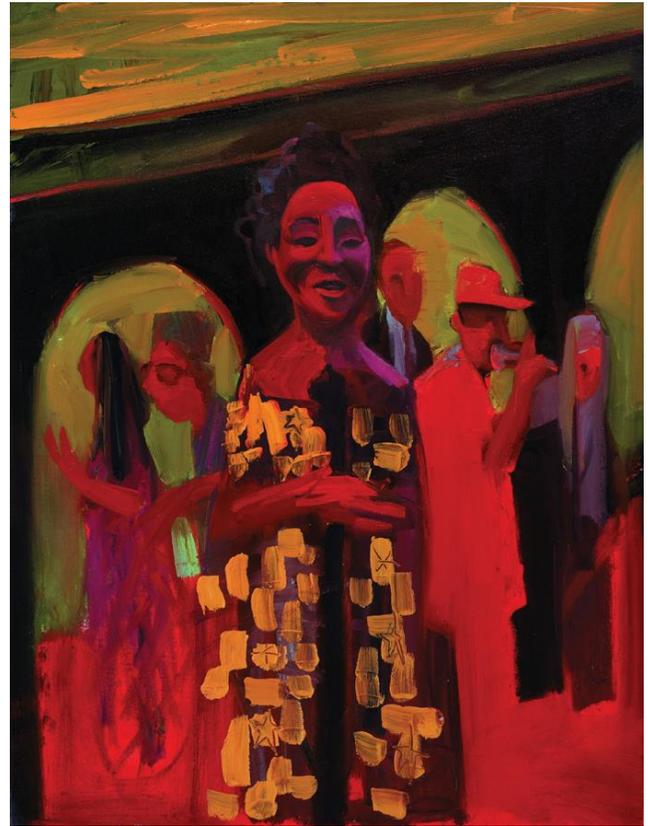




INDIANA  
REPERTORY  
THEATRE

# Bridge & Tunnel

by Sarah Jones



March 29 – May 1, 2016  
on the Upperstage

## STUDY GUIDE

edited by Richard J Roberts  
with contributions by Janet Allen  
Gordon Strain, Katie Cowan Sickmeier, Allen Hahn, Todd Mack Reischman

Indiana Repertory Theatre  
140 West Washington Street • Indianapolis, Indiana 46204  
Janet Allen, Executive Artistic Director      Suzanne Sweeney, Managing Director

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# ***Bridge & Tunnel* by Sarah Jones**

An open-mic poetry night becomes a celebration of American diversity in the Tony Award-winning play, *Bridge & Tunnel*. Follow along as one woman plays more than a dozen characters of various genders, ages, and nationalities as life stories are shared and dreams are dared. Jones’s script encourages us to look through new eyes at an all-inclusive America: a beautiful ideal for immigrants and nationals alike, where liberty, equality, and opportunity have concrete, vital meaning.

Student Matinees at 10:00 A.M. on April 6 & 13

Estimated length: 90 minutes, with no intermission

Recommended for grades 11-12 due to strong language and mature themes.

## **Themes & Topics**

Poetry and Storytelling	Race and Nationality	Equality and Opportunity
Humor and Vulnerability	Empathy and Compassion	Tradition and Sexuality
Immigration	Freedom,	Fear of Exclusion
Multiculturalism		

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# Milicent Wright

## Actor

### Characters in the Play:

Ms. Lady	Lydia Rios
Mohammed Ali	Yajaira Hernandez
Linda	Monique Barnes
Lorraine Levine	Rashid
Bao Viet Dinh	Pauline Ling
Gladys Bailey	Boris Ostrovsky
Juan Jose Martinez	Rose Aimee Sylvance
Habiba Rahal	



This is Milicent's fifth one-woman production, following *Pretty Fire* and its sequels *Neat* and *The Night Watcher* by Charlayne Woodard; and *The Power of One*, in which she played Harriet Tubman, Madame C. J. Walker, and Rosa Parks. Milicent was just seen in the IRT's production of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Other notable appearances at the IRT include Sojourner Truth in *A Woman Called Truth*, Maria in *Twelfth Night*, the Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet* (2004), Celia in *As You Like It*, Calpurnia (2011) and Portia (2002) in *Julius Caesar*, Rosa Parks in *Mother of the Movement*, Madame Zeroni in *Holes*, and multiple roles in *Hard Times* and *Great Expectations*. Over the years in *A Christmas Carol* she has played Mrs. Fezziwig, Mrs. Cratchit, the Sister of Mercy, the Charwoman, the Laundress, the Plump Sister, and the Sister with the Roses. *Bridge & Tunnel* will be her sixth onstage collaboration with director Richard J Roberts. Recently at the Phoenix Theatre she appeared in the rolling world premiere of *Dontrell Who Kissed the Sea* by Nathan Davis, and their sold-out *Love, Loss, and What I Wore*. She was seen last summer in *Twelfth Night* for HART. Other favorites include a two-women show (*And Her Hair Went with Her*) as well as *Black Gold* at the Phoenix Theatre, *Doubt* for Cardinal Stage in Bloomington, and *Stonewall Jackson's House* and *The Colored Museum* at the Human Race Theatre in Dayton. Milicent is the IRT's manager of outreach programs and a resident teaching artist in the IRT's Summer Conservatory for Youth. She enjoys sharing her love of acting by working as a teaching artist and private coach to youth. Here in Indianapolis she has had the pleasure of working with the Asante Children's Theatre, Young Audiences of Indiana (now Arts for Learning), Freetown Village, and teaching in Civic Theatre's adult class programming. Milicent was a 2011 Arts Council of Indianapolis Creative Renewal Fellowship recipient and a 2015 award recipient from the Center for Leadership and Development. "I am grateful to Joel and Susie Blum; their recognition of my work this season through their artist sponsorship is a generous compliment. My work in this show is in memory of ladies that raised me who I miss terribly: Mrs. Marie Turner-Wright, Ms. Patricia Turner, Ms. Marion Turner, Mrs. Willie Marie Turner, and Mrs. Katherine Wolfe. They believed in me when I didn't believe in myself."

# Many Milicents

by Janet Allen, Executive Artistic Director

There were two goals that catalyzed this production of *Bridge & Tunnel*: first, to find another solo show for actress and staff member Milicent Wright; second, to broaden our dramatic conversation on the subject of diversity.

This constitutes Milicent's fifth solo show over 23 years: that's easily a record breaker at the IRT, where we pride ourselves on solo performances that are highly memorable and theatrically thrilling. In a field deep with amazing solos performers—let's not forget two productions of *Shirley Valentine* by the sublime Priscilla Lindsay—Milicent distinguishes herself in a unique way: she has complete rapport with an audience. She's at her easiest, her most relaxed, when she's interacting with an audience, and moving the character she's playing literally off the stage and into the audience's laps and hearts. Some really great solo performers actually stop somewhere about five feet in front of an audience; they are more comfortable working on the stage, using the safety it provides to reassure themselves. That's never true with Milicent. She derives energy from the audience reactions she gets, she's drawn to the folks in the seats, and nowhere is that energy exchange more evident than when she's doing solo work. This is not to say that her more traditional work (*i.e.* with other actors onstage!) isn't stellar; I hope that many of you saw her Calpurnia in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. But something about the high-wire work of solo performance just makes everything in Milicent sparkle.

We considered several plays for their opportunities to connect Milicent to audiences, and decided on *Bridge & Tunnel* largely because it gives her a wealth of opportunity to tell many immigrant stories and to use her prodigious skills variously. You'll see Milicent as male and female characters, as young and old, as black, Asian, Latino, white, and many more. Thanks to Mil for taking this one on: it's a boat-load of challenges, and we're all excited to learn all the many ways she'll find to remind us of our human connections. It takes a lot of skill and a lot of empathy to fill the compassionate souls behind all these colorful sounds.

*Milicent Wright in The Power of One (2008), The Night Watcher (2012), and Neat (2011).*



# Take a Good Look

by Richard J Roberts, Director

*Bridge & Tunnel* is a play about immigrants. That's a hot-button word nowadays—immigrant. It might lead you to think about outraged demands to protect our fragile borders, or bleeding-heart propaganda about the land of opportunity. But that's not the play that Sarah Jones has written. Instead, she gives us an informal evening at an annual open-mic poetry reading, an intimate gathering of literary enthusiasts with varying levels of skill. Individually and collectively, they remind us how art can help people to unlock the stories in their hearts—and what a powerful experience that can be for us all to share.



Do something for me right now, OK? Stop reading for just a moment, and take a good look at the stranger sitting next to you, or in front of you, or across from you. Go on, I'll wait.

Stranger—that's another interesting word. Strangers are, by definition, well ... strange. What do you know about that stranger next to you? You don't know where he or she lives. You don't know what he or she does for a living. You don't know where they go to church—or if they go to church. You don't know who they're going to vote for this fall—if they vote at all. You don't know where their family is from.

But there are also things that you do know. Like you, he or she has come to the theatre today, hoping to be entertained and/or enlightened. Like you, he or she has unfinished business to take care of tomorrow. Like you, he or she has secrets ... pain ... love—in one form or another ... and heartbreak. We all have a past full of joys and regrets, and an unknown future full of hopes and dreams and fears. We all come from families that were—one generation or eight generations ago—immigrants.

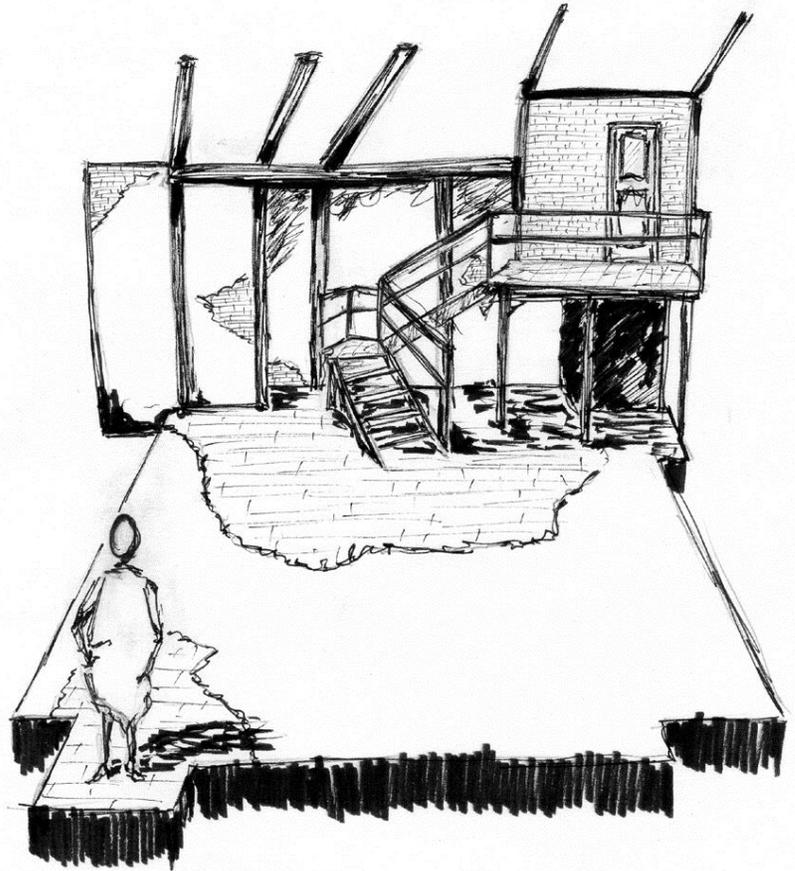
There will always be issues that separate us. But there is so much more that holds us together.

# The World in One Room

## Gordon Strain

Scenic Designer

My first reading of this play left me with the idea of a hip urban coffee house where a poetry slam might take place. But as I read it again and began to have conversations with the rest of the design team, the location became a little more nebulous. Perhaps some kind of found space that the characters could assemble in. A place that is old, repurposed, and slightly unexpected. A church basement? An abandoned warehouse? Something large but not cavernous. It needed to be a location that our actor could explore and discover how her many different characters might use it. Ultimately I have tried to take advantage of the architecture the theatre has given us, and to give Milicent a playground for the characters.



*Preliminary sketch by scenic designer Gordon Strain.*

## Allen Hahn Lighting Designer

From a lighting design perspective, the challenge in this play is figuring out how to subtly partner with the performer to create a nuanced emotional landscape within which to bring the text alive in the audience's experience. I hope lighting can support Milicent's interpretation of Sarah Jones's characters as elegantly as a dancer lifting his partner in a graceful aerial maneuver: providing support while leaving the focus, rightly, with the performer doing all the hard work—the one you came to see. If this seems grandiose, it is not. Nor is it another way of saying, "good lighting should not be noticed," an old trope in the theatre. Instead I mean to suggest that there is a way in which a great performer and the space she inhabits can achieve a sublime union and create a richer experience than either could achieve alone. This *pathos* is, after all, why we keep coming back to the theatre.

**Katie Cowan Sickmeier** Costume Designer

The practical hurdle of *Bridge & Tunnel* is transforming one actress into 15 characters—both genders, in a wide range of ages, from wildly different backgrounds—and doing it very quickly. We start with a neutral canvas and use a few simple items to add specificity. But creating authenticity with so few pieces was the primary design challenge. *Bridge & Tunnel* premiered in New York City in 2004; however, it could have been written just yesterday about any major city in the United States. The costumes need to reflect both realities. The play was written in a post-9/11 but pre-Obama world, but it begs us to question how we view immigrants right now. American immigrants' struggle to balance their foreign heritage against the pressure to become "American" is even more amplified in today's national political conversation than it was in 2004. Thus, I want the characters to be credible not just as recent New Yorkers, but as citizens of Indianapolis in 2016. Their clothes need to exemplify the purgatory that is the immigrant experience, appearing as simultaneously exotic and assimilated. To this end, I chose garments that would make each character individually, and the group as a whole, look as diverse and complex as the experiences they represent.



*Costume renderings by designer Katie Cowan Sickmeier.*

**Todd Reischman** Sound Designer

Reading this script for the first time was exciting, and I had a pretty solid idea what I wanted to do with the sound. As I read on, I wondered if I could make it work. Then I got lost in these great stories. The music is a character in this play, helping to create the world we're in, and following the story being told. Poetry slams and hip hop music are often intertwined, and the setting for *Bridge & Tunnel* is a fun and somewhat juxtaposed venue for such pairings. The idea that certain styles of art are exclusive to a certain ethnicity or demographic is wonderfully diminished in this play. The rhythms and tones here are categorized, but not confining. They break down barriers and invite everyone into the same arena.

# Poet & Playwright

## Sarah Jones

The *New York Times* has called her “a master of the genre.” The *New Yorker* has described her as “a multicultural mynah bird [who] lays our mongrel nation before us with gorgeous, pitch-perfect impersonations of the rarely heard or dramatized.”

Sarah Jones was born in Baltimore in 1973 and grew up in Boston, Washington DC, and Queens. Her father is African American and her mother is of mixed Euro-American and Caribbean descent; both are physicians. Sarah was educated at the United Nations International School and Bryn Mawr College. As the product of a multiracial, multi-ethnic family and community, she was interested from an early age in the cultural backgrounds of her diverse relatives, neighbors, and friends. As a budding theatre artist, she was influenced by such solo performers as Lily Tomlin, Whoopi Goldberg, and Tracey Ullman, as well as Ruth Draper (1884-1956), a pioneer in the multi-character solo form.

In the mid-nineties, Jones began competing in poetry slams at the Nuyorican Poets Café in New York. Her first solo show, 1998’s *Surface Transit*, wove monologues of eight disparate yet cosmically linked New Yorkers. *Women Can’t Wait* premiered in 2000, focusing on eight different women from around the world, each living under laws that violate her human rights.



“Everybody who’s ever influenced me, from a Richard Prior to a Whoopi Goldberg to, you know, any of the voices that have resonated with me as a performer since I was a kid—you know, you couldn’t really say that their work didn’t have some element of political commentary in it. So, as far as I’m concerned, the greatest art, the stuff that moves me the most, is the stuff that also inevitably makes you think about the times we live in.”

In 2001 Jones's spoken-word recording "Your Revolution," a hip hop poem about the sexual exploitation of women in hip hop music, was declared indecent by the Federal Communications Commission and banned from broadcast. Jones became the first artist in history to sue the FCC for censorship, and the ruling was reversed in 2003.

In 2004 Oscar-winning actress Meryl Streep produced Jones's Off-Broadway debut in *Bridge & Tunnel*. The play was produced on Broadway 2006, and Jones received a Special Tony Award.

A regular guest on public radio, Jones has made numerous TV appearances on shows such as *Charlie Rose*, *The Today Show*, and *CBS Sunday Morning*, as well as in her own 2005 Bravo special, *The Sarah Jones Show*. She has received commissions from Equality Now, the Kellogg Foundation, and the National Immigration Forum. She is a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador and has performed at the White House at the invitation of President and Mrs. Obama.

Jones has millions of views for her three TED Talks, the most recent being an excerpt of her new one-woman show *Sell/Buy/Date*, which will have its world premiere at Manhattan Theatre Club this fall. She is currently working on a commission from Lincoln Center Theater and developing an HBO feature based on her characters.

"I feel very connected at a fundamental level to every other person I've ever met. I know that it sounds really hokey and strange, but it's a familial relationship to the true sense of that.

The 'human family' to me really is a concept that I live with every day."



# Slam Poetry

In 1984, a middle-aged construction worker and poet named Marc Smith became fed up with the typical poetry scene. He felt that most poetry open mics were self-centered and dull. The poets droned on and the audience seemed like an afterthought. Smith felt the audience should be the center of the show, so he devised a contest where members of the crowd would judge poetry on an Olympic-style scoring scale



of 0 to 10. The rules: no props, no costumes, no musical accompaniment, no animal acts. Each poet would have a limit of three minutes on the mic to perform his or her original poem. The best part: the crowd was allowed to cheer, boo, snap, hiss, heckle, and applaud whenever they wanted. It was the audience's show! Smith first attempted his new "sport" at the Get Me High Lounge in Chicago. Due to the growing crowd size he moved his show to the historic Green Mill, where it continues to this day.

Slam expanded to other U.S. cities. In 1990, poet Gary Mex Glasner suggested to Smith the idea of a national slam competition, which took place in Fort Mason, San Francisco. The contest consisted of teams from San Francisco and Chicago, and an individual poet from New York City. Today the National Poetry Slam features more than 70 teams of poets from around the globe.

In 1992, several poets from the southeast region of the United States held a regional poetry slam in South Bend, Indiana, to qualify for the National Poetry Slam. That regional eventually spawned the first Southern Fried Poetry Slam in 1993 in Asheville, North Carolina, making it the oldest open invitational poetry slam. Today there are numerous regional slam competitions stretching across the country.

As slam gained legitimacy, the poetry itself evolved. While the earlier work was loose and free-flowing, newer poetry seemed to have tighter lines with a more concrete structure. Influences such as hip hop, dub poetry, and toasting became more evident in the work. Some slammers began to experiment with using multiple voices within a single poem. Many artists began to incorporate choreography in their art. A new form called the group piece was born.

As the poetry progressed, so did the slam event. In addition to the standard bout format, themed slams emerged such as haiku death matches, hip hop battles, nerd slams, decathlon slams, queer slams, limerick slams, prop slams, cover slams, group piece slams, impromptu slams, indigenous slams, grief and remembrance slams, and more.

The vast expansion in the movement in the late 1990s brought changes. Suddenly, slam was more than just a fun game for artists. Poets were making money touring and getting published, and they were featured on various media platforms. Around this same time, slam made its way overseas, turning from a national fad to a worldwide movement. In 2002, Russell Simmons premiered *Def Poetry Jam* on HBO. Poetry slam was finally part of mainstream culture.

What began as a fad in a Chicago bar also became an energizing way to engage youth. In the early 2000s, a youth competition called Brave New Voices began to receive mainstream recognition. Created by a non-profit organization called Youth Speaks, this national competition features young poets from all over the world. There are now several youth leagues around the country, including the notable Louder Than a Bomb league. While a large portion of academia initially rejected slam, many institutions have recently reached out to its artists due to its cultural relevance and approachability. Meanwhile, many slammers now used the art form to earn higher education degrees.

Although poetry slams still occur in bars and coffee shops, its practice and literature are now utilized in grade schools, colleges and universities, prisons, juvenile detention centers, youth programs, not-for-profit organizations, concert halls, bookstores, on radio stations, television programs, studio albums, and countless places online. As the movement has evolved, slammers have begun to recognize that their art form can function as an agent for change. Many slammers now use poetry slam to improve the community around them. Although some still debate the legitimacy of slam as an art form, few can deny the impact it has had as

possibly the most diverse multicultural literary movement of our time.

**—adapted from  
a presentation  
by Adam Henze**



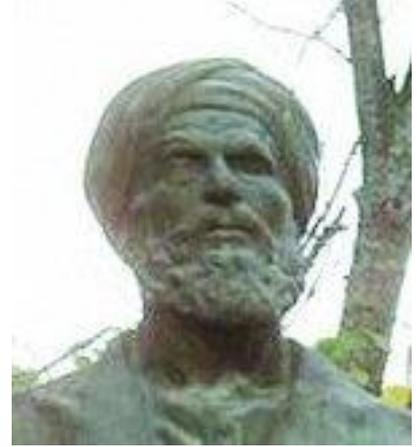
*Photographs from  
the IRT Poetry Slam,  
March 25, 2016.*

# Historic Poets

A number of historic poets are mentioned in *Bridge & Tunnel*.

## Abu Al-Ala Al-Ma'ari

(973–1057 CE) a blind Arab philosopher, poet, and writer. Described as a “pessimistic freethinker,” Al-Ma’ari was a controversial figure of his time, citing reason as the chief source of truth. He was pessimistic about life, describing himself as “a double prisoner” of blindness and isolation. He attacked the dogmas of religion and rejected Islam as well as other religions. He suggested that children should not be born to spare them of the pains of life. Despite his unorthodox views, he is sometimes regarded as one of the greatest classical Arabic poets.



## Walladah bint-al-Mustakfi

(1001-1091) an Andalusian poet. She was the daughter of a Córdoba caliph. As her father had no male heir, she inherited his properties, using them to open a palace and literary hall in Córdoba. The great poets and intellectuals of the time visited her there, and she offered instruction in poetry and the arts of love to women of all classes, from those of noble birth to her own slaves. Wallada was considered an ideal beauty of the time: blonde, fair-skinned, and blue-eyed, in addition to being intelligent, cultured and proud. She was also controversial, walking out in public without a *hijab*. In the fashion of the harems of Baghdad, she wore transparent tunics and embroidered her verses on the trim of her clothing. Her behavior was regarded as perverse by some, but she was defended by others. A Córdoba custom of the time was for poets to compete in finishing incomplete poems. Wallada gained recognition for her skill, particularly as a woman in what was almost entirely a male competition.

## Alexander Pushkin

Alexander Pushkin (1799 –1837) was a Russian author of the Romantic era who is considered by many to be the greatest Russian poet and the founder of modern Russian literature. He is best known for his play *Boris Godunov* and his verse novel *Eugene Onegin*.



**Aleksandr Blok**

Alexander Blok (1880-1921) was the leader of the Russian Symbolist movement and one of the half-dozen most significant poets in Russian literature. He hailed the Russian Revolution as a mystical, rather than political, rebirth of his homeland, but the Bolsheviks rejected his work, leading to his depression and premature death.

**Vladimir Mayakovsky**

Vladimir Mayakovsky (1893–1930) was a Russian Soviet poet, playwright, artist, and actor. Prior to the Russian Revolution, Mayakovsky was a prominent figure of the Russian Futurist movement. Although his work often demonstrated ideological and patriotic support for the Communist Party and a strong admiration of Lenin, he increasingly found himself in conflict with the Soviet State, suffering from censorship due to the State doctrine of Socialist realism. Yet after his 1930 suicide Joseph Stalin posthumously declared Mayakovsky “the best and the most talented poet of our Soviet epoch.”

**Nizar Qabbani**

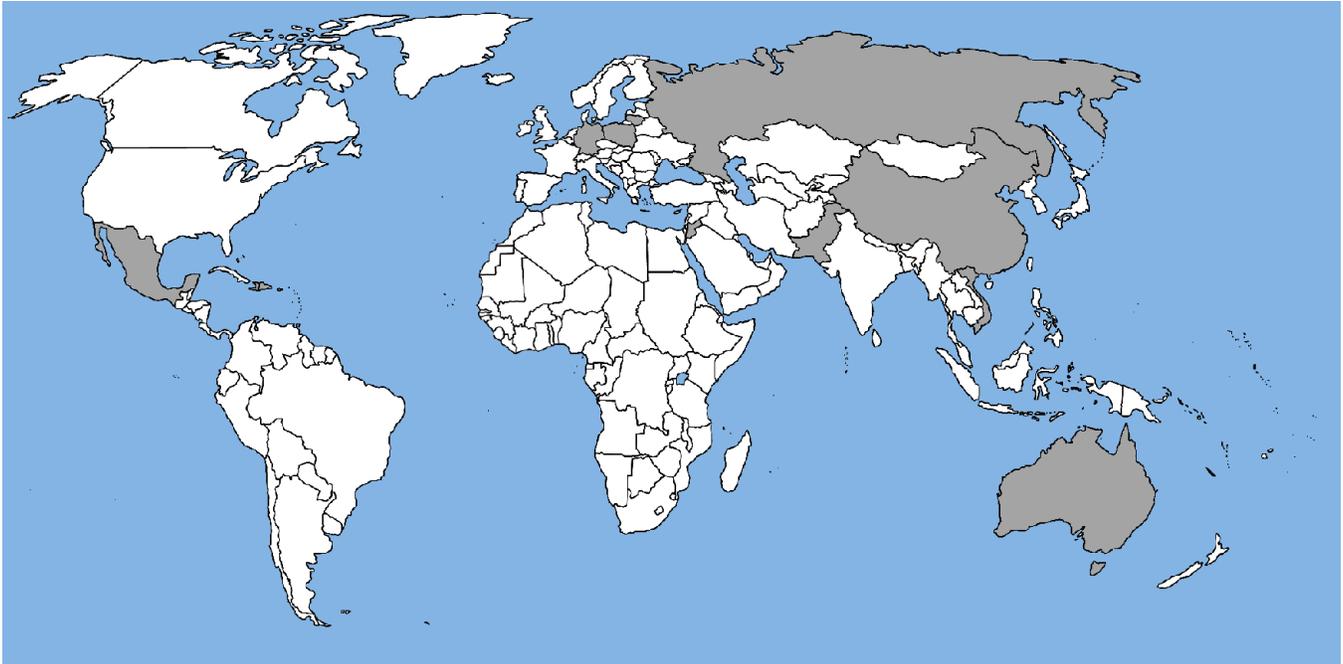
(1923–1998) a Syrian diplomat, poet and publisher. His poetic style combines simplicity and elegance in exploring themes of love, eroticism, feminism, religion, and Arab nationalism. Qabbani is one of the most revered contemporary poets in the Arab world.

**Yevgeny Yevtushenko**

(born 1932) Russian poet. He is a controversial figure, with some considering him a courageous behind-the-scenes reformer and others calling him a Soviet collaborator in disguise. He is considered by many literary critics to be the greatest writer of his generation, the voice of Soviet life.

# Around the World

The characters of *Bridge & Tunnel* have immigrated to the United States from many countries.



## Australia

Australia is the world's sixth-largest country by total area. Indigenous Australians lived there for 50,000 years. After the European discovery of the continent by Dutch explorers in 1606, Australia's eastern half was claimed by Great Britain in 1770 and initially settled as penal colonies. The population grew steadily in subsequent decades and an additional five self-governing crown colonies were established. In 1901, the six colonies federated as one. Since federation, Australia has maintained a parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy. The current population of 24 million is highly urbanized and heavily concentrated in the eastern states and on the coast. Australia has the world's 12th-largest economy and the fifth-highest per capita income. With the second-highest human development index globally, Australia

ranks highly in international comparisons of quality of life, health, education, economic freedom, and the protection of civil liberties and political rights.



## China

China is the world's most populous country, with a population of over 1.35 billion. It is governed by the Communist Party, with its seat of government in Beijing. The world's third-largest country by land area, China has a vast and diverse landscape, ranging from forest steppes and deserts in the arid north to the world's highest mountain ranges in the west to



subtropical forests in the south. China is one of the world's oldest civilizations. For millennia, China's political system was based on hereditary monarchies known as dynasties. Since 221 BCE, when the Qin Dynasty first conquered several states to form a Chinese empire, the country has expanded, fractured, and reformed numerous times. The Republic of China overthrew the last dynasty in 1911. The Communist Party has governed since 1949. Since the introduction of economic reforms in 1978, China has become one of the world's fastest-growing major economies, and today it is the world's largest economy. Although economic reform has brought great national wealth, it has also brought China's citizens wide income inequality, and the average annual income is \$7,600. China is a recognized nuclear weapons state and has the world's largest standing army.

## Dominican Republic

The Dominican Republic is located on the island of Hispaniola, in the Caribbean. Both by area and population the Dominican Republic is the second-largest Caribbean nation (after Cuba), with nearly 10 million people, one million of whom live in the capital city Santo Domingo. The Taíno people inhabited the island since the 7th century. Christopher Columbus landed there in 1492, Santo Domingo became the first permanent European settlement in the Americas. After three centuries of Spanish rule, the Dominican Republic became independent in 1821, experiencing various periods of monarchy, colonial rule, and dictatorship. Since 1978 the



country has moved toward representative democracy. The Dominican Republic has the largest economy in the Caribbean and Central American region. Nevertheless, unemployment, income inequality, government corruption, and inconsistent electric service remain major problems. Large numbers of Dominican émigrés in the United States send billions of dollars to their families at home.

## Germany

Various Germanic tribes have occupied northern Germany since classical antiquity. Beginning in the 10th century, German territories formed a central part of the Holy Roman Empire. During the 16th century, northern German regions became the center of the Protestant Reformation. In 1871 many of the German states unified into the Prussian-dominated German Empire. Alliance with Austria-Hungary led to World War I. After the war, the Empire was replaced by the parliamentary Weimar Republic. The establishment of Hitler's Nazi dictatorship in 1933 led to World War II. After 1945, Germany split into East Germany and West Germany; in 1990, the country was reunified. Today, Germany has the world's fourth-largest economy and is the world's third-largest exporter and importer of goods. It has a very high standard of living with universal health care, environmental protection, and a tuition-free university education. Known for its rich cultural history, Germany has long been the home of influential artists, philosophers, musicians, sportsmen, entrepreneurs, scientists, and inventors.



## Haiti

Haiti shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic in the Caribbean. With a population of 10.6 million people, it is the third-most populous country in the Caribbean. Originally inhabited by the indigenous Taíno people, Haiti was occupied by Spain from 1492 until the early 17th century, when it was ceded to France, which named it *Saint-Domingue*. The development of sugarcane plantations, worked by slaves imported from Africa, led to the colony being among the most lucrative in the world. In the midst of the French Revolution,



slaves and free people of color revolted, leading to the abolishment of slavery. The sovereign Republic of Haiti was established in 1804—the first independent nation of Latin America and the Caribbean and the only nation in the world established as a result of a successful slave revolt. Haiti has somehow maintained its independence since that time, through a series of monarchies, dictatorships, military coups, and foreign occupations. The country was devastated an earthquake in 2010 and is still recovering. It has the lowest Human Development Index in the Americas.

## Jamaica

Jamaica is an island country situated in the Caribbean Sea. Previously inhabited by the indigenous Arawak and Taíno peoples, the island came under Spanish rule following the arrival of Christopher Columbus in 1494. Named *Santiago*, it remained a possession of Spain until 1655, when England (later Great Britain) conquered the island and renamed it Jamaica. Under British rule, Jamaica became a leading sugar exporter, with its plantation economy highly dependent on slaves imported from Africa, followed later by Chinese and Indian indentured labor. All slaves were fully emancipated in 1838, with independence from the United Kingdom achieved in 1962. Jamaicans are of predominately of African descent, with significant European, Chinese, Indian, and mixed-race minorities. Due to a high rate of emigration since the 1960s, Jamaica has a large diaspora around the world, particularly in Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States.



## Jordan

Jordan is an Arab kingdom in the Middle East, on the East Bank of the Jordan River, surrounded by Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria, Israel, and Palestine. Since the dawn of civilization, the country's location at the crossroads of the Middle East has served as a strategic nexus connecting Asia, Africa, and Europe. Early kingdoms were later part of the Roman Empire and the Ottoman Empire. In 1946, Jordan became an independent sovereign state. Jordan is a major tourist destination in the region and is considered the safest country in the Middle East.



It has accepted refugees from almost all surrounding conflicts since 1948, including some 2 million Palestinian refugees and 1.4 million Syrian refugees. Jordan is considered one of the Arab World's most cosmopolitan and liberal countries.

## Lithuania

Lithuania is situated east of Sweden across the Baltic Sea and north of Poland. It has a population of 3 million people, and its capital and largest city is Vilnius. The first unified Lithuanian state was created in 1253. During the 14th century, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was the largest country in Europe, including present-day Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, and parts of Poland and Russia. Formed in 1569, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth lasted more than two centuries, until neighboring countries systematically dismantled it in the late 1700s, with the Russian Empire annexing most of Lithuania's territory. As World War I neared its end, Lithuania achieved independence. During World War II Lithuania was occupied first by the Soviet Union, then by Nazi Germany, then again by the Soviet Union. In 1990, a year before the formal dissolution of the Soviet Union, Lithuania became the first Soviet republic to declare itself independent. Today the United Nations Human Development Index lists Lithuania as a "very high human development" country. Lithuania has been among the fastest growing economies in the European Union.



## Mexico

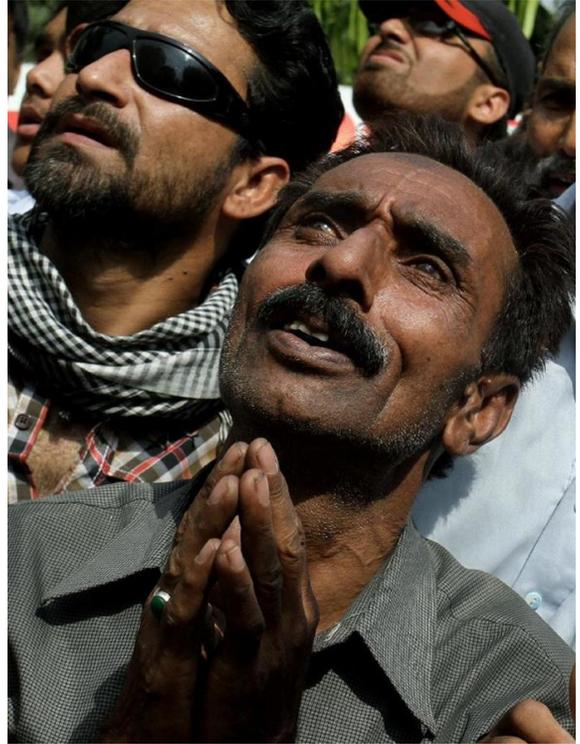
Mexico is the 13th largest independent nation and the most populous Spanish-speaking country in the world. Pre-Columbian Mexico was home to many advanced civilizations, including Maya and Aztec. In 1521, the Spanish Empire conquered and colonized the territory. In 1821 Mexico won independence. The tumultuous post-independence period was characterized by economic instability and many political changes. The Mexican–American War (1846–48) led to the cession of one-third of its territory to the United States. The country's current political system emerged in 1917. Today, more than 11% of Mexico's native population lives abroad, making it the country with the most emigrants in the world; 98% of all Mexican emigrants reside in the United States. The instability of the Mexican peso compared to the United States dollar lures many Mexicans to leave their country and look for better salaries in the United States, so they can send dollars to their families in Mexico. It is not uncommon to



see towns where men are absent, working in the United States and sending dollars to their families in Mexico. Such money is thought to be Mexico's second largest international income.

## Pakistan

Pakistan is the sixth most populous country in the world, located northwest of India and southeast of Afghanistan. The territory that now constitutes Pakistan has been ruled by numerous empires of different faiths and cultures. As part of the Asian subcontinent's struggle for independence, Pakistan was created in 1947 as an independent nation for Muslims. A civil war in 1971 resulted in the secession of Bangladesh. Pakistan is an ethnically and linguistically diverse country, with a great variation in its geography and wildlife. It has the seventh largest standing armed forces in the world and is the only nuclear power in the Muslim world. It has a semi-industrialized economy with a well-integrated agriculture sector. The post-independence history of Pakistan has been characterized by periods of military rule, political instability, and conflicts with neighboring India. The country continues to face challenging problems, including overpopulation, terrorism, poverty, illiteracy, and corruption.



## Poland

The Kingdom of Poland was founded in 1025. In 1569 it joined with Lithuania to form the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, one of the largest and most populous countries of 16th and 17th-century Europe. In the late 18th century the Commonwealth was partitioned among Prussia, the Russian Empire, and Austria. Poland regained its independence at the end of World War I. In 1939 World War II started with the invasions of Poland by Nazi Germany; more than six million Polish citizens died in the war. In 1947 Poland became a satellite state of the Soviet Union. During the Revolutions of 1989 Poland's Communist government was overthrown and Poland adopted a new constitution establishing itself as a democracy. Since



the beginning of the transition to a primarily market-based economy that took place in the early nineties, Poland has achieved a "very high" ranking on the Human Development Index, as well as gradually improving economic freedom. Today Poland is a democratic country with an advanced high-income economy, a high quality of life, and a very high standard of living.

## Russia

Russia is the largest country in the world, covering more than one-eighth of the Earth's inhabited land area. It spans eleven time zones and incorporates a wide range of environments and landforms. It is the world's ninth most populous country with more than 144 million people. The medieval state of



Rus arose in the 9th century, adopting Orthodox Christianity and synthesizing Byzantine and Slavic cultures. Most of Rus was overrun by the Mongol invasion in the 13th century. The Grand Duchy of Moscow gradually reunified the surrounding Russian principalities and achieved independence. By the 18th century, the nation had become the Russian Empire, the third largest empire in history, stretching across three continents from Poland to Alaska. Following the Russian Revolution in 1917, the Soviet Union (USSR) became the world's first constitutionally socialist state, a recognized world superpower, and a rival to the United States, playing a decisive role in the Allied victory in World War II. The Soviet era saw some of the most significant technological achievements of the 20th century, including the world's first human-made satellite, and the first man in space. By the end of 1990, the Soviet Union had the world's second largest economy, largest standing military, and the largest stockpile of weapons of mass destruction. Following the partition of the Soviet Union in 1991, fourteen Independent republic nations emerged from the USSR, the largest being the Russian Federation, considered the successor state of the USSR. Today, average annual per capita income is \$13,000.

## Vietnam

Vietnam is the easternmost country on the Indochina Peninsula in Southeast Asia. With an estimated 90.5 million inhabitants, it is the world's 13th most populous country. Vietnam was part of Imperial China from 111 BCE to 939 CE. After winning independence, successive Vietnamese royal dynasties flourished until the Indochina Peninsula was colonized by the French in the mid-19th century. When the French were expelled in 1954, Vietnam was divided politically into two rival states, North and South Vietnam. Conflict led to the Vietnam War, which ended with a North Vietnamese victory in 1975. Vietnam was then unified under a communist government but remained impoverished and politically isolated. In 1986, the



government initiated a series of economic and political reforms. By 2000, it had established diplomatic relations with all nations. Since 2000, Vietnam's economic growth rate has been among the highest in the world.

# Indiana Academic Standards Alignment Guide

## Reading – Literature

- RL.1 – Read and comprehend a variety of literature independently and proficiently
- RL.2 – Build comprehension and appreciation of literature by analyzing, inferring, and drawing conclusions about literary elements, themes, and central ideas
- RL.3 – Build comprehension and appreciation of literature, using knowledge of literary structure and point of view
  - Sample: 11-12.RL.3.1: *Analyze and evaluate how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a work of literature (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.*
    - How does Sarah Jones’ choice to set *Bridge & Tunnel* at a poetry reading affect her ability to convey her themes? How does it affect the tone of the piece? Was it effective? Why or why not?
- RL.4 – Build comprehension and appreciation of literature by connecting various literary works and analyzing how medium and interpretation impact meaning

## Reading – Nonfiction

- RN.2 – Extract and construct meaning from nonfiction texts using a range of comprehension skills
  - Sample: 11-12.RN.4.2: Synthesize and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.
    - Read [this review](#) of *Bridge & Tunnel* in the New York Times. How did the choice for Sarah Jones to play all of the characters affect this reviewer’s reaction to the piece? How did it affect you? Write your own review of the piece to explore.

## Reading – Vocabulary

- RV.3 – Build comprehension and appreciation of literature and nonfiction texts by determining or clarifying figurative, connotative, and technical meanings
  - Sample: 9-10.RV.3.1: *Analyze the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in works of literature, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings.*
    - After viewing the play, revisit some of the poems using the glossary provided in the IRT study guide. How does this new access to background information affect the meaning of the poem for you?

## Cross-Curricular Connection: US History

- USH.8.9 *Analyze the impact of globalization on U.S. culture and U.S. economic, political and foreign policy. (Government, Economics, Geography)*
  - Using the IRT study guide, research each of the countries represented by the characters of *Bridge & Tunnel*. What aspects of the foreign relations between the United States and that country affected the experience of the character? Is there any insight as to why they feel the way they do?

# Pre-Show Activity

In preparing to talk about the use of **controversial language** in the play, have the students look into linguistics and etymology. Here are two sites of interest:

<http://www.linguisticsociety.org/resource/studying-linguistics>

<http://grammar.about.com/od/words/a/Etymologywords.htm>

An additional helpful resource is *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of The English Language* by David Crystal.

Assign your students some vocabulary words to research—perhaps words from the play, or words from your other teaching units—and then report their findings to the class. This is a good bridge to use in letting students know that all language is teachable. All words have roots and history to be explored. From what is the word derived? When was it first used? What is its social background? Discuss the purpose of language.

Why are certain words categorized as profane, vulgar, or taboo? What does the use of this language say about the person using it? How does society view and/or judge people who use (or object to) these words? Are there situations where profanity is inappropriate? Why? How and why have society's views of this type of language changed in the last 20 years?

Ask the students to note in the play when taboo words are used. What effect do they believe the playwright is seeking with such language? Is she successful? In what ways would the play be different if the playwright had chosen other language? What does such language reveal about the emotions, background, and point of view of the characters? What affect, if any, did the swearing have on the mood and point of view of the audience?

Perhaps you as a teacher will want to offer your students a summary of this topic that might include your observations of taboo language in literature and other media formats (past, present, and future), the rules of conduct of your school, and/or your personal views about swearing.

# Discussion Questions

Why do you suppose these annual poetry reading events are so important for Mohammed? Discuss from his point of view both as a poet and as an immigrant.

What is the significance of Mohammed's phone calls from his wife, Amina? What are the implications that these calls might suggest for other characters in the play?

In what ways do the play's immigrant characters share similar concerns? In what ways are their points of view different? How do such factors as age, education, and economic prosperity shape the characters' experiences in America?

How did the play make you look at people differently? Think of someone who you see regularly but don't actually know. What do you imagine about that person's life? What questions might you ask him or her if you met face to face?

Social exclusion is not solely confined to those who are immigrants. Talk about the social system in your school. How do different social groups get along? How do different grades include or exclude each other in activities? How do cliques develop, and why? How can such societal groupings be beneficial, and how can they be harmful.

What is your family's background? From what countries did your ancestors emigrate? How does your family follow unique traditions that have been handed down from other lands?

What did you think of the actor's transformations from character to character? Which characterization was your favorite, and why? Beyond the changing of costumes, what specific physical and vocal techniques did you see the actor using to differentiate between characters?

How did the different characters work together to create a picture of America? What connections can you make between the stories in the play and events in the world today?

# Activities

This play features characters from many countries around the world, including Australia, China, the Dominican Republic, Germany, Haiti, Jamaica, Jordan, Lithuania, Mexico, Pakistan, Poland, Russia, and Vietnam. Divide your class into small groups of two or three students each. Or add other countries to the list and assign each student his or her own country. Have each student or group create a 5-minute oral presentation or a bulletin board display on each country. Include such elements as history, geography, demographics, education, economy, arts and culture, and human rights.

Investigate the history of immigration in the United States. How have attitudes and regulations changed over the years? How have they remained consistent? What are the social, economic, and political factors shaping today's debate about immigration? How might our ancestors view today's attitudes on the subject?

Investigate your family tree to learn how your own family came to the United States. Record interviews with your older relatives to make an oral history of your family's journey.

Create a character of your own, as Sarah Jones, Whoopi Goldberg, Lily Tomlin, and others have done, and write and perform a monologue. Perhaps your character might be inspired by someone you have known or seen or heard about, or perhaps he or she will come from your imagination. Choose someone who will stretch your skills but at the same time be someone whom you can get inside of and convincingly embody. What is the story your character has to tell? What physical and vocal characteristics will make your character distinctive yet believable? What one or two costume pieces might help you suggest your character?

Organize a poetry slam at your school. Invite students to read poems or stories they have written. Make it purely a sharing event, or select judges and offer prizes.

## Writing Prompts

Write a poem to perform aloud. Choose as your subject something you really care about. Speak from the heart. Use such literary devices as metaphor, simile, alliteration, onomatopoeia, antithesis, rhythm, and/or rhyme.

We learn about characters from what they say, what they do, and from what other characters say about them. Choose one of the characters from *Bridge & Tunnel* and do a character analysis beginning with those three points. Then extrapolate more biographical information about your chosen character, such as age, gender, education, passions, aspirations, likes and dislikes, hopes and dreams, work life, relationships, socioeconomic position, etc. Write a poem or story from your chosen character's point of view, imagining a different aspect of his or her life from that in the play.

Put each character's name onto a slip of paper and mix them together. Have each student draw two random names from the collection. Have each student write a conversation between their two characters, perhaps discussing each other's presentations in the poetry reading.

Write a review of the play. What moments made an impression on you? How do the elements of scenery, costumes, lighting, and sound work with the actor's performance of the text to tell the story? What ideas or themes did the play make you think about? How did it make you feel? To share your reviews with others, send to: [education.irt@gmail.com](mailto:education.irt@gmail.com)

# Resources

## Books

*From Every End of This Earth: 13 Families and the New Lives They Made in America*  
by Steven V. Roberts

*Outcasts United: An American Town, a Refugee Team, and One Woman's Quest to Make a Difference* by Warren St. John

*American Victory: Wrestling, Dreams, and a Journey Toward Home* by Henry Cajudo

*Try to Remember* by Iris Gomez

*The Wall: Growing Up Behind the Iron Curtain* by Peter Sis

*The Latehomecomer: A Hmong Family Memoir* by Kao Kalia Yang

*Golden Bones: An Extraordinary Journey from Hell in Cambodia to a New Life in America*  
by Sichan Siv

*Dying to Live: A Story of U.S. Immigration in an Age of Global Apartheid* by Joseph Nevins

*We Are All Suspects Now: Untold Stories from Immigrant Communities after 9/11*  
by Tram Nguyen

*Targeted: Homeland Security and the Business of Immigration* by Deepa Fernandes

*Brave New Voices: The YOUTH SPEAKS Guide to Teaching Spoken Word Poetry*  
by Scott Herndon & Jen Weiss

*The Spoken Word Revolution: Slam, Hip Hop & the Poetry of a New Generation*  
by Mark Eleveld

*Take the Mic: The Art of Performance Poetry, Slam, and the Spoken Word*  
by Marc Kelly Smith & Joe Kraynak

*Word Warriors: 35 Women Leaders in the Spoken Word Revolution* edited by Alix Olson

*Courage: Daring Poems for Gutsy Girls*  
edited by Keren Finneyfrock, Mindy Nettifee, & Rachel McKibbens

## Films

*Moscow on the Hudson* (1984)

*In America* (2002)

*El Norte* (1983)

*West Side Story* (1964)

*Stand and Deliver* (1988)

*Avalon* (1990)

*The Terminal* (2004)

*Louder Than a Bomb* (2010, documentary)

## Online Video

Sarah Jones's four TED Talks

<https://www.ted.com/search?q=sarah+jones>

Sarah Jones: One Woman, Many Peoples

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZCEza0YZ8cl>

Sarah Jones: The Just City

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y1dqsXhl0sE>

Sarah Jones at the United Nations: Women Can't Wait

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vna4RAUkX9w>

Sarah Jones: The New Global Village

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxGZ1TI3IU4>

a collection of YouthSpeaks spoken word poems and other videos

<https://www.youtube.com/user/YOUTHSPEAKS>

10 spoken word performances from TED Talks

<http://blog.ted.com/10-spoken-word-performances-folded-like-lyrical-origami/>

## Websites

Playwright Sarah Jones's website

<http://sarahjonesonline.com>

Ancestry.com

[http://www.ancestry.com/?s\\_kwcid=geneology+website&gclid=Cj0KEQjw763BRDZx\\_Xg3-Pv2cABEiQAoDfeGPTOUCA8H4F9dX97WWuN8VZ3KcHx675kjshclCLv3D4aAkZZ8P8HAQ&o\\_xid=21837&o\\_lid=21837&o\\_sch=Paid+Search+--+NonBrand](http://www.ancestry.com/?s_kwcid=geneology+website&gclid=Cj0KEQjw763BRDZx_Xg3-Pv2cABEiQAoDfeGPTOUCA8H4F9dX97WWuN8VZ3KcHx675kjshclCLv3D4aAkZZ8P8HAQ&o_xid=21837&o_lid=21837&o_sch=Paid+Search+--+NonBrand)

Genealogy.com

[http://genealogy.com/lp/genealogy-records?s\\_kwcid=free+genealogy+website&rd=http%3a%2f%2fgenealogy.com%2flp%2fgenealogy-records&o\\_xid=57493&o\\_lid=57493&o\\_sch=Paid+Search+--+NonBrand](http://genealogy.com/lp/genealogy-records?s_kwcid=free+genealogy+website&rd=http%3a%2f%2fgenealogy.com%2flp%2fgenealogy-records&o_xid=57493&o_lid=57493&o_sch=Paid+Search+--+NonBrand)

a bibliography of genealogy websites for beginners

<http://www.familytreemagazine.com/article/25-best-genealogy-websites-for-beginners>

the world's first and largest online poetry community for youth

<http://www.powerpoetry.org>

Youth Speaks, a literacy development program focused on spoken poetry

<http://youthspeaks.org/bravenewvoices/>

Poetry Slam Inc.

<http://poetryslam.com>

a bibliography of websites about immigration history

<http://besthistorysites.net/american-history/immigration/>

Immigration: Stories of Yesterday and Today

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/immigration/>

Multicultural education and equity websites for teachers

[http://www.nsrharmony.org/sites/default/files/2014.Nov.\\_Connections.TenEquityWebsites.pdf](http://www.nsrharmony.org/sites/default/files/2014.Nov._Connections.TenEquityWebsites.pdf)

The National Organization for Multicultural Education

[http://www.nameorg.org/websites\\_links.php](http://www.nameorg.org/websites_links.php)

# Glossary

## 26 Federal Plaza

The Jacob K. Javits Federal Office Building in Manhattan houses the Department of Homeland Security, the FBI New York City field office, and the New York City district field office of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

## Ali, Muhammed

Muhammad Ali (born Cassius Clay Jr. in 1942) is generally considered among the greatest heavyweights in the history of professional boxing, and one of the most recognized sports figures of the past 100 years. He was known for his witty trash talk; in preparation for a championship fight with Sonny Liston in 1964, Ali said that he would “float like a butterfly, sting like a bee. Your hands can’t hit what your eyes can’t see.”

## “Almost Deaf Poetry Jam”

a reference to *Russell Simmons presents Def Poetry*, better known as simply *Def Poetry Jam*, a spoken word poetry television series hosted by Mos Def and airing on HBO between 2002 and 2007.

## ancient Chinese secrets

A reference to a series of 1970s TV commercials for Calgon water softener for laundry.

## apple pie

Despite the expression “as American as apple pie,” the apple is not native to America. It was brought to America by Dutch, British, and Swedish settlers in the 17th century. Recipes for Dutch apple pie go back to 1514.

## arugula

A pungent salad green, long eaten in Italy but until recently popular in the United States only among “foodies.”

## Baghdad

Baghdad is the capital of Iraq. With a population of 7 million, it is the largest city in Iraq and the third largest city in the Middle East. As of 2012, Baghdad was ranked as the worst of 221 major cities as measured by quality-of-life.

## Bar Mitzvah

Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah are Jewish coming of age rituals, when youth begin to bear their own responsibility for Jewish ritual law, tradition, and ethics, and are able to participate in all areas of Jewish community life.

## Boca

Boca Raton is located in Palm Beach County, Florida. It is a very popular retirement community.

## Bridge & Tunnel

The phrase “bridge and tunnel” was originally coined as a pejorative term for people who commute into Manhattan from surrounding communities, requiring them to pass over a bridge or through a tunnel.

## the Bronx

The Bronx is New York City’s northernmost borough. It is the birthplace of rap and hip hop culture.

## Brooklyn

Brooklyn, on the western tip of Long Island, is New York City’s most populous borough.

## cardamom

a spice made from the seeds of several plants native to India; a common ingredient in Indian cooking.

**Chicano**

A person of Mexican origin living in the United States.

**comparative literature**

Comparative literature (sometimes abbreviated comp lit) is an academic field dealing with the study of literature and cultural expression across linguistic, cultural, and national boundaries.

**Corona**

A multicultural neighborhood in Queens with a Latino majority.

**crack**

the freebase form of cocaine that can be smoked; considered to be the most addictive form of cocaine

**coyote's car**

In urban slang, a coyote is a person who illegally smuggles immigrants into the United States for a fee.

***Crouching Tiger Hidden Drycleaner***

A reference to *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, a Hong Kong martial arts film. The highest-grossing foreign-language film in American history, it won four Academy Awards, including Best Foreign Language Film.

**democracy**

The term *democracy* first appeared in Greek political and philosophical thought in ancient Athens.

**El Monte terminal**

a bus station in East Los Angeles

**Eastern Europe**

The United Nations Statistics Division classifies the following ten countries as Eastern Europe: Belarus, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, and Ukraine.

***Enemy of the State***

*Enemy of the State* is a 1998 spy thriller film starring Will Smith and Gene Hackman, about NSA agents who kill a congressman who opposes expanded counter-terrorism legislation.

**Eritrea**

Eritrea is located on the coast of East Africa, across the Red Sea from Saudi Arabia.

**feng shui**

the Chinese art or practice of creating harmonious surroundings that enhance the balance of yin and yang, as in arranging furniture or determining the siting of a house

**Florida**

Spaniard Juan Ponce de León first explored the region in 1513 and named it *La Florida* ("flowery land").

***Frontline***

*Frontline* is a public affairs television program featuring documentaries about various subjects on PBS since 1983.

**gooks**

Gook is a derogatory term for Asians. It was originally predominantly used by the US military during wartime, especially during the Korean and Vietnam wars.

### **haiku**

A haiku is a short Japanese poem consisting of 17 syllables, divided into three phrases of 5, 7, and 5. Traditionally, it juxtaposes two contrasting images or ideas, and its subject matter is drawn from nature.

### **Haitian Creole**

Haitian Creole is a creole language based largely on 18th-century French with influences from Portuguese, Spanish, Taíno, and West African languages. (A pidgin language is a rudimentary non-grammatical means of communication that develops between two groups that do not have a common language. If, over generations, it becomes a fully developed language with its own vocabulary and system of grammar, that is a creole language.)

### **H&R Block**

H&R Block is the nation's largest tax preparation company, founded in 1955.

### ***hijab***

A hijab is a veil that covers the head and chest, which is worn by some Muslim women beyond the age of puberty in the presence of adult males outside of their immediate family. It can further refer to any head, face, or body covering worn by Muslim women that conforms to a certain standard of modesty.

### **Hoboken**

Hoboken, New Jersey was a major port and home to industries for most of the 20th century. Recently evolving from a blue collar town to a more upscale community, it is rebuilding from devastation by Hurricane Sandy.

### **Ho-ho-kus, New Jersey**

A borough in Bergen County, New Jersey.

### **IKEA**

IKEA has been the world's largest furniture retailer since 2008. The company was founded in Sweden in 1943.

### **JFK**

The John F. Kennedy International Airport is located in Queens.

### ***jilbab***

The term *jilbab* refers to a long and loose-fit coat or garment worn by some Muslim women. Wearers believe that this definition of *jilbab* fulfills the Quranic demand for a *hijab*. The modern *jilbab* covers the entire body, except for hands, face, and head. The head and neck are then covered by a scarf or wrap (*khimar*).

### **Karachi**

Karachi is the largest city of Pakistan and the second largest in the Muslim world.

### **Lee, Bruce**

Bruce Lee (1940–1973), star of such films as *Enter the Dragon* (1973), is widely considered to be one of the most influential martial artists of all time, as well as a pop culture icon of the 20th century.

### **Levi's jeans**

Levi Strauss was a German immigrant when he first began manufacturing Levi's jeans in San Francisco in 1853.

### **Long Island**

Long Island stretches east from New York Harbor into the Atlantic Ocean. The western part of the island is occupied by Brooklyn and Queens; the suburban counties of Nassau and Suffolk lie to the east.

**Maher, Bill**

Bill Maher (born 1956) is a comedian, writer, producer, and political commentator, best known for his series *Real Time with Bill Maher* and *Politically Incorrect*. He is widely known for his liberal opinions and sarcastic delivery.

**Marley, Bob**

(1945–1981) Jamaican reggae singer, song writer, musician, and guitarist. He is one of the world's best-selling artists of all time, with sales of more than 75 million records.

**McCain, John**

John McCain (born 1936) is a US Senator from Arizona and was the Republican presidential nominee in 2008. During the Vietnam War, he was held as a prisoner of war by the North Vietnamese for six years.

***The Mexican***

A 2001 film starring Brad Pitt and Julia Roberts, a romantic comedy–thriller–road movie. The title refers to the name of an antique gun, not a person, and the film focuses on the adventures of two white people in Mexico.

**Moslems**

Today Moslem is considered an old-fashioned, out-dated spelling for Muslim. Whereas for most English speakers, the two words are interchangeable, the Arabic roots of the two words are very different. In Arabic, *Muslim* means “one who gives himself to God”—a follower of Islam; *moslem* means “one who is evil and unjust.”

**Mozambique**

Mozambique is located on the southeastern coast of Africa.

**Napalm**

Napalm (*naphthenic* and *palmitic* acids) is a thickening/gelling agent generally mixed with gasoline or a similar fuel for use in military operations. US forces used Napalm bombs extensively during the Vietnam War.

**National Guard**

In 2005, National Guard members and reservists were said to comprise a larger percentage of frontline fighting forces than in any war in U.S. history (about 43 percent in Iraq and 55 percent in Afghanistan). Maximum deployment is currently 24 months, double what it was pre–9/11. The idea of the National Guard serving “one weekend a month, two weeks a year” no longer seems to be relevant.

**Nguuyen, Dustin**

Vietnamese-American actor known for his TV roles on *21 Jump Street* and *V.I.P.*

**Nova**

*Nova* has been a popular PBS science series since 1974.

**orthopedic shoes**

Orthopedic shoes are specially designed footwear to relieve discomfort associated with many foot and ankle disorders, such as blisters, bunions, calluses and corns, hammer toes, or heel spurs.

**paper**

Papyrus, a thick paper-like material made from the pith of the papyrus plant, was developed in Egypt in the fourth millennium BCE; the oldest surviving documents date from around 2500 BCE.

**Phu Dong**

The Phu Dong Family Band is a group of 25 who play a wide range of traditional Vietnamese instruments from their collection of hundreds, including strings and winds as well as percussion.

**Queens**

Queens, on Long Island north and east of Brooklyn, is geographically the largest borough in New York City. It is not only the most ethnically diverse county in the USA, it is the most ethnically diverse urban area in the world.

**Queens College**

Queens College, located in Flushing, is one of the senior colleges of the City University of New York. It opened in 1937 and has 18,500 students.

**Queensborough Film Festival**

fictional

**Radio Ramallah**

Broadcasting from 1949 to 1967, Radio Ramallah united West Bank Palestinians and Jerusalem Jews. It avoided propaganda and demagoguery, only playing the most popular Western and Arabic music.

**Ramadan**

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, observed by Muslims worldwide as a month of fasting to commemorate the first revelation of the Quran to Muhammad.

**Route 17**

Route 17 is a state highway in Bergen County, New Jersey.

**Saigon**

Ho Chi Minh City is the largest city in Vietnam. Under the name Saigon, it was the capital of the French colony of Cochinchina and later of the independent republic of South Vietnam from 1955 to 1975.

**schmatta**

Yiddish: rag

**Secretary of State**

A reference to Colin Powell (born 1937), Secretary of State under President George W. Bush from 2001 to 2005, the first African American to serve in that position. His parents were Jamaican immigrants.

**sestina**

A sestina is a fixed-verse poetic form consisting of six stanzas of six lines each, normally followed by a three-line envoi (a short stanza at the end of a poem used either to address an imagined or actual person or to comment on the preceding body of the poem). The words that end each line of the first stanza are used as line endings in each of the following stanzas, rotated in a set pattern.

**shampoo**

Shampoo was developed in ancient India. It was brought to Europe during the colonial era. The word *shampoo* is derived from Hindi *chāmpo*, itself derived from the Sanskrit root *capayati*, which means “to press, knead, soothe.”

**Somalia**

Somalia is located on the Horn of Africa, a peninsula on the coast of East Africa that juts out into the Indian Ocean. It has been rocked by instability since civil war broke out in 1991. From 2008 to 2013 it was ranked at the top of the Fragile States Index; it is currently second on the list.

**Staten Island**

Staten Island is the most suburban in character of the five boroughs of New York City. It is connected to Brooklyn by the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge and to Manhattan by way of the free Staten Island Ferry.

***A Tale of Two Airports***

fictional

**TRL**

*Total Request Live*, a video series on MTV from 1998 to 2008.

**Toyota**

Based in Japan, Toyota is the largest automobile manufacturer in the world. It is the 14th largest company in the world and, outside of three government-owned energy companies in China, the largest company in Asia.

**uprising in Chiapas**

The Zapatista Army of National Liberation is a revolutionary leftist political and militant group based in Chiapas, the southernmost state of Mexico. The Zapatistas consider the contemporary political system of Mexico inherently flawed and disconnected from the people and their needs. In contrast, the Zapatistas seek indigenous control over their local resources, especially land. The Zapatista Army went public in 1994 on the day when the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) came into effect.

**Urdu**

Urdu is the official language of Pakistan, historically associated with the Muslims of Hindustan.

**Van Wyck Expressway**

a six-lane auxiliary interstate highway that extends north from JFK Airport into Queens

**video diary for MTV**

*Diary*, an MTV series that follows celebrities through their everyday lives, premiered in 2001.

**Williamsburg, Brooklyn**

Williamsburg has a large local art community and hipster culture. It is an influential hub of current indie rock.

# Going to the Theatre: Audience Role & Responsibility



You, the audience, are one of the most important parts of any performance. Experiencing the theatre is a group activity shared not only with the actors, but also with the people sitting around you. Your attention and participation help the actors perform better, and allow the rest of the audience to enjoy the show. Here are a few simple tips to help make each theatre experience enjoyable for everyone:

Leave mp3 players, cameras, mobile phones, and other distracting and noise-making electronic devices at home.

You may think texting is private, but the light and the motion are very annoying to those around you and on stage. Do not text during the performance.

Food and drink must stay in the lobby.

The house lights dimming and going out signal the audience to get quiet and settle in your seats: the play is about to begin.

Don't talk with your neighbors during the play. It distracts people around you and the actors on stage. Even if you think they can't hear you, they can.

Never throw anything onto the stage. People could be injured.

Remain in your seat during the play. Use the restroom before or after the show.

Focus all your attention on the play to best enjoy the experience. Listen closely to the dialogue and sound effects, and look at the scenery, lights, and costumes. These elements all help to tell the story.

Get involved in the story. Laugh, cry, sigh, gasp—whatever the story draws from you. The more emotionally involved you are, the more you will enjoy the play.

Remain at your seat and applaud during the curtain call because this is part of the performance too. It gives you a chance to recognize a job well done and the actors a moment to thank you for your attention.