



ARTSCLUB

ALIVE ON THREE STAGES

GRANDTHEATRE LONDON,
CANADA

In association with

Rubaboo

Created by
Andrea Menard

Music by
Andrea Menard & Robert Walsh

2022/2023 Season
Granville Island Stage

March 20th - April 30th, 2023



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Welcome

This guide was created for teachers and students. It contains an overview of the play's story as well as informative resources and activities for teachers and students.

The guide aims to provide background knowledge and critical perspectives on the play that will yield fruitful discussion and foster an understanding and appreciation of theatre arts.

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions for the guide, please contact our

Education & Outreach Manager

Hila Graf

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This study guide was written and designed by Ceanna Wood

ABOUT THE ARTS CLUB THEATRE COMPANY

The Arts Club of Vancouver was founded in 1958 as a private club for artists, musicians, and actors. It became the Arts Club Theatre in 1964 when the company opened its first stage in a converted gospel hall at Seymour and Davie Streets.

Now in its 59th season of producing professional live theatre in Vancouver, the Arts Club Theatre Company is a non-profit charitable organization that operates three theatres: the Granville Island Stage, the Stanley Industrial Alliance Stage, and the Newmont Stage at the BMO Theatre Centre. It's popular productions range from musicals and contemporary comedies to new works and classics.

Learn more about the Arts Club Theatre Company at artsclub.com

Learning Objectives

After viewing Rubaboo and working through the following activities, students will:

- recognize different modes of creating that make connections to Indigenous art and cultures
- make relations with different modes of art and the symbols/themes they hold, relating back to their own personal experiences

BC Curriculum Connections

Arts Education 7/8/9

- Interpret and communicate ideas using symbols and elements to express meaning through the arts (7/8)
- Compose, interpret, and expand ideas using symbolism, imagery, and elements (8/9)
- Take creative risks to experience and express thoughts, emotions, ideas, and meaning (7/8/9)
- Collaborate through reciprocal relationships during creative processes (9)
- Create personally meaningful bodies of artistic works that demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of social, cultural, environmental, and historical contexts (9)

Synopsis

Rubaboo – derived from the Michif word for ‘leftovers stew’ or ‘big ‘pot’ is a sort of one act cabaret led by Métis performer, Andrea Menard. Through her lyrical voice and masterful storytelling, she is able to emphasize the beauty of Métis culture in a sharing circle with the audience. Andrea uses the four elements of fire, water, wind, and earth as a structure for the play and to underscore several teachings. Fire is used to call upon the power of the Metis people in referencing events like the Riel Resistance and the Return of the Bell of Batoche, challenging the assumption that the Metis were “rebels” when in fact they were reacting to continued Canadian expansionism moving further West, which put their farms and river-lots at risk. Water represents the capacity we all have for healing, and the hope that exists for a possible reconciliation of nations. Wind evokes the ritual of smudging, and honours those lost to colonial violence and residential schools, while also calling for “winds of change” to right these wrongs. Finally, Earth reminds us that we all come from Mother Earth, and we need to be grateful for this gift of life. By combining all the elements, a metaphorical pot of Rubaboo is created by the end of the play, and we understand that we are all a part of “The Circle”, where we are all equal and we all belong, in unity.

About the Author:

Andrea Menard



Photo Credits:

Andrea Menard is an accomplished Métis singer/songwriter, actor, speaker, wellness trainer, retreat host, and the founder of the Sacred Feminine Learning Lodge.

Born in Manitoba, Andrea is a proud member of the Metis Nation of Canada. Her Metis family originates from St. Laurent, Manitoba and then settled in the interlakes region of Treaty 2 territory. Andrea's carries the name Skooteah Equahh which means Fire Woman in Anishinaabe and the Cree name Notigwew Yutin, which means Grandmother Wind.

Other Credits & Awards

- One of the all-star cast of Sullivan's Crossing.
- Five-time Gemini-nominated actress for Moccasin Flats and Rabbit Fall
- 15-time music award winner.
- Was named ACTRA National's Woman of the Year in 2021.
- Released 4 award-winning albums named: Lift, Sparkle, Simple Steps and The Velvet Devil.
- Released 2 television programs, The Velvet Devil and Sparkle.
- Established a TEDx Talk called "Silent No More"

Métis

Métis people are an Indigenous nation that formed due to the unions of European settlers and First Nations people in the 18th century. As this nation developed the first generations of Métis peoples established important connections with Fur trade companies like the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), the Northwest Company (NWC), XY Company, and the American Fur Company (AFC). Métis people became interpreters and guides and acted as a bridge between First Nations and European kin. As a result of our original fur trade lifestyle, many Métis were multilingual, speaking several First Nations and European languages.

Some Metis Symbols & Traditions

Métis Flag

Métis Sash

Fiddle Music/Jigging

Michif

Métis Symbols & Traditions

Métis Flag

The Métis flag features a white infinity sign on a blue background. The infinity symbol represents the mixing of European and First Nation peoples, to create a unique and distinct culture. The infinity symbol, which refers to a quantity without end, in this situation symbolizes the faith that the Métis culture will exist forever.

Métis Sash

One of the most prominent symbols is the brightly coloured, woven sash. In the days of the voyageur, the sash was both a colourful and festive item of clothing and an important tool worn by the hardy tradesmen. Now it symbolizes pride and identification for Métis people. Manitoba and Saskatchewan have both created “The Order of the Sash” which is bestowed upon members of the Métis community who have made cultural, political or social contributions to their people.

Mentioned in the Play

Michif

A combination of French nouns and Cree verbs and is spoken by Métis people across Canada

Fiddle Music/Jigging

It is the primary instrument for accompanying the Métis jig. The famous ‘Red River Jig’ has become the centrepiece of Métis music. This unique dance was developed by the Métis people, combining the intricate footwork of Native dancing with the instruments and form of European music.

Historical Context:

Battle of Batoche

In the late 19th century Charlies Nolin and Maxime Lepine organized a Métis committee of inhabitants from the North-West Territories. This committee was held to discuss the lack of recognition the Métis people were getting and ended up voting in favour of sending a delegation to Ottawa. The Métis decided to fight against General Middleton at the village of Batoche in what is now Saskatchewan. They dug defensive rifle pits and trenches around the village but it was a battle of attrition as the Métis became exhausted and ran out of ammunition. The Battle of Batoche ensured that an Anglo-Protestant-led settler society would impose its dominance on the Canadian Prairies for several generations.

Through the legacy of the Battle of Batoche, the town celebrates with festivities called Back to Batoche Days in Batoche Saskatchewan which is the historic homeland of the Métis. For over 50 years, the four-day event has been an important opportunity to share Métis culture, build relationships, honour our Métis veterans, and connect to the land where our Métis heroes fought in the 1885 Northwest Resistance. This annual celebration, held on the national historic site of “The Battle of Batoche,” represents a movement toward reconciliation as approximately 10,000 people, Métis and non-Métis gather, to share in the celebration of our history, culture and language (<https://metisgathering.ca/back-to-batoche/about-batoche/>)

Discussions Questions

Pre-Show

- What might Rubaboo be? Has anyone heard this word before hearing of this play?
- What are some things you may already know about the Métis culture?
- How might music be used in a non-musical theatre piece?

Post-Show

- What is Rubaboo?
 - After learning what Rubaboo is, how was this play Rubaboo?
- What were new things about Métis and other Indigenous cultures that you learnt from this show?
- What are the different parts/elements in this show that step away from conventional ways of practicing theatre?
 - How was music used in this performance?



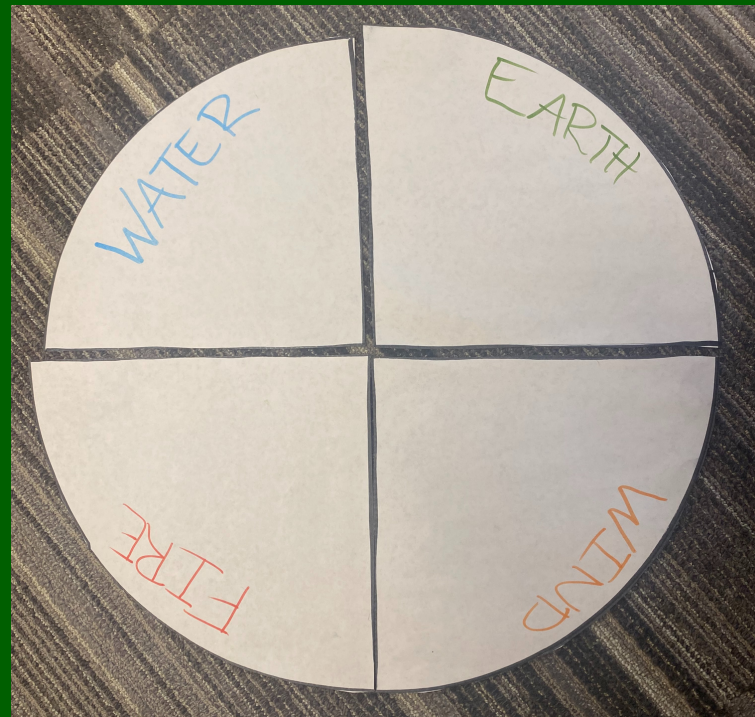
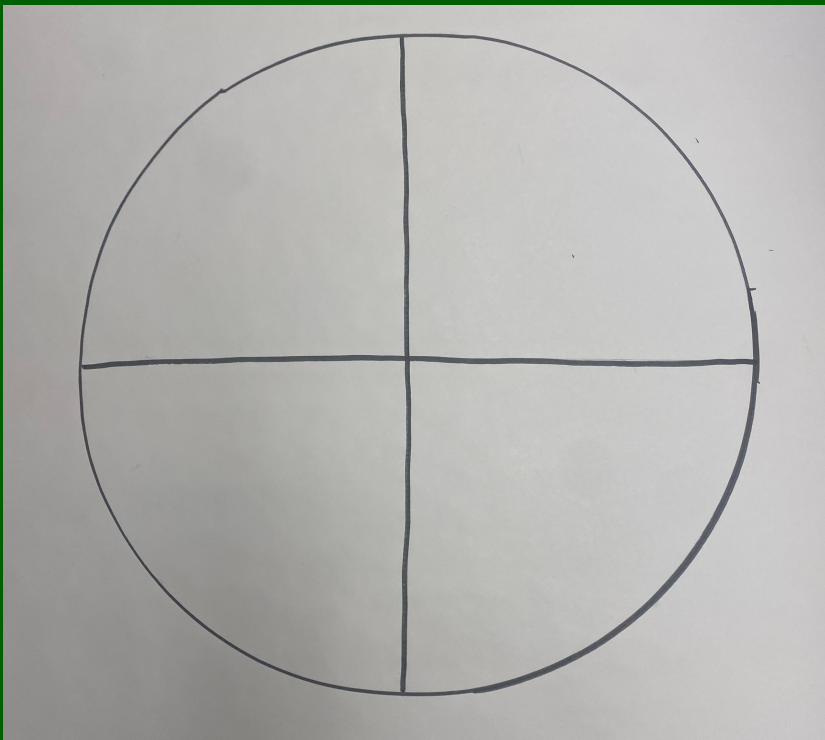
ACTIVITY #1:

Element Circle Creation

Supplies:

- Paper -
 - 1 big piece, cut into a perfect circle (which will be divided into 4)
 - 1 background piece (to attach to circle too later)
- Scissors
- Art making supplies (paints, crayons, pencils, markers etc.)
- Glue/tape/magnets

Example of divided paper circle





ACTIVITY #1 CONTINUED

Instructions:

Step 1: First you will want to prep a piece of paper and cut it into a circle, this should be a big sheet as it will then be cut into 4 equal corners of this once complete circle.

Step 2: Next divide the group of students into 4 groups, giving each group a slice of the circle.

1. You will then assign each group with one of the 4 elements either Water, Fire, Wind, or Earth

Step 3: Give the students time to discuss how their element was represented and displayed throughout the play Rubaboo

1. This could be through symbols, actions, words, colours, sounds, anything that can be associated with the way the elements were portrayed in Rubaboo.

Step 4: Once all 4 groups have completed their corners, stick each part together to form a complete circle - get the students to then observe the differences and/or similarities. Get them to discuss the reasoning and thoughts behind the works.

ACTIVITY #2:

Gratitude Circle

Explanation

First set aside time for the students to write a creative piece on thing(s) they are grateful for or things they would like to share their gratitude towards.

- This piece can be a poem, song, short paragraph, mini story, or any other written form. Something shorter so all students can share.
- Get them to grab onto themes in the play, looking at not just physical things but the ways of living, the creatures and nature that live around us.

Next get the students to sit in a circle. Allow time for each student to share their short piece that reflects what they have gratitude for.

- At the end of each piece ask about the themes and understandings that came out in reflecting on the play, Rubaboo in this process

To end give time to reflect, what were things that were common for multiple students? How do some of the pieces relate to the structure or themes brought out in Rubaboo?

Further Resources

Kamloopa by Kim Senklip Harvey

An Indigneous matriarch story includes a study buddy with terms and interesting ways of engaging different theatre practices. This is another example of a female Indigenous piece that integrates culture and Indigenous theatre processes.

Métis Gather Website <https://metisgathering.ca/>

- A great source to learn about the Metis culture and has more specific info on the Michif language with Word of the Days for it.

Rupertsland Institute <https://www.rupertsland.org/teaching-learning/resources/>

- An Metis based institute that helps give resources and funds to support the community.

Full Circle: First Nations, Métis and Inuit Ways of Knowing

https://ied.sd61.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/112/2019/02/Full_Circle_FN_Metis_Inuit_Ways_of_Knowing.pdf

- This is a great resource guide for engaging with Indigneous ways of knowing. It is meant to grow the resources for Indigneous education.

Métis Resource Page <https://ied.sd61.bc.ca/cultural-curriculum/metis-resources/>

- A web page will a variety of sources for Metis.

Sources

Page 3

Curriculum connections from Arts Education 7/8/9.

<https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/#>

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Andreas bio adapted from her own written bio on her website

<https://andreamenard.com/>

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Introduction to Métis culture

<https://metisgathering.ca/history-culture/metis-origin/>

Information on Métis symbols and traditions

<https://www.metisnation.org/culture-heritage/symbols-and-traditions/>

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Specific information on the symbols and traditions

<https://www.metisnation.org/culture-heritage/symbols-and-traditions/>

History on Michif language

<https://metisgathering.ca/michif-language/spirit-of-michif/>

<https://albertametis.com/culture/language/>

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Description and history explained on the Battle of Batoche

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/battle-of-batoche-feature>

Modern information on the town of Batoche and their Back to Batoche Days

<https://metisgathering.ca/back-to-batoche/about-batoche/>