

2022/23 Season



# Dimanche Learning Guide

# broadcaststage



Photo via Company Challiwaté & Focus

**broadcaststage**  
at the Santa Monica College Performing Arts Center





Photo by Virginie Maigné

**Go behind the scenes!** Explore our creative Learning Guides with insights, fun facts and activities to enrich and inform your performance experience at BroadStage. For families, students and learners of all ages, Learning Guides place arts education center stage.

**broadstage**  
at the Santa Monica College  
Performing Arts Center

1310 11th St., Santa Monica, CA 90401 [BroadStage.org](https://BroadStage.org) **2**



# Inspiration

**Dimanche**, which in French means Sunday, is the collective work of two theater companies, *Company Chaliwaté* and *Focus*, who brought together their skills in **physical theater** and puppetry, respectively. As they developed ideas, the artists observed people prioritizing their daily routines and habits over extreme global events and changes that were happening around them. This inspired the artists to combine comedy and tragedy as they created a **surreal** story that would mirror the world they observed and invite us to dream together as we question our role here on this planet.

**“It’s not denial. I’m just selective about the reality I accept.”**

—Bill Watterson in *Calvin and Hobbes*.



Photo credit: Virginie Maigné

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## Investigation

“Art is not what you see, but what you make others see.” —Edgar Degas



Photo credit: Alice Piemme

### Puppets and the Art of Puppetry

Toys have existed since prehistoric times and these include dolls and puppets. Puppets and dolls, however, are not always toys. Their origins involve being used in rituals, ceremonies or other religious events, as well as public performance. Both can vary in size from tiny to life-size to giant and can be used to tell stories. The main difference between a doll and a puppet is that a puppet’s movements are controlled by strings, rods, human hands or other means. It is the way puppets are manipulated that can make them appear to be alive!

Early documentation and evidence shows that puppets were created and used on every continent. Storytellers used different types of puppets including clay figurines with movable limbs, puppets made of wood, paper, leather, feathers, various cloths and other materials in a variety of settings and for different purposes. As the art of puppetry continued to develop around the world, these theatrical traditions sometimes moved forward thousand year old practices, marked historical events or even inspired theater styles.

The traditional puppet theater of Japan, Bunraku, started around the 16th century as popular entertainment. Three puppeteers in full view of the audience wear all black clothing to be “invisible” as they manipulate each puppet to narrated stories that are accompanied by the shamisen, a three stringed musical instrument. Half life-size puppets play out tales

or legends of the past with themes of conflict between social obligations and human emotions. Indonesia’s Wayang Kulit, or shadow puppet theater, projects light onto flat articulated cut-out figures as they move behind a transparent screen. The story is accompanied by a traditional Indonesian gamelan orchestra, and directed by the dhalang, or puppet master, who is the highly respected guardian of this important cultural tradition.

In Italy, between the 16th and 18th century, the theater style **commedia dell’arte** and the puppetry arts of the region developed shared characteristics, suggesting their influence on each other. **Improvisation** is a significantly important element for both, as is the creation of established character-types, or ‘masks.’ As actors in commedia dell’arte wore actual masks, they needed to project their characters’ emotions through the body. Today’s physical theater form draws influence from commedia dell’arte, as well as from mime and other movement disciplines.

In *Dimanche*, Company Chaliwaté & Focus use their skills in physical theater, as well as their knowledge of puppetry to create what the Greeks call **thaûma**, or wonder. As the Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle both claimed, wonder is what causes people to begin to think deeply, or philosophize. As you experience the wonder of *Dimanche*, be curious and pay attention to the questions that may come to your mind.

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## Investigation



Photo credit: Alice Piemme

### How is the World Changing?

Scientifically speaking, climate change is happening. The Earth is undergoing long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. Historically, this planet we call home has undergone climate change before, so why should we be concerned now? It's different this time. Since the Industrial Revolution (mid 1700s to mid 1800s), human activities such as the burning of fossil fuels (coal, oil and gas) have led to the creation of greenhouse gasses, which have contributed to making the Earth 1.1 degrees Celsius warmer than it was in the late 1800s. This may not sound like a big change, however during the last few decades, the rate of increase in global temperatures has been greater than ever before. The climate change that is happening today is different from those in the past. Today, temperatures are rising faster than ever and this is happening almost everywhere on the planet at the same time.

We may notice weather events and conditions mainly on land, but climate change has also heavily impacted the ocean, which is currently 30% more acidic than it was before the Industrial Revolution. The ocean absorbs the greenhouse gasses (nitrous oxide, methane, carbon dioxide and fluorinated gasses) from the atmosphere, but it is the carbon dioxide that specifically causes **ocean acidification**. Over the last century, **melting glaciers** have contributed to the global sea level rise of about 8 inches and currently, the sea level is rising at a rate double that of the last century. As a result of ocean

acidification and sea level rise, the ocean's **ecosystem** has been disrupted and this is already affecting coastal communities.

As a species, humans are dependent on the **biodiversity** of the earth. When biodiversity is impacted by climate change, this affects our food and water supply. Major changes in the landscape such as melting glaciers or dried up rivers also impact a people's culture and way of life. Extreme weather events such as droughts, heatwaves, and more frequent and intense tropical storms endanger life and can make areas of the planet uninhabitable, or impossible to live in, creating situations where people become **climate refugees**.

So what can we do? Through international agreements such as the Kyoto Protocol, the Paris Agreement, and the Glasgow Climate Pact, nations around the world work to identify and commit to making the shifts necessary to **mitigate** the effects of climate change. However, some scientists do not agree that limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius is enough to make a positive impact on its effects, as some agreements propose. As these debates continue, we as individuals also need to consider what role we will play. Like the artists of *Dimanche*, we too can observe the habits of other people and our own daily routines. By understanding our mindset, or way of thinking, we can actively respond to the needs of our environment. Remember, if we were able to change the world before, we can hope to do it again!

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# Vocabulary

**Biodiversity:** The variety of life in the world or in a particular habitat or ecosystem that includes animals, plants, fungi, and microorganisms.

**Climate Refugees:** People who are part of large-scale migrations caused by weather-related disasters.

**Dialogue:** Conversation between two or more people as a feature of a book, play, or movie etc.

**Ecosystem:** A geographic area in which all living things affect each other and the environment.

**Glaciers:** A slow moving mass of ice on land formed by the accumulation and compaction of snow over time; found on every continent except Australia.

**Improvisation:** Performing something that has not been practiced or planned.

**Mitigate:** To cause to become less severe, serious, or harsh.

**Narrator:** A person who tells a story or gives an account of something.

**Ocean Acidification:** A decrease in the pH level of the ocean water as a result of the greenhouse gasses, mainly carbon dioxide, that are absorbed by the sea. Since the Industrial Revolution the ocean's pH level has decreased from 8.20 to 8.05.

**Physical Theater:** A style of performance where physical movement is the primary method of storytelling; it may incorporate other techniques such as mime, gesture, and modern dance and will often have little or no dialogue.

**Surreal:** Something that is unusual like in a dream or that is fantastical, with items or actions that are combined in a way that is not normally seen in reality.

**Thaûma:** In the Greek language refers to wonder, marvel, a supernatural event.



# Exploration

## Did You Know?

### OUR LOCAL OCEAN MONITOR

Heal the Bay is an environmental nonprofit, located in Santa Monica and dedicated to making the coastal waters and watersheds safe, healthy, and clean. Established in 1985, Heal the Bay protects the coastline, restores waterways, and enacts clean water policies to protect public health through the use of science, education, community action, and advocacy. [www.healthebay.org](http://www.healthebay.org)

### PUPPETS CAN MAKE CHANGE

Puppets can express big important ideas! Founded in 1963 in New York City, the Bread and Puppet Theater has been stirring up conversations with their shows, which always include fresh baked bread to create a feeling of community. As one of the oldest, nonprofit, puppet theater companies in the United States, they began by using their gigantic papier-mâché puppets to express the concerns of the community and have continued to demonstrate the company's commitment to the creative advocacy work for change.

## Poem

### *For Calling the Spirit Back from Wandering the Earth in Its Human Feet*

By Joy Harjo, Muscogee (Creek) Nation,  
POET LAUREATE OF THE UNITED STATES 2019-2022

Put down that bag of potato chips,  
that white bread, that bottle of pop.

Turn off that cellphone, computer,  
and remote control.

Open the door, then close it behind you.

Take a breath offered by friendly winds. They travel the earth  
gathering essences of plants to clean.

Give it back with gratitude.

# Exploration

## Try This

### ENVIRONMENTAL PROMISE / HOW TO REDUCE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

Challenge yourself to reduce your own impact on the environment. Whether it's your food, home, mode of transportation, or shopping habits, choose one part of your life to focus on first. For example, if you choose food, think of everything that relates to your food. Is it grown locally? How is it grown or raised? Do some research and decide what changes you want to make in this area that will benefit the Earth. Then, prepare your ***Promise to the Environment***. On an index card or half sheet of paper, write down the changes you plan to make and keep your ***Promise*** as a reminder to do your part for our environment.

### CREATE A PUPPET STORY

Follow these guidelines to create your own puppet story:

- Imagine 2-3 characters with bold personality traits
- Focus on a simple yet intriguing plot  
(what, when, where)
- Choose only one setting, or location, for the entire story

Puppetry relies on movement, so give your characters plenty to do. You can choose to have an outside **narrator** or not, but either way, keep the narration and/or **dialogue** short. Audience participation is always fun to include! Ask your audience questions about the action or to sing along to a simple song that you teach them. End with a clear gesture such as a bow, by simply freezing or with a curtain closing to let the audience know that the show is over. Enjoy the applause!

## Take It Further

Check out our **Resources Page** with website links and relevant state standards to use for the classroom.





# Resources

## SUGGESTED CA STATE STANDARDS

### NINTH THROUGH TWELFTH GRADE STANDARDS

CA VAPA Theatre Grade 9-12 Proficient 2.2 Write dialogues and scenes, applying basic dramatic structure exposition, complication, conflict, crises, climax, and resolution.

CA VAPA Theatre Grade 9-12 Proficient 3.0 Students analyze the role and development of theatre, film/video, and electronic media in past and present cultures throughout the world, noting diversity as it relates to theatre.

CA VAPA Theatre Grade 9-12 5.0 Connections, Relationships, Applications. Students apply what they learn in theatre, film/video and electronic media across subject areas. They develop competencies and creative skills in problem solving, communication and time management that contribute to lifelong learning and career skills. They also learn about careers in and related to theatre.

CA VAPA Dance Grade 9-12 1.1 Demonstrate highly developed physical coordination and control when performing complex locomotor and axial movement phrases from a variety of genres (e.g., refined body articulation, agility, balance, strength).

CA HSS 9-12 10.3.2 Examine how scientific and technological changes and new forms of energy brought about massive social, economic, and cultural change (e.g., the inventions and discoveries of James Watt, Eli Whitney, Henry Bessemer, Louis Pasteur, Thomas Edison).

CA HSS 9-12 10.3.3 Describe the growth of population, rural to urban migration, and growth of cities associated with the Industrial Revolution.

CA HSS 9-12 10.3.6 Analyze the emergence of capitalism as a dominant economic pattern and the responses to it, including Utopianism, Social Democracy, Socialism, and Communism.

HS-ESS2-2. Analyze geoscience data to make the claim that one change to Earth's surface can create feedback that causes changes to other Earth's systems.

HS-ESS2-4. Use a model to describe how variations in the flow of energy into and out of Earth's systems result in changes in climate.

continued on next page >>



## Resources

HS-ESS2-5. Plan and conduct an investigation of the properties of water and its effects on Earth materials and surface processes.

HS-ESS3-1. Construct an explanation based on evidence for how the availability of natural resources, occurrence of natural hazards, and changes in climate have influenced human activity.

HS-ESS3-3. Create a computational simulation to illustrate the relationships among management of natural resources, the sustainability of human populations, and biodiversity.

HS-ESS3-4. Evaluate or refine a technological solution that reduces impacts of human activities on natural systems.

HS-ESS3-5. Analyze geoscience data and the results from global climate models to make an evidence-based forecast of the current rate of global or regional climate change and associated future impacts to Earth systems.

### **SOCIAL JUSTICE STANDARDS**

DI.9-12.8 I respectfully express curiosity about the history and lived experiences of others and exchange ideas and beliefs in an open-minded way.

DI.9-12.10 I understand that diversity includes the impact of unequal power relations on the development of group identities and cultures.

### **SEL COMPETENCIES**

Self-Awareness: Identifying Emotions, Accurate Self-Perception, Recognizing Strengths, Self-Confidence, Self-Efficacy

Responsible Decision-Making: Identifying Problems, Analyzing Situations, Solving Problems, Evaluating, Reflecting, Ethical Responsibility





# Resources

## Website and Research Links

*Dimanche Trailer*

*World Encyclopedia of Puppetry Arts*

*Origin of Puppetry*

*Puppets in Ancient Greece*

*Bread and Puppet Theater*

*Japan's Bunraku Puppet*

*The Wayang Puppet Theater*

*Making Puppets from Trash*

*Puppets Inside Jim Henson's Creature Shop*

*Modern Climate Change*

*Paris Agreement*

*Glasgow Climate Pact COP26*

*Net Zero*

*Climate Refugees*

*Natural Resources Defense Council*

*Heal the Bay*

*Where Art meets Activism*