

ARIZONA THEATRE COMPANY

THE STATE THEATRE



GOD of CARNAGE

Play Guide

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It is Arizona Theatre Company's goal to share the enriching experience of live theatre. This play guide is intended to help you prepare for your visit to Arizona Theatre Company. Should you have comments or suggestions regarding the play guide, or if you need more information about scheduling trips to see an ATC production, please feel free to contact us:

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Support for ATC's Education and Community Programming has been provided by:

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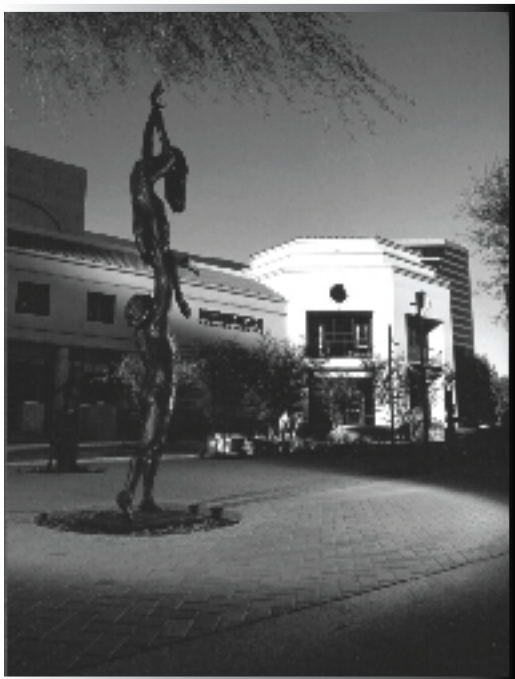
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ARIZONA THEATRE COMPANY: WHO WE ARE

Thousands of people make our work at ATC possible!

Arizona Theatre Company is a professional, not-for-profit theatre company. This means all of our artists, administrators and production staff are paid professionals, and the income we receive from ticket sales and contributions goes right back into our budget to create our work, rather than to any particular person as a profit.



Herberger Theatre in Phoenix, Arizona

Each season, ATC employs hundreds of actors, directors and designers from all over the country to create the work you see on stage. In addition, ATC currently employs about 100 staff members in our production shops and administrative offices in Tucson and Phoenix during our season. Among these people are carpenters, painters, marketing professionals, fundraisers, stage directors, computer specialists, sound and light board operators, tailors, costume designers, box office agents, stage crew -the list is endless- representing an amazing range of talents and skills.

We are also supported by a Board of Trustees, a group of business and community leaders who volunteer their time and expertise to assist the theatre in financial and legal matters, advise in marketing and fundraising, and help represent the theatre in our community.

Roughly 150,000 people attend our shows every year, and several thousands of those people support us with charitable contributions in addition to purchasing their tickets. Businesses large and small, private foundations and the city and state governments also support our work financially.

All of this is in support of our mission: to create professional theatre that continually strives to reach new levels of artistic excellence and that resonates locally, in the state of Arizona and throughout the nation. In order to fulfill its mission, the theatre produces a broad repertoire ranging from classics to new works, engages artists of the highest caliber, and is committed to assuring access to the broadest spectrum of citizens.



Temple of Music and Art in Tucson, Arizona

GOD OF CARNAGE

By Yasmina Reza

Translated by Christopher Hampton

INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAY

“Sticks and stones can break my bones” ... but when Benjamin hits Henry at a nearby park, it starts two sets of parents on a comically explosive downhill slide from political correctness to character assassination. In this universally acclaimed new comedy by the author of *Art*, adults come together for a civilized evening of coffee, cake and conversation about their kids. But frayed nerves soon surface and the grownups begin to outdo their pugnacious children in bad behavior, disproving the notion that “words can never hurt me.” Winner of the 2009 Tony Award for Best Play, *God of Carnage* is a hilariously harrowing look at the minefield of modern marriage.

SYNOPSIS

Michael and Veronica are Henry’s daddy and mommy.

Alan and Annette are Benjamin’s daddy and mommy.

Benjamin got angry and hit Henry with a stick. Henry’s mouth hurt because two of his teeth broke.

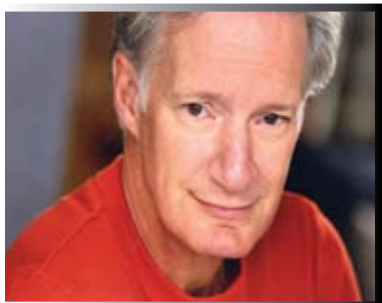
Now the grownups have decided to meet and talk. They will work out a solution because they are grownups.

Because grownups know how to handle things better than kids...

Right?



THE CHARACTERS



Actor Bob Sorenson who plays Michael Novak

Alan Raleigh: A lawyer. Married to Annette and father to Benjamin.

Annette Raleigh: Works in “wealth management.” Married to Alan and mother to Benjamin.



Actor Benjamin Evett who plays Alan Raleigh



Actor Amy Resnick who plays Veronica Novak

Michael Novak: Owner of a wholesale company. Married to Veronica and father to Henry.

Veronica Novak: A writer. Married to Michael and mother to Henry.



Actor Joey Parsons who plays Annette Raleigh

YASMINA REZA

The author of ATC favorite *Art* is back this season with *God of Carnage*, the playwright’s newest Tony Award-winning play. So who is Yasmina Reza and what inspires her to create her work?

Yasmina Reza may have made her mark as an author and a playwright, but she is, first and foremost, an actor. Her plays have been described as acting showcases, displaying a real understanding of the relationship between actor and script. An entry on Reza in *The Complete Review* notes that, as an actress, she has an “ear for what works on stage. Her dialogue is often sharp. . . . Plays such as *Art* . . . [rise] and [fall] with what the actors can do with their roles.” As a result, Reza’s plays resonate with actors, attracting some of the biggest names on Broadway and in Hollywood.



What draws stars from Sean Connery to Robert de Niro is the fact that Reza's works are character-driven and focused on relationships, or the lack thereof, and the tensions that arise in the normal course of even the most mundane of human interactions. That focus on character also resonates with audiences: few plays have experienced the international success that *Art* or *God of Carnage* have. *Art* has been translated into more than thirty languages and continues to fill theatres around the world. Audience interest in *Art* and *God of Carnage* has carried over to Reza's other plays as well, helping to make Yasmina Reza one of the most important figures in late-twentieth century theatre.

Yasmina Reza was born on May 1, 1959 in Paris, the daughter of a Hungarian violinist and a successful businessman of Russian-Iranian descent. Reza was an intelligent child, and her father's affluence allowed her parents to instill in their family a love for art in all its forms. "I grew

up with wonderful parents in cultured and comfortable circumstances," Reza has said. "My father never bought anything extravagant or expensive except art, when he had the means." Despite her mother's musical influences, Reza's artistic talents bent more toward the literary and theatric. She studied theatre at University Paris X in Nanterre, and later pursued intensive actor's training at Paris' internationally renowned Jacques Lecoq Drama School. As a working actress in France, Reza won roles in contemporary and classic productions alike, and, in between rehearsals and performances, she began to write her own plays. "Early in my acting career I saw it was a life of waiting and dependence," says Reza. "Writing I could do by myself, for myself." She completed her first play, *Conversations after a Burial* in 1987 and was awarded the Moliere Award for Best Author, the French equivalent of the Tony.

Reza followed that early success with quite an ambitious endeavor: translating an adaptation of Franz Kafka's novel *The Metamorphosis* for Roman Polanski. That work was rewarded in 1988 with a nomination for the Moliere Award for Best Translation. Thereafter, it seems, Reza could do no wrong. Her second play, *Winter Crossing*, premiered in 1990 and was awarded the Moliere Award for Best Fringe Production; her fourth play, *The Unexpected Man*, premiered in 1995 and was revived by the Royal Shakespeare Company in 1998, for which it was nominated for the BBC Award for Best New Play at the Laurence Olivier Theater Awards. More recently, Reza has written the critically acclaimed *Life X 3* (2000) and *A Spanish Play* (2004), both of which have been produced in theatres throughout Europe, North America, and Australia.

In addition to her plays, Reza has also written screenplays for films shown exclusively in Europe, and she is the author of three novels. But, until the premiere of *God of Carnage*, it was her third play, *Art*, which garnered the most acclaim. Since its Paris debut in 1995, *Art* was nothing less than a phenomenon: it is estimated that the play has earned more than \$300 million worldwide, and it has won numerous awards, including the Moliere Awards for Best Author, Best Play, and Best Production; the Laurence Olivier Award for Best Comedy in 1997; and the Tony Award for Best Play in 1998. It is with that play that Reza was launched to international stardom, and, while she appreciates the perks of success, Reza has said that she much prefers her time at home in France with her children: “I don’t have any expensive furniture, or jewels, or a country house either. The only things I treasure are emotional—a book of drawings by my daughter. . . . My spirit is my only possession.”

One thing common to all of Reza’s plays is a wit that either not everyone gets, or that prompts people to mislabel her works as comedies. Reza adamantly maintains that her plays are not meant to be comedies, and she fears that her plays may not be taken seriously. In fact, it has been written that Reza believed the Paris premiere of *Art* was a disaster because she could hear the audience laughing. While this story is anecdotal, it is supported, at least in theme, by comments Reza has made elsewhere. “My plays are tragedy, funny tragedy,” she told *Business Week* in 2001. “To me, *Art* is heartbreaking.”

However, there is no denying that her works have largely been a success, and Reza does acknowledge that audiences and actors alike have embraced her writing, a talent that she says she falls back on when life isn’t enough. “Writing helps me survive,” she has said. “I don’t write a lot, but I can write anywhere, on anything. It’s a strength.” Of her own writing, Reza has said it is not intelligent but may appear to be: “I write from my intuition, my sense of freedom, my feeling for words and rhythm. Sometimes from my heart, but not very much.”

Did her experiences as an actress influence the way she writes for the stage? Reza says yes, but, unlike other people, Reza sees no real distinction between her acting and her writing. To her, they are simply parts of her that seemed to naturally mesh. “I don’t feel writing is my profession,” she has said. “I don’t know what my profession is. I loved the theatre, and I loved words, so it was logical to write for theatre.” That mutual passion for both talents has revealed an ability to write for actors in a way that makes it seem to each actor that the part he is playing was written specifically for him. *The Complete Review* notes that one of the fascinating aspects of *Art* is the fact that so many different sets of actors have successfully played these roles: “It is an odd sort of star-vehicle at which few seem to have failed.”

Fabienne Pascaud, a writer for the French arts magazine *Telerama*, once wrote that famous actors dream of parts in Reza’s plays because of her masterful use of silence. “[Reza] has a wonderful way with ellipses, those rejoinders embroidered on the thread of the essential, apparently simplistic, but in which any great actor can hint at great depths through perfectly timed, almost musical silences.” Reza agrees. “Most writers don’t know that actors are never better than in the pauses or in the subtext. They give actors too many words,” she has said. “In a play, words are parentheses to the silences. They’re useful for the actors, but . . . they aren’t the whole story.”

By Don Leavitt
From Utah Shakespeare Festival’s Insights, 2007
Reprinted with permission from Utah Shakespeare Festival

INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR RICK LOMBARDO

Rick Lombardo, Artistic Director of San Jose Repertory Theatre and director of *God of Carnage*, agreed to answer some questions from ATC Literary Manager Jenny Bazzell about what it's like to be working on this exciting new Tony Award-winning play, his thoughts about the cast, and what he foresees as the challenges of this production.

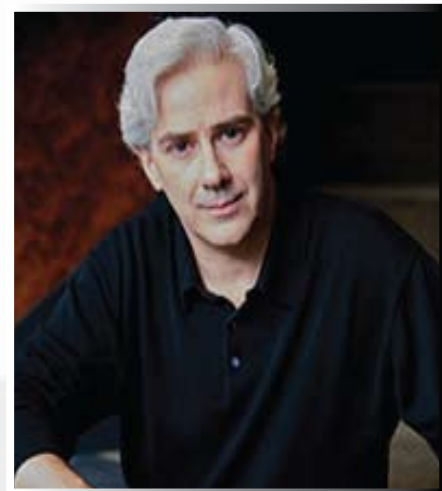
Jenny Bazzell: The play's title, *God of Carnage*, sounds a little scary to some people. What is this play about?

Rick Lombardo: For me, this title comes from the fact that this play revels in the notion that just below the surface of human beings lies a kind of wonderful savage. It's like peeling away this very light veneer of civility or civilization that we think we have. We think we're a very civilized people, that we're very modern and very sophisticated and so far beyond the times of the cave men and cave women. But what is wonderfully darkly humorous about the play is that it doesn't take much to peel back the surface a little bit and we see ourselves as the cave men and cave women or those little primitive children on the schoolyard that we once were.

JB: So true! Let's talk a little bit about the playwright. Yasmina Reza is a very popular modern playwright. Her Tony Award-winning play *Art* (previously produced by ATC) has been produced all over the world and finds popularity in disparate cultures. Her newest, *God of Carnage*, is also a Tony winner. What do you think it is about Reza's work that speaks so powerfully to human beings the world over?

RL: I think both plays are so easy to relate to. *Art* actually does a very similar thing to *God of Carnage*. *Art* takes these three men who are close friends and also supposedly very sophisticated and civilized and it shows that it can take one little thing, like a disagreement over a painting, to reduce them to pettiness and antagonism and a kind of emotional war – which is very much the same process in *God of Carnage*. And I think the reason the plays relate so much cross-culturally, regardless of whether one of Reza's plays starts in France or England or in another language, is because they all explore this kind of Western civilization and how easy it is for the walls to come tumbling down.

JB: Indeed. *God of Carnage* is a wickedly funny and insightful play about the ways in which grownups sometimes behave worse than their children. Are there specific challenges to a play of this genre?



Director Rick Lombardo

RL: Dark comedy or black comedy always has really specific challenges because the actors and I are going to have to walk a very fine edge to discover the balance between the truth of the rage and betrayal that begins to emerge in this play. And it's not just between the two couples but within the two couples; both of these marriages are ultimately very troubled and these spouses feel betrayed. And when you take that emotional journey and all the darkness and all of the pain that emerges from that, we've got to tell that in a truthful way. But also we have to modulate it so that the audience is both horrified by what's happening but also intensely entertained and amused by what's happening. So, we need to consider what makes it funny AND what makes it horrifying and how can we keep BOTH balls in the air at the same time. That's the really particular challenge of the writing. And, were you going to ask me about the technical challenges of the show?

JB: I think that could be a fun thing to talk about!

RL: Well, I don't want to give too much away, but I'll say there's the technical challenge of how do you realistically and ridiculously and outrageously handle the "vomit moment," which has to be so ridiculous that we're allowed to laugh at it and at the same time, again, that we're also horrified and repulsed by it. It's a whole other can of worms for the production staff and the technical staff to try to figure out how to deal with that. And whatever we secretly come up with, we're not going to reveal it! *[Laughter.]*

JB: When you began the casting process for the play, what specific qualities were you looking for that the actors would need to possess?

RL: There's a really specific kind of actor who can completely go to the truth of what is dangerous in this play and what's scary in this play, but yet they have the right comic sensibility to know just how to twist the moment so that we can also laugh with them and be entertained by them. I knew three of the four actors and their work really well. This play requires really smart actors. And the fourth actor we found was definitely the complement to the other three people that we had asked to do it.

JB: And that's so critical because I think Yasmina Reza's plays just require smart actors and she asks the audience to be smart.

RL: Yeah. Who are these characters? A financial wizard from Wall Street, a super high-end corporate attorney and someone who is a political and social activist raising funds for Darfur. Again, these are sophisticated people.

JB: You're set to join us in Arizona to begin work on rehearsals at the end of September. What are you most looking forward to about beginning the rehearsal process? About being in Arizona?

RL: First of all, I'm looking forward to diving into this play, because I love how outrageous this play is and I love how bold this play is – that always really excites me. Secondly, the four actors that I'm going to be working with are brilliant acting creatures, and I can't wait to be together with them in that room and start exploring. Because I know they're also dangerous actors who will try almost anything and that's what I love in an actor: someone who's always willing to try something outrageous or stupid or dangerous and just go all out. And all four of these are those types of actors.

Also, San Jose Rep and Arizona Theatre Company have done many, many productions together and the Rep Staff and the ATC staff as well as [ATC Artistic Director] David Ira Goldstein and I, have such similar sensibilities and aesthetics. So I'm really excited to be coming into a work environment that already feels like home. And to have David as a colleague, and for him to be able to come in and look over my shoulder, just as I was able to do when he was here [in San Jose] with *The Kite Runner*, is wonderful. We're two artists that I feel are cut from the same cloth.

Oh and I'm hoping that it'll be below 90 degrees when I get there!

[I told him we couldn't promise anything...]

ANGER MANAGEMENT

We all get angry from time to time. Who doesn't? And like Veronica, Michael, Alan and Annette, sometimes we just need to let things out.

Well, maybe not QUITE like Veronica, Michael, Alan and Annette...

Regardless, appearing at parties with your eyes bulging and screaming profanities at people may not make you the most sought-after guest. So instead, follow these oh-so-helpful anger management techniques and perhaps, just perhaps, you'll still have friends and family willing to acknowledge you at the end of the day.

- **Take a Time Out:** Yes, it's that same thing parents threaten their children with rather than spanking, but it's also useful for grownups! Basically, count to ten before you SAY anything, DO anything, or THROW anything. Just imagine how many take-backsies you wouldn't be wishing you had if instead you just bit your tongue and pretended to send yourself to your room before you speak.

"Fortunately, there is still such a thing as the art of co-existence, isn't there?"
– Annette, *God of Carnage*

- **Adjust What You Expect:** Just because you EXPECT your significant other, parents, children, or the rest of the whole darn world to act like rational human beings doesn't mean they're GOING to. So if you choose to let go of that expectation, then they can't disappoint you. So if you just lower your expectation, they can't disappoint! Presto! It's like magic!
- **Exercise:** And this doesn't mean your mouth. Run, walk, play basketball or hit things [not people]. Putting your energy into these sorts of activities means you're more likely to be too tired to get yourself worked up. So it's a double bonus! Less able to get really mad AND healthier too!
- **Ix-nay on the Alcohol-way:** Alcohol + Anger = Bad News. No big shock there. So unless your anger management solution includes copious amounts of anger/tears/vomit/passing out coupled with copious amounts of Jack Daniels, play the teetotaler when temperatures start to rise. Because it's a proven fact that anger management situations that include alcohol increase confrontational issues exponentially based on the number of drinks consumed per person (okay, that's not a proven fact, I totally made that up, but it's probably true...).



- **Express Yourself:** Like Madonna once told us, one of the keys to a happy life is learning to tell people what you think. But not ALWAYS. Learn to be clear in your communication style and about what you want and you'll go far. Or maybe you'll stay NEAR and actually be able to continue to live in the same house as your family without exploding....
- **Move Forward, Don't Live in the Past:** That's right there, buster. Put down that little book you use to write down everything that everyone you know ever did EVER to make you angry. Or more likely that book is in your head, but the same principle applies. Forgive. You don't have to forget (let's get real). But you CAN not immediately bring up that fight you had with your spouse in 1967 the next time you have an argument. Just saying.
- **Listen to Music:** And put down the Rage Against the Machine, Anthrax or DMX (or, Miley Cyrus, whatever makes you MORE angry rather than LESS angry). Think those guys who wrote instrumental music eons ago that people always pronounce incorrectly: Beethoven, Mozart (okay, they usually get those names right), Chopin,

Brahms or Debussy (not so often pronounced right). But avoid anything with cannon fire; that'll probably just start you up again.

- **Yoga:** Unless the very thought of putting on stretchy pants makes your anger levels soar, yoga can calm even the most angry feelings. It's something about the combo of that specific yoga voice that ALL yoga instructors must have gone to the same school to learn and group unity that arises from contortionist attempts. Besides, if you're trying not to fall over out of tree pose, it's much harder to focus on the fact that your child just got an "F" in math for the sixth straight semester in a row.
- **Visualize Your Happy Place:** This works pretty well if your happy place is a beach with crashing waves or a forest with quaint wildlife or a hot air balloon soaring through the clouds. Not so much if your happy place is a cage fighting match or watching 300 for the zillionth time.
- **Make a Joke:** Humor tends to diffuse angry feelings in tense situations. Just make sure your joke is going to make the situation better, not worse. For instance, a joke about something funny that happened to the two of you during your honeymoon road trip to Colonial Williamsburg = good plan. A joke about his receding hairline or her mother = not so good a plan.
- **Get Professional Help:** No, really. We're a theatre company, not professional therapists. Talk to someone who is.

CLA-WHAT-TI?

"You have to taste this clafouti. Good clafouti is an endangered species." – Michael, *God of Carnage*

Clafouti (spelled *clafoutis* in French and pronounced kla-foo-TEE) is a rustic French dessert from the Limousin area of France, made with black cherries and a pancake or flan-like batter. Originally the cherries were left un-pitted, because purists claimed that leaving the pits in during baking produced an exceptional flavor, but since serving desserts that include pits lacks desirability for many chefs, most of the time in the modern world clafouti is prepared without pits. Many other fruits can be included in a clafouti recipe, including apples, pears, plums, blackberries and blueberries, however, *technically* this would make the dessert no longer meet the exact characterizations of clafouti and therefore it should properly be called a *flaugnarde*. However, people use the term clafouti to include variations on the dessert that are not the exact proper version including black cherries. Clafouti is served either warm or at room temperature usually with a dusting of powdered sugar and sometimes along with *crème fraîche*, yogurt, or whipped cream.

"So, clafouti, is it a cake or a tart?"
 – Michael, *God of Carnage*



A traditional clafouti.

Clafouti Recipe:

Ingredients:

1/2 cup all purpose flour

1/4 teaspoon salt

2 large eggs

2 tablespoons granulated white sugar

3/4 cup milk

1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

3/4 - 1 pound fresh sweet cherries, pitted

1 tablespoon unsalted butter

2 tablespoons granulated white sugar

Preheat the oven to 425°F and place the rack in the center of the oven. Wash the cherries, remove the stems and pits.



In your food processor or blender place the flour, salt, eggs, 2 tablespoons sugar, milk, and vanilla extract. Process for about 45 - 60 seconds, scraping down the sides of the bowl as needed. Once the batter is completely smooth, let it rest while you prepare the fruit.

In a large 9- inch heavy nonstick ovenproof skillet melt the butter over medium heat making sure the melted butter coats the bottom and sides of the pan. When the butter is bubbling, add the pitted cherries, and cook until the cherries have softened a bit and are coated with butter (2 - 3 minutes). Then sprinkle the cherries with the sugar and cook until the sugar has dissolved and turns into a syrup (1 - 2 minutes). Pour the batter over the cherries and bake for about 20 minutes or until the clafoutis is puffed, set, and golden brown around the edges. Do not open the oven door until the end of the baking time or it may collapse. Serve immediately with a dusting of confectioners sugar and yogurt crème fraîche, or softly whipped cream.

- Recipe from <http://www.joyofbaking.com/breakfast/CherryClafoutis.html>

GODS OF CARNAGE

A title is our first impression of a play. Yasmina Reza has powerfully named her work *God of Carnage*. The name of this piece immediately introduces the audience to a graphic word: carnage. According to the *Miriam-Webster* “carnage” is defined as, “(1) the flesh of slain animals or men,” and “(2) great and usually bloody slaughter or injury.” So the question is, what does this title tell us about the play?

Everything has an origin. Countless cultures had “gods of carnage.” One of the best known is the Greek god of war, Ares. This deity was adapted by the Roman culture but was reassigned the name Mars. Although Ares and Mars were one and the same, the cultural perception of the carnal nature of this god changed:

Ares vs. Mars

Ares: Reportedly hated by all of the Greeks including his father Zeus and his mother Hera

vs.

Mars: Loved and revered by the Romans

Ares: Identified by Homer as “murderous, bloodstained, the incarnate curse of mortals; and, strangely a coward too, who bellows with pain and runs away when he is wounded.”

vs.

Mars: Considered “magnificent in shining armor, redoubtable, invincible.” In the *Aeneid* “soldiers rejoice when they see they are to fall on “Mars’ field of renown;” they rush to glorious death and find it sweet to die in battle.”



A statue of ares

The Greeks had reason to detest and fear Ares. According to Homer, Ares would bring an entourage to battle with him that would strike fear in the bravest of hearts.

Ares' Attendants:

- His sister Eris (Discord)
- Eris' son Strife
- The Goddess of War Enyo accompanied by Terror, Trembling and Panic
- Ares' bird was a vulture (a rapacious or predatory bird)

This shift in perception displays varying cultural views of carnage. Now we must ask ourselves, what does carnage mean to us today? Do we view the strife of the characters of this play through a Greek or Roman lens?

-written by Faith Glendenning, Dramaturgical Intern.
Mythology Material Quoted from Edith Hamilton *Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes*

SPARTACUS

SPARTACUS

“I am Spartacus.” – Everyone who is NOT Spartacus in the 1960 film *Spartacus*

Spartacus (c. 109–71 BC) was a real person, though very little is known about his life prior to his involvement in a slave uprising against the Roman Empire during the Third Servile War. Sources are notoriously conflicting about the life of Spartacus, though most seem to agree he was Thracian by birth. Historians agree that at some point he faced enslavement and eventually trained at a gladiator school. He and other gladiators escaped and fled from their captivity; eventually, the group chose Spartacus as one of their leaders (along with Crixus and Oenamus).



A close-up of a statue of Spartacus

At first, the Roman Empire did not take the slave revolt particularly seriously. They sent an army led by Clodius Glaber after Spartacus and his men, who had taken refuge on the slopes of Mount Vesuvius. Rather than viewing the slave uprising as being “worthy” of their normal legions, Rome sent what basically equates to an untested militia to face the gladiators. Not surprisingly, these men’s training proved inadequate to counter the skill of gladiators trained to fight to the death. Rome next sent another group led by Publius Varinius to defeat the slaves. They, too, were defeated. At this point many historians believe Spartacus wished to lead his men to the Alps, a long distance from the center of the Roman Empire, where he believed they could start new lives out of Rome’s reach. However, some members of the group wanted to continue pillaging local cities and march on Rome itself. Some historians believe that at this point Crixus broke with Spartacus over the goals of the uprising and struck out on his own.

“Who knows about Spartacus these days?” – Veronica, God of Carnage

In 72 BCE the Roman Senate decided that the group of rebellious slaves needed more attention than had previously been paid. They sent four Roman legions to deal with the situation created by the rebellion. The legions, led by Lucius Gellius and Gnaeus Lentulus surrounded and dispatched more than two thirds of Crixus’ group. Spartacus’ group, however, had continued to grow, reaching an estimated 70,000 slaves. They faced off with legions from Rome on three separate occasions and won. However, for some reason, probably forever definitively unknown to historians, Spartacus chose not to lead his men to the Alps, but instead turned back to present-day Italy. Historians conjecture that perhaps some of Spartacus’ men would not have continued with him without a path that allowed

further pillaging and raiding. Perhaps Spartacus believed the slaves could reasonably take Rome after so many victories. Some historians believe the group headed toward Rome numbered between 75,000-125,000 men, a considerable fighting force that perhaps led Spartacus to grow overconfident; the number of rebellious slaves certainly had Roman citizens very nervous. Particularly concerning to the Roman senate and citizens was the lack of strong military leadership in Rome itself: most of the most revered leaders of the day were dealing with uprisings in other parts of the Empire and not able to face Spartacus and his hoard.

However, Marcus Crassus, a man made very wealthy by real estate deals, agreed to oversee all military actions against Spartacus. He had served under the Roman general Sulla, who was well-respected and thus the populace believed his experience would serve Rome well during the crisis that Spartacus and his men had created. The story goes that after the first defeat of a group of soldiers led by Mummius, Crassus was so angry that soldiers had broken rank and fled that he ordered one in every ten men from the group to be executed in front of their fellow soldiers to discourage disobedience. Spartacus and his men managed several other victories, but eventually found themselves trapped between legions led by Crassus and Lucullus (another Roman military leader) with additional legions on their way led by Pompey (also another Roman military leader). Spartacus had no choice but to lead his men into one final battle, in which the Roman legions decimated the entire slave army. Some historical accounts tell of 6,000 captured men who Crassus ordered crucified along the road that led from Capua to Rome. The exact fate of Spartacus is unknown, though most reports indicate he perished on the battlefield. The life of Spartacus ended with the slave revolt, but his legend has lived on throughout the ages; he is often celebrated as a folk hero in numerous cultures for the way in which he stood up to the Roman Empire.

Famous Depictions of Spartacus:

***Spartacus* (Novel by Howard Fast)**

The novel *Spartacus* is a historical novel self-published by the American author Howard Fast in 1951. It tells the basic story of the life and death of Spartacus. The central themes of the book deal with the human right to freedom and rebellion as a means of escaping oppressive systems (focusing on the fact that stripping individuals of rights leaves them in the position of having nothing to lose). Fast wrote the novel as a reaction to a three month prison sentence he received in 1950 for being found in contempt of Congress for refusing to name names during the McCarthy Era. The first edition of the book was self-published by the author and included a forward indicating that he hoped one day in the future he would be able to give the names of the people who had helped make the book a reality, but at present he would not because he feared it would subject them to danger of reprisal.



A painting depicting the fall of Spartacus on the battlefield.



Spartacus (1960 Film)

Spartacus is a 1960 film starring Kirk Douglas as the titular character based on the novel of the same name by Howard Fast. Directed by Stanley Kubrick (who replaced original director Anthony Mann after the first week of filming), the film won four Oscars and starred Laurence Olivier as Crassus as well as Peter Ustinov (as Lentulus Batiatus), John Gavin (as Julius Caesar), Jean Simmons, Charles Laughton, John Ireland, Herbert Lom, Woody Strode, Tony Curtis, John Dall and Charles McGraw. The film is partially legendary because of Dalton Trumbo's work on the screenplay. Because of his blacklisting he had been unable to write under his own name for many years when Kirk Douglas insisted that he receive credit for the work he had done on the script, helping to break

his blacklisting. **Spoiler Alert:** The film is also well-known in popular culture as the source of the line, "I am Spartacus," uttered by many of Spartacus' men at the end of the movie as a show of solidarity and to prevent Spartacus from revealing his identity to his captors. He goes unidentified and is crucified namelessly alongside many of the men he fought beside.

THE SAGA OF NIBBLES, THE HAMSTER

"I murdered the hamster?!" – Michael, *God of Carnage*

A little hamster named Nibbles becomes a topic of conflict during the play *God of Carnage*. Can these hardy little creatures survive the great outdoors? Odds of survival relate directly to the environment a hamster encounters. A desert environment like Arizona creates a different survivability ratio than the streets of Brooklyn, New York because issues such as temperature are highly important to weigh. Predators naturally included in a particular area also directly correlate to odds of survival - think coyotes and snakes in Arizona and dogs, cats and maybe really big rats in Brooklyn (no alligators though, even if Nibbles made it into the sewers since that myth has been disproved). Finally, since it appears that Nibbles was a "domesticated" hamster having never faced finding food on her own, escaping from predators or creating her own



shelter...well, let's just say that odds aren't good she'll be like that one cat you hear about that's located after disappearing seven years before and is reunited with its owner (not to mention that hamsters live, on average, two to three years). But, let's just hope Nibbles was an especially resilient little hamster who had spent most of her life reading *Worst Case Scenario Survival Handbooks* ...

Did You Know? The name of these little critters derives from the German word "hamstern," which means "hoard?"

HAMSTER FACTS!

*Hamsters were first discovered in the Syrian Desert and are burrowing and hoarding animals.

*In the wild, Syrian hamsters are omnivores. Which means they eat grasses, seeds, plant roots and the occasional insect.

*Never pick a Syrian hamster up by the scruff of the neck – it puts pressure on the head and may cause the eyes to pop out.

*Hamsters are nocturnal and can become cranky if you disturb their daytime sleep. Try to limit cleaning, feeding and handling to the late afternoon and evening.

*The very private hamster makes a great pet and will thrive in a quiet, dimly lit room away from the sun, drafts and other animals.

"This hamster makes the most godawful racket all night, then spends the whole day fast asleep!" – Michael, *God of Carnage*



If Nibbles' plight touched you and you feel the urge to adopt a hamster after seeing *God of Carnage*, please remember the following:

- Hamsters need nutritious food, fresh water and a clean habitat daily.
- Hamsters need daily exercise and play.
- All household members should understand how to hold and play with a hamster, and they should all be as eager as you to welcome a hamster into the family.
- Hamsters are nocturnal, requiring cleaning, feeding and handling in the late afternoon or evening.
- A pet hamster may require taming.

Written and compiled by Faith Glendenning and Jenny Bazzell. All hamster facts from http://www.burgesspetcare.co.uk/uploads/resources/documents/supahamster_careguide.pdf

REFERENCES IN THE PLAY

New York Area References

BQE: Acronym for Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, also known as Interstate 278. Links Brooklyn and Queens (thus the name) and bypasses through industrial, commercial and residential areas.

Cobble Hill Park: A small city park located in the Cobble Hill neighborhood of Brooklyn. The park boasts a rose garden, playgrounds and a dolphin fountain.

F Train: Portion of the Manhattan Transit Authority that connects Queens, Manhattan, and Brooklyn.

Secaucus: A New Jersey town located 4.5 miles from Manhattan.

Whitman Park: Named for poet Walt Whitman, this park covers 2.91 acres in Brooklyn, New York. The park is currently closed and undergoing massive renovations (valued at approximately 4.5 million dollars). Its estimated reopening date is spring of 2012.

International References

Darfur Conflict: This began when “the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) began attacking government targets in early 2003, accusing Khartoum of oppressing black Africans in favor of Arabs. Darfur, which means land of the Fur, has faced many years of tension over land and grazing rights between the mostly nomadic Arabs, and farmers from the Fur, Massaleet and Zaghawa communities.”

*<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3496731.stm>

Ethiopian-Eritrean War: Began when Eritrea invaded Ethiopia in May 1998 and ended in June 2008. The two countries, considered two of the poorest in the world, were battling over land.

The Hague: The Hague is a famous city in the Netherlands. It is not only the seat of the Dutch government, Parliament and Supreme Court, but also the location of many international dispute resolution organizations including the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court. Behind New York and Geneva, The Hague is the third major hosting city of the United Nations and boasts the Peace Palace, funded by philanthropist Andrew Carnegie to house the Permanent Court of Arbitration.

Kinshasa: The capitol city (and largest) of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Sheba: This historical kingdom was situated on the eastern tip of the Red Sea located in the Southwest portion of Arabia. This kingdom was once mighty but now no longer exists.

Medical References

Ataxia: Ataxia refers to problems with muscle coordination that affects people's ability to manifest voluntary movements. Sometimes associated with damage to the cerebellum (the part of the brain that controls muscle movement), ataxia can manifest in finger, hand, arm, leg, eye, and body movement irregularities along with speech and balance issues. Ataxia is generally symptomatic of another illness or injury.

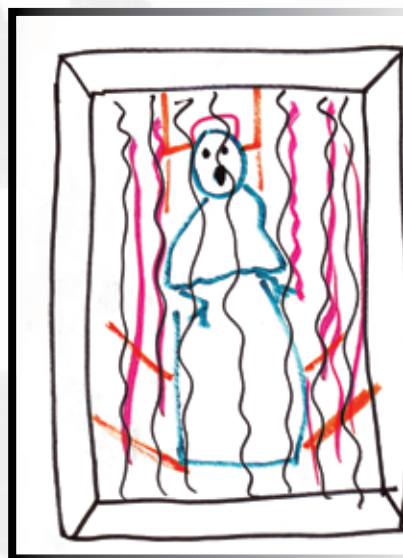
Beta Blockers: Also known as beta-adrenergic receptor antagonists (or beta blocking agents), beta blockers are a class of drugs that diminish the effects of epinephrine and stress hormones. They are often used for the management of cardiac arrhythmias, myocardial infarction and hypertension.

Endodontic Surgery: The term endodontic surgery, more commonly called "a root canal," refers to any surgical procedure dealing with the teeth roots and the surrounding area. Usually endodontic procedures involve a dentist dealing with inflammation or infection.

The Lancet: A leading medical journal.

Art/Theatre/Cultural References

Bacon: Francis Bacon (October 28, 1909 –April 28, 1992), an Irish-born British figurative painter who first came to prominence in the art world through his work *Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion*, which first exhibited in 1945 and caused quite a stir. He considered all his work prior to *Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion* not worthy of note. The figures in the painting show stylistic attributes that continued throughout Bacon's work, including physical distortion, violence and emotionally raw imagery. He often created works that were contemplations on prior works of art that attracted his attention including his famous *Study after Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X* (1953) which referenced the earlier work, but in a distorted fashion. British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher once famously described him as "that man who paints those dreadful pictures;" however, despite Ms. Thatcher's rebuke of his work, he was respected in his own time and is considered the most important British painter since J.M.W. Turner.



"Study after Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X" by Francis Bacon (well, okay, not EXACTLY...)

Charley's Aunt: A three-act farce written by Brandon Thomas. This story is about young Charlie Wykeham and his friend Jack Chesney attempting to obtain and arrange love. However, after formulating a plan revolving around Charlie's Aunt Donna Lucia d'Alvadorez's visit, they are met with comical hurdles that complicate their goal.



"Self Portrait with Cat" by Tsuguharu Foujita (well, okay, not EXACTLY...)

Foujita: Léonard Tsugouharu Foujita (November 27, 1886 – January 29, 1968) was a Japanese-born painter and printmaker who moved to Montparnasse in Paris, France in 1913. He moved in the expatriate circles that were setting the artistic world alight and forged relationships with Amedeo Modigliani, Pascin, Chaim Soutine, Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse (and perhaps even took dance lessons from Isadora Duncan). He combined Japanese and Western techniques in his famous nudes as well as reflecting his love of cats in many of his paintings. He was the only Japanese artist of his day to earn so expansive a European reputation. After traveling extensively and spending time in Japan during World War II, he returned to Paris toward the end of his life and was baptized into the Catholic Church (thus taking the baptismal name of Léonard, theoretically because of his admiration for Leonardo da Vinci).

Kokoschka: Oskar Kokoscha (March 1, 1886 – February 22, 1980) was an Austrian painter, printmaker and playwright. He viewed art as critical to human existence and believed in its power to engage with politics. His expressionistic portraits and landscapes helped to revolutionize art at the beginning of the twentieth century. Oxford University Press explains that, "Kokoschka promoted a new visual effect in painting, related to making visible the immaterial forces active behind the external appearance of things, in which the object was a living, moving substance that revealed its inner essence to the eye. This applied to the portraits as well as to the townscapes. The art-historical basis for his work lies in the painting tradition of Austrian late Baroque and especially in the colorfully expressive visions of Franz Anton Maulbertsch."



"The Bride of the Wind" by Oskar Kokoschka (well, okay, not EXACTLY...)

Kouros: A cologne for men produced by Yves Saint Laurent.

Shroud of Turin: A linen cloth that appears to bear the image of a man who has sustained injuries consistent with crucifixion, the Shroud of Turin has maintained its mysterious status for many centuries. Modern science has yet to explain exactly how the image of the man was imprinted on the cloth (and even whether the image is anatomically consistent with a human being). While history traces the shroud fairly faithfully from 1390, its origins remain unclear, despite independent scientific analysis of the cloth (in 1988 several labs, including one at the University of Arizona, dated the cloth between the thirteen and fourteenth centuries.) For some religious adherents, the Shroud of Turin represents an instance of a “miraculous image” and some believers claim that the reason scientific tests have been unable to determine the way in which the image was imprinted is because it was created divinely; they believe the shroud was wrapped around the body of Jesus and at the moment of his resurrection, the image was created. For others, including John Calvin, it represents heresy in that if such an image had been left on the shroud, Jesus’ followers would have mentioned it in the Bible. Regardless, the Shroud of Turin has become one of the most tested and controversial items in mankind’s history.

Weaponry References

Kalashnikov or AK47: Sometimes referred to as a Kalash, which is a semi-automatic type rifle.

Thump Gun: A M79 grenade launcher used in Vietnam.