

**STEPPENWOLF FOR YOUNG ADULTS
GEORGE ORWELL'S *ANIMAL FARM***

**ADAPTED FOR RADIO BY STEVE PICKERING
FROM THE STAGE ADAPTATION BY ALTHOS LOW
DIRECTED BY LILI-ANNE BROWN**

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WELCOME TO *ANIMAL FARM*, THE RADIO PLAY!

It is an honor and privilege to present artistic content created for a teen audience specifically and to reach many new students across the world via our virtual platform.

This guide is meant to serve as a complement to the play in several ways:

- We hope that students will get to know our awesome cast before they start listening! Everyone is encouraged to read character descriptions and hear from the cast themselves before they start streaming the play. [Link to page 14 in this document “the Voices of *Animal Farm* and/or link to transcript The Voices of *Animal Farm* currently on page 45 of this document?]
- In case this is new to you (as it is to us!) and you don't yet know what to expect, a radio play is a purely aural performance with no visual component. There are actors voicing the characters and their performance is complemented by underscore and sound design. Think podcast or audiobook. In the Vimeo video you will receive, there will be ASL interpreters as well as closed captions on screen. We will also use title cards with scene numbers to help you track where you are in the play. But listeners can feel free to sit back, relax and enjoy this aural experience. Welcome to *Animal Farm*, the radio play!

What follows is two acknowledgements that speak into the space erased histories; through this honoring, we uplift histories that often go unaffirmed and unacknowledged. Steppenwolf Education seeks to use the arts to promote compassion and inspire action; we invite you to join us in working towards a more empathetic tomorrow.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We recognize that Steppenwolf Theatre sits on Native land. This area is the traditional homelands of the people of the Council of Three Fires, including the Ojibwe, Potawatomi, and Odawa. Although for over 200 years Native Nations have been forcibly removed from this territory, we must acknowledge that this land continues to be a site of gathering and healing for more than a dozen other Tribal Nations and remains home to over 100,000 tribal members in the state of Illinois.

BLACK LABOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We recognize that America as we know it today was built at the often fatal expense of forcefully enslaved Black people. We acknowledge and remember those who did not survive the Middle Passage, those who were beaten and lynched at the hands of White Americans, and those who died and are still dying while fighting for their freedom. We remember those who “toiled the grounds where many theatres have been built and resurrected.” We acknowledge that while fighting for their own lives and civil liberties, Black people have envisioned a world that will be better for all of humanity.

WHAT IS A LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT?

A land acknowledgement is a formal statement that recognizes and honors the enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous communities and their traditional homelands. The purpose of recognizing the original inhabitants of this land is to show respect, gratitude, and appreciation to those whose land we reside on, as well as raise awareness about histories that are often erased or forgotten. It is important to understand the longstanding history that has brought us to reside on land currently occupied by non-Indigenous communities, and to pursue an understanding of everyone’s place within that history. It is important to note that land acknowledgements do not exist in a past tense: colonialism still lives with us today in various forms, and we hope you join us as we consider and interrogate our present participation.

FOR FURTHER RESOURCES AROUND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, PLEASE VISIT:

American Indian Center

aicchicago.org

Native Land Digital

native-land.ca/about/

“Indigenous Land Acknowledgement, Explained”

Teen Vogue Article (February 2018)

We are very grateful to our friends at the American Indian Center—Chicago, specifically Fawn Pochel, for their guidance on Steppenwolf’s new practice around Land Acknowledgements.

***ANIMAL FARM* PLAY SYNOPSIS**

By Education Intern Ahon Gooptu

1.

This aural adaptation of *Animal Farm* begins with Moses, a raven, sharing with his comrades the promise of Sugarcandy Mountain, a place where all animals who have been good, respectful and hardworking during their life go after they die. Benjamin, a donkey and the narrator of our story, shoos the bird away and introduces us to the setting for our story: Manor Farm, a struggling business owned by a mean old man, Mr. Jones.

2.

Old Major, the wise matriarchal sow on the farm, inspires her fellow animals to dream of revolution in response to Mr. Jones's cruel behavior. She fosters solidarity among the animals and shares a chant with the group: Whatever goes upon four legs - or has wings - is a friend. Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy. She begins to lead everyone in a song that was passed down to her from her ancestors, but before the song finishes, she collapses and passes away. The animals continue singing in her memory.

FOUR LEGS GOOD, TWO LEGS BAD

3.

Inspired by Old Major's words, Boxer, a work horse, and Snowball, a pig, smash open the door to the storehouse, providing food to the hungry, neglected animals. The commotion attracts Mr. Jones who fires a shotgun off into the air to intimidate the animals. In response, Snowball leads his comrades in revolution, driving Mr. Jones away and taking over the farm. The animals bury the fallen alongside Old Major, and Napoleon, another pig, vows to care for a litter of pups that are left unaccounted for.

NO ANIMAL SHALL SLEEP IN A BED

4.

The sun rises over the horizon of the newly re-named Animal Farm. Napoleon and Snowball introduce the animals to a new philosophy called Animalism, which denounces materialistic pleasure and promises equality in self-governance. The animals begin removing all remnants of tyranny and animal violence from the farm, such as the heads of their comrades used by the humans as decoration and the barrels of beer used for their celebrations.

NO ANIMAL SHALL DRINK ALCOHOL

5.

Napoleon and Snowball organize the main principles of Animalism into Seven Commandments, which their comrade Squealer, another pig, paints on the barn wall for all to see. Everyone except Benjamin votes on them, thus (almost) unanimously passing their first law. Benjamin notices that six-and-a-half buckets of milk go missing but decides not to say anything.

NO ANIMAL SHALL KILL ANY OTHER ANIMAL

6.

Every animal goes the extra mile to produce the biggest harvest in the farm's history. The pigs mark this achievement by presenting the flag of Animal Farm, featuring a hoof and a horn. Committees are put in motion to ensure progress towards bettering the lives of all animals. Literacy begins to be a dividing factor among the animals, as the pigs, some of the only animals who know how to read, set out making major decisions about the business of the farm.

7.

When Mr. Jones returns with a small group of men to try and take back the farm, Snowball valiantly leads the charge and fights off the humans, securing victory in what comes to be remembered as the Battle of the Cowshed, and earns him the title of Animal Hero First Class. Jealous of the status and attention Snowball is receiving, Napoleon begins to undermine Snowball's ideas, questioning his leadership of the farm and recruiting animals to side with Napoleon against his rival.

ALL ANIMALS ARE EQUAL

8.

Snowball advocates for the building of a windmill to battle the hardships caused by winter, but Napoleon vehemently opposes it. As the plan is put to vote, Napoleon unleashes the dogs he raised from pups. They chase Snowball off the farm and threaten the other animals. Napoleon announces the beginning of a new regime in which the pigs will serve as the sole decision-makers, bringing an end to the democracy that Animal Farm was built upon.

9.

Squealer tarnishes Snowball's reputation in order to paint Napoleon as a faultless leader. The pigs decide to build a windmill after all, Napoleon claiming it as his original idea. The animals work harder than ever but get less and less food. Boxer works the hardest and looks forward to a glorified retirement the next year.

FOUR LEGS GOOD, TWO LEGS BETTER!

10.

Mollie, the mare, is disowned for choosing to work for humans (who feed her sugar and allow her to wear ribbons). Poor harvests lead to lower rations, extra work, new trading relations with neighboring human farms and the selling of the hens' eggs. The animals begin to question the pigs' actions, which go against the laws of Animalism, but Squealer and the dogs shut them down.

NO ANIMAL SHALL SLEEP IN A BED WITH SHEETS

11.

When a storm destroys the windmill that the animals have been working to build, Napoleon blames it on Snowball and suggests there are traitors amongst them working secretly with him. Trials are held in which each of the accused publicly confess to their crimes, before being ruthlessly attacked by Napoleon's dogs. With the execution and blinding of the traitors, the Revolution is deemed complete and the singing of Old Major's song is forbidden on Animal Farm.

NO ANIMAL SHALL DRINK ALCOHOL TO EXCESS

12.

When Boxer collapses while working, the pigs say that they will organize an ambulance to get him professional veterinary care. When it finally arrives, however, Benjamin reads the sign on the van and realizes too late that Boxer is being taken to the slaughterhouse. Benjamin blames himself for allowing this to happen by not standing up to Napoleon before.

NO ANIMAL SHALL KILL ANY OTHER ANIMAL WITHOUT CAUSE

13.

Napoleon learns that the human farmers he has been trading with have been using counterfeit money and declares war against them. Many animals die in the fighting. The conditions of the farm return to as they were before the Revolution, for all animals with exception of the pigs who are reaping the rewards of the farm's profits. Only a single commandment remains on the wall: All animals are equal. But some animals are more equal than others. The pigs, now on two legs, confer and drink with the humans as partners and Benjamin isn't able to distinguish them from one another. Moses flies away, still holding on to the promise of Sugarcandy Mountain.

ALL ANIMALS ARE EQUAL. BUT SOME ANIMALS ARE MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS

AN ALLEGORY FOR REVOLUTION: *ANIMAL FARM* & THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

By Education Intern Ahon Gooptu

An allegory is a work of art that serves as a metaphor for real-life events and can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning. It generally has a moral or political theme associated with it. Published in 1945, George Orwell wrote his short novel *Animal Farm* as an allegory for the 1917 Russian Revolution. As we familiarize ourselves with the world of Manor Farm, let's take a moment to learn more about the historical inspiration behind Orwell's story.

A REVOLUTION ON MANOR FARM

The First World War ruined the Russian economy, acted as a blow to the nation's prestige as a force to be reckoned with, and prompted the Russian peasantry and industrial labor force to revolt against the monarchy headed by Tsar Nicholas II. This uprising came to be known as the February Revolution (1917). Following intense pressure from the Russian parliament, the Tsar abdicated his throne, thus bringing an end to nearly 200 years of the Russian monarchy. A provisional government was immediately established, and it soon found leadership in the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. This created an opportunity for the Bolshevik Party, led by Vladimir Lenin, to inspire the masses and organize a Marxist revolution.

[picture]

A demonstration of workers protesting in Petrograd (modern day St. Petersburg), Russia, during the February Revolution of 1917.

Although Lenin played an integral role in adopting Marxism and calling for a coup d'état (removal of an existing government in power, generally by violent means), for personal security reasons he was in hiding during the Bolshevik takeover of the Winter Palace in the October Revolution (1917). Chairman of the Bolshevik Party, Leon Trotsky led the siege with support from the editor of the Russian daily newspaper, Joseph Stalin. Soon after, the Russian Civil War (1918) broke out between the "Reds," comprising the uprising majority led by the Bolshevik minority, and the "Whites," who were the army officers, the bourgeoisie, and a wide range of right and socialist political groups.

OLD MAJOR, NAPOLEON AND SNOWBALL

During the Russian Civil War, Stalin began to acquire more significance among the party, mostly by agreeing with Lenin's policies. He took control of regional military operations, laid the

foundation for a political militia and often commanded the Soviet secret police agency to execute, sometimes without trial, suspicious counter-revolutionaries.

[picture]

Vladimir Lenin and Joseph Stalin in Gorky, circa 1922.

Stalin had his first notable fallout with Lenin and Trotsky over the issue of strategic defense in the Polish-Soviet War (1920-21). Lenin's introduction of the New Economic Policy caused a divergence within the political party as Trotsky appealed for the abolition of trade unions while Stalin vehemently opposed that view. It wasn't until after Lenin's death in 1924 that the rivalry between Stalin and Trotsky became wholly apparent. Stalin acquired more support from the younger members of the party and used his newly-garnered popularity to remove and exile his rival, eventually deporting him from the Soviet Union.

We see parallels between Stalin and Napoleon as figures in powerful positions with long-term plans for personal and political ascension; conversely, Lenin and Old Major, Trotsky and Snowball have the best interests of their society's development in mind. While the former pair grasps every opportunity to establish themselves as an indomitable force, the latter are more concerned with strategizing solutions to aid their comrades.

[picture]

Leon Trotsky exiled in Mexico in 1940 during the final months of his life.

THE WINDMILL CONSPIRACY AND THE EVOLUTION OF ANIMALISM

In what came to be known as the Great Purge or the Moscow Trials (1936-8), a number of prominent leaders of the party were found to be guilty of treason and intimately involved in an alleged terrorist plot led by Trotsky. They were either imprisoned or executed as a result. After the trials, conspiracy theories revealed that those on trial were in fact innocent, the evidence against them was fabricated by the Soviet secret police and the confessions were made under pressure of intensive torture and intimidation. As you listen to Part 2, Scene 8 of the play, you'll see some familiar similarities between the Moscow Trials and what transpires on Manor Farm.

Just like in the Russian historical context, language is used as a mode of manipulation in Napoleon's regime in *Animal Farm*. The Seven Commandments of Animalism posed towards the beginning of the play gradually experience amendments to suit the needs of the leader(s). What is originally used as a way to unite the animals eventually becomes the foundation for their

hierarchy. Napoleon, Squealer and Moses disseminate propaganda in different ways in *Animal Farm*, each finding their own plausible way to counter their comrades' conspiracy theories with persuasive speech. When power corrupts, there can be a tendency to take ownership of language in a way that can be perceived as abusive and which leads to disorganization and dishonesty while simultaneously enabling potential corruption.

THE VOICES OF ANIMAL FARM

By Education Intern Ahon Goptu

Before listening to Steppenwolf for Young Adults' aural adaptation of *Animal Farm*, be sure to familiarize yourself with the cast and the characters they play. Most members of the cast provide the voices for multiple characters over the course of the story - click here to learn more about what the characters sound like, and how the cast worked to differentiate one character from the next. Run time: 3 minutes and 57 seconds

LINK TO VIDEO: <https://vimeo.com/457790089/6af760bf51>

[also see transcript of this video on page 45 of this document.]

Voiced by Steppenwolf ensemble member Namir Smallwood:

Benjamin, a donkey. The oldest animal on the farm and one of the few besides the pigs who is literate. He is extremely insightful but serves as a silent spectator, not even exercising his right to vote. He is a good friend to Boxer. We hear the story of *Animal Farm* from his perspective.

Benjamin is representative of the silent bystanders who choose not to participate fully in a revolution.

Headshot of Nair Smallwood

Voiced by Steppenwolf ensemble member Al Wilder:

Napoleon, a Berkshire boar. An eloquent and persuasive speaker whose attractive policies conceal his power-hungry nature and contempt of Snowball.

Napoleon is representative of Joseph Stalin, or leaders of a revolution who betray their ideals for the sake of power.

Snowball, a pig. A firm believer in democracy and a passionate leader whose strategies serve all the animals as a whole but prove to be a threat to Napoleon's long-term plans for the farm.

Snowball is representative of Leon Trotsky, or exiled leaders of a revolution who are forced out by those corrupted by power.

Headshot of Al Wilder

Voiced by Robert Cornelius:

Boxer, an enormous work horse. The strongest animal on the farm, only a year away from retirement, but not the most clever. He is loyal to his comrades and a good friend to Benjamin.

Moses, a raven. A follower of Mr. Jones and the human farmers. He clings on to the hope of Sugarcandy Mountain, the animal afterlife, and passionately spreads word of the promise it holds.

Moses and Boxer represent workers who follow their leaders because they believe in the good that promises to result from a revolution.

Headshot of Robert Cornelius

Voiced by Steppenwolf ensemble member Audrey Francis:

Squealer, a red wattle pig. Napoleon's most loyal follower who uses her words to make the animals buy into her leader's vision. As a result, she enjoys the special perks with the rest of the pigs.

Pinkeye, a young pig. One of the only pigs that sees through Napoleon's dictatorial tactics and isn't afraid to stand up to him.

Squealer and Pinkeye represent the "right-hands" that every revolutionary leader needs; in this case, one who follows no matter what and one who is willing to challenge a leader and who ultimately pays the price for that.

Old Major, an aged sow. A wise and respected animal who, before her death, lays the seeds of the revolution and inspires her comrades with a patriotic song that, at least for some time, binds them together.

Old Major is representative of Vladimir Lenin and the ideals of Karl Marx, or the original figurehead of the revolution. She represents the purity of ideas that ordinarily come at the beginning of a revolution.

Headshot of Audrey Francis

Voiced by Sharriese Hamilton:

Mollie, a young and beautiful mare. She is reluctant to work too hard and prefers materialistic pleasures, like sugar cubes and ribbons, to the revolution.

Julia, a cow. An eager helper on the farm whose allegiance is easily swayed.

Mollie and Julia represent citizens of a revolution.

Headshot of Sharriese Hamilton

Voiced by Emjoy Gavino:

Muriel, a goat. One of the more intelligent animals on the farm, she is eager to help her comrades learn how to read. With time, she becomes one of Napoleon's most loyal followers.

Maggie, a hen. A loyal supporter of Old Major's outlook for the revolution. She is fierce and actively speaks on behalf of all the hens and chickens.

Muriel and Maggie both play different roles in the revolution, Muriel representing how a citizen can become polluted by the power of their leader.

Headshot of Emjoy Gavino

REIMAGINING A CLASSIC: A CONVERSATION WITH DIRECTOR LILI-ANNE BROWN

Interview by Education Intern Ahon Gooptu

Edited by Matthew Chapman and Patrick Zakem

Over the summer, Education Intern Ahon Gooptu (he/him) sat down with director Lili-Anne Brown (she/her) over Zoom to discuss her reimagining of George Orwell's *Animal Farm* for the current social and political climate, and the experience of working on *Steppenwolf* for Young Adults' first ever radio play.

Click here to listen to the full conversation between Ahon and Lili-Anne. Or, if you would prefer to read the full transcript of this conversation, you can do so here! Run time: 11 minutes and 22 seconds

LINK TO INTERVIEW: <https://vimeo.com/458752499/8b467457a1>
[and/or link to transcript of interview on page 47 or this document?]

Headshot of Lili-Anne Brown

“It's a classic because it's about tyranny. And tyranny is afoot at all times. It is something that we have to be vigilant against at all times in history. It's incredibly relevant now because we're actually looking at an actual tyrannical leader in America which is something that our American Myth doesn't really allow for. Part of our American Myth is that like, you know, “We fought King George because he was a tyrant and then we made our own nation, and never again because we're not like that.” And yet somehow... Somehow, these pigs that fought this revolution now are standing on two legs and looking a lot like King George. So imminently relevant, yes?”

-Director Lili-Anne Brown

SOUND ON: A CONVERSATION WITH SOUND DESIGNER & COMPOSER AARON STEPHENSON

Interview by Education Associate Abhi Shrestha

Education Associate Abhi Shrestha (they/them) had a Zoom conversation with *Animal Farm* Sound Designer & Composer of Original Music Aaron Stephenson (he/him) to chat about what it's like to collaborate on a unique project like this one.

ABHI SHRESTHA: Aaron! Thanks for taking a few minutes to share some trade secrets about what it means to be a Sound Designer and Composer. To start things off, how did you get into sound design as a career path?

AARON STEPHENSON: I started as an actor, but I have always loved music. I was in a band in high school where I learned a lot about sound equipment and that led to me running the sound board at a local theater. I originally wanted to be a dramaturg, which is someone who researches the text of a play to help the actors as they develop their characters. Sound design is the perfect intersection of my passions around storytelling, research and music.

ABHI: What's your first step in starting a new project?

AARON: Often times a script will not tell you what the play sounds like so you have to read between the lines. Researching where and when the play takes place, when it was written and who wrote it gives me a huge head start when I come into a process. From there I just try to remain as open, flexible and collaborative as possible as I work with the director and the rest of the creative team, including the costume, set and lighting designers.

ABHI: Had you read *Animal Farm* before being hired for this project?

AARON: I read *Animal Farm* in high school which led me to read George Orwell's other famous novel 1984 as well. Orwell is one of the most important authors in western literature and one whose work has aged agonizingly well. All references to the Bolshevik revolution aside [i.e. the Soviet Revolution of 1917 for which the novel is an allegory], it remains a critical and timely story about the importance of speaking truth to power and using your voice loudly to defend against the greed and manipulation of those who seize and wield power for personal gain.

What I didn't realize was that [director] Lili-Anne would open my eyes to a whole new angle on the story! Seeing the story through a contemporary lens of white supremacy and a wealthy American ruling class pitting citizens against one another felt like hearing the story for the first time.

ABHI: Are you drawing from any inspirational sources in your design and composition?

AARON: Lili-Anne and I talked about making this an American story and so early inspiration came from Aaron Copeland (Classical Americana), Charles Mingus (Jazz), and the music of Ken Burns's Civil War documentary (Bluegrass).

ABHI: You and Director Lili-Anne Brown are frequent collaborators. Can you talk a bit about your collective approach to a process?

AARON: A lot of theatre creators spend their entire careers looking for "their people," the kind you just gel with right from the jump, and I felt that right away with Lili. I'm so lucky! Working with her makes it feel less like work because we have so much fun together. When we work together, neither one of us holds back with sharing ideas so we can collaborate in the best way possible.

ABHI: What excites you about this project?

AARON: Being able to create during the pandemic has been a real challenge for theatre makers, so the opportunity to be back in the room, even a Zoom rehearsal room, with my friends doing the thing we love to do has really recharged my creative batteries.

ABHI: Thank you so much, Aaron!

AARON: Thank you.

Fun fact! Aaron Stephenson is a Sound Board Operator at Steppenwolf which means that in non-pandemic times you can find him up in the sound booth, ensuring that everything on stage

sounds perfect during Steppenwolf for Young Adults' performances. Wave hello to Aaron next time you're at the theater!

View Aaron's musical inspiration for *Animal Farm* on this Spotify playlist.

LINK TO PLAYLIST:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/7mX2jA1ravL3DhCfZnFxjS?si=bR1k1QLcSjiLo2ib1tR7ag>

Try making your own beats using this online beat maker!

LINK TO BEAT MAKER:

https://www.soundtrap.com/collaborate?gclid=Cj0KCQjwk8b7BRCaARIsAARRTL4mVWvadWVWQTWuijqPYF7PKEe02CE9dQuQNpyi4xx6MdJ7TPMdaEaAt94EALw_wcB

THE GOLDEN FUTURE TIME: A CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

By Teaching Artists Jared Bellot, Jazmín Corona, Sonya Madrigal, Wilfredo Ramos, Jr., and CPS Teacher Renae Stone

ACTIVITY TIME: 45 minutes; to be conducted before or after students listen to the play

For the animals in *Animal Farm*, the idealistic hopes for revolution as celebrated by Old Major are quickly confronted by the darker realities taking place on the farm and the corrupt quest for power by Napoleon and his lackeys.

In this activity, students will be asked to reflect on their own communities, identify pressing issues, and embody a revolutionary spirit in order to imagine a way forward, all while reflecting on the challenges of attempting to simplify a revolution.

STEP ONE: INDIVIDUAL JOURNALING (5 minutes)

Independently, have students brainstorm responses to the prompt: What is an issue occurring in your community that you would change if you could? (i.e., too many Zoom meetings in a single day, not enough money being invested in local community centers, unjust immigration laws, food deserts/inequitable access to nutritious food, etc.)

Let students know that they will share their brainstorm with peers.

STEP TWO: SHARE OUT (5 minutes)

As a class, share out individual responses to the prompt. Popcorn out student responses by asking them to write their reflections in your meeting room's chat feature or through a software like Google Jamboard where students can populate their thoughts directly to a page.

No matter what, keep a record of the issues students have brainstormed; they will need them in Step 4!

During the share out, have students consider:

- What patterns do you see emerging in the responses?

- What changes do you agree with? What changes do you disagree with?
- What surprises you about the responses? What feels expected about the responses?

STEP THREE: CLASS READ ALOUD (5 minutes)

Share the quote below from *Animal Farm* with the class. Have students read the quote aloud, reading the excerpt line by line or having multiple students read the excerpt in its entirety so you can hear from multiple voices.

Beasts of Earth, and Beasts of Country,
Beasts of every land and clime,
Hearken to my joyful tidings
Of the Golden Future Time.
We believe the day is coming,
Tyrant Man shall be overthrown,
And the fruitful fields of this land
Shall be trod by beasts alone.

STEP FOUR: ARTMAKING IN SMALL GROUPS (20 minutes)

Students will now be divided up into small groups to create communities that embody the “Golden Future Time.” Instruct students that in their small groups, they will be responsible for:

- 1) Identifying one main issue from the brainstormed list at the top of class that their group will focus on improving.

Ex: Food deserts/inequitable access to nutritious food

- 2) Based on their chosen issue, have students create three commandments to guide their ideal community. These agreements should shed light on how the group plans to improve conditions around their issue.

Ex:

- Grow Local - Expand and invest in community gardens so that we can grow and harvest our own food.
- Shop Local - Celebrate and support local grocery stores and bodegas so that each neighborhood has many locations to choose from.
- Spend Local - Basic income guaranteed for all community members to afford nutritious food without worry.

3) Now have students identify their “Golden Commandment” (the commandment that is the most important to their society) and create some type of physical embodiment that represents this commandment. Each group should practice their gesture or physical embodiment a few times together.

Ex: If the Golden Commandment is “Grow Local” the embodiment might look like group members planting a seed and using their hands to represent the growth of new crops upwards.

STEP FIVE: SHARE OUT AND REFLECTION (10 minutes)

Once group work time is over, have all groups share with the rest of the class the issue they decided to focus on, their three commandments, and their “Golden Commandment” embodiment.

After all groups have shared, independently or as a full group, have students reflect:

- Why did your group decide to focus on your chosen issue? What were the factors that led to this decision?
- Do you feel as though your commandments adequately address the needs of your new community? Why or why not?
- Did you feel empowered to share your thoughts/views in the creation of your group’s new community? Why or why not?

BREAKING THE SILENCE: A CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

By Teaching Artists Jared Bellot, Monét Felton, Lauren Katz, Stewart Romeo and CPS Teacher eD Cisneros

ACTIVITY TIME: 45 minutes; to be conducted after students listen to the play

In *Animal Farm*, fear and silence are used to maintain the status quo and perpetuate systems of oppression that allow for those in power to remain in power.

In this activity, students will explore a list of “-isms” and how those systems of oppression are present in the world of *Animal Farm* before using an excerpt from the play to allow students to create their own creative responses in an attempt to understand how we might break through oppressive cycles in the future.

STEP ONE: INTRODUCING “-ISMS” (5 minutes)

As a class, review the Merriam Webster Dictionary definition of “-ism” provided below.

-ism (noun)

\ 'i-zəm \

- 1: a distinctive doctrine, cause, or theory
- 2: an oppressive and especially discriminatory attitude or belief

After reviewing the definition, brainstorm a list of “-isms” that students are familiar with.

(If helpful, have students familiarize themselves with various “-isms” found in “Terms for the Classroom” located on page 32 of this guide.)

STEP TWO: “-ISMS” IN ANIMAL FARM (7 minutes)

Based on the list created by the class, identify which “-isms” show up in *Animal Farm*.

(This might be a good moment to contextualize *Animal Farm* - that it was originally written as an allegory for the Russian Revolution and corruption of Communism, as well as what it could currently be an allegory for in our world today aided by “An Allegory for Revolution” located on page 11 of this guide.)

If not identified by the class, be sure to introduce the following “-isms”, along with their simplified definitions, which will be the focus of the remainder of this lesson.

- Fascism - takes away your voice
- Authoritarianism - takes away your freedom
- Capitalism - takes away your internal worth
- Fatalism - takes away your agency/will
- Passivism - takes away your obligation/power to act
- Sexism - takes away your rights based on gender
- Racism - takes away your rights based on race
- Narcissism - takes away your perspective/community investment

STEP THREE: CLASS READ ALOUD (15 minutes)

With the help of student volunteers, read aloud Act 2, Scene 8 (located on page 27 of this guide).

After reading the scene aloud, ask students to reflect:

- What “-isms” are at play here? How do they manifest themselves?
- How does silence manifest itself in this scene? What does it mean to remain silent?
- How could things have looked differently if an animal spoke out? What if someone joined Boxer, or what if Julia spoke her thoughts aloud? What if Benjamin felt he could make a difference?

STEP FOUR: EXPLORING OPPRESSION AND SILENCE THROUGH ARTMAKING (10 minutes)

Based on students’ conversation around the Act 2, Scene 8, ask students to compose a brief poem to be performed in response to the question: “What does breaking the silence look like for you?”

Responses can be literal or abstract, and can be based in the real world or the world of *Animal Farm*, but should include:

- At least one mention of an “-ism” discussed as a part of class
- At least one excerpt of text pulled from Act 2, Scene 8
- At least one moment of silence

STEP FIVE: SHARE OUT AND REFLECTION (8 minutes)

Select a few students to perform their poems for the full class.

Once poems have been performed, ask students to reflect, either independently or as a class:

- How is language used to dehumanize on *Animal Farm*? In the real world?
- How is silence used as a tool of oppression on *Animal Farm*? In the real world?

AN EXCERPT FROM *ANIMAL FARM*: ACT 2, SCENE 8

Note: this scene is referenced in the classroom activity “Breaking the Silence”

The ANIMALS wait in the YARD. NAPOLEON enters, followed by SQUEALER. They take their position, and NAPOLEON signals off. The DOGS enter, dragging MAGGIE, JULIA, and PINKEYE with them. Each of the THREE has been beaten - a burlap sack is pulled over their heads. The DOGS line them up facing the other ANIMALS. NAPOLEON signals. One of the DOGS pulls the sack off PINKEYE’s head.

NAPOLEON

Confess your crimes, Pinkeye.

MURIEL lunges forward.

MURIEL

Yes. Confess it all. Confess – you traitor.

BOXER and BENJAMIN are taken aback by the ferocity of her reaction.

PINKEYE

I - have been secretly in touch with Snowball ever since he ran away. And I – oh - collaborated with him in destroying the windmill, yes. And - I have entered into an agreement with him to hand over Animal Farm back to Mr. Jones.

(Beat.)

I’m so sorry – I’m so very sor –

NAPOLEON

What else?

MURIEL

Tell all of it.

PINKEYE

Oh, I forgot – I'm sorry. Snowball, uh – admitted to me privately that he had been Jones' secret agent all along. All along – the whole time.

NAPOLEON signals. The DOGS tear PINKEYE apart.

MURIEL

Yes – tear his throat out. Make him pay.

The other ANIMALS stand, stunned. NAPOLEON signals. One of the DOGS pulls the sack off MAGGIE's head.

NAPOLEON

Confess your crimes, Maggie.

MURIEL

Yes, confess your crimes, you stupid bird.

MAGGIE

I was a ringleader in the planning of an Egg Revolt. Snowball appeared to me in a dream, and –

(Beat.)

SQUEALER

“Incited.”

MAGGIE

Yes – incited me to disobey Napoleon’s orders.

NAPOLEON

What else?

MURIEL

What else? Tell us all of it.

MAGGIE

I hid six ears of corn during last year's harvest and ate them in the night.

NAPOLEON signals. The DOGS move toward MAGGIE. Suddenly, BOXER steps out. He knocks over one of the DOGS, pinning him to the ground with his hoof. The ANIMALS freeze.

NAPOLEON

(Low.) Brother Boxer. It’s for the good of everyone.

A beat – then BOXER lifts his hoof. The DOGS regain their footing, and tear MAGGIE apart.

MURIEL

Yes. Yes. Rip her apart.

Silence. NAPOLEON signals. One of the DOGS pulls the sack off JULIA’s head.

NAPOLEON

Confess your crimes, Julia.

Lights shift to JULIA, alone. To us:

JULIA

This is not our farm. This is not what we wanted. This is not what we hoped for. We wanted a society of animals set free from hunger and the whip. All equal - each working according to his gifts - the strong protecting the weak – like we protected the box of dog pups that first night when Old Major spoke to us. I don't remember things – but I remember that. The pups. Not this, though – this is not ours. A place where no one speaks their mind and the grown dogs roam and bare their teeth. Where you never understand what you did wrong but try to be a good worker. Where everyone – even Boxer - watches their brothers and sisters torn apart and can't bring themselves to stop it.

(Beat.)

I would say these things out loud – but I don't have the words to say them.

Lights shift back to the YARD.

NAPOLEON

Confess.

MURIEL

Confess it all. Say it.

JULIA

I – I urinated in the drinking pool.

(Beat.)

Snowball told me to.

NAPOLEON

Fortunately, for you – your milk is precious to our sustenance. Therefore, your life will be spared.

MURIEL

No.

JULIA

Th - thank you.

NAPOLEON

But just barely.

NAPOLEON signals. The DOGS tear into JULIA. Blackout.

TERMS FOR THE CLASSROOM

Compiled by Teaching Artists Greg Geffrard and Tiffany Fulson

Review the terms below for an added layer of depth and discussion while listening to Steppenwolf for Young Adults' aural adaptation of *Animal Farm*.

Altruism: (ethics) regard for the welfare of other people (as opposed to one's own welfare) as the highest principle of action.

Capitalism: a society that favors or encourages the formation and investment of wealth in production.

Collectivism: (politics) a doctrine in political philosophy (and sometimes ethics) holding that the individual's actions should benefit not the individual but some kind of collective organization (such as a tribe, community, profession, or state).

Communalism: a kind of small-scale utopianism or voluntary collectivism.

Contractualism: a term in philosophy which refers either to a family of political theories in the social contract tradition (when used in this sense, the term is an umbrella term for all social contract theories that include contractarianism).

Democratism: a doctrine of or belief in social equality or the right of all people to participate equally in politics.

Fascism: a form of far-right, authoritarian ultra-nationalism characterized by dictatorial power, forcible suppression of opposition, as well as strong regimentation of society and of the economy which came to prominence in early 20th-century Europe.

Fatalism: The view that the fortunes of human beings are pre-determined; it differs from determinism in stressing the negative or tragic nature of human life (similar to pessimism) and the inability to modify one's fate.

Liberalism: (politics) an emphasis on the freedom and rights of the individual (sometimes called “classical liberalism”).

Libertarianism: (politics) A doctrine and movement that espouses every individual’s liberty to act in complete freedom as long as they respect the rights of others (primarily by not initiating force or fraud).

Marxism: A theory of economics and society asserting that social and political change is determined by control over the means of economic production.

Passivism: the principle or practice of passive resistance.

Relativism: the view that truth and value are relative to an observer or group of observers.

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR READING, STANDARD 2:

Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

See “*Animal Farm* Play Synopsis” page 7 and “The Voices of *Animal Farm*,” pages 14/45

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR READING, STANDARD 3

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.

See “Breaking the Silence,” page 24

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR READING, STANDARD 10:

Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

See “An Allegory for Revolution,” page 11 of this document

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR SPEAKING AND LISTENING, STANDARD 1:

Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

See Examples throughout guide

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR SPEAKING AND LISTENING, STANDARD 3:

Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

See "Reimagining A Classic," page 17 and 47 of this document

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR SPEAKING AND LISTENING, STANDARD 5:

Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

See Examples throughout guide

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[TITLE PAGE??]

Anna D. Shapiro† E. Brooke Flanagan
Artistic Director Executive Director

STEPPENWOLF THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

George Orwell's

ANIMAL FARM

Adapted for radio by Steve Pickering

from the stage adaptation by Althos Low

Directed by Lili-Anne Brown‡

Featuring

Robert Cornelius*, Audrey Francis†*, Emjoy Gavino*, Sharriese Hamilton*, Namir
Smallwood†* and Alan Wilder†*

Aaron Stephenson Sound Design & Original Music

Martha Wegener Sound Engineer

Patrick Zakem Artistic Producer

Elise Hausken Production Manager

JC Clementz, CSA Casting Director

Christine D. Freeburg* Production Stage Manager

Laura D. Glenn* Assistant Stage Manager

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Special Thanks: Jessica Wilder and Antonio the dog

Steppenwolf Theatre Company is a constituent of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for nonprofit professional theater.

† member of the Steppenwolf Theatre Company ensemble.

* member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers.

‡ member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Union.

ARTISTS BIOS

Robert Cornelius (Boxer/Moses) Steppenwolf Theatre Company debut. Chicago: *Her Honor Jane Byrne* (Lookingglass Theatre Company); *Lottery Day* (Goodman Theatre); *Total Bent* (Haven Theatre/About Face Theatre); *Rightlynd, Wheatley, On the Block, Takunda* (Victory Gardens Theater); *Hamlet* (The Gift Theatre); *Picnic* (American Theater Company); *Wit* (The Hypocrites); *Aida* (Drury Lane Theatre); *Raisin* (Court Theatre); *Taming of the Shrew* (First Folio Theatre); *The Boys Next Door* (Provision Theatre). Regional: *My Children, My Africa* (Montana Repertory Theatre); *You Can't Take It with You, The Jeremiah, The Rivals* (Milwaukee Repertory Theater); *Blues For an Alabama Sky* (Madison Repertory); *Spunk* (St. Louis Black Rep.); *Great Expectations* (Indiana Repertory Theatre). Film: *Hoodlum*. Television: *Shameless, South Side, The Chi, Chicago PD, Turks*.

Audrey Francis (Squealer/Old Major/Pinkeye) joined the Steppenwolf Theatre Company ensemble in 2017. Steppenwolf: *Dance Nation, The Doppelgänger (an international farce), You Got Older, The Fundamentals, Between Riverside and Crazy, The Herd*. Chicago: *Kill Floor* (American Theater Company); *Witch, Othello, Another Part of the Forest* (Writers Theatre); *Awake and Sing!* (Northlight Theatre); *Talking Pictures* (Goodman Theatre). Film: *Knives and Skin, Later Days, Signature Move*. Television: *Empire, Chicago Med, Chicago Fire*. Directing credits include *Plano* (First Floor Theater with Steppenwolf's 1700 Lookout Series) and *The Invisible Hand* (Steept Theatre). Audrey is also the proud co-founder of Black Box Acting.

Enjoy Gavino (Maggie/Muriel) Steppenwolf Theatre Company: *You Got Older, The Drunken City*. Chicago: *Do You Feel Anger* (A Red Orchid Theatre); *Kentucky* (The Gift Theatre); *Vietgone* (Writers Theatre); *Bull in a China Shop* (About Face Theatre); *You on the Moors Now* (The Hypocrites); *Realish Housewives* (The Second City); *Failure...* (Victory Gardens Theater); *Electra* (Court Theatre); *Working* (Broadway Playhouse); *Act(s) of God* (Lookingglass Theatre Company); *...Neo-Futurist Christmas Carol* (The Neo-Futurists). Regional: ReAct Theatre, ACT, Village Theatre, Studio Theatre. Television: *The Exorcist, Mob Doctor, Chicago Fire/Med*. Enjoy is a 3Arts Make a Wave grantee, associate artistic director and casting director for The Gift Theatre and the founder of The Chicago Inclusion Project.

Sharriese Hamilton (Mollie/Julia) Chicago: *Wonderful Town* (Goodman Theatre); *Thaddeus and Slocum* (Lookingglass Theatre Company); *Pericles* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre); *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder, How To Succeed, Ain't Misbehavin, Pal Joey, A Class Act* (Porchlight Music Theatre); *9 to 5* (Firebrand Theatre); *Sister Act, Sleeping Beauty, The Velveteen Rabbit, Madagascar u/s* (Marriott Theatre); *Rock of Ages, James and the Giant Peach* (Drury Lane Theatre). Regional: *HAIR* (McLeod Summer Playhouse); *Spamalot, Working, The 25th Annual Putnum County Spelling Bee, Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story* (Timber Lake

Playhouse). Touring: *Come From Away* - Australia. Television: *Chicago Fire*, *Empire*.
Education: B.A. in Theatre from Michigan State University.

Namir Smallwood (Benjamin) joined the Steppenwolf Theatre Company ensemble in 2017. Steppenwolf: *Bug*, *True West*, *Monster*, *Man In Love*, *The Hot L Baltimore*. Chicago: *The Lost Boys of Sudan* (Victory Gardens Theater); *Charm* (Northlight Theatre); *The Grapes of Wrath* (The Gift Theatre); *East Texas Hot Links* (Writers Theatre). Regional: Marin Theatre Company, Pillsbury House Theatre, Lincoln Center Theatre, Ten Thousand Things Theater, Guthrie Theater. Television: *Chicago Fire*, *Betrayal*, *Elementary*, *Pipeline* (Live From Lincoln Center) on PBS.

Alan Wilder (Napoleon/Snowball) has been a Steppenwolf Theatre Company ensemble member since 1976 and has appeared in over 70 Steppenwolf productions in Chicago, Dublin, London, Perth, New York, Toronto and Washington, D.C. Steppenwolf (select credits): *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *The Caretaker*, *The Fundamentals*, *Marie Antoinette*, *Russian Transport*, *Fake*, *The Tempest*, *The Seafarer*, *The March*, *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, *The Weir*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Steve Pickering (Radio Adapter) is a Chicago-based actor (AEA, SAG-AFTRA), director and playwright (Dramatists Guild). A Creative Partner with the Goodman Theatre, and a member of their 2019/20 Playwrights Unit, he is currently adapting George Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia* for Goodman Resident Artistic Associate Henry Godinez. Steve is the Project Manager and co-founder of Shanghai Low Theatricals, whose innovative stage adaptations include George Orwell's *Animal Farm* for the Steppenwolf Young Adult Program in 2014, and—in a 2018 Jeff-nominated script collaboration with director David Kersnar—Jules Verne's *20,000 Leagues Under the Seas* for Lookingglass Theatre Company. Steve is formerly the Artistic Director of the Next Theatre in Evanston, and a 2016 Lunt-Fontanne Fellow with the Ten Chimneys Foundation.

Althos Low (Stage Adapter) is the pen name for Shanghai Low Theatricals, an adaptation development group based in Chicago. For the 2014 Steppenwolf for Young Adults' *Animal Farm* collaboration for director Hallie Gordon, Shanghai Low co-founder Steve Pickering served as Adapter, playwright Alice Austen as co-Adapter, and House Artists Fred Baxter and Tom Kyzivat provided pre-production art and dramaturgy.

Lili-Anne Brown (Director) is a native Chicagoan, works as a director, actor and educator, and has performed in, directed and produced many award-winning shows, both local and regional. She is the former Artistic Director of Bailiwick Chicago, where she focused programming on

Chicago-premiere musicals and new play development with resident playwrights. Recent credits include *School Girls, or The African Mean Girls Play* and the world premiere of Ike Holter's *Lottery Day* at Goodman Theatre; *Put Your House In Order* at La Jolla Playhouse; *The Color Purple* at Drury Lane Theatre. She is a member of SDC, AEA, and SAG-AFTRA, a graduate of Northwestern University, and represented by William Morris Endeavor.

Aaron Stephenson (Sound Design & Original Music) has worked on over 40 Steppenwolf Theatre Company productions as an audio technician and design assistant since completing their 2013-14 Apprenticeship. Chicago: *P.Y.G.*, or *The Mis-Education of Dorian Belle*, *Blood At The Root* (Jackalope Theatre); Kentucky, *Open Season*, *Richard III* (The Gift Theatre); Yen (Raven Theatre); Haymarket (Underscore Theatre); *The Glass Menagerie* (The Hypocrites); *The Lisbon Traviata*, *Lips Together*, *Teeth Apart* (Eclipse Theatre); *Robin Hood & Maid Marian* (Strawdog Theatre); *The Woman Before* (Trap Door Theatre); *The Walk Across America For Mother Earth* (Red Tape Theatre). Infinite love and thanks to Kristin and River.

Christine D. Freeburg (Production Stage Manager) Steppenwolf Theatre Company: *Bug*, *The Great Leap*, *MS. BLAKK FOR PRESIDENT*, *La Ruta*, *Downstate*, *The Roommate*, *The Doppelgänger* (an international farce), *The Minutes*, *Linda Vista*, *Visiting Edna*, *Constellations*, *The Flick*, *John Steinbeck's East of Eden*, *The Herd*, *Airline Highway*, *Tribes*, *The Motherf**ker with the Hat*, *American Buffalo* (also at McCarter Theatre), *The Tempest*, *The Seafarer*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *after the quake*, *Cherry Orchard*. Chicago: Northlight Theatre, Court Theatre, Lookingglass Theatre, Apple Tree Theatre. Freeburg is an adjunct faculty member at The Theatre School at DePaul University and spent nine summers stage managing at Weston Playhouse. She is happily married to Thom Cox and the proud mother of Joan Marie. For Malcolm.

Laura D. Glenn (Assistant Stage Manager) Steppenwolf Theatre Company: *The American Clock*, *Lindiwe*, *True West*, *The Children*, *Downstate*, *Domesticated*, *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* and many others over the past 30 years. Chicago: *Butler*, *Whipping Man*, *Chapatti*, *A Skull in Connemara* and many others (Northlight). Galway International Arts Festival: *Better Late* (Northlight); *Orange Flower Water & Purple Heart* (Steppenwolf). BITE Festival Barbican Center London: *The Man Who Came to Dinner*. Broadway: *Buried Child* (Steppenwolf). Laura has been a proud member of Actors' Equity Association for 30 years.

Anna D. Shapiro (Artistic Director) is a Tony Award-winning director and Artistic Director of Steppenwolf Theatre Company. She joined the Steppenwolf ensemble in 2005 and was awarded the 2008 Tony Award for Best Direction of a Play for *August: Osage County* (Steppenwolf, Broadway, London). She was nominated in 2011 in the same category for *The Motherf**ker with the Hat* (Public Theater, Labyrinth Theater). Other Steppenwolf directing credits include the

world premiere production of *The Minutes*, *Mary Page Marlowe*, *Visiting Edna*, *Three Sisters*, *A Parallelogram*, *Up, The Crucible*, *The Unmentionables* (also at Yale Repertory Theatre), *The Pain and the Itch* (also in New York), *I Never Sang for My Father*, *Man from Nebraska*, *Purple Heart* (also in Galway, Ireland), *The Drawer Boy*, *Side Man* (also in Ireland, Australia and Vail, Colorado), *Three Days of Rain*, *The Infidel* and *This Is Our Youth* (which transferred to Broadway). Additional Broadway credits include *Of Mice and Men* (with James Franco) and *Fish in the Dark* (with Larry David), and Off Broadway *Domesticated* (Lincoln Center Theater). She is directing the new Broadway musical *The Devil Wears Prada* with music by Sir Elton John, lyrics by Shaina Taub and book by Paul Rudnick. Shapiro is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama and Columbia. She is a professor in Northwestern University's Department of Theatre.

E. Brooke Flanagan (Executive Director) most recently served as Managing Director at Chicago Shakespeare Theater (CST) before becoming Executive Director of Steppenwolf Theatre Company in 2020. At CST, she led fundraising and external affairs programs and serving as a strategic partner to the Board of Directors, Artistic Director Barbara Gaines and Executive Director Criss Henderson. She increased the Tony Award-winning Theater's annual contributed income by 50%. In 2012, she launched the historic Our City, Our Shakespeare endowment and capital campaign, which successfully closed above goal in 2018 after raising \$61.6 million. Prior to joining Chicago Shakespeare, Brooke Flanagan spent seven seasons at Steppenwolf Theatre as Director of Major Gifts. She was the Associate Director of Development for Ravinia Festival from 2000-2004, and also held key positions at League of Chicago Theatres and Santa Fe Opera. She has served as Board Chair for Arts Alliance Illinois since 2016. She resides in Chicago's Old Town neighborhood with her husband and three children, who proudly attend a Chicago Public School.

Transcript of: THE VOICES OF ANIMAL FARM

By Steppenwolf for Young Adults

Date: August 2020

Featuring: Audrey Francis, Robert Cornelius, Emjoy Gavino, Namir Smallwood, Alan Wilder and Sharriese Hamilton.

Audrey Francis:

Hi everyone. My name is Audrey Francis. My pronouns are she/her/hers and I'm a Steppenwolf ensemble member and I will be playing the roles of Squealer, Old Major and Pinkeye. And the way that I'll be differentiating these characters is that Squealer [in a lofty voice] has a little bit of a know-it-all voice and it sounds like this. Old Major is a little bit older and [slowly] is not feeling very well. [In a high pitch and fast-pace] And Pinkeye is just a little baby! Like super excited about everything all the time! This is such a great moment! [Audrey's regular voice] I hope you all enjoy listening to the play and thanks for studying along with us.

Robert Cornelius:

Hi. My name is Robert Cornelius and I'll be playing Moses. [Enthusiastically; as Moses] OH, there is a land my brothers and sisters! And Boxer. [In a low, deep tone; as Boxer] I will work harder. [Robert's regular voice] Enjoy the show!

Emjoy Gavino:

Hi. My name is Emjoy Gavino. My pronouns are she/her/hers. In *Animal Farm*, I play Maggie the hen and Muriel the goat. Maggie, the hen, [in shaky, high pitch and warm tone] she sounds a little bit like this. Which is a voice I very, very badly based on a young Judy Garland. It's very high up and a little warmly in the vibrato, especially when she gets very upset and sometimes [in a lower pitch] she talks down here. But uh, uh, uh, uh, there's a lot of shaking involved. And Muriel the goat [in a weary voice] is a little bit older. I think she's seen quite a bit. I based her on an aging Blossom Dearie because my references are apparently from the 1930's and 40's. But, she is a little bit more mature, but also very sure of herself. But sometimes when she gets righteous it can get a little bit more forward like this in tone, but just a touch of vocal fry. [Emjoy's regular voice] And those are my characters! I hope you enjoy listening to *Animal Farm*.

Namir Smallwood:

Hey everybody. I'm Namir Smallwood. He/him/his. I'm a Steppenwolf ensemble member and I'm playing Benjamin the donkey in *Animal Farm*.

Alan Wilder:

I'm Alan Wilder. I'm an original ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre since day one. I am playing in *Animal Farm* Snowball the pig [in a high, reedy voice] who has a high, sort of reedy voice and he's very optimistic and very helpful to everybody and tries to be, a very good leader. [In a slow, low tone] Also, I play Napoleon, a boar, who is rather villainous and he's deeper and has a bit of a twang.

Sharriese Hamilton:

Hello. My name is Sharriese Hamilton. She/her/hers. And I'm going to be playing two characters today. The first character you're going to hear is Mollie the horse. [In a high, soft tone] And her voice is really high and lofty. I always say everything with a smile to keep that care-free spirit. Even if she's upset, I always say it with a smile. [Sharriese's regular voice] Um, and the next character you're gonna hear me play is Julia the cow. [In a low, dry voice] And, I always say her lines with a little bit of a furrow in my brow. Uh, because she's very passionate and nurturing and she's just always a little concerned. So, um, that's what I do, I make her voice a little bit lower to denote age and intensity. [Sharriese's regular voice] So those are the two characters you're gonna hear me play. That's it! Thanks for listening.

Transcript of: REIMAGINING A CLASSIC: A CONVERSATION WITH DIRECTOR LILI-ANNE BROWN

By Steppenwolf for Young Adults

Date: 8/29/2020

Featuring: Education Intern Ahon Gooptu and *Animal Farm* Director Lili-Anne Brown

[Musical Introduction]

Ahon Gooptu:

Hey all! I'm Ahon Gooptu, the 2020 Summer Education Intern with Steppenwolf Education. And I am here with director, Jeff Award-winner and educator Lili-Anne Brown. And we're talking about her reimagining of George Orwell's *Animal Farm* for the current social and political climate, as well as our experience working on Steppenwolf for Young Adults' first ever radio play.

[Folksy musical interlude]

Ahon Gooptu:

Lili-Anne, this is so exciting. So, thank you for taking the time to have this conversation with me today.

Lili-Anne Brown:

Of course, thanks for having me.

Ahon Gooptu:

My first question to you is, when was the first time you read George Orwell's *Animal Farm*? And do you still remember it? How did you perceive it back then? And how have your feelings and perceptions changed since?

Lili-Anne Brown:

Yeah, I don't remember it, actually. Like I know that I did. And I'm not even sure that that's the truth. As you as you live life and things become—you become culturally aware of some things, I think some things just seep in so deeply that you have no idea when they first got in there or how they got in. So, I think I read it sometime in my teen years. And I don't know if that was in like, late elementary school, like eighth grade or if it was high school. I don't know when I read *Animal Farm*. I think I did. I'm not even sure I really did. Or did I just see it as a play sometime later? Or, I don't know, or do I just know it because it's part of our cultural consciousness? And I didn't really remember much other than sort of “Oh, the pigs, and the horses, and four legs good; two legs bad.” I kind of remembered that. And you remember the themes, really, more than you remember the details of the story. Like, I remember being like, “Yeah, that's about fascism.” And knowing that—that it was it was about rising up against tyranny and what happens when the oppressed become the oppressors. So, I was actually really glad, because I like to approach work

from a fresh perspective whenever humanly possible. That is my preference. I often work (and I started out working) in musical theater. And I think what we see in musical theater is that the grand tradition has previously been, “These things came off of Broadway” and then they would tour and there was this adherence to the original production and how it was done, down to the letter. And then that began to trickle out to middle America as like, “Oh, this is how theater is done. It's—there's this one production and then you do it like that.” And I think a lot of people grow up thinking that's what theater is. And when you are somebody who is a minority, you can see that very clearly from a young age. You know, instead of being like, “This is how it is” you're like, “What the hell, there's no way into that!” So, I've always sort of seen things as like “No, no, no—how do you go back to the source material? Okay, what's it really about? Does it really need to be done like that? Is there another way to do it? How is this relevant to today?” You know, I think that's how you want to make theater. So, it was not really relevant to me that I didn't have an adherence to the book. I actually really appreciated being able to approach it somewhat fresh, knowing its cultural relevance, but not having a bunch of stuff in my head to sort of cloud what I was going to do. That was really helpful.

Ahon Gooptu:

That's fascinating. And how do you think the story of *Animal Farm* relates to the current political and racial climate in the country and even in the world at this moment?

Lili-Anne Brown:

I mean, it's a classic because it's about tyranny. And tyranny is afoot at all times. It is something that we have to be vigilant against at all times in history. It's incredibly relevant now because we're actually looking at an actual tyrannical leader in America which is [Laughter] something that our American Myth doesn't really allow for. Part of our American myth is that like, you know, “We fought King George because he was a tyrant and then we made our own nation, and never again because we're not like that.” And yet somehow... Somehow, these pigs that fought this revolution now are standing on two legs and looking a lot like King George. So imminently relevant, yes?

Ahon Gooptu:

Yes! What about the stories specifically appeals to you? Do you relate to any characters in particular?

Lili-Anne Brown:

I mean, it all relates to me. I just—I think it's us. I think that what's wonderful about it is that we're all complicit. And that is very much shown in *Animal Farm*. Everyone is complicit in some way. And our narrator, as the person that we follow very closely, Benjamin the donkey, goes through this journey of being detached. Being like, you know, “I'm skeptical about all of this and therefore, I'm going to sort of be aloof and remain watchful and remain on the sidelines. But what can I personally do to affect an outcome?” And he's very cynical. And that cynicism is something I think that we all can develop, and many of us have developed, because we're living in an age that is fairly devoid of nuance. The internet has pretty much seen to that, you know,

because if everybody's opinion on everything counts equally, then we are going to see the death of expertise and the death of nuance. Yes? So, it just—it feels imminently relevant and it's imminently relevant to me. I feel like I'm living it. And we're living in *Animal Farm*.

Ahon Goptu:

This play is so visual. Just reading it, you think about how the actors are going to embody these animals and how their costumes are going to look. Talk a little bit about the process for this piece: how did you encourage your cast to embody those visual and movement in their voice? And how do you think the sound design will help create this visual world of the piece?

Lili-Anne Brown:

Yeah. I hear you when you say the play is so visual, but I think it's really us as people that are visual. Yeah, some plays seem more physical than others, right, because people might have to do stilt work or acrobatics or dancing or use their bodies in some strange way. But honestly, in terms of embodying animals (or in terms of embodying anything), I don't think it's necessarily inherently physical. Just because they're animals, you know. So, why can't it also be like, “Oh, this play is inherently aural” and I mean, ‘A-U-R-A-L.’ Because, think about the sounds of a farm. The sounds animals make. And what a rich tapestry that could be. So, I didn't spend any time thinking about the physical or how to tell people what's physically going on, because you don't need that; we know what a horse is. A horse is a horse! And we'll have horse sounds. And you can imagine. And so, it was amazing to have actors flex a different muscle. And really be thinking about that and thinking about really giving it so much more vocally than even what they're used to on stage. Because on stage, people can see what you're doing. And that is half the battle, right? What if all you have is your voice to convey all of the emotions? And I think that's a fantastic challenge for an actor.

Ahon Goptu:

Yeah, absolutely it is. And I can't wait to hear all of it. Last but not least: what do you hope students will take away from this work of art at this moment?

Lili-Anne Brown:

Hmm. I hope that they will have really, really honest conversations. And I hope that they don't settle for anything less. I hope that they really think about what they as individuals can do, and what they, together with each other, can accomplish. And, and that they think about being brave and breaking the system and not following what came before. And taking care of each other, really taking care of each other. And thinking about how to do that, how they can achieve that. That's stuff I hope they think about.