

Lorraine Kimsa
Theatre for Young People

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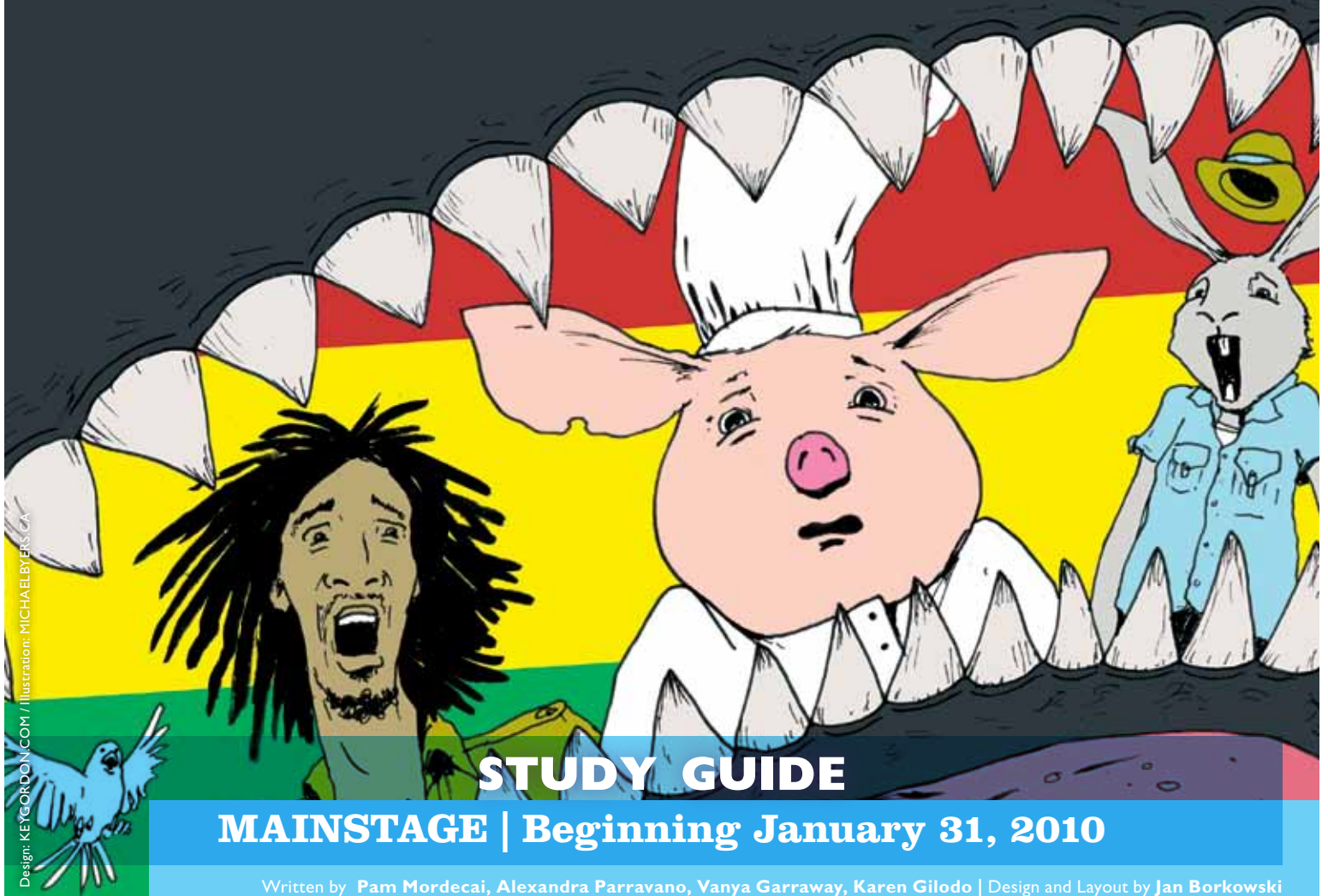
RBC Foundation®

El Numero Uno

BY **PAM MORDECAI**

DIRECTED BY **ahdri zhina mandiola**

FEATURING **WALTER BORDEN**



STUDY GUIDE

MAINSTAGE | Beginning January 31, 2010

Written by Pam Mordecai, Alexandra Parravano, Vanya Garraway, Karen Gilodo | Design and Layout by Jan Borkowski

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LIVE THEATRE IS AN ACTIVE EXPERIENCE!

Ground Rules:

As members of the audience, you play an important part in the success of a theatrical performance. Please review the following theatre rules with your students prior to your LKTYP visit.

- Food, drinks, candy and gum are not permitted in the theatre.
- LKTYP is a nut-free zone. Many children have severe life-threatening allergies; NO PEANUTS or NUT products may be brought to our theatre.
- No electronic devices are permitted in the theatre because they affect our sound system. Photography, audio and video recording during a performance is prohibited by the Canadian Theatre Agreement.
- Students are not permitted to leave the theatre unless they are accompanied by an adult.

Theatre is a two-way exchange:

Actors are thrilled when the audience is engaged and responsive. We want you to laugh, cheer, clap and really enjoy your time at the theatre. However, please be considerate audience members. Talking, whispering and excessive movement during a live performance is distracting for the actors, and disruptive for other audience members.

Enhance your visit by encouraging your students to look at different aspects of the production. Before the show, identify tasks for your class. Have one group of students looking at the set, another listening for the music and sound effects, a third watching the lighting and a fourth, the costumes. Compare notes after the show about what they observed. Your students will be more informed and they'll be surprised by how much they noticed. Ask them to be prepared with one question for the actors after the show. Brainstorm with them about possible topics to get the most out of the experience!

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Additional support for our Study Guides is generously provided by the J.P. Bickell Foundation.

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THE STUDY GUIDE Thematic Overview

El Numero Uno, a play about a pig who finds himself responsible for saving his community from environmental disaster, is a charming and rich original fable. In creating the study guide for the play two specific areas of interest emerged: 1) the language of the piece, which is composed of English, French and Spanish words, verse, and Jamaica Talk* resulting in a syntax rich in meaning and expression, and 2) the theme of personal responsibility in a community setting.

Students will enjoy working through some of the pre-show language exercises provided by playwright, Pam Mordecai. These exercises are intended to help students become familiar with and/or celebrate the language of the play so that they might glean more from watching the performance. In the same way that students new to Shakespeare sound-out and decode a language that may be unfamiliar, students approaching **El Numero Uno** will play with words, verse, meter and rhythm and find meaning. Of course the language of the play blends Caribbean culture and traditions in ways that should be recognizable to our diverse Toronto audience.

The post-show exercises focus on creative problem solving through role-play. Students are asked to consider how communities should come together to solve problems and to examine multiple points of view.

As always, find Jon Kaplan's Introduction to Student Reviewing on pg. 14 in order to help students reflect on the play using analytical and critical thinking skills.

** Jamaica or Rasta Talk is constantly changing, so that different conventions apply in different places, different Rastafarians will speak it differently, Dread Talk now being an international language. Also, that 'dread' means several things including 'very serious' and 'mysterious and holy'. e.g., (1) True love is a dread thing. (2) I-and-I look up, and, in a dread moment, behold a messenger from Jah.*

STRANDS AND CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS



CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS: Social Studies, Language and English, The Arts, History and Geography.



CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT CONNECTIONS: Honesty, Kindness and Caring, Perseverance, Responsibility and Teamwork.

In addition to Drama **A** and Language Arts **L**, **El Numero Uno** directly relates to student development in the areas of:



SOCIAL STUDIES: Relationships, Rules and Responsibilities.



LANGUAGE: Oral communication - Story Telling, Listening to Understand, Speaking to Communicate, Reflecting on Oral Communication Skills and Strategies.



THE ARTS: Drama - Reflecting, Responding and Analyzing, Exploring Forms and Cultural Contexts.



HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY: Communities - Local, National and Global.

THE COMPANY

The Cast

Chef Trenton/Freddiebeast	Walter Borden	Ti Lapin/Police	Jajube Mandiela
Compère Lapin/		Ras Onelove/Eddiebeast	Jamie Robinson
Brother Gordon/Mayor	John Blackwood	Ma Bessie/Jab-Jab	Sabryn Rock
El Numero Uno	Andrew Broderick		
Mrs. Barble Dove/			
Pitchy-Patchy/Ti Jacqui	Lisa Codrington		

Creative Team

Playwright	Pam Mordecai	Drums & Percussion/	
Director	ahdri zhina mandiola	Music Consultant	Quammie
Set & Costume Designer	Astrid Janson	Set & Costume Apprentice	Nadine Grant*
Lighting Designer	Kimberly Purtell	Lighting Apprentice	Susie Jaroszewksa**
Music Direction/Original		Stage Manager	Giselle Clarke-Trenaman
Music/Sound Design	Cathy Nosaty	Assistant Stage Manager	Sarah Bustard
Dramaturg	Stephen Colella		

* Astrid Janson's mentorship with Nadine Grant is made possible by Obsidian Theatre Company and the Department of Canadian Heritage and the National Arts Training Contribution Program.

** Kim Purtell's mentorship with Susie Jaroszewksa is supported by The AMY Project (Artists Mentoring Youth).

This project was made possible in part through the Toronto Arts Council and Theatre Ontario's Youth Theatre Training Program, funded by the Ontario Arts Council.

SYNOPSIS

Uno, a teenaged orphan pig with a mischievous nature, is learning to be a chef under the tutelage of Chef Trenton, Lopinot's master chef. Food has become scarce on the island, as a thief has stolen the island's harvests, and the inhabitants have begun to worry about their rapidly dwindling food supplies. Uno is sent on an important errand by Chef Trenton to pick up the freshest, most perfect produce, which will be ingredients for the very mysterious "Turn-Me-Into-My-True-Self Soup". But Uno inadvertently damages the produce, lies about it and is then sent out on the errand again.

This time, on his way back to Chef Trenton, Uno runs into two scoundrels who "pignap" him and hold him hostage. He soon realizes the danger he is in and the purpose of that mystery soup. He must rely on the help from friends, as well as his own craftiness, in order to save his life and those of his townspeople.

PRE-SHOW UNIT

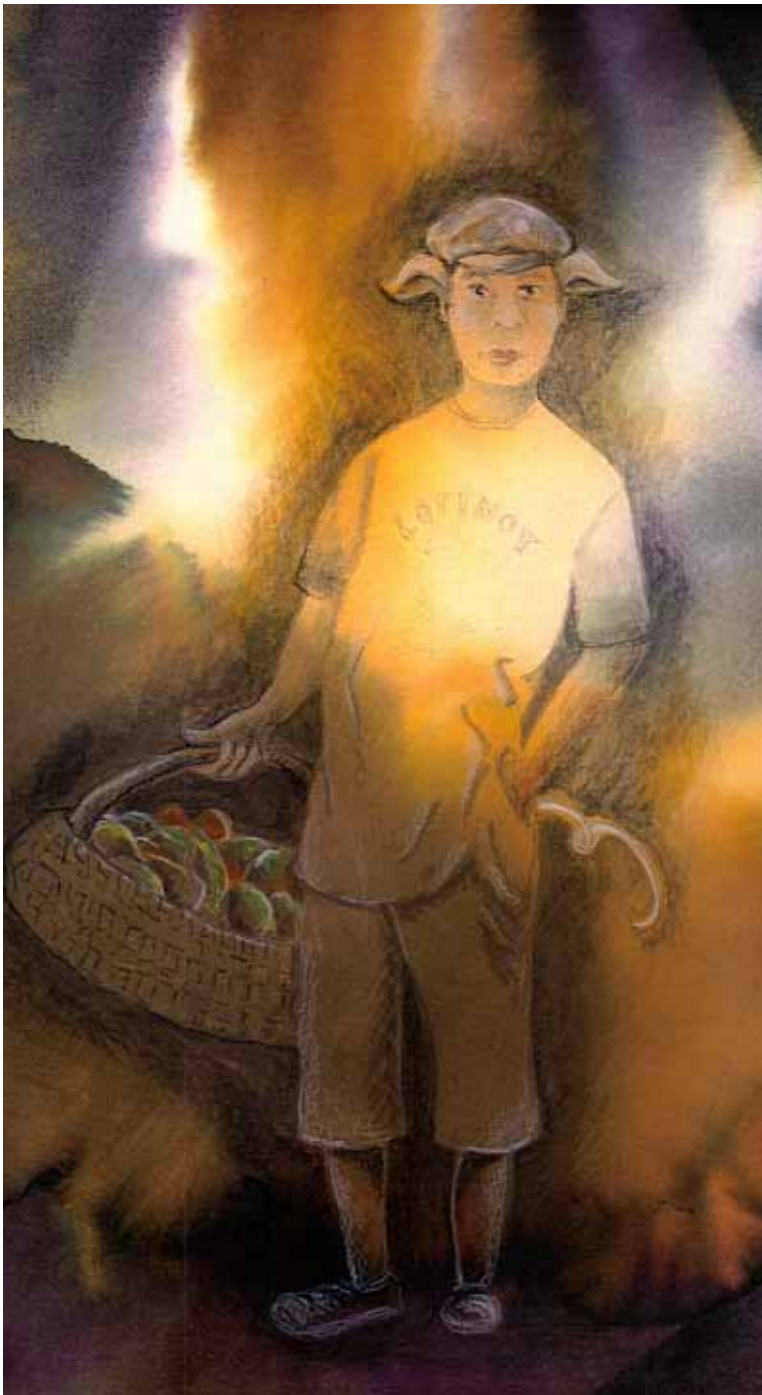
Curriculum Expectations

by participating in the pre-show activities students will:

- analyse oral texts and explain how specific elements in them contribute to meaning.
- identify the presentation strategies used in oral texts and analyse their effect on the audience.
- identify some vocal effects, including tone, pace, pitch, volume, and a range of sound effects, and use them appropriately.
- demonstrate an understanding of the information and ideas in increasingly complex oral texts in a variety of ways.

PRE-SHOW QUESTIONS—ALL GRADES

- What is a spell?
- Who can cast a spell? (i.e. does one need magical powers to cast a spell?)
- How can young people solve problems in their communities?
- How do students feel they best express themselves? Creative writing, visual art, through music, on social media? Why?



COSTUME DESIGNER: ASTRID JANSON

LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES FOR GRADES 3—6

Activity #1: Loving Language

Glossary: Match these words with their definitions

appellation	undo (a spell), get rid of
assault	cooking misfortune
associate	name
brew	understand, make out
cajole	tool, instrument
commotion	attack in order to steal
concoction	drink, mixture
crucial	ask again
culinary catastrophe	instruct
device	mix-up, confusion
discern	name
dispel	give water to (plants)
enjoin	mix
identification	persuade, sweet talk
importune	attack, harm
irrigate	mixing
maraud	very important

Note:

Find the answer key below.

Activity #2: Create a Poem

Create a poem of your own using words from the glossary.

Try using verse, onomatopoeic words, and alliteration.

POETRY UNIT: ALL GRADES

Activity #1

Look at the words and meanings below, then fill in the blanks with words from the list on the left. Use each word as many times as you need to. When students have successfully completed the exercise, have them perform the rap.

Jamaica Talk (Iyeric) English

I-and-I	I
I	my
thou	you (as subject)
thee	you (as object)
bad-bad	very bad
fool-fool	very foolish
small-small	very small
steep-steep	very steep
more quick	faster
hereso	here

Numero Uno,
listen carefully
and _____
will tell _____
why
_____ must
not walk
through the forest!
_____ was standing
right _____
eyeing the _____ track
that go up the hill
to that _____ house.
_____ move there
two days ago
and _____
was going to try
to reach _____
by taking the path
through this wood.

It was a _____ idea!
All of a sudden! Whaps!
_____ feel a terrible blow
inflicted by a cowardly foe!
_____ did not espy
the wicked creature
but for certain
_____ feel that blow
from the top of _____ head
to the tip of _____ toe!
So Numero Uno,
if _____ dost go
into that _____ place,
that evil villain might seize _____ too
and _____ mightest vanish
without a trace!

Playing with Poetry

Directions:

- Brainstorm with the class some effective choral speaking techniques.
- Divide students into groups and give each group one of Pam Mordecai's poems.
- Have students experiment with different ways of presenting the poems (i.e. as a group, taking turns, using movement etc.).

Villain

A villain is
a bad man
a vandal
or a thug.
Look out
for a villain
he'll steal
or mug
or slug
you!

Playing mas

To dress
in costume
and take part
in a parade
is to be
a masquerader
join in
the masquerade.

If you come
down our way
the way we put it
is to say

"Man, you
playing mas!"

Acquaintances, accomplices, perpetrators...

So who is
my acquaintance?

not quite
but, maybe...
Almost!

trick

Est-il mon camarade?

Now if we --
that's
my acquaintance
and me --
perpetrate

or some
great feat
then he
becomes

Is he my brother
or my bredren
my homey
my pasero?

(meaning
perform,
commit
or operate)

my accomplice
my assistant
my collaborator

My peeps
my comrade
tal vez
mi companero?

or, if you prefer
my fellow
perpetrator!

Well, none
of dem tings,

some
quick neat

*tal vez = perhaps

Some definitions

A responsibility is a duty or obligation a profession is a job or an occupation.

Affirmative means yes
covetous means greedy
perplexed means puzzled
pauperized means needy.

Anointed means holy
dire means serious;
of the essence means key
peculiar means mysterious.

Research and establish
both mean to find out;
cajole means persuade
and holler means shout.

Scrutinize means examine
to snare is to trap;
a legend is an ancient
tale,
a morsel is a scrap.

Appropriate means suitable
distinguished means famous
incredible, hard to believe
perspicacious means saga-
cious

in other words,
smart, sharp, very wise
a person who knows
how to use his eyes!

Concerning the letters P-I-G

Porcine means
pig-like.
Pigheaded means
stubborn.

To pig out
is to eat
like a pig.

A pigsty is
a pen for pigs.
A piglet is
a baby pig.
A pig farm is
a piggery.

Piggish means
eating too fast
or behaving in an
uncooperative way.

If a pig
has arthritis
(in this play,
anyway)
it's called
pigthritis.

However,
believe it
or not –
and you may
or may not

pig boats
piggybacks
pig-eons
(that's
pigeons,
ha-ha)
pigfish
pig iron
Pig Latin
pigments
and pigmies

have nothing
at all to do
to do with pigs!

except of course
for those
initial
letters
P-I-G.

POST-SHOW UNIT GRADES 3—6

Curriculum Expectations:

By participating in the post-show activities students will:

- ask questions to gain information about urban and rural communities (e.g., How do changes in the environment affect life in a community?)
- identify and describe a cause-and-effect relationship between the environment and the economy.
- formulate questions to guide and synthesize research on an environmental issue.
- choose an environmental issue that illustrates one of the themes of geographic inquiry and explain why various individuals and groups have different opinions on the issue.
- engage actively in drama exploration and role play, with a focus on examining multiple perspectives related to current issues, themes, and relationships from a wide variety of sources and diverse communities.
- construct personal interpretations of drama works, connecting drama issues and themes to social concerns at both the local and global level.

Post-show Discussion Questions

By participating in these activities students will:

- How do the residents of the Lopinot community change to overcome the obstacles facing them?
- Whose contribution affects the outcome the most?
- What do the beasts represent?
- Why doesn't the community tell Eddie and Freddie that they were under a spell? Would students tell them? Why? Why not?
- For this play, LKTYP converted its mainstage into a "theatre-in-the-round." How does this change the theatre experience?

Activity #1: Calling all master chefs!

In *El Numero Uno*, Chef Trenton prepares a magical soup called the "Turn-Me-Into-My-True-Self Soup". In this activity students will create their own version of the soup.

Directions:

- Ask students, what effects does the soup have?
- Asking students to think about their culinary creativity, have them create their own "Turn-Me-Into-My-True-Self Soup" soup.
- What ingredients would they put in their soup?
- Draw a picture of your gastronomic creation and write the recipe, including measurements next to your soup!

Bon Appétit and be careful who you serve it to!

Activity #2: The Communities Around Us

In *El Numero Uno*, Uno and his friends must work cooperatively and diligently to solve their problem. Through this, the audience can see examples of what it means to be a community and what can be achieved when a community works together to face their problems.

Directions:

- Start with a discussion about communities: What does "community" mean? What makes up a community? How are you a part of or not a part of a community?
- As a class, discuss and make a list of the communities to which students belong (school, cultural, neighbourhoods etc.).
- What are some issues/ problems that some of these communities have had to face?
- Divide students into groups.
- Each group must choose a community and research the community's issue. Students should find examples and how they have or are trying to solve the issues through teamwork.
- Have students present their findings to the class.

POST-SHOW UNIT GRADES 7 & 8

Process Drama—Explanation

Unscripted and improvised drama activities. Role play is a key component of process drama, and the activities are intended to promote learning, inquiry, or discovery rather than to create drama for presentation to an audience. The focus is on the exploration and investigation of human dilemmas, challenges, and relationships.

-The Revised Ontario Arts Curriculum (p.173)

The inhabitants of Lopinot are faced with a very real issue within the play. The crisis is the drought and the subsequent food shortage because of it. This is, in fact, a very real problem and a deep concern for many around the world.

Activity #1 Town Meeting—A Process Drama Exercise

Directions:

- With the class, make a list of all the different people within a community who are involved in a food crisis. You can use the characters you have seen in *El Numero Uno* to help you.
- Hold a town meeting to create a lively discussion about how to solve the food crisis problem. How can the community get through it together successfully?
- Assign different students various roles and have them come to the town meeting having already developed answers to the following.

Role:

Farmers

Police Officers

Thieves

Kids

Question:

How have your lives been affected by the drought?

What changes, if any, have you seen in the crime rate since the food shortage has occurred?

Do you have a reason for your actions?

How can kids help in this situation?

* Feel free to add characters of your own.

- Using the teacher-in-role method, act as the mayor and hold a town meeting. All characters and people of the town must be heard. Together, try to work out a way to solve the food crisis or to make it more endurable and liveable as a community.
- Let students know how long the town hall meeting will last (so they know how long they will have to maintain their role).
- Decide on a code word students can use to take a “time-out” from the process drama so that they can make suggestions to help the process drama function more smoothly.

Extension

- Give the various groups the opportunity to host the meeting. How would this change the meeting? Where would it be hosted? i.e.: What would happen if the children of the town called and held the meeting at their school?

BOOK YOUR WORKSHOPS!

Workshop Possibilities

LKTYP is working with artists from bcurrent theatre to provide workshops in connection with *El Numero Uno*! Check out what we have available or design your own workshops with Educational Services Coordinator, Karen Gilodo, at kgilodo@lktyp.ca. Workshop fees vary depending on location of the workshop and number of participants.

- Mas & Parade**
 An introduction to spectacle performance through the creation and application of basic makeup masks inspired by or embodied in carnival traditions. These workshops will have short discussions and demonstrations, between the facilitator and participating groups; as well as one-on-one components where each participant will learn on the spot application for self and possible partners.
- Dub Poetry!**
 Exploring creation for group and solo performance. Participants are introduced to the dynamics of creating and performing dub poetry in group and solo context. The facilitator looks at presentation, emulation, rhythm, poetics, original creation, and group work with participants.
- Text 2 Move**
 Using excerpts from *El Numero Uno*, participants will create short movement pieces in small groups. This workshop will include in-depth text analysis and various improvisational games to free the body and imagination.



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

el numero uno is ol' time caribbean story being told in a new canadian context.

with the mashing up of languages and cultures and peoples from all over the world happening in modern day toronto, the mirroring of the caribbean creolized experience is stark. several centuries ago, peoples from all over the continents of africa, asia, and europe encountered native folks already making great kingdoms in what we now know as north america. today the social fabric and the culture of the caribbean is variegated and homogenous all at the same time. all kinds of language structures and vocabularies, new and old world cuisines, shades and textures of body images, grassroots and 'standard' economic survival, as well as many different spiritual beliefs and practices are all part of life in all the islands, and mainland regions of the caribbean.

our teenage protagonist who comes of age in **el numero uno** is growing up in a world where all kinds of creatures and humans work and build their dreams and everyday lives right beside each other. the mixture in uno's world is evident on every creatures' body and in the way they speak. and the celebration of old time festivities, in the form of jonkannu masquerade is testament to the longevity and lasting effects of great old world cultures; as today, many different modern day celebrations involve masquerade or carnival... such as toronto's own caribana each summer.

i have to confess that delving into the cultural lore and practice of jonkannu was a bit scary for me! between the ages of 3 and 9, growing up in kingston, jamaica meant much hiding under the bed 'in broad daylight' whenever i heard the ominous waft of fife & drum music approaching during each christmas or independence time. and let me now even start to unearth my memory of being caught in a shoe store with a jonkannu band approaching near my home. but with my excellent team of designers, a diligent and attentive production crew, and this wonderfully talented cast assembled, the exploration of mask and masquerade, and so many alter egos and dualities was a joy. and i particularly enjoyed working on the re-configured, in-the-round theatre space. it was a massive challenge, but probably the best compliment to the kind of storytelling which characterizes pam mordecai's **el numero uno**. at times it felt like i may have just been working in someone's big backyard!

much thanx to **lktyp** for programming **el numero uno** into this season, even as we were still workshoping and finetuning the story elements. and thanx to pam for her inspiration of text and story, for putting forward so many big words for little people, for reiterating so many lessons i grew up learning in my first home of jamaica; and especially for the chance to work on this piece which allowed me to further release my own fear of jonkannu!

ahdri zhina mandiola
director

DESIGNERS NOTE

El Numero Uno is a Pan-Caribbean, Canadian story centred around a Harvest Festival known as Jonkonnu or Junkanoo, a festival which took place around Christmas time on colonial Caribbean plantations that allowed slaves one day to enjoy themselves and perhaps even to spoof their masters. The stage design needs to incorporate various locations in a simple and fluid way. The action moves quickly from a country road to a market to a kitchen and then to the forest. The configuration of the LKTYP stage has been altered to create an intimate “in-the-round” venue where scenic elements must be minimal for sight lines, and changes are visible and transparent.

The characters are a mix of animals and humans who all join in the traditional festivities of Jonkonnu by dressing in masquerade, dancing, singing and playing various instruments that are often household implements, homemade or found objects.

The story takes place in a rural community that has been devastated by an unknown catastrophe that has caused all the crops to disappear and the water to dry up. The cause of this disaster are a pair of enchanted “beasts” who can only be transformed into their “true” selves by a magic soup that the young orphan pig Uno, a chef in training, must learn to make.

The masquerade costumes are based on research of the typical Jonkonnu figures, visually strong and sometimes scary, that were part of the festival. They are rough, vegetal and homemade, mixing available materials with recycled and natural elements. The animal characters have small touches of “animal”, like ears or tails, as indicators of their species but mix comfortably with the human characters. **“El Numero Uno”** is an imaginative and poetic fable and therefore a pleasure to design.



REVIEWING A PLAY

Jon Kaplan's Introduction to Student Reviewers

Theatre is, for me, an art form that tells me something about myself or gets me thinking about the world in which I live.

Whether going to the theatre as a reviewer or simply an audience member, I think that watching a play is an emotional experience and not just an intellectual one. I always let a show wash over me, letting it touch my feelings, and only later, after the show, do I try to analyze those feelings.

That's when I start to think about some of the basic questions you ask when you're writing a review – what did I see (story, characters, themes); how did I respond to what I saw; what parts of the production (script, performances, direction, design and possibly other elements) made me feel and think what I did; why was I supposed to respond in that fashion?

When you go to the theatre to review, take a few notes during a show if you feel comfortable doing so, but don't spend your time writing the review during the show; you'll miss what's happening onstage.

Writing a review doesn't mean providing a plot summary. That's only part of the job; you have to discuss your reaction to what you saw and try to explore some of the reasons for that reaction.

I don't believe that there's any such thing as a totally objective piece of criticism. We are all individuals, bringing our own backgrounds, experiences and beliefs to a production. In some fashion, every one of us sitting in the theatre is a critic, no matter whether we're writing a review or not; we all react to and form judgments about what we see on the stage.

When I go to a production, I always keep in mind that the people involved in putting it on have worked long and hard – weeks, months, sometimes years – getting it onto the stage. Even if I have problems with the result, it's important to respect the efforts that went into the show.

Jon Kaplan is senior theatre writer at NOW Magazine, where he's worked for the past 29 years.





COSTUME DESIGNER: ASTRID JANSON

LKTYP would like to acknowledge and thank Pat McCarthy for her expertise and advice on this season's study guides.

Arts Impact: Making a difference in the lives of students

LKTYP is proud to have **Great-West Life, London Life and Canada Life** as lead sponsors for its Arts Impact program, which provides opportunities for schools in low-income areas of Toronto to participate in quality arts education. Arts Impact's goal is to deepen students' understanding of theatre, allowing them to be inspired by the material presented on stage and to think in ways that challenge their own perceptions.



STRONGER COMMUNITIES TOGETHER™

Connections: Addressing the pattern of poverty

There is empirical evidence that children who live in poverty are at greater risk of dropping out of school. Studies have also proven that exposure to the arts improves scholastic ability and attendance. Thanks to the generosity of **CIBC World Markets Children's Foundation**, LKTYP can offer special subsidized tickets to qualifying schools.



CIBC Children's Foundation

LKTYP



Allen MacInnis
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

LORRAINE KIMSA THEATRE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

(formerly Young Peoples Theatre) is the largest Theatre for Young Audiences (TYA) company in Canada and a significant institution in the Canadian professional theatre community.

Over our 44-year history we have produced many of the most important works that now form the canon of

plays for young audiences in this country. At the heart of founder Susan Rubes' idea for Young Peoples Theatre (YPT) was a belief that children deserve a theatre of their own – with resources and standards no lesser than those for adults. She believed – as we do today – that young people deserve good theatre because theatre is good for young people.

Through the communal experience of the theatre we create for them, children can receive indications of what is important, funny, trivial; positive, negative, wrong, right, rightish, wrongish; frightening, reassuring, empowering, unavoidable; familiar, new, eternal We strongly believe that even through the most playful of plays, we are speaking powerfully to children about the community and the world in which they live.

Therefore, at the centre of the artistic policy of LKTYP is a desire to have a positive and lasting impact on the emotional, social, and intellectual development of young people.

We want children to be imprinted with experiences that will increase their access to the world, in order for them to grow into the unique and wonderful people they were born to be. To do this, our programming is drawn from the world classics of children's stories, from contemporary works, from the new plays we develop, and from productions showcasing the most innovative and accomplished theatre for young audiences by other Canadian and international theatre companies.

At LKTYP, because we are serious about child development through theatre art, children can experience our work as either audience members or theatre creators.

We extend the learning opportunities of our professional productions through our substantial Education & Participation Department. The Department's services for teachers and students helps connect curriculum objectives and learning outcomes to the content of our professional productions; its Community Participation projects link our theatre skill with the educational aspirations of partners who are dedicated to the growth of young people; our interest-based Drama School offers young people the chance to engage deeply in the excitement of theatre art; and our Community Volunteer programme offers everyone who wants it, the opportunity to participate in the mission of LKTYP.

LKTYP is not only a professional theatre for young audiences but a vital community-based centre of arts education.

Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People

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Education & Participation Department
Karen Gilodo, Educational Services Coordinator
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GOVERNMENT & FOUNDATION PARTNERS



The Ontario Arts Council and The Ontario Trillium Foundation are agencies of the Government of Ontario.