

THE DIVINERS

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Based on the novel by **Margaret Laurence**

Text by **Vern Thiessen** with **Yvette Nolan**

World Première

Directed by **Krista Jackson** with **Geneviève Pelletier**

Choreographed by **Cameron Carver**

GRADE RECOMMENDATION

Grade 9+

CONTENT ADVISORY

The play explores mature subject matter including colonialism, racism and discrimination. There are references to domestic and child abuse. It also includes some drinking, sexual content and scenes of staged intimacy. [Please see the show page for a detailed audience advisory.](#)

SYNOPSIS

Novelist Morag Gunn, estranged from her only daughter, unable to write, struggling with the bottle, is adrift in a river of memories. Travelling from the present to the past to an imagined future, Morag's journey encompasses her personal struggle for freedom and expression as well as those of the Métis and First Nations peoples of her native Manitoba.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

GLOBAL COMPETENCIES

- Citizenship, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, Creativity, Metacognition, Self-Awareness

GRADE 9-12

- The Arts
- Canadian and World Studies
- English
- First Nations, Métis and Inuit Studies
- Indigenous Languages
- Technological Education

GRADE 11-12

- Social Sciences and Humanities

POST-SECONDARY

- Suitable for courses in disciplines such as Indigenous Studies, Arts, Canadian Studies, Cultural Studies, Creative Writing, Drama, English, Fine Arts, History, Human Rights, Religious Studies, Social Development Studies, Teacher Education and Theatre

THEMES

- Ancestry and Generational Relationships
- Circles and Cycles
- Class and Rural and Urban Contexts
- Colonialism, Racism and Discrimination
- Family, Mothers and Daughters
- Feminism, Gender and Agency
- The Human Need for Connection
- Language, Story and Identity
- Loneliness and Isolation
- Love
- Memory and Trauma
- Métis Identity, Music and Culture
- The Power of Water and Nature, and How They Move Us
- The Relationship Between Past, Present and Future
- Revelation and Reclamation
- Secrecy and Shame
- Self-Discovery and Acceptance
- Truth and Reconciliation
- Writing and Writers

DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Think about the recurring stories in your life. Do you believe that the stories you retell yourself or that you hear repeatedly about you shape your identity? Why or why not?
- Why do parents sometimes keep the truth from their children? Do you think it's ever okay for adults to keep secrets from children? Explain your thinking.
- This play is an adaptation of Margaret Laurence's novel which was published in 1974 and is a new retelling that is collaboratively created. In what ways does this respond to the 83rd Call to Action from the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#)? Why might it be important for Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists to work together on artistic projects? How could projects like this contribute to the reconciliation process?
- There have been repeated attempts to ban Margaret Laurence's original novel and to prevent young people from reading it in school. Do you think it's important that young people are able to make their own choices about what they want to read? Should books ever be banned? Explain your position.
- Reflect on your own experiences with coming-of-age stories. How do you expect this play to explore the journey from adolescence to adulthood?

STUDY GUIDES

Study Guides for selected 2024 productions are available free of charge online:

stratfordfestival.ca/StudyGuides

Email educate@stratfordfestival.ca for access to past study guides.

BOOKING INFORMATION: STUDENT MATINÉES, INTERACTIVE PRESHOWS, WORKSHOPS & CHATS

STUDENT MATINÉES

You may book any available date, but selected student matinée performances for this show are at 2 p.m. on the following dates:

- Thursday, September 12
- Tuesday, September 17
- Thursday, September 19
- Wednesday, September 25
- Friday, September 27
- Tuesday, October 1
- Wednesday, October 2

INTERACTIVE PRESHOWS

Led by artists appearing in the matinée, these high-energy sessions provide students the opportunity to explore key themes, questions and technical aspects of productions on the Festival's renowned stages.

\$4 per student (free for Teaching Stratford Program participants)
11 a.m.–noon on the following dates:

- Tuesday, September 17
- Thursday, September 19
- Wednesday, September 25
- Friday, September 27
- Tuesday, October 1
- Wednesday, October 2

stratfordfestival.ca/InterACTIVE

WORKSHOPS & CHATS

Workshops and Chats (virtual, onsite or at your school/centre) can be booked by calling the Box Office at 1.800.567.1600 or by emailing educate@stratfordfestival.ca.

Pre-Show Workshops customized to your students' needs and interests are available from 10–11 a.m. or 11 a.m.–noon before selected matinées.

\$10 per student

stratfordfestival.ca/Workshops

Half-Hour Post-Show Chats with cast and creative team members are available after selected matinées.

\$3 per student

stratfordfestival.ca/Chats

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Tools for Teachers includes
InterACTIVE Preshows, Study Guides
and Stratford Shorts.

PROUD SEASON PARTNER



The 2024 season is generously
supported by Ophelia Lazaridis.

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