the Mediterranean.

**River of the Ocean**

Oceanus was believed by the ancient Greeks and Romans to be the divine personification of the World Ocean, an enormous river encircling the world.

**Rout**

Ioke is the female personification of onslaught, battle-tumult, pursuit, and rout. With Alke (battle strength), Eris (strife), and Phobos (fear), she is part of the armed guard of Zeus.

**Sarajevo**

The Bosnian War for independence resulted in large-scale destruction during the Siege of Sarajevo between 1992 and 1996. During the siege, 11,541 people lost their lives, including more than 1,500 children. An additional 56,000 people were wounded, including nearly 15,000 children.

**Scaean Gates**

the main gate into the walled city of Troy, also known as the Dardan Gates

**Scamander**

In Greek mythology, Scamander was a river god, son of Oceanus or Zeus. Scamander fought on the side of the Trojans after Achilles insulted him. Scamander is the personification of the Scamander River that flowed from Mount Ida across the plain beneath the city of Troy, joining the Hellespont north of the city.



**scepter**

Use of a rod or staff as representing authority can be traced to the beginning of Classical Antiquity. Among the early Greeks, the scepter was a long staff. It was used by respected elders and came to be used by judges, military leaders, priests, and others in authority.

**sea-nymph**

A nymph in Greek and Latin mythology is a minor female nature deity typically associated with a particular location. Different from goddesses, nymphs are divine spirits who animate nature. They are usually depicted as beautiful, young, nubile maidens who love to dance and sing.

**Sinbad**

Sinbad the Sailor is a fictional sailor and the hero of a story-cycle of Middle Eastern origin. During his voyages throughout the seas east of Africa and south of Asia, he has fantastic adventures going to magical places, meeting monsters, and encountering supernatural phenomena.

**Spartan**

Sparta was a prominent city-state in ancient Greece. Around 650 B.C.E., it rose to become the dominant military land-power in ancient Greece. Sparta's social system was completely focused on military training and excellence. Spartan soldiers were widely considered to be among the best in battle.

**Strife**

Eris is the Greek goddess of chaos, strife, and discord; her name in Latin is Discordia. It is Eris who initiates the Trojan War by provoking the goddesses into a contest of beauty judged by Paris.

**Terror**

In Greek mythology, Deimos is the personification of terror. He is the son of Ares (god of war) and Aphrodite. He is the twin brother of Phobos (fear).

**Thebes (“the rough-hewn gates of Lower Thebes”)**

The walled city of Thebes was accessible by seven gates. Aeschylus's play *Seven against Thebes* gets its title from seven battles to break down these seven gates during a war between Oedipus's sons.

**Thespiae**

Thespiae was an ancient Greek city. (Citizens of Thespiae are called Thespians; but the common noun “thespian,” meaning “actor,” comes not from the city, but from the legendary first actor, named Thespis.)

## Going to the Theatre: Audience Role & Responsibility

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.