

Scorched

by Wajdi Mouawad

translated by Linda Gaboriau

an NAC English Theatre / Tarragon Theatre (Toronto)
English-language world premiere coproduction

Study Guide

**THE NATIONAL ARTS CENTRE ENGLISH THEATRE
PROGRAMMES FOR STUDENT AUDIENCES
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About This Guide

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About the Play (page 1 of 2) (see Activity #1)

SETTING Time and location are often blurred and interchangeable, much like memories. In the making of a modern myth, time and location take on a universal rather than specific truth. The “present” time is not defined but is very much like the beginning of the 21st century, with memories of times much like the latter half of the 20th century. Locations are not defined but Janine and Simon live in a city and country very much like Montreal, Canada and their mother, Nawal, came from a country very much like Lebanon in the Middle East. Modern locations may be places like a lawyer’s office, a gym, a university classroom, a backyard. These scenes are blended with flashbacks to Nawal’s war-torn homeland: villages, roads, a cemetery, a prison and a school. As Janine and Simon search backward in time to discover who their mother really was, Nawal’s life unfolds before us starting as a young teenager and moving inexorably to the horrific event that gave life to her twins.

PLOT SYNOPSIS Upon the death of their mother, Nawal, her grown twin children Janine and Simon learn from her will that they must search out their father and brother in their mother’s homeland. Their relationship with their mother had been strained while growing up but they had been told that their father was dead and there had been no mention of a brother. At first they react angrily but gradually set out separately on their quest to dig backwards through time. Simultaneously we are introduced to Nawal as a young girl, pregnant out of wedlock and forced to give up her child. Nawal later promises to find her lost son and her journey takes her through a land torn by the violence of civil war with death and revenge all around her until eventually she is imprisoned for a military assassination. The journeys of Simon and Janine and of Nawal finally collide in a horrific revelation.

CHARACTERS (by order of appearance):

Alphonse Lebel – notary in charge of the will of the deceased Nawal Marwan
Simon Marwan – son of Nawal, an amateur boxer and twin brother of Janine
Janine Marwan – daughter of Nawal, university lecturer in Mathematics
Ralph – Simon’s trainer
Nawal (shown at various ages from 14 to 65, played by three different actors)
– a young girl, native of a Middle Eastern country; in love with young Wahab from a neighbouring village; later known as the woman who sings
Wahab – a young boy and father of Nawal’s baby
Jihane – Nawal’s mother
Nazira – Nawal’s grandmother
Elhame – a midwife
Antoine Ducharme – once, the male nurse to the aged Nawal; now, a theatre technician.

About the Play (page 2 of 3) (see Activity #1)

CHARACTERS (continued)

Sawda – a friend of young and middle-aged Nawal
Abdessamad – village elder
Malak – a shepherd who took in the infant children of Nawal
Nihad – a psychopathic killer who takes pictures of his victims dying
Chamseddine – spiritual leader of the resistance movement
Abou Tarek – torturer at Kfar Rayat prison, now imprisoned for war crimes
A Doctor, Militiamen, a Museum Guide, a School Janitor

STYLE The language is not realistic and often takes on a poetic quality. People may speak in colourful images using language that suggests symbols and greater meanings. Watch for phrases that are repeated in different situations, such as “*Childhood is a knife stuck in the throat*” and “*No matter what happens, I will always love you*”. Watch for repeated recurring use of water as a symbol, as well as the image of a red wolf. Watch for the promise that must be kept in order to have one’s tombstone engraved. Watch for the quirky linguistic trait of the notary Alphonse.

THEMES Watch for themes involving a search for identity and heritage, revenge and reconciliation, loss and redemption, and finally the Oedipal story of the man who, unknowingly kills his father and marries his mother.

SOME THINGS TO WATCH FOR IN THE PRODUCTION:

- The fabric used to create the walls - what does it suggest?
- The sand covering the floor – how does this stage effect make us feel?
- The stream of sand falling from above before the play starts – what does it suggest? how is this image echoed at the end?
- The surprise use of the lawn sprinkler
- The uniform pale colour of most costumes
- The varied use of scarves – watch for how many ways each is used
- The use of the trap door in the stage – what is its significance?
- The repeated use of two scenes in different locations and times playing simultaneously – does this enrich or confuse? The transitions from one scene to next – what does this suggest about the action?
- Actors playing several roles, particularly David Fox who plays over 10 characters in quick succession - how is each defined physically and through costume or props?

About the Play (page 3 of 3) (see Activity #8)

Chronology of Events in *Scorched*

As explained in the section "About the Play" (page 1), events in the play are not presented in chronological order, but rather by means of flashbacks and similar devices. **Please do not distribute this page to students until after they have seen *Scorched***, as it contains information which the audience is meant to discover as the play progresses. For students to be made aware of these facts in advance risks diminishing their enjoyment of the play.

- 1937: Nawal born
- 1951: Nawal age 14/ Wahab age 14 – Nawal is pregnant.
- Nawal at 15 gives birth to Nihad / Wahab sent away just before labour.
- Nihad (just born) taken by Elhame to an orphanage in the South.
- Nawal age 16 – her grandmother Nazira dies.
- Nawal, age 16 runs away to learn to read and write.
- Nawal age 19 returns to the village to write the stone marker for her grandmother's grave.
- Nawal age 19 meets Sawda (approximately 19) – they go to the South in search of Nihad.
- Nawal age 19 and Sawda at Kfar Ryat orphanage – Nihad is four years old. Nihad has been adopted by Harmanni family sometime before their arrival. Nawal and Sawda think he has been taken south by the refugees.
- Nawal age 19 gets on a bus to pursue Nihad south and just misses being massacred by the militiamen on a bus for refugees.
- 1978: Kfar Ryat prison is established.
- The army from another country invades the South. The leader of the south's militiamen is assassinated. In retaliation, there is a significant massacre of the refugees in their camps. Nawal is 40. Nihad is 25. Nawal gives up her search for him and assassinates the leader of the militiamen.
- **Act 2** starts with Nawal at age 40 – There is a photo of Nawal (age 40) and Sawda in front of the burnt out bus that Nawal escaped age 19.
- After the assassination, Nawal is imprisoned for five years in Kfar Ryat prison, where she is given the identity of #72 in cell number 7. Nawal sings while others are tortured. Abou Tarek, the head of the prison, tortures and rapes Nawal.
- Nawal gives birth to twins in the prison. They are taken from her and miraculously survive.
- 1983: end of the war and Abou Tarek flees into hiding.
- 1997: International Criminal Tribunal into war crimes.
- Nawal age 60 testifies. Abou Tarek testifies in response and Nawal learns that Abou is her son Nihad.
- August 21, 1997: day of the twins' 17th birthday, Nawal goes silent. Nawal writes her will.
- 2000: Kfar Ryat turned into a museum for tourists.
- Summer 2002: Nawal dies. Janine and Simon are 22 years old. **Act 1** begins.

Who Helped Put the Production Together? (page 1 of 3) (see Activity #10)
The Creative Team

Director: Richard ROSE
Playwright: Wajdi MOUAWAD
Translator: Linda GABORIAU
Set/Lighting Design: Graeme S. THOMSON
Costume Design: Teresa PRZYBYLSKI
Music Coach: Maryem TOLLAR
Sound Design: Todd CHARLTON
Assistant Director: Melissa HALLER
Stage Manager: Kathryn WESTOLL
Assistant Stage Manager: Stéfanie SÉGUIN

Cast: in alphabetical order

Sawda / Elhame: Valerie BUHAGIAR

Simon / Wahab: Sergio DI ZIO

Nihad / Ralph: Paul FAUTEUX

Antoine / Doctor in Orphanage /
Abdessamed / Militia Man 1 /
Tourist Guide to Prison / Janitor /
Photographer / Chamseddine / Malak /
and all other parts: David FOX

Nawal (age 40) / Jihane: Kelli FOX

Janine: Sophie GOULET

Nawal (age 14 – 19): Janick HÉBERT

Nawal (age 60 – 65) / Nazira: Nicola LIPMAN

Alphonse Lebel / Militia Man: Alon NASHMAN

Who Helped Put the Production Together? (page 2 of 3)

(see Activities #10 and 12)

Playwright Wajdi Mouawad – a Bio



Wajdi Mouawad was born in Beirut, Lebanon in 1968 but his family fled the war-torn country to live in Paris, France for a few years, then emigrated to Quebec in 1983. Wajdi graduated from the French acting division of the National Theatre School in 1991 and then began his remarkable Montreal-based career as an actor, director, playwright, adapter and translator. He came to notice in the early 1990s after forming the Théâtre Ô Parleur (with fellow classmate Isabelle Leblanc) when he staged a “walking” production of Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* (in French) throughout Old Montreal starting at 2am. He was praised for his roles in several productions including his play *Alphonse*. In addition to his own

plays, he has also directed *Le tour de monde de Jo Maquillon*, *Disco Pigs* (which he co-translated), *Oedipe Roi* and a French version of Chekhov’s *Three Sisters* for the NAC in 2004. He became artistic director of Théâtre de Quat’Sous in Montreal in 2000. He has published over a dozen plays and a novel in French. Four of his plays have been translated into English. *Littoral* (published in English as *Tideline*) was made into a film in 2004 with Mouawad as co-screenwriter and director. Mouawad’s *Pacamambo* was produced at the NAC in 2001, followed by *Ce n’est pas de la manière qu’on se l’imagine que Claude et Jacqueline se sont rencontrés* and *Incendies*. His most recent play, *Forêts* (the third in a tetralogy on the theme of heritage, of which *Littoral* and *Incendies* are the first two parts), will be presented at the NAC in March 2007. Its Montreal production was in January of this year after a six month tour of France. His play *Littoral* received the Governor General’s Award in 2000. In 2002, the French government honoured him with the title of knight of the National Order of Arts and Letters.

Mouawad has recently been named Artistic Director Designate of French Theatre at the NAC. Peter Herrndorf, president and CEO of the NAC, hailed him as an “outstanding creator” and a “captivating storyteller” who will be a leader in supporting French-language theatre across the country. In accepting the position, Mouawad promised, “*I intend to maintain that [high] standard of theatre, to reinvent it in the context of my duty to explore my own radicality, which I feel confident I can do. Theatre is still a place for exploring. It allows the breathtaking suspension that reveals inexpressible beauty.*”

“*There is a certain reticence these days to tell our stories, a tendency to position the story as a trap for intelligence, so that the latter can only be expressed through formalism pushed to the limit. ... What, then, are our stories today – or, to put it another way, what stories can we trust to provide a gathering place for our individual and collective souls? What role do time and space play in a story, in this age where concepts of time, place and action bear no relation to the sense of disconnectedness – dissipation, even – that informs our era, mutilating happiness, God, desire ...? Fictional time, imaginary time, time transformed. How all of this can coalesce in space to become a story which, as always, transports us into the unknown – precisely because, in history as in life, we cannot predict what will come next.*” - Wajdi Mouawad

Who Helped Put the Production Together? (page 3 of 3) (see Activity #12)

Other Plays by Wajdi Mouawad – If you like *Scorched* try one of these:

Wedding Day at the Cro-Magnons' - first produced in 1996 as a coproduction by Théâtre Passe Muraille and the NAC. This bitter and surreal comedy, set in war-torn Beirut, focuses on our heroic and ludicrous need to continue tradition in the midst of chaos. A family decides to go ahead with the marriage of their daughter despite the world crumbling around them, despite the mother's unhappiness and the father's violence, despite the mental deficiency of the youngest son and the absence of the oldest son, and, above all, despite the fact that the bridegroom doesn't exist.

Alphonse - a short play for young audiences; first produced in 1998 by Pink Ink Theatre Productions. Little Alphonse has disappeared. Everyone is looking for him: his parents, his friends, the police. Meanwhile, Alphonse is strolling around the countryside, inventing the fabulous adventures of his alter ego.

Tideline (French title: *Littoral*) – Wahab, a young man born in Montreal, decided to bury his deceased father in his native Lebanon after his relatives refuse to admit him to the family cemetery plot. In Lebanon, Wahab, along with some friends, confronts a country scarred by war where an additional corpse is one too many. The young man then embarks on a journey with a body that takes up too much space.

Plays not yet translated into English:

Pacamambo - Gone missing for three weeks, Julie is found, accompanied by her dog, Le Gros, beside her grandmother's dead body. Why did she hide in the basement with the corpse? Why does she refuse to answer the shrink's questions? Slowly, Julie will reveal the Pacamambo dream, her grandmother's heritage.

Un obus dans le Coeur - In the middle of the night, the phone rings at Wahab's home. His mother is agonizing at the hospital. On his way to his mother's side, Wahab faces obstacles: a snowstorm, a nagging bus driver, a stubborn Santa Claus. But one desire prevails: to flee, to go back to the way things were "before".

Forêts – An epic four-hour play with several interwoven stories: six women brutally face the incoherence of their existence as interpreted by a paleontologist who visits a concentration camp with a team of scientists in 1946; a soldier, leaving the battlefield in 1917, takes refuge in a forest where he discovers a zoo where four women live amongst wild animals; a woman learns in 2003 that she is suffering from an incurable disease.

Canada's Cultural Mosaic – Immigrant Playwrights (see Activity #12)

Canadians reflect a dynamic and evolving cultural, ethnic and linguistic makeup that is found nowhere else on earth. As recognized by the Department of Canadian Heritage (Multiculturalism): "Approximately 200,000 immigrants a year from all parts of the globe continue to choose Canada, drawn by its quality of life and its reputation as an open, peaceful and caring society that welcomes newcomers and values diversity." Canada's approach to diversity is based on the understanding that "respect for cultural distinctiveness is intrinsic to an individual's sense of self worth and identity, and a society that accommodates everyone equally is a society that encourages achievement, participation, attachment to country and a sense of belonging." (http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/multi/respect_e.cfm)

The diversity of cultures in Canada is reflected in a rich tapestry of traditions, and these are especially important to new immigrants. The 2003 Ethnic Diversity Survey conducted by Statistics Canada, for example, found that 57% of first generation Canadians had a strong sense of belonging to their ethnic or cultural group, and about 63% (or 6.5 million people) said that maintaining ethnic customs and traditions was important. (<http://www.statcan.ca/english/IPS/Data/89-593-XIE.htm>)

One of the greatest areas for new audience development is in culturally diverse communities since the Canadian population is growing more from immigration than from natural increase. In May 2001, 5.4 million people (or 18% of the population) were born outside the country, and of the 1.8 million immigrants who arrived during the 1990s, 73% chose to live in Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal – cities that are also home to the largest concentration of Canadian artists and arts organizations. (<http://www.canadacouncil.ca/aboutus/advocacy/dk127306715935781250.htm>)

The voices of New Canadians are vital in the arts. Immigrant playwrights share with all Canadians their heritage, their immigrant experience and their views on their new land. The website http://www.ryerson.ca/library/events/asian_heritage/authors.html lists over 140 writers of Asian (Middle East to Japan) descent. Many more from Africa, South America and Europe may be found in a web search. Three of these are mentioned below.

M.J. (Myung-Jin) Kang was born in Korea and immigrated to Canada with her family when she was two years old. Her family continues to live in Toronto. In addition to acting on stage and film, Kang is a successful playwright and aspiring screenwriter. In her play *Blessing*, a young Korean-Canadian woman travels to Korea to find a sense of identity for the first time since immigrating to Canada. She travels back to Canada to try and integrate what she has learned in Korea with her past in Canada.

Born in Japan, **Hiro Kanagawa** is a Vancouver-based actor and playwright. He wrote and directed his first full-length play *Slants* for his MFA at Simon Fraser University. His most recent play *Tiger of Malaya* premiered at Factory Theatre, Toronto, and the National Arts Centre. Set in the Philippines after World War II, Hiro Kanagawa's play depicts the war-crimes trial in 1946 of real-life Japanese general Tomoyuki Yamashita, known as the Tiger of Malaya for his tactical brilliance.

Rene Aloma immigrated from Cuba at the age of 15 and had a career as a playwright in Toronto until he died recently at the age of 39. His play *A Little Something to Ease the Pain* explores the struggle to find where home really is in a world of exiles.

Civil War

Wajdi Mouawad uses the ancient Greek myth of Oedipus as told by Sophocles and an unspecified Middle Eastern country plagued by civil war as canvases on which to paint a new history of loss and redemption. The setting of the play is not as important as the civil war that rages within it. Many countries throughout the world have suffered the atrocities of civil war such as Lebanon, Yugoslavia, and Chechnya, resulting in a tragically fragmented population. Civil war and the Oedipal myth are both integral to the story of *Scorched*. By being non-specific in situating the story, the history of Nawal and her children becomes mythic in itself.

Definition: a civil war is one in which parties within the same culture, society or nationality fight each other for the control of political power. Political scientists use two criteria: the warring groups must be from the same country and fighting for control of the political center, control over a separatist state, or forcing a major change in policy. The second criterion is that at least 1,000 people must have been killed in total, with at least 100 from each side.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil_war

The reasons for civil war are often extremely diverse and complex. Sociologists have a difficult time identifying a causal relationship for civil war. Most countries around the world have minority cultures, several different religious groups, an imbalanced power structure, and are ideologically and/or regionally divided. However, not all nations engage in civil war, thus identifying the variables which lead to civil war is problematic. Though not always the case, most civil wars occur in countries which are regionally divided, undemocratic, and poor. Some causes of civil war are:

- competition for resources and wealth
- religious conflict
- cultural differences
- imperialist rulers battling each other for greater power
- demographics.

The following websites are a good resource for students to research civil war and find out about past and present divided nations, and the process of peace keeping after civil war:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_divided_nations

<http://www.historycentral.com/Europe/CivilWarYugo.html>

<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/chechnya1.htm>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Chechen_War

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lebanese_Civil_War

<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/>



The Psychology of Revenge (page 1 of 2) (see Activities #2 and 5)

Anger is a fact of life. Our world is filled with violence, hatred, war, and aggression. French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan taught that aggression results as a psychological defense against threats to our personal identity which we create to hide our innate human vulnerability and weakness. When anything or anyone threatens to expose our vulnerability to ourselves, the quickest, easiest, and most common defense available—to hide the truth of our weakness and to give the illusion that we possess some sort of power—is aggression. Anger, which is a universal human emotion, is distinct from feeling hurt or irritated. We all feel hurt or irritated when someone or something obstructs our needs or desires. Anger, though, in its technical sense refers to the desire to “get even with”—that is, to take revenge on—the *cause* of the hurt. However, anger acts like a poison that ultimately lowers the quality of one’s own life as much as it hurts the life of another person. Nawal uses this concept to help Sawda understand the futility of revenge when the latter plans to destroy an enemy village. Revenge will never undo past hurts no more than a medicine can cure last week’s stomach ache.

It is possible to be angry without having a desire for revenge, but it is impossible to be revengeful unless one feels deep anger. Often the rage that fuels revenge takes the form of cold deliberate viciousness. The nature of revenge is actually a contradiction. It is saying “No one should suffer the way that person made me suffer, so to teach him a lesson, I’ll make him suffer more.” Focusing on the desire to get revenge hardens one toward others and obstructs the process of getting in touch with the emotional pain which could help in healing the hurt. If hurt feelings are always hidden behind a protective show of curses (or guns) one will never fully understand and accept one’s natural vulnerability.

Dr. Raymond Lloyd Richmond points out that the desire to “get even” underlies much of human conflict. Revenge permeates our culture (movies, music, popular literature, sports, politics, even the legal system) because it permeates the human unconscious. Revenge, therefore, is what we most commonly experience in our unconscious fantasies when we become frustrated. It could be the frustration of knowing that others are missing the point. It could be the irritation of having to tolerate rude behavior. It could be the humiliating insult of not having our expectations fulfilled. It could be the traumatic insult of childhood physical, emotional, or sexual abuse. Whatever the insult is, there is the urge to pick up weapons—whether physical (i.e. guns and bombs) or verbal (i.e. sarcasm and curses)—and turn them on others. Often, these urges to get revenge break out of the unconscious into the real world and become real events such as road rage, family violence, terrorism, school violence, or suicide. There is no escaping the psychological effects of injury and anger; either one can face up to *all* of the unconscious anger and learn real forgiveness, or one can let the deadly poison of revenge take over. (see <http://www.guidetopsychology.com/anger.htm>)

A person who has been victimized—and that includes survivors of crime, accidents, childhood abuse, political imprisonment, warfare, and so on—must decide whether to forgive the perpetrator or hold on to bitterness and anger. Forgiveness must not be confused with reconciliation or forgetting. Reconciliation involves penance and the agreement of both parties to become friends again, while forgetting means that one denies that the hurt ever happened. Forgiveness means understanding the hurt and coming to peace with it. This does not mean that wrong-doing and crimes should not be punished. That punishment, however, should come from a neutral third party – a judge, court, tribunal or God. (See <http://jhw.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/11/1/31> or <http://www.guidetopsychology.com/forgive.htm>)

The Psychology of Revenge (page 2 of 2) (see Activities #2 and 5)

Another factor which needs to be examined in understanding the psychology of revenge is the cultural differences amongst peoples. Value preferences in different societies can be loosely categorized as individualism or collectivism. North American society with its emphasis on self-reliance, individual achievement, personal choice and private property supports an individualistic focus. In other parts of the world, collectivism places the emphasis on encouraging group success, adherence to norms and group consensus, respect for hierarchical roles and acceptance of group ownership. With this in mind it is understandable that violations of face and honour resulting in shame to the family or community are taken much more seriously in collectivist societies, whereas violations involving rights are more harmful in an individualistic society. Shame appears to be a powerful motivator of thoughts of revenge among collectivists whereas anger is a powerful motivator with individualists. As well, injustices to group members are more “contagious” amongst collectivists who experience vicarious shame when group members have been humiliated, leading to the impulse to seek revenge on their behalf. Collectivism may also be a factor in beliefs the importance of group longevity over and above individual longevity, leading to greater self-sacrifice for the benefit of the group. This understanding of societal values will help in attempts to mediate conflicts, not only internationally and between sectarian groups but also within a community such as a classroom. (See http://www.wested.org/online_pubs/bridging/part3.shtml)

A disturbing characteristic of reprisals to perceived insults or injuries is that they always escalate. This summer when Israel struck back at Hezbollah forces in Lebanon for kidnapping two of its soldiers, the extent of retaliation was much greater than the original injury. The European Union criticized Israel not for having struck back at Hezbollah at all, but for striking back with a “disproportionate use of force”. Since this phenomenon is universal, it is not tied to any religion or culture; it is part of human nature generally. To investigate this, a study at the University College London was conducted in which pairs of volunteers were hooked up to a device that allowed each to exert pressure on the other volunteer’s fingers. Taking turns, each volunteer was told to apply exactly the same amount of pressure that he felt being exerted on his finger by the other while researchers measured the actual amount of pressure applied. Surprisingly, although each volunteer made every attempt to apply the same pressure, they responded with about 40% more pressure than they experienced. In these controlled conditions where the subjects were really trying to follow the rule they cannot be accused of increasing the amount of force they used because of racism, bigotry, religious hatred, self-interest, protecting their nation, or anything like that. Each subject was convinced that the other person was scaling up the amount of force being used but that they were only applying the “correct” amount of force. Daniel Gilbert, who conducted this study, concludes something that is obvious: we will always perceive our own pain as greater than that of others. In a conflict situation, the difference in pain inflicted is much greater, since the parties want to inflict suffering on their enemies. However, not only are people unable to perceive the harm they inflict on others, they are also unable to accurately perceive how the actions of others are really reactions – consequences of their own behaviour. They don’t miss how their own actions are reactions, though. In another study involving verbal dispute, the volunteers always remembered the statement made before their own response or how they responded to the opponent’s statement. In other words, we remember the causes of our actions and the consequences of their partner’s. This is why an outside impartial mediator is essential in dispute resolution. However, acceptance of this hinges on the parties recognizing that their own perception is flawed, a development that may not come soon in the Middle East.

The Mind of a Psychopath (page 1 of 2) (see Activity #3)

The character Nihad Harmanni exhibits the characteristics of a psychopathic killer. Trained by Chamseddine to be an expert marksman and member of his militia, Nihad then wanders away to lead an isolated life style. He continues killing people as a sniper, but does not restrict himself to military victims. Rather, he kills those he meets indiscriminately without any obvious reason other than he wants to photograph them as they die. His behaviour seems to fit the criteria devised by psychiatry to identify this mental abnormality.

What is Psychopathy? Currently, psychopathy is defined in psychiatry as a condition characterized by lack of empathy or conscience, and poor impulse control or manipulative behaviors. It is currently also known as antisocial personality disorder and dissocial personality disorder. Psychopathy is most commonly diagnosed using a checklist devised by Psychiatrist Robert D. Hare who describes psychopaths as "intraspecies predators who use charm, manipulation, intimidation, and violence to control others and to satisfy their own selfish needs. Lacking in conscience and in feelings for others, they cold-bloodedly take what they want and do as they please, violating social norms and expectations without the slightest sense of guilt or regret. What is missing, in other words, are the very qualities that allow a human being to live in social harmony." It is thought that any emotions that the psychopath shows are the result of watching and mimicking other people's emotions. Along with poor impulse control they show a low tolerance for frustration and aggression. Although they are lacking in conscience they understand that society expects them to behave in a conscientious manner, and therefore they mimic this behaviour when it suits their needs. They have a superficial charm, average intelligence, high level of verbal skills but low level of "emotional intelligence". They exhibit a high degree of insincerity and untruthfulness. They have a need for stimulation and are prone to boredom. They often are sexually promiscuous but show an incapacity to love. Unlike psychotics there is an absence of delusions, irrational thoughts and nervousness, so they may seem perfectly sane. There is a pathological egocentricity, often with beliefs of superiority and power. They often show an early tendency to bullying, delinquency and repeated lawlessness. If murder is involved they will usually repeat that crime. Certainly not all psychopaths are murderers, nor are all murderers psychopaths.

What is the Cause of Psychopathy? Research indicates that psychopathy is associated with a dysfunction of the small, walnut-shaped amygdala region of the brain situated deep in the temporal lobes. The amygdala, which is responsible for emotional memory, has been found to have a smaller mass in advanced psychopaths. This may be due to a genetic factor, since the trait may be passed down in families, or also due to environmental factors experienced during the early years of the child while the brain is developing. Studies show that the aggression stems from a deep-seated fear of rejection in the infant triggered by parental rejection. This rejection or lack of affection may have resulted from a difficult birth or early post-natal problems that prevented genuine emotional bonding between parent and child. Violence or mental or physical abuse in the very early stages of child development may prevent the normal stimulus for growth in the amygdala of the brain resulting in psychopathy at a later age.

The Mind of a Psychopath (page 2 of 2) (see Activities #3 and 4)

What is the Treatment for Psychopathy? Psychopathy is one of the most difficult disorders to treat. Punishment of the behavioral traits in children and teens usually results in a worsening of the situation, as does incarceration. There is a high degree of recurrence of the offences with the psychopath becoming cleverer in avoiding detection. Although numerous methods of therapy have been tried with psychopathic patients, including drug treatment, electrode stimulation of the brain, and group and individual psychotherapy, few methods have been able to bring about any improvement in the patients. Progress is questionable because the psychopath has low motivation to improve or is uncooperative - there often being little recognition of the problem - or the psychopath becomes adept at deception of his or her progress.

Psychopathic Killers Charles Manson: imprisoned in 1969 for planning the murder of at least seven people including Sharon Tate, wife of film director Roman Polanski.

Ted Bundy: executed in 1984 for the murders of at least 36 attractive young women whom he seduced and strangled before raping them.

Jeffrey Dahmer: convicted for the torture, sexual assault and killing of 21 teenage boys and young men whom he later dismembered; he was murdered shortly after being imprisoned.

Albert Fish: executed in 1936 for torturing, killing and often eating the flesh of at least 15 children; he was the main inspiration for Dr. Hannibal Lecter of *Silence of the Lambs*.

Eric Harris: one of the two boys who carried out the Columbine High School massacre; his diaries indicate a mind that was clearly psychopathic.

Robert Picton: currently on trial in Burnaby B.C. for the murder of 22 prostitutes from Vancouver.

Questions arising from a study of many psychopathic killers: Why are the vast majority men? Why is there always a sexual aggression component?

http://www.crimelibrary.com/criminal_mind/psychology/psychopath/1.html

"*The Childhood Psychopath: Bad Seed or Bad Parents?*" by Katherine Ramsland. Lengthy study of the nature of Psychopathic Syndrome, its possible causes and manifestations.

<http://www.ramas.co.uk/report3.pdf> Report on the treatment of psychopathy.

<http://faculty.ncwc.edu/toconnor/428/428lect16.htm> Article on antisocial personality disorders.

<http://www.crisiscounseling.com/Articles/Psychopath.htm> "Are You Involved with a Psychopath?" Article on the socialized psychopaths met in everyday life.

Movies featuring Psychopathic Killers

Natural Born Killers (1994) dir: Oliver Stone. Woody Harrelson and Juliette Lewis play two victims of traumatized childhoods who become lovers and outcast psychopathic serial murderers. They travel through America conducting psychedelic mass-slaughters, not for money or revenge, but just for kicks. Their exploits are irresponsibly glorified in the media, making them folk heroes.

Silence of the Lambs (1991) dir: Jonathan Demme. In order to track down a psychopathic serial killer, an FBI agent (Jodie Foster) enlists the help of another psychopathic murderer, Hannibal Lecter (Anthony Hopkins), imprisoned in a hospital for the criminally insane.

An Excerpt from *Scorched* (page 1 of 3) (see Activity #6)

(Background: Simon and Janine are twin brother and sister, grown children of Nawal who has recently died. They have been deeply disturbed by their mother’s sudden silence and withdrawal before her death. Antoine, Nawal’s private nurse, set a tape recorder by her bed at night to see if she might say anything while alone and later gave Janine, a university mathematics lecturer, the many hours of tape. Janine has become obsessed with finding out what disturbed her mother. Simon, an amateur boxer, has come to Janine’s home.)

(Note: for classroom presentation purposes, the sections in square brackets [] may be left out.)

SIMON: The university is looking for you. Your colleagues are looking for you. Your students are looking for you. They keep calling me, everyone’s calling me: “Janine has stopped coming to the university. We don’t know where Janine is. The students don’t know what to do.” I’ve been calling you. You don’t answer.

JANINE: What do you want from me, Simon? Why have you come to my house?

SIMON: Because everyone thinks you’re dead.

JANINE: I’m fine. You can leave.

SIMON: No, you’re not fine and I won’t leave.

JANINE: Don’t shout.

SIMON: You’re starting to act like her.

JANINE: How I act is my own business, Simon.

SIMON: No, I’m sorry, but it’s my business, too. I’m all you have left, and you’re all I have left. And you’re acting like her. You’re becoming the same as her.

JANINE: I’m not doing anything.

SIMON: You’ve stopped talking. Like her. One day she comes home and she locks herself in her room. She sits there. One day. Two days. Three days. She doesn’t eat. Or drink. She disappears. Once. Twice. Three times. Four times. She comes home. Refuses to talk. Her phone rang, she wouldn’t answer. Your phone rings, you won’t answer. She locked herself in. You lock yourself in. You refuse to talk.

JANINE: Simon, come sit beside me. Listen. Listen for a bit. Listen carefully.

An Excerpt from *Scorched* (page 2 of 3)

Janine gives Simon one of her earphones and he presses it to his ear. Janine presses the other earphone to her ear. They both listen to the silence.

JANINE: There. Listen. You can hear her breathing. You can hear her move.

SIMON: You're listening to silence!

JANINE: It's her silence. There are many things behind that silence, but we can't hear them.

[*Nawal (age 19) and Sawda are walking side by side. Nawal is teaching Sawda the Arabic alphabet.*]

NAWAL: Aleph, bé, tâ, szâ, jîm, hâ, khâ ...

SAWDA: Aleph, bé, tâ, szâ, jîm, hâ, khâ ...

NAWAL: Dâl, dââl, rrâ, sîn, shîn, sâd, dââd ...]

SIMON: You're going crazy, Janine.

JANINE: What do you know about me? About her? Nothing. You know nothing. How can we go on living now?

SIMON: How? You throw the tapes away. You go back to the university. You give your courses and you continue your Ph.D.

JANINE: I don't give a damn about my Ph.D.!

SIMON: You don't give a damn about anything!

JANINE: There's no point in trying to explain to you, you never understand anything. 1 plus 1 equals 2. You don't even understand that.

SIMON: I forgot, we have to talk to you in numbers! If your math professor told you you were going crazy, you might listen to him. But your brother – forget it! He's too dumb, too slow!

JANINE: I didn't say that.

SIMON: That's what you said.

An Excerpt from *Scorched* (page 3 of 3)

JANINE: I said I didn't give a damn about my Ph.D. There's something in my mother's silence that I want to understand, something I need to understand.

SIMON: And I'm telling you there's nothing to understand!

JANINE: Fuck off!

SIMON: ou fuck off!]

JANINE: Leave me alone, Simon. We don't owe each other anything. I'm your sister, not your mother. You're my brother, not my father!

SIMON: It's all the same thing.

JANINE: No, it's not the same.

SIMON: Give me a break!

JANINE: Leave me alone, Simon.

SIMON: The notary is expecting us in three days, we have to sign the papers. Are you going to come?... You're going to come, Janine.... Janine... answer me, are you going to come?

JANINE: Yes, Go away now.

Simon leaves.

[Nawal and Sawda are walking side by side.

SAWDA: Aleph, bé, tâ, szâ, jîm, hâ, khâ, Dâl, dââl, rrâ, sîn, shîn, sâd ... Tââ ... oh, no

NAWAL: Start over.]

Janine is listening to her mother's silence.

JANINE: I know you're there. I know it. Why didn't you say anything? Say something, speak. Speak to me. You're alone. Antoine isn't with you. You know that he's recording you. You know that he won't listen to anything. You know that he'll give us the cassettes. You know. You've figured it all out. You know. So speak. Why won't you say something to me? Why won't you say something to me?

Janine smashes her walkman on the ground. End of scene.

Oedipus Rex (page 1 of 2) (see Activity #11)
**A play by Sophocles, one of the three great Greek tragedians,
first performed in 428 BCE.**

The ancient legend of the unfortunate King Oedipus as told by Sophocles has some parallels to the story of Nawal and her children. A comparison of the tales may be of interest.

Plot Synopsis

Long before the play opens Laius, Oedipus' father, kidnapped, raped and beheaded the young boy Chrysippus and was then cursed by Chrysippus' father, Pelops. The weight of this curse bore down onto Oedipus himself. An oracle prophesied that the son born to Laius and Jocasta would kill his father and marry his mother. Seeking to avoid such a fate, when a son was born, Laius had the infant's ankles pierced with a brooch and gave him to a servant to be placed in the wilderness to die. They then resolved to have no more children. The soft-hearted servant, however, could not carry out Laius' order and instead handed the boy to a shepherd who then presented the baby to King Polybus and Queen Merope of neighbouring Corinth because they were childless. They raised him as their own son and heir, naming him Oedipus (meaning "swollen foot").

At a party thrown by King Polybus, a drunken guest called Oedipus a bastard. Seeking to confirm his parentage, not believing the man, Oedipus sought out the Oracle at Delphi. Instead of telling him his parentage, the Oracle related the same prophecy as was told to his father: that he would kill his father and marry his mother. Not wishing to have the prophecy fulfilled, Oedipus decided to leave those he knew as his parents and to banish himself from Corinth. On his journey, on a road where three roads meet, he met an unarmed man with a staff on his own pilgrimage, riding a chariot. The man in the chariot demanded that Oedipus stand aside so he could pass, finally hitting Oedipus with his staff. Oedipus, in self-defense, killed the stranger and all but one of his entourage. The man, unknown to Oedipus, was King Laius, Oedipus' real father.

As he traveled, Oedipus encountered a mythical creature that was terrorizing Thebes. Oedipus saved the city by answering the riddle of the Sphinx. Q: "What walks on four legs in the morning, two legs in the afternoon, and three legs in the evening?" A: "Man, as a baby man crawls on four legs; as an adult walks on two legs; when old, man uses a cane." (The answer to the Sphinx's riddle applies to Oedipus more than any other man. As an infant with hobbled ankles, he had difficulty in learning to walk. As a blind man in old age, he depended on a cane). Since Oedipus answered the Sphinx's riddle correctly, he was offered the now-vacant throne of Thebes and the now-widowed queen's hand in marriage. Oedipus accepted both offers. Within a short time, divine signs of misfortune and pollution descended on Thebes.

The people of Thebes are begging the king for help; he must discover the cause of the plague. Oedipus swears to find the person responsible for the pestilence and execute him as well as anyone who aids him. He questions everyone in the palace, including his wife, Jocasta. Eventually, when the blind seer Tiresias informs Oedipus that he himself is both the source of the pollution and the murderer, the king does not believe him. Oedipus insists that the culprit is Creon, Jocasta's brother, whom he believes is plotting to usurp the throne. Oedipus then accuses Tiresias of lying and being a false prophet. In proof, Jocasta cites the old prophecy that her son should kill his father and have children by his mother. She prevented its

Oedipus Rex (page 2 of 2) (see Activity #11)

fulfillment, she confesses, by abandoning their infant son in the mountains. As for Laius, he had been killed by robbers years later at the junction of three roads on the route to Delphi.

This information makes Oedipus uneasy. He recalls having killed a man answering Laius' description at this very spot when he was fleeing from his home in Corinth to avoid fulfillment of a similar prophecy. An aged messenger arrives from Corinth, at this point, to announce the death of King Polybus, supposed father of Oedipus, and the election of Oedipus as king in his stead. On account of the old prophecy Oedipus refuses to return to Corinth until his mother, too, is dead. To calm his fears the messenger assures him that he is not the blood son of Polybus and Merope, but a foundling from the house of Laius deserted in the mountains. This statement is confirmed by the old shepherd whom Jocasta had charged with the task of exposing her babe. In a moment of recognition, he realizes that he has not only killed his own father but has also married his own mother (with whom he has had four children). When Jocasta learns the horrible truth, she hangs herself in the very chamber where she and her son have unknowingly committed incest. Seizing the brooches—the long gold pins—from her dress, Oedipus blinds himself.

Detective, murderer, judge, and jury, Oedipus condemns himself to wander in darkness throughout the land for the rest of his life.

A more detailed summary as well as commentary on the play and its themes can be found at <http://www.pathguy.com/oedipus.htm>.

A complete copy of the text of *Oedipus Rex* can be found at <http://classics.mit.edu/Sophocles/oedipus.html>.



*Oedipus being questioned by
the Sphinx*

Suggested Movies/Books/Websites (see Activity #4)

Movies



Littoral (English title ***Tideline***) (2004) Director/Screenwriter Wajdi Mouawad. 96 min. When young Wahab's father dies, a family feud comes to light. His uncles and aunts hate the man and refuse to allow the body to be buried in the family plot, blaming him for the death of his wife. Wahab then decides to take him and his coffin back to his native Lebanon. But even in Lebanon, no one wants him in their village, cemetery or backyard. Available at Glebe Video International and other video stores.

Syriana (2005) Director/Screenwriter Stephen Gaghan. 126 min. A political thriller about the power and corruption of oil industry set in the Middle East and America. One of the plot threads deals with a CIA agent, played by George Clooney, who fails in his dealings with missile exchange in the Lebanese Republic. Available at most video outlets.

West Beyrouth (1998) Director/Screenwriter Ziad Doueiri. 105 min. In April, 1975, civil war breaks out and Beirut is partitioned along a Moslem-Christian line. Tarek is a high school student making Super 8 movies with his friend, Omar. At first the war is a lark: school is closed, the violence is fascinating, getting from West to East is a game. Tarek's mother wants to leave but his father refuses. As he comes of age, the war moves inexorably from adventure to tragedy. Available at Glebe Video International.

Circle of Deceit (German title ***Die Fälschung***) (1981) Dir. Volker Schlöndorff. (108 min.) A German journalist, travels to the city of Beirut during the fighting between Christians and Palestinians hoping to produce an essay about the situation. Together with his photographer he discovers the everyday face of the war. Shot in almost a documentary style, it portrays the situation after the Lebanese Civil War started in 1975 but before Israel invaded Lebanon to get rid of PLO Terrorists. Beirut is divided into many rival Quarters with Palestinians controlling part of Beirut, a hellish situation where everybody is against everybody. Available at Glebe Video.

Books



From Beirut to Jerusalem by Thomas Friedman; Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1989. *New York Times* Middle East journalist Friedman in this National Book Award winning book presents his observations on the bizarre and violent life in Beirut during the Civil War. His insight and predictions on the internal strife and fate of Israel in the unstable Middle East is just as pessimistic. Although almost 20 years old, the book today reads just as topically as when it was written.

Websites



<http://faculty.ncwc.edu/toconnor/428/428lect16.htm> Article on antisocial personality disorders with an analysis of behaviours associated with APD.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/24/opinion/24gilbert.html?ex=1311393600&en=d3e66404c34a3f4b&ei=5088&partner=rssnyt&emc=rss> Op Ed article "*He Who Cast the First Stone Probably Didn't*" – why retaliation actions escalate.

Activities (page 1 of 4)

Before Seeing the Play (page 1 of 2):

1. A Reading Assignment

Distribute copies of pages 1-2 of this Study Guide, "About the Play". The students should read beforehand the brief synopsis and comments on the play so as to be better prepared to understand the world of Janine, Simon and Nawal. The unrealistic language and structure of the play with scenes interlaced though different times and locations will be a challenge, as will the fact that actors often play several roles and sometimes several actors play the one character. The section "Some Things to Watch For in the Production" might help the students become more perceptive while watching the play.

2. An Improvisation Activity

Experiencing a wide variety of improv topics will help student relate to the material of *Scorched*. Try any of the following:

- a pregnant teen opposes her mother and wants to keep the baby.
- a male teen confronts another for beating up his brother, an act which was itself reprisal for a similar assault.
- a friend tries to persuade another friend not to seek revenge on a someone for a perceived slight.
- the grown children of a recently deceased parent who neglected them in childhood argue about whether to carry out the stipulations of the will.
- grown children of an immigrant parent reject the values of the parent's homeland.
- a teen confronts a parent after discovering that they have a much older sibling who had never been discussed.
- A teen confronts a parent over lies that made a dead parent seem heroic rather than despicable.
- A parent confronts a cold-hearted grown child about something that was deeply hurtful.

3. A Psychological Analysis Project (to be done either before or after viewing the play)

Distribute copies of the material on "The Mind of a Psychopath" found on pages 11-12. Once the students recognize some of the characteristics, have them discuss characters found in literature or film who exhibit those characteristics. A reading of the material on the website: <http://www.crisiscounseling.com/Articles/Psychopath.htm> will give some insight into how common the problem may be in society.

4. Enrichment Activity

If time allows, screen a film dealing with the Lebanese Civil War as mentioned on page 18 of this Study Guide, and/or Psychopathy (page 12). These films are available at Glebe Video International. You may likewise visit the websites mentioned on pages 12 and 18 for more in-depth coverage of the issues.

Activities (page 2 of 4)

Before Seeing the Play (page 2 of 2):

5. A Psychological Behaviour Activity

Divide the group into two sections, one set to do a behavioral activity and the other set to be observers. Those doing the activity work in pairs and are instructed close their eyes and each press the other's arm in turn using the same force as the other presses with. They are told to be exact in the amount of pressure even if the other made a mistake and used more or less than they exerted on them. After a short time groups reverse roles as active or observer sets. This active set line up one in front of the other with their eyes closed. The person at the back taps the back of the person in front of them. This person taps the back of the next person using exactly the same pressure as they felt, and so on to the front of the line. Observer groups then compare notes with each other. Let the entire group read the material on "The Psychology of Revenge" (pages 9-10) noting particularly the last paragraph on perception of impulses. Do their observations agree with this? How does this observation enlighten us on revenge psychology?

6. A Scene Study Activity

The excerpt from *Scorched* (pages 13-15) can be used as a scene study. The location may or may not be defined in this scene production but the blocking should reflect the relationship and desires of the two characters. The scene could be expanded to include the characters from the past, Nawal teaching Sawda the alphabet. This scene could be intercut with the Janine/Simon scene or could continue underneath the dialogue of the twins. Experiment with the effects of each.

7. Any trip to the theatre should also involve the students being made aware of proper theatre etiquette while at the NAC. A handout is available on page 23. Please photocopy this page and distribute to students.

Activities (page 3 of 4)

Activities After Seeing the Play (page 1 of 2)

8. Creative Writing Project

Have the students write a biography for the character Nihad, the son Nawal gave birth to when she was 15. Fill in where he was taken to, who raised him, when he became independent and who he worked for. Try to explain his behaviour later in life. Page 3 of this Study Guide, "Chronology for *Scorched*" will be helpful.

9. Topics for Class Discussion on the Production (students may want to review the material on pages 1-2 of this Study Guide, "About the Play".)

- Style of language used in the script; the use of repeated phrases, symbols;
- Style of acting chosen for this play;
- Themes explored – what was it about?
- Who or what does the title refer to?
- Effect of having actors playing more than one character;
- Production aspects:-
 - Costumes – how well did they define time period, character, mood?
 - Set – how well did it define location, theme? what mood did it convey? what abstract ideas did it evoke? what effect does its non-specific style have on the viewer?
 - Lighting – did the realistic/non-realistic nature of lighting express anything; what special effects were used?
- Relevance of this material set in the latter half of the 20th century in the Middle East to today's Canadian audiences.

10. Write a Play Review.

While the play is still fresh in their minds, give students the assignment of writing a review of the production of *Scorched*. Have them read reviews of other plays in *The Ottawa Citizen* or *Xpress* to give them an idea of the standard approach to theatrical criticism. A suggested outline for writing a review can also be found online on page 12 of the Study Guide for "The 'Vaudevilles' of Chekhov" found in the NAC website <http://www.artsalive.ca/en/eth/activities/>. Another excellent guide to writing a review can be found on the Theatre Ontario website http://theatreontario.org/content/play_reviews.htm. Students may have received programs at the matinée, or may refer to page 4 of this Study Guide ("Who Helped Put the Production Together?") for the correct information about the production in their reviews. The areas the review should cover, in general and more specifically when merited, are: all design elements (lighting, sound, set and costumes), the performance of the actor, the direction, the basic narrative, dialogue and the central theme(s) of the script.

Activities (page 4 of 4)

Activities After Seeing the Play (page 2 of 2)

11. A Comparison between *Oedipus Rex* and *Scorched*

In an article in the June 2006 edition of the journal *Neohelicon*, Rainier Grutman and Heba Alah Ghadie describe *Oedipus Rex* as "a palimpsestuous plot for *Incendies*". A palimpsest is a parchment or papyrus manuscript which has been used more than once, with the earlier writing incompletely erased so that it shows through. Have the students read the plot summary of *Oedipus Rex* found on pages 16-17 of this Study Guide. Use the above definition to start a discussion on how the two plots compare and contrast. How do the similarities and differences affect our reaction to Mouawad's new legendary tale.

12. Research Activity on Playwrights who are New Canadians

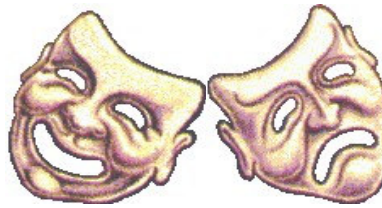
The enrichment of Canadian culture due to immigrant playwrights and other artists has been enormous. Have the students read the biography of Wajdi Mouawad on pages 5-6 of this Study Guide and then the material on immigrant playwrights on page 7. A number of such playwrights are mentioned here but there is a multitude of others. When we include those who are first-generation Canadian the group grows. Have the students research one or two New Canadian playwrights of different ethnic origin on the internet. If a student has a particular cultural heritage he/she should focus on that group of theatre artists. A few names to get them started are: Marty Chan, Betty Quan, Yung Luu, John Ng, Keira Loughran, Nora Bang, Meiko Ouchi, Pan Bouyoucas, Marjorie Chan, C.E. Gatchalian, Nina Lee Aquino, Catherine Hernandez, Silvija Jestrovic, Guillermo Verdecchia, Marcia Johnson, Mima Vulovic, Camyar Chai and Gloria Montero.

"*Canadian Theatre Review*" – Issue 110, Spring, 2002 is dedicated to examination of Chinese Canadian Theatre and can be found in the Ottawa Public Library or on-line.

Also, check out:

<http://www.africanadian.com/2006/playwrights.php> African-Canadian writer/performers

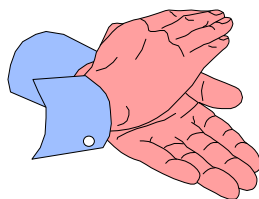
<http://www.yorku.ca/aonline/> African Canadian on-line



Theatre Etiquette

Please take a moment to prepare the students for their visit to the National Arts Centre by explaining good **Theatre Etiquette** which will enhance the enjoyment of the play by all audience members:

- 1.** *Scorched* will be performed in the Theatre of the NAC. Matinées at the NAC are for students and the general public. It is important for everyone to be quiet (no talking or rustling of materials) during the performance so others do not lose their immersion in the “world of the play”. Unlike movies, the actors in live theatre can hear disturbances in the audience and will give their best performances when they feel the positive involvement of the audience members. The appropriate way of showing approval for the actors’ performances is through laughter and applause. For the enjoyment of all, people who disturb others during the show may be asked to leave the Theatre.
- 2.** If you plan to make notes on the play for the purposes of writing a review, please do not try to write them during the play. This can be distracting for the actor. Wait until intermission or after the performance is finished to write your reflections, please.
- 3.** It is important that there be no electronic devices used in the Theatre so that the atmosphere of the play is not interrupted and others are not disturbed. **Cell phones, pagers and anything that beeps must be turned off.** Cameras and all other recording devices are not permitted in the Theatre.
- 4.** You will be seeing *Scorched* in the Theatre of the NAC. Tickets with assigned seats will be distributed by your teacher and to avoid confusion it is important to sit in the designated seat. All even numbered seats are on the left side of the theatre and all odd numbered seats are on the right. This means that seats 10 and 12, for example, are actually side by side.
- 5.** Programs may or may not be distributed at this student matinée. Information on the artists who put this play together, however, can be found in this Study Guide for those who wish to use it in writing a review. Some programs can be made available to teachers if desired as a teaching aid to show how a program is put together.
- 6.** The play has a running time of just under three hours (including one intermission), so it is important to make a trip to the washroom before the show starts. Anyone leaving while the play is in progress may unfortunately not be allowed back into the Theatre until after intermission.





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Scorched, the English language version of *Incendies*, was commissioned and developed by the National Arts Centre English Theatre (Ottawa) and with the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Interdepartmental Partnership with the Official-Language Communities (IPOLC), an initiative of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Scorched received public readings in 2005 at the National Arts Centre English Theatre / Canadian High Commission *4play Canada* showcase (London, UK) and the NAC English Theatre *On the Verge* festival (Ottawa).

Scorched is published by Playwrights Canada Press; First edition July 2005.

Incendies was first presented in France, on March 14, 2003, at l'Hexagone Scène Nationale de Meylan, and subsequently in Québec, on May 23, 2003, at Théâtre de Quat'Sous during the tenth edition of the Festival de théâtre des Amériques. The production was directed by Wajdi Mouawad.

Incendies was produced by Théâtre de Quat'Sous, in co-production with Théâtre Ô Parleur, Festival de théâtre des Amériques, l'Hexagone Scène Nationale de Meylan, Dôme Théâtre d'Alberville Scène Conventionnée, Théâtre Jean Lurçat Scène Nationale d'Aubusson, Festival des théâtres francophones en Limousin, Théâtre 71 Scène Nationale de Malakoff.



Maquette of Set for *Scorched* - set design by Graeme S. Thomson



Grandmother



Simon



Nawal

Costume Designs
by
Teresa Przybylski