

Hilberry
Theatre

WAYNE STATE
UNIVERSITY

Frank Langella's

Cyrano

Morning Matinee Play Guide

Frank Langella's *Cyrano*

Study Guide

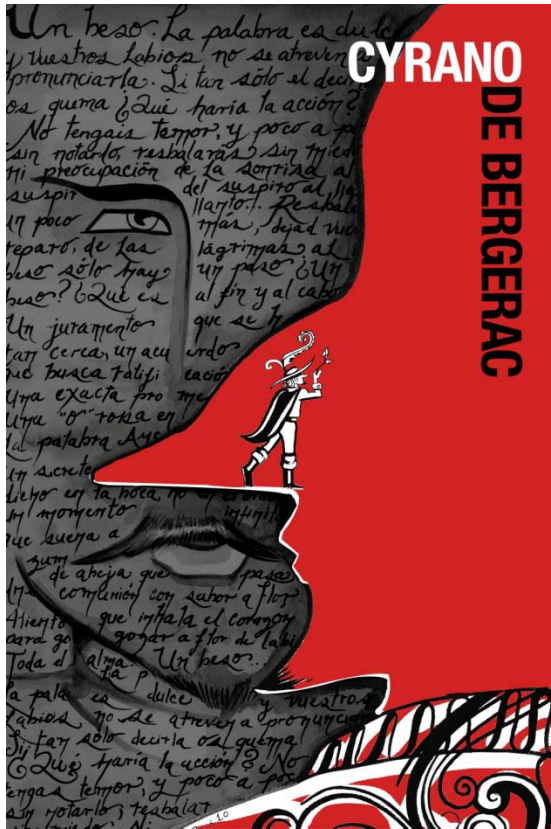
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SYNOPSIS OF THE PLAY:

It is an exciting night at the theater. A handsome gentleman, Christian de Neuville, hopes to see the woman he has fallen in love with, Roxane. Ragueneau, a pastry chef, arrives looking for his friend Cyrano de Bergerac, who hates one of the play's actors, Montfleury, and has ordered him not to perform. Cyrano, known for his skill with a sword and his sensitivity about his large nose, is Roxane's cousin. When the play begins and Montfleury enters, Cyrano arrives and successfully threatens Montfleury off stage. A nobleman mocks Cyrano's nose and Cyrano challenges him to a duel, winning even as he composes a ballad for the occasion. Once the commotion has ended, Cyrano confesses to a friend that he loves Roxane, whose attendant comes on her behalf to arrange a meeting between the cousins for the next day. Cyrano then learns that his friend, Lignière, is being ambushed so Cyrano leaves to protect him.

The next morning, as Cyrano waits at Ragueneau's pastry shop for Roxane, he is praised by his comrades for his ballad-duel the previous evening. He tells them of his encounter with the men trying to attack Lignière. Cyrano quickly composes a love letter to Roxane, who arrives, but before he can give it to her, she confides that she is in love with one of the men in his army unit, the attractive Christian, whom she wants Cyrano to take under his wing. De Guiche, Cyrano's jealous commander who hopes to marry Roxane, arrives and claims credit for organizing the previous night's ambush, earning him further dislike from the men assembled. At their first meeting, Christian interrupts Cyrano's attempts to tell his friends about the ambush by mocking his nose.



Unusually, Cyrano does not rise to the bait, instead offering in private to write love letters and speeches for Christian to repeat to Roxane and giving him the unsigned love letter. Roxane confides in Cyrano about receiving Christian's letter. De Guiche interrupts, preparing to leave for battle in command of Cyrano and Christian's unit, but Roxane tricks him into deciding not to send the unit into battle by pretending to accept his love. On his way to court Roxane, Christian tells Cyrano that he will speak for himself but, when this falls flat, he is forced to beg Cyrano to help again; Cyrano does so with great success.

De Guiche sends a letter to tell Roxane he is on his way to see her again before he leaves for battle, but Cyrano delays the noble long enough for Roxane and Christian to be married. To punish the lovers, De Guiche announces that the unit will be going to battle after all and that Cyrano and Christian must leave immediately.



On the front lines, Christian and Cyrano endure a serious food shortage, while Cyrano continues to write Roxane for Christian, slipping letters through enemy lines. De Guiche, still holding a grudge against Cyrano, uses a spy to make the unit the target of the next enemy attack. Roxane interrupts the battle preparations after talking her way through the enemy lines with food in her carriage, dramatically raising the morale of the men. Roxane leaves to inspect the front lines, allowing Cyrano to warn Christian that he has been sending her extra letters in his name. Christian realizes Cyrano loves Roxane, who now loves Christian for his soul and regardless of his looks. Christian orders Cyrano to tell Roxane the truth and leaves to fight, but is carried back mortally wounded before Roxane learns the truth about Cyrano's letter writing. As Roxane mourns Christian's death and is carried away from the fighting, Cyrano leaves for battle, intending to be killed.

Fifteen years later, Roxane is in a convent, where Cyrano, now poor, weak, and unpopular, visits her daily. One day, Cyrano is seriously injured by one of his enemies. Instead of resting, Cyrano

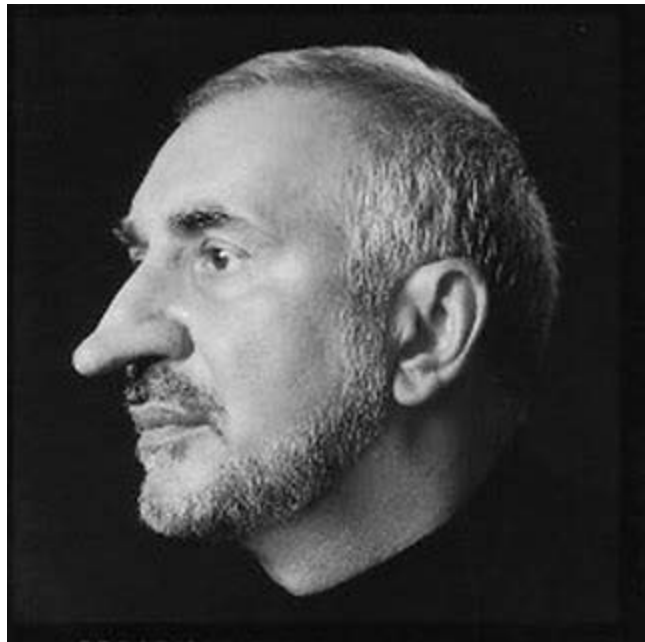
presses on to visit his cousin as usual, arriving late. He tells Roxane the latest court news, faints, and asks to read Christian's last letter to her. Roxane realizes it was Cyrano, not Christian, who had composed the words she had fallen in love with, just as Cyrano dies of his injury.

ABOUT THE ADAPTATION:

*(Preface to Frank Langella's Cyrano.
Copyright 1999 by Frank Langella)*

To attempt *CYRANO DE BERGERAC* with a cast of a dozen people presents a host of traps -- and I fell into about all of them. Some I pulled myself out of, and others swallowed me alive.

In this preface, I will try to describe to future pioneers the territory as I discovered it. After you have charted my course, you must chart your own and live with the consequences.



Picture: Frank Langella as Cyrano.

Consequences, by the way, I still feel are well worth risking. And I encourage anyone who wishes to test his mettle to take the trip.

As an actor I've played Cyrano twice before, in 1971 and 1980, at the Williamstown Theatre Festival in Massachusetts. Both productions were essentially the same -- huge cast, including hundreds of soldiers and hordes of nuns, grand costumes, quaint music; and both were very long.

Both were immensely successful with audiences and critics, and given the limited budgets and time constraints at Williamstown, all-out spectacles.

A number of years ago, it began to occur to me that this play, so universally loved, might be very effective as a chamber piece. My reasons were two-fold.



Picture: Frank Langella as
Cyrano.

Most of us have known the pain of unrequited love, and many people ruin their lives holding out for an ideal beyond them, when true happiness is right under their noses, so to speak.

What if all the pomp and ceremony were stripped away? The extraneous characters gone? All sense of period eliminated? Wouldn't a timeless love story remain? A tragic triangle for all time -- and would it not perhaps be more tragic viewed in the simplest of settings, free from the frills and feathers of its day?

Secondly, I saw it as a production one could do anywhere -- at any theatre with a limited budget, and as a show easy to travel. And, of course, the character of Cyrano himself is a great ride for any actor. I had expressed the idea to Todd Haines of the Roundabout Theatre one year. He said, "Do it." So, I sat down and began to adapt my favorite translation, the Brian Hooker.

As I began, I realized I had been editing the play in my head for years -- for the form it now exists in took shape fairly quickly. At first I cut too much, then over-restored, then over-cut again. I will not recount here the dozens of revisions I created and discarded over the year or even the dozens of changes made during rehearsals and a desperately needed long preview in New York.

The version contained herein is the one we played at the Roundabout and it is meant to convey the heart and soul of Cyrano's story. It was arrived at, at no little cost to a patient and courageous group of actors who had to survive my constant changes as adapter and director; as well as another actor playing Cyrano during a large portion of rehearsal, while I stumbled through those changes.

I can best serve the next adventurer by trying to describe some of the mistakes I made.

First the physical production. It had been my original intention to do as bare-bones a production as possible. A unit set of various levels easily workable as a theatre hall, or a camp, or a garden, etc. I also envisioned costumes of utmost simplicity -- clean lines, soft easy flow for the women;

hard, strong, lean for the men -- but somewhere in the early stages, I veered away from that concept and, again with the constant devotion of my designers, began to create an ersatz period look that resulted in a mock-romantic style, neither spectacle, nor elegant simplicity -- but rather a sense of a watered down period piece. I would urge future productions to keep it extremely simple. Bare-bones set and costumes. No hint of any era. Also make your scene changes swift and simple -- allow the characters to carry you from one scene to the next -- not the stagehands.

The music too was a demon. I tried 40's love songs, Duke Ellington jazz and some over-sentimental classical. All of it unsuccessful. I tend to think little or no music would best serve this version.

Cyrano removed from the era in which he was written can seem, if the actor and the production are not vigilant, like an over-florid animated Hallmark Card. Stripped of the standards and mores of his day, his pain and longing can look dangerously silly. It's only in the depth of feeling and honesty of performing that a sense of semi-classical pretentiousness can be avoided.

On the plus side, in the acting, I encouraged a total lack of what I had come to regard as "that sound" -- a sort of fake semi-classical acting noise that passes for seriousness of intent -- nor did I want the modern, moment to moment, sub-realism that results in actors sounding so with it as to be past it. The company worked tirelessly and exhaustively toward that end -- and suffered through endless variations of that theme; at various times performing at breathless speed, in the dark, improvising, and -- at one glorious afternoon rehearsal -- in Spanish. Efforts were made to break away from a traditional grandiose attitude toward this material, and play the characters with a full-out honesty, truth, and simplicity -- not losing their passion or power.

Roxane is best served in this version as a young woman who learns about herself as the play progresses. At first in love with love and Christian's beauty, then the realization of her shallowness and her eagerness to mature, and finally, in her loss, a quiet acceptance culminating in a genuine rage at her betrayal.

Christian is not a dolt -- but an honest, upright, honorable man -- full of real love and with a sweet understanding of his shortcomings -- just because he can't talk to a woman doesn't mean in

all other respects he isn't a fine and decent man who rises to great nobility when he learns the truth and forces Cyrano to tell Roxane.

And so on -- Marguerite is a fine woman, not a dithering matron. Le Bret, a good friend -- solid and true, Ragueneau, a gentle sometime poet. DeGuiche, not a boring stuffed shirt, but a shrewd and intelligent politician. And Lise is here conceived as a young woman deeply in love with Cyrano -- silent throughout, hoping that one day he will turn to see, that while he has been languishing over his own unrequited love -- she has been there always, hoping he will see her, which he never does.

And Cyrano is himself not altogether a noble character, but fearful and cowardly and using his nose as the reason he will not act upon his true desires -- as many people often use anything to keep from acting on their dreams. To that point, I would suggest the actor playing Cyrano be a relatively young man, since part of Cyrano's self-deception should come from his youth and inexperience.

It is then in this version, a small village of people -- all interconnected and interdependent -- and the deeply intimate unfolding of a tragedy, of which they are all aware, that should hold the audience -- not spectacle. Taking Cyrano out of his era is dangerous -- but playing this version with total conviction and honest intentions is ultimately rewarding. It is often said that all the characters are stick figures, there to serve Cyrano's shining star. This version, by its very simplicity, avoids that cliché. Each of the characters is a clear and specific individual aware of and party to Cyrano's story, and they become rewarding to play.

Finally, my production, it could be said charitably, was a noble failure. The New York critics, with a few exceptions, were dismissive and at times vicious in their denouncement of me and my concept. Lack of approval cannot stop you. Do what you want to do. Ignore my advice here even, and follow your instinct.

Risk this Cyrano. It is, I hope, full of his soul and yearning and it was, for my soul, a rewarding and thrilling journey -- one I envy you, should you decide to go for it.

CAST OF CHARACTERS:

Cyrano de Bergerac - A poet, swordsman, scientist, playwright, musician, and member of the Cadets of Gascoyne, a company of guards from Southern France. For all his prodigious talents, Cyrano is unattractive, and cursed with a ridiculously long nose that makes him insecure and keeps him from revealing his love for his cousin Roxane.



Picture: Joseph Fiennes as Cyrano at the Chichester Festival Theatre.
Photograph: Tristram Kenton

Roxane - Cyrano's cousin, a beautiful and intellectual heiress. She has a soft spot for romance and a love for poetry and wit.

Baron Christian de Neuville - Perhaps the opposite of Cyrano, Christian is a handsome but simple young nobleman who lacks wit and intelligence. New to Paris and to the cadets, he falls in love with Roxane and joins Cyrano's company of cadets early in the play. His good looks are matched only by Roxane's.

Comte de Guiche - A powerful, married nobleman in love with Roxane and not fond of Cyrano. Deceitful and always angry, he attempts several times to have Cyrano killed, once by a hundred men.

Ragueneau - Cyrano's friend, a pastry chef with a deep love for poetry. Ragueneau gives away pastries in return for poems, and, therefore, innumerable poets visit him frequently. He reflects the theme that poetry is food for the soul, and underlines the division between the physical and spiritual aspects of the world. After his business fails, he becomes Roxane's porter.

Le Bret - Cyrano's friend and closest confidant. He is a fellow soldier and guardsman. Le Bret worries that Cyrano's principles will ruin his career, but Cyrano ignores Le Bret's concerns.

Ligniere - Christian's friend, a satirist and drunkard with many powerful enemies. Cyrano protects him from the hundred men hired by de Guiche to ambush him.

The duenna - Roxane's companion and chaperone, who tries to keep Roxane out of trouble. She is a character reminiscent of Juliet's nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*.

Vicomte de Valvert - An insolent young nobleman lauded by de Guiche as a possible husband for Roxane, a scheme that would give de Guiche access to Roxane. After he insults Cyrano's nose, he is defeated in an ensuing duel.

Montfleury - A fat, untalented actor whom Cyrano bans from the stage.

Carbon de Castel-Jaloux - Cyrano's friend and the captain of his company. He is a strong-willed and successful leader.

Bellerose - The man in charge of the theater at the Hotel de Bourgogne.

Lise - Ragueneau's sharp-tongued wife. She does not approve of her husband's patronage of the local poets. An altogether unhappy woman, she leaves Ragueneau for a musketeer after Act II.

Capuchin - A modest and well-meaning monk. De Guiche employs him to carry a message to Roxane. He is diverted at first by Cyrano when they are outside Roxane's residence. He later presides over Roxane and Christian's hasty wedding.

MINOR CHARACTERS:

Mother Marguerite de Jesus, Sister Claire, Sister Marthe - Nuns of Roxane's convent. They are compassionate women who admire and respect Cyrano and therefore allow him to visit whenever he wishes.

HISTORICAL REFERENCES:

Cardinal Richelieu - Not a character, but a historical figure referenced in the play as de Guiche's uncle. Perhaps the most powerful man in France, he is a skilled political manipulator whose authority rivals and probably exceeds that of the king.

ABOUT THE PLAY:



Picture: Edmond Rostand.

Edmond Rostand, French poet and dramatist, produced the heroic comedy, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, in 1897 when he was only twenty-eight years old. The play was an instant hit and was almost immediately translated into English, German, Russian, and other European languages after its debut in Paris. Rostand wrote *Cyrano* in a period which is today referred to as the Romantic era. Heavily influenced by the styles and ideas of the era, Rostand applied many of these themes—such as patronage, dueling and bravado, and nobility, to his play, which he set in the 1640s.

The popular character that emerged from the Romantic era came in the form of the gifted but misunderstood loner who refuses to follow the rules of contemporary society (sound familiar?). The real Cyrano—seventeenth century swordsman, poet, and philosopher—proved to be the perfect fit for the mold of a Romantic hero. Cyrano was both a lover and fighter. His ideas on science and philosophy were ahead of his time, marking him as strange and misunderstood by his fellow cadets. If that weren't enough, his nose—that massive protrusion in the center of his face—physically set him apart and made him different. Luckily for Cyrano, however, all of these characteristics came together to make him the ideal 1890s protagonist. Romanticism also helped in the emergence of positive voices that were beneficial for the marginalized sections of society. The enthusiasm for *Cyrano* at its premier exceeded even Rostand's expectations—people wept, and it was said that the author was pelted with ladies' gloves and fans.

THE FIRST PRODUCTION OF *CYRANO DE BERGERAC*:

Although set in 1640, *Cyrano* premiered in 1897 at the Theatre de la Porte Saint Martin in Paris, where it was first performed more than 400 times. This indoor theatre had a seating capacity of over 2,000 people. Given that it was impossible to lower the house lights, the audience was always aware of each other, and the spectators were often notably vocal during most performances, often heckling or interacting with the actors. The standing room directly in front of the stage, without seats, was called the “parterre” and was strictly reserved for men. Because these were the cheapest tickets, the parterre was usually an eclectic mix of social groups. Elegant, or upper class people watched the show from the galleries. Princes, musketeers, and royal pages were given free entry

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Full Title: *Cyrano de Bergerac: Heroic Comedy in Five Acts*

Originally written by: Edmond Rostand, Written in French. Written in Paris, France, 1897,

First Performance: December 28, 1897

Date of first publication: 1898

SETTING

Setting: 1640 (Acts I–IV) and 1655 (Act V). Paris and Arras, respectively.

Cyrano de Bergerac is set in France during the years 1640 to 1655. In the mid-1600s, France was fraught with political tension and in conflict with foreign enemies. The majority of *Cyrano* takes place in 1640, when Louis XIII sat on the throne, and Armand-Jean du Plessis Richelieu dominated the political landscape. Richelieu was a Roman Catholic cardinal and the chief minister and advisor to King Louis XIII. (De Guiche, the play’s villain, uses his connections with Richelieu to gain power.)

Richelieu's goals were to strengthen the French monarchy and make France the most powerful nation in Europe. He led France into the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648), a complicated religious, economic, and military struggle.

As a result of the war, France became Europe's leading power. Protestant monarchs came to rule in most of northern Europe, and the old dream of a united Catholic Europe was destroyed forever. One key battle of this long war was the French siege of the town of Arras, in which the real Cyrano took part. The siege is also the setting for one of the scenes in the play, in which the fictional Cyrano takes part.

ABOUT THE REAL CYRANO:

Playwright Edmond Rostand did not invent Cyrano de Bergerac, he discovered him! The real Cyrano was a swordsman, poet, and philosopher who lived in the seventeenth century. Like Rostand's Cyrano, the real Cyrano served as a cadet in the French military. After years of service and one life-threatening injury, Cyrano put down his sword and picked up the pen, becoming the author of some of the world's first science fiction novels. In *The States and Empires of the Sun*, Cyrano travels to the moon on a firecracker fueled rocket, where he meets four-legged moon men with fantastic singing voices. In another novel, *Estates of the Moon and of the Sun*, Cyrano imagined a society in which the greatest honors went to the men with the largest noses. (Hey, a guy can dream, can't he?) So, if you were wondering whether the part about his large nose was true, the answer is YES! A friend once wrote, "this improbable nose spreads itself over a three quarter view of the face...it forms in the middle a mountain which looks as if it ought to be, after the Himalayas, the highest mountain in the world... ." Needless to say, his nose was a touchy subject. Historical accounts prove that there was a real Roxane as well, his cousin Madeline de Robuneau, although she was already married when Cyrano fell in love.

CYRANO CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:

BEFORE YOU READ:

FOCUS ACTIVITY

Judging by images shown on TV and in movies and advertisements, there are few things our society prizes more highly than physical beauty. In your opinion, why do we value physical beauty so highly? What relationship does it have to inner beauty?

Think-Pair-Share

Discuss this question with a partner. List reasons why you believe physical beauty is so highly valued by our society.

Setting a Purpose

Read about someone who is not beautiful, but who is a romantic hero nonetheless.

BACKGROUND

Did You Know?

“Swashbuckler” is a term used to describe a story with colorful sword-fighting characters. In film, as well as in literature, there is a whole genre of swashbucklers, including the movie versions of *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Macbeth*, *The Man in the Iron Mask*, and *Shakespeare in Love*. The word itself was first used in 1560 to describe a swordsman who struck an opponent’s shield, or buckler, with his sword.

All for One, One for All: Swashbucklers Unite

Cyrano de Bergerac is a drama in keeping with an earlier tradition of gallant swashbucklers. Scottish novelist and poet Sir Walter Scott invented the swashbuckling historical novel by producing *Ivanhoe*, but the caped swordsman did not become a full-fledged hero until Alexandre Dumas’s *The Three Musketeers* and *The Count of Monte Cristo*. Born in 1802, Dumas is the creator of the elegant, dashing duelist, D’Artagnan. Embodying all the virtues of courage, chivalry, and reckless delight, Dumas’s character is based on an historical figure from Gascony who was also called D’Artagnan, but whose real name was Charles de Batz de Castelmoré (1611–1673). D’Artagnan appears in three of Dumas’s novels. He supposedly makes a cameo appearance in Act 1 of *Cyrano de Bergerac*. As you read, see if you can spot him and take note of what he says to Cyrano.

MORE RESOURCES FOR *CYRANO DE BERGERAC*:

FILM

- *Cyrano Fernandez*. Dir Alberto Arvelo, Indigo Media, 2007. A hard adaptation transporting the story to the tough streets of modern-day Venezuela. Rated R.
- *Whatever It Takes*. Dir David Raynr, Columbia Pictures, 2000. An updated plot set in modern-day high school. James Franco and Shane West each have to help the other attract the object of his affection.
- *Cyrano*. Dir Jean-Paul Rappeneau, Orion Classics, 1990. A faithful adaptation of the original play in French starring Gerard Depardieu.
- *Roxanne*. Dir Fred Schipisi, written by and starring Steve Martin, Columbia Pictures, 1987. A smart update with “CB” as the head of a small-town fire brigade who serenades Roxane on behalf of his newest recruit, Christian.
- *Cyrano*. Dir Michael Gordon, Stanley Kramer Productions, 1950. An English translation inspired by a lost French version from 1945.
- *Cyrano*. Dir Augusto Genina, Egami Studio, 1925. A silent adaptation with French and Italian actors.

MUSICALS AND OPERA

- *Cyrano de Bergerac*, Dr. David DiChiera (music) and Bernard Uzan (libretto), 2007. The most recent operatic adaptation, composed for Michigan Opera Theatre.
- *Cyrano*, Anthony Burgess, 1973. Starring Christopher Plummer as the large-nosed hero.
- *Cyrano*, Heny Cain (libretto) and Franco Alfono (music), 1936. A late nineteenth-century French opera focusing on the tragedy of Cyrano’s story.

LITERATURE

- *Cyrano*, Geraldine McCaughrean. Harcourt Publishing, 2006. A Young Adult novelization of the play with emphasis on Cyrano’s larger-than-life personality. Long-listed for a Carnegie Award in young adult literature.
- *So I am Glad*, A.L. Kennedy. Vintage Publishing, 2001. A re-incarnated Cyrano finds new love in this sci-fi novel.

- *The Last Sonnets of Cyrano de Bergerac*, James L Carcioppolo. Lost Sonnet Publishing, 1998. Also available in Kindle Edition. A series of sonnets written from Cyrano's point of view as he dies.

TELEVISION

The main plot of *Cyrano* is a beloved literary device for confused lovers on television series. Certain episodes often feature someone providing the right romantic words for a tongue-tied admirer:

- Star Trek: "Deep Space Nine Looking for par'Mach in All the Wrong Places"
- Boy Meets World: "Cyrano"
- The Brady Bunch: "Cyrano de Brady"

FOR FUN

For more *Cyrano*, please follow these links for "Monsterpiece Theatre" and Wishbone clips:

- Sesame Street's Monsterpiece Theatre: "Cyranose de Bergerac"

<http://tinyurl.com/MonsterpieceCyrano>

- Wishbone: "Cyranose" <http://tinyurl.com/WishboneCyrano>

INFORMATION AND ACTIVITIES COLLECTED FROM:

Folger Shakespeare Library. 2011. *Cyrano De Bergerac Study Guide*. Accessible at:

<http://www.folger.edu/documents/Cyrano%20Study%20Guide%202011.pdf>

<http://www.glencoe.com/sec/literature/litlibrary/pdf/cyrano.pdf>

THE HISTORY OF THE HILBERRY THEATRE



The Hilberry Theatre is a unique open-stage performance center for the nation's first graduate repertory company, which presents six plays in rotating repertory from October to mid-May.

Created in 1963 with the belief that repertory theatre is the best possible training ground for careers in the theatre, the Hilberry was the brainchild of the late Leonard Leone. Clarence

B. Hilberry, the president of Wayne State University, personally took responsibility for raising the funds to convert the First Church of Christ Scientist in Detroit into an open-stage theatre, which now stands as a memorial to his leadership. Following the theatre's opening, he invited a group of community leaders to form a women's committee to ensure the continuity of the growing company. "The Understudies," as the group became known, has solicited funds for 45 years, primarily from individual donors, to provide essential support for the artists of the Hilberry company.

Celebrating its 49th season, the 42-member company is composed of actors, costume, lighting, and scenic designer-technicians, as well as stage managers and theatre managers, who work under the direction of the professional staff. The members of the company, chosen in nationwide auditions and interviews, receive training leading to advanced degrees in acting, directing, design, or management.



The heart of the program is a rotating repertory of outstanding classic and modern plays. Widely known for the high quality of its productions, the Hilberry has received numerous honors. It has been selected to perform at Ford's Theatre and The Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., the Far East for the USO and most recently for the Moscow Theatre Festival. Over the years, Hilberry actors have been honored with awards by all of Detroit's major newspapers, including "Best Female Performer in a Local Professional Production - Drama," and "Best Male Performer in a Local Production - Comedy," "Best Director" and "Best Play."

Thanks to the continuing support of the university and the community, the Hilberry Theatre remains a strong and flourishing cultural gem.

BEFORE ARRIVING AT THE THEATRE

Thank you for participating in the 2011-2012 season at the Hilberry Theatre. In order to make the experience enjoyable and educational for all student groups, guidelines for proper theatre etiquette have been established. Please share these house rules with other chaperones and your students.

1. Audience members are to remain seated, keeping aisles free, as actors sometimes enter and exit through the audience. Students need to be instructed to remain in their seats during the acts, as leaving the theatre during the performance could interfere with the show.
2. Teachers are to remain in the theatre during the entire show, seated among their students, to help the theatre staff control any problems that may arise during the performance.
3. Please keep lunches on the bus and all food, drink, candy and gum out of the theatre. If lunches cannot be left on the bus, make sure they are well marked. We will provide a space until the conclusion of the performance. Please notify us in advance if you will be needing this service. Also please remind students to dispose of chewing gum prior to entering the theatre.
4. Keep in mind that the actors can see and hear the audience members. It takes a tremendous amount of concentration to perform in front of a live audience. Live theatre is different from television and movies. Talking directly to the actors or each other while the show is in progress could prevent the actors from doing their best job for you.
5. Please let your students and chaperones know that copyright laws prohibit photographs of the stage or actors anytime during your theatre experience. Flashes during the performance also create a disruption for both the actors and other audience members.
6. Electronic devices such as CD or MP3 players, cell phones, pagers and laser pointers should not be brought into the theatre. The noises and sound waves of these types of devices can interfere with the headsets the stage manager and crew use during the performance. If these devices cannot be left on the bus, ushers will provide a safe place for them to be stored during the performance. If ushers find people using these devices during the performance, they will be confiscated until the conclusion of the show.
7. Please educate all students and chaperones that the stage is a creation by our design team that is to be viewed by the audience. Actors and stage hands are the only people allowed to walk or sit on the stage.
8. Students should be encouraged to listen carefully, respond to the story (laugh, applaud, etc.) and quiet down quickly to listen again. When they are actually playing an active part in the performance, they discover the true excitement of the theatre.

HELPFUL INFORMATION

Here are some ways that you can help us run the student matinees in a more efficient and time-saving manner:

Arrival Time & Instructions:

1. Plan to arrive at the theatre by 9:30 a.m. as the show is scheduled to begin promptly at 10 a.m. If you will be late due to bus arrival, traffic, etc., please contact the Hilberry Box Office at 313-577-2972.
2. Once you arrive at the theatre, please pick up your seating card at the box office before bringing the students off the bus. Have the students enter the theatre in an orderly fashion and we will direct them to their seats as quickly as possible.
3. If your group has to wait in the lobby before being seated, please help in keeping the noise level down to assist in communication and more timely seating.

Bus Instructions for Attending Student Matinees:

While attending the Hilberry Theatre, buses should park by the “No Standing” signs along the streets. There are usually several places along Cass Avenue. Please do not park directly in front of the theatre or the lots surrounding the theatre. Those lots do not belong to the theatre. Please be patient and considerate during this potentially stressful time and always put the safety of the students first.

Ticket Exchanges:

To change your number of tickets, please call the box office at least two weeks in advance. Once the group leader has confirmed the number of tickets reserved, the number cannot be reduced.

Talkbacks:

Your group is invited to join us for a 10-15 minute Talkback immediately following the student matinee performance. A Talkback is a question-and-answer session with the actors and crew. This discussion is a great opportunity for students to ask questions concerning the development of a theatre performance. Students are encouraged to use this time to analyze the script and language. This optional session is a great way to meet many of the Michigan Arts Education and Language Arts curriculum guidelines by discussion. If you have any questions regarding the Talkbacks, please contact Group Sales and Services at (313) 577-0852.

DIRECTIONS TO THE HILBERRY

Coming from the	VIA	Directions
WEST	I-94	To Lodge 10, SOUTH. Take to 1st exit, which is Forest/Warren. Turn LEFT on Forest at top of ramp. Go to 4th stoplight, Cass. Turn LEFT. Go 1 block to Hancock.
EAST	I-94	To Woodward exit, SOUTH. Go to 4th stoplight, Woodward. Turn LEFT. Take to Hancock, which is 1 block south of Warren. Turn RIGHT on Hancock. Go one (1) block to Cass.
SOUTH	I-75	To Lodge (M-10), NORTH. Take Forest exit. Turn RIGHT on Forest. Go to third stoplight, Cass. Turn LEFT on Cass. Go one (1) block to Hancock.
NORTH	I-75	To Warren exit. Turn RIGHT on Warren. Go to third stoplight, Cass. Turn LEFT. Go one (1) block to Hancock.
NORTH	Lodge (M-10)	To Forest/Warren exit. Turn LEFT on Forest. Go to fourth stoplight, Cass. Turn LEFT. Go one (1) block to Hancock.
WEST	I-96	Take to I-94 exit, EAST (toward Port Huron). See directions coming from WEST I-94.

The Hilberry Theatre is located at 4743 Cass Ave. at the corner of Cass and West Hancock.

To reach Group Sales and Services, call 313-577-0852.

