THE GIVER
adapted by Eric Coble
from the Newbery Award-winning novel
by Lois Lowry

January 21 – February 21, 2015, on the IRT’s Upperstage

STUDY GUIDE

edited by Richard J Roberts & Milicent Wright
with contributions by Janet Allen, Courtney Sale
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The Giver
adapted by Eric Coble
from the Newbery Award–winning novel by Lois Lowry

No pain. No desire. No choice. Sameness reigns in a utopian society set in the not-too-distant future. But for twelve-year-old Jonas, his controlled and predictable life is unraveling before his eyes. Based on the award-winning book by Lois Lowry, this complex and controversial story forces us all to question the dangers of conformity and complete safety from all pain. After learning the truth and feeling pain and joy, Jonas realizes he wants to experience all of life and must leave the safety and security of home.

Estimated length: 90 minutes

Recommended for students in grades 5 through 12

THEMES, ISSUES, & TOPICS
Utopia/Dystopia
Safety and Security vs. Freedom
Life of the Community vs. Life of the Individual

Student Matinees at 9:45 & 11:50 am: Monday-Friday, January 21–February 20

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The Story

Jonas lives with his parents and his younger sister, Lily, in a world without hunger, violence, or conflict. Everything in the community is carefully designed for serenity and comfort. Each family unit has two parents and no more than two children; old people are cared for in a separate facility; appropriate careers are assigned by a committee of elders who carefully assess each person’s abilities.

As the time nears for the annual Ceremony of 12, Jonas and his friends Asher and Fiona look forward to receiving their life assignments. Jonas is surprised to be singled out as the community’s Receiver of Memory. Every day he is to report to the Giver, an Elder who holds a special place of honor in the community. The Giver begins to share with Jonas the wealth of memories and knowledge he carries, and Jonas starts to glimpse a world beyond the confines of his community, beyond the here and now. As he learns about the choices that are no longer available to him—or to anyone else—Jonas begins to question the price the community pays for its placid existence.
Listening to Our Youth

by Janet Allen, Executive Artistic Director

In young adult fiction today, there is a clear fascination with the concept of a dystopian future. The Divergent series, the Hunger Games series, among others, imagine a world not so unlike ours, but where the stakes for human life have been altered by cruel survivalist governments. Lois Lowry’s The Giver was among the first of this genre: written in 1993, it sold 10 million copies and won the Newbery Medal for Children’s literature in 1994. It has gone on to become a staple of junior high reading curricula, as it poses an excellent study of the power of the individual human spirit to act for good in the face of inhuman controls.

Among the concerns that this profusion of dystopian novels suggests is that the future appears to hold some scary possibilities: individual freedoms curtailed, human history obliterated, questioning eliminated, biological families separated, all for the good of the body politic. Among the most challenging questions The Giver poses is, “would it really take the elimination of human choice to create a world free of poverty and war?” We all agree that poverty and war are blights on human existence, and certainly Lowry isn’t suggesting that these are human ills worth abiding. Instead, the values raised in her cautionary tale suggest that we must act wisely and compassionately to honor human individuality, to understand human differences without attempting to obliterate them, even if the goal in doing so appears to favor the majority. This is a running theme in dystopian literature, as well as a values system that tweens, teens, and young adults are attempting to master: What is the price of conformity and how do individual freedoms need to dovetail into the fabric of human society? Where does the self leave off and the health of a social unit of friends, family, school, or workplace prevail? How is social compromise achieved without demeaning human life?

The zeal to adapt Lowry’s tale to the stage, screen, and even opera house has been very apparent of late. Jeff Bridges’s film version that premiered this past summer had some brave acting in it; but the ways in which the movie’s creators chose to generalize the book’s content lessened its impact and moved it away from the coming-of-age story that is so important to Lowry’s premise. Eric Coble’s stage adaptation hews closely to Lowry’s story structure and rests firmly on the wide-eyed wonder of the adolescent Jonas as he moves into an adult world and is expected to accept some decidedly cynical adult reasoning. This stage adaptation celebrates Lowry’s belief that it takes a child to recognize the pathway out of the rationalized dysfunction of the adult world, even if it means leaving all that is familiar and safe behind. No wonder young people celebrate these works: they are a clarion call for clear-eyed empathy and human-centered values. We should all be listening.
Lessons in Disobedience

by Courtney Sale, Director

Scan any parenting section at a local bookstore, and you will find scads of literature dedicated to raising the well-behaved and obedient child. These books reinforce a perceived notion that success for both caregivers and children springs from a willingness to go along with the pack, make little disturbance, and conform. Americans prize individualism and yet we see this conformity play out in our homes, our religious institutions, and perhaps most frighteningly in our schools.

This past October in Jefferson County, Colorado, school board members proposed a new curriculum for public school history courses. The proposal suggests educators should not teach works that encourage civil disorder, social strife, or disregard for the law. In this scenario students would be “guarded” from the works of Thoreau, the Women’s Suffrage and Civil Rights movements, and the Boston Tea Party. How did young people of Jefferson County respond? They staged acts of civil disobedience, participated in walkouts, and voiced their concerns in public forums. The proposal marginally passed and debates continue in Jefferson County.

_The Giver_ offers us a dynamic lesson in disobedience that continues to be strikingly relevant. In Jonas, we find a young man who has little reason to challenge his surroundings. For him, every need is met, every desire numbed. Lois Lowry’s remarkable story reminds us at every age that when equipped with truth, knowledge, and memory, we must stand up to the most disguised oppressors, whether they are familial or foreign. And often the best and most powerful tool in that fight is our own disobedience.
The Community … and Beyond

Robert Mark Morgan  Scenic Designer
What I believe makes theatre special is that it is a collaborative art form. From the earliest of design meetings moving forward, no member of the creative team can claim one idea or another as exclusively his or hers. Instead, ideas build upon ideas into one marvelous creative stack of ... file drawers.

Led by our director, Courtney Sale, design meetings for The Giver were emblematic of this approach. We launched ourselves into discussions of how we categorize and organize memories, thoughts, and significant events in our lives both on an internal or subconscious level, but also an external one. Remember card catalogs? Remember microfiche? Even before knowing what the set would be, we referenced it as a “sculpture” that would serve as a metaphor for this physical and mental categorization of memories as well as (of course) a scenic “device” for staging the play. The result sits before you now. I hope you enjoy the memory you create tonight and carry with you ... in whatever way you store it.

Preliminary scenic drawing by designer Robert Mark Morgan.
**Betsy Cooprider-Bernstein**  Lighting Designer  
I am excited to light my second production of *The Giver* at the IRT because this cautionary tale is so compelling. I am a big fan of this genre and I know the impact it can have on our audiences. As I approach this production, I envision a world of high contrasts. At first we see an environment controlled by “sameness”—which does not necessarily mean bland and boring. Perhaps it looks like a place we would like to be: safe, calm, serene. But then we begin to see the world differently, affected by what we learn from the Giver. The memories he shares with Jonas invoke images of color, texture, shape, and movement. Theatrical lighting will use these same qualities to enrich and enliven the play’s revelations.

**Guy Clark**  Costume Designer  
A lack of choices does not have to lead to an environment of stark privation. Imagine an all-expense-paid vacation on a luxury cruise liner where your every need is lavishly met. Everything around you is designed to remove all worries—until the morning you wake up craving something not on the menu.

Costume renderings for Jonas and the Giver by designer Guy Clark.

**Tom Horan**  Sound Designer  
I first read *The Giver* just after it was published, and I’ve enjoyed helping to bring to life a novel that has been so influential to current Young Adult literature. In tackling the sound design for this show, I began to see Jonas’s music-less world as an extension of our own—how on any given day we are more likely to hear a ringtone than someone actually playing an instrument. What do we lose when we no longer hear the creak of fingers against steel strings of a guitar, or the breath of the singer? Are we okay with music that is merely pleasant? How often have we been on the phone with a soothing computer voice rather than a person? It is possible, however, to restore what has been lost. The memories that serve Jonas’s journey are made visceral—and therefore more real—by their complicated and dissonant sound.
The Card Catalog

Early librarians kept written lists, or catalogs, of their holdings, organized as each librarian saw fit. New acquisitions had to be squeezed into the margins until a new, reorganized list was created. The first card catalogs appeared in the 1800s after the standardization of the 3x5 card for personal filing systems. Each card listed author, title, subject, date of publication, publisher, etc. Three cards might be created for each book in the library, to be filed by author, title, or subject, enabling greater flexibility in searching. Updates were easily accomplished by filing new cards between old ones. The cards were filed in small, deep drawers that might be pulled out and set on a table for easier access. Library patrons flipped through the cards to find what books the library held by a given author, or on a given subject. Online cataloging was first developed in 1983 and widely used by the late 1990s. Although card catalogs are rarely seen today, they are still part of our collective memory: a familiar sight to generations of library users, and an apt metaphor for organizing ideas.
Meet the Characters

Jonas
played by Grayson Molin
As the play begins, Jonas is unsure what assignment he will receive from the Council of Elders. When he becomes the community’s Receiver of Memory, he discovers that the flashes of Beyond he has glimpsed are a rare gift that will take him to places he never imagined.

The Giver
played by David Alan Anderson
The community’s long-time Receiver of Memory has held the community’s collective memory for many years. He uses this knowledge to help the Council of Elders make important decisions.

Costume drawings by designer Guy Clark.
This actor plays two different characters.

**Chief Elder**
played by Katie deBuys
As leader of the community’s Council of Elders, the Chief Elder announces young people’s assignments at the Ceremony of Twelve.

**Mother**
played by Katie deBuys
Jonas’s mother holds an important position in the community’s Department of Justice, ensuring that the citizens of the community follow the rules.

**Father**
played by Bill Simmons
Jonas’s father is a Nurturer who cares for the community’s new children, helping to meet their physical and emotional needs.
Fiona
played by Lola Kennedy
Fiona is a sensitive, thoughtful friend of Jonas who loves to volunteer as a Caretaker in the House of the Old.

Asher
played by Joseph Hock
Another friend of Jonas, Asher has a playful nature that makes him ideal for his assignment as Assistant Director of Recreation.

Lily
played by Jordan Pecar
Lily is Jonas’s younger sister. Like many seven-year-olds, she can be impatient and a bit of a chatterbox.
"an Elsewhere from which it came"

*The Giver* is a novel by Lois Lowry, who has written more than 30 books for children. Two of her novels have won the prestigious Newbery Medal for distinguished contributions to American literature for children: *Number the Stars* (1990), a work of historical fiction about the Holocaust, and *The Giver* (1994). Lowry is known for offering young readers the opportunity to confront challenging subject matter, including racism, terminal illness, and death.

Although her novels are not autobiographical, like most authors Lowry has incorporated her own life experiences into her works in different ways. In her 1994 speech accepting the Newbery Medal for *The Giver*, she discussed how certain elements of the book may have been inspired by various experiences in her life. She referred to a passage from the book in which Jonas begins to look more deeply into his own life as he learns of a past that he never knew existed:

"... Now he saw the familiar wide river beside the path differently. He saw all of the light and color and history it contained and carried in its slow-moving water; and he knew that there was an Elsewhere from which it came, and an Elsewhere to which it was going."

Lois Lowry’s father was an Army dentist. From the age of 11 to 13, Lois lived in Tokyo, Japan, in a small, enclosed community of Americans. As foreigners in a strange land, her family found the familiarity of this self-contained environment comfortable and safe. But young Lois was intrigued by the exotic sights and sounds and smells of the surrounding city. She would sneak away and ride her bicycle through the busy streets filled with noisy street vendors and bright colors and strange music. Perhaps these experiences contributed to the creation of Jonas’s quiet, safe community and its perception of the world beyond.

*Lois Lowry at age 12, wearing a traditional Japanese kimono.*
In 1979 Lowry interviewed the painter Carl Nelson, and she was taken with the artist’s vivid capacity for understanding and appreciating color. Years later, when she learned that he had become blind, she wondered what it was like for him to lose the colors about which he was so impassioned. It may be that this experience was the seed for creating a world without color in *The Giver*. Lowry’s own photograph of Nelson is the face on the cover of most editions of the novel (*seen at right*).

Dealing with her own aged father’s loss of memory may have caused Lowry to wonder about a world with no memories. The author’s own memories include how she and her college friends had shunned a girl who was different. What did Lowry miss by not being that girl’s friend, by not appreciating and even celebrating differences? Such thoughts may have suggested the sacrifices necessary to create a world without differences, a world of sameness. Attending her son’s wedding in Germany and thinking of the union of good wishes expressed in the confusion of different languages may have inspired the author to think of the interconnectedness of all people.

Lois Lowry has often been criticized for her subject material. Should children be exposed to such topics? Is it safe? In her 1994 Newbery Medal speech, the author addressed this issue:

“... I remember once again how comfortable, familiar, and safe my parents had sought to make my childhood by shielding me from Elsewhere. But I remember, too, that my response had been to open the gate again and again. My instinct had been a child’s attempt to see for myself what lay beyond the wall....

“The man that I named the Giver passed along to the boy knowledge, history, memories, color, pain, laughter, love, and truth. Every time you place a book in the hands of a child, you do the same thing. It is very risky. But each time a child opens a book, he pushes open the gate that separates him from Elsewhere. It gives him choices. It gives him freedom.”
Author Lois Lowry

Lois Lowry is a prize-winning author of more than 30 books for children. Born Lois Hammersberg in Honolulu, Hawaii, in 1937, she was the daughter of an Army dentist, and her family moved frequently. Lois grew up in Carlisle, Pennsylvania; Tokyo, Japan; and New York City. She has written, “From the time I was eight or nine, I wanted to be a writer. Writing was what I liked best in school; it was what I did best in school.

“I was a solitary child, born the middle of three, who lived in the world of books and my own imagination. There are some children, and I was this kind of child, who are introverts and love to read—who prefer to curl up with a book than to hang out with friends or play at the ball field. Children like that begin to develop a feeling for language and for story. And that was true for me—that’s how I became a writer.”

After studying for two years at Brown University, Lois married Donald Lowry, a Navy officer, and found herself once again on the move. The couple (and eventually their four children) lived in California, Connecticut, Florida, South Carolina, Massachusetts, and Maine, where they finally settled after Donald left the Navy and became a lawyer. As her children grew, Lowry found time to return to school at the University of Maine, earning her B.A. in English literature and then pursuing graduate studies.

Lowry’s work as a freelance journalist and photographer caught the attention of an editor at Houghton Mifflin Publishing, who suggested she write a children’s book. A Summer to Die is a fictionalized account of the early death of Lowry’s sister. The book was published in 1977, the same year Lowry and her husband divorced.

“My books have varied in content and in style,” says Lowry. “Yet it seems to me that all of them deal, essentially, with the same general theme: the importance of human connections.” Number the Stars, winner of the Newbery Medal in 1990, is a work of historical fiction about the Holocaust. In the book, ten-year-old Annemarie and her family risk their lives to protect Annemarie’s Jewish best friend.
Lowry was awarded a second Newbery Medal in 1994 for *The Giver*, which the author says is about “the vital need for humans to be aware of their interdependence, not only with each other, but with the world and its environment.” Subsequently she has written three related books, creating a tetralogy. *Gathering Blue* (2000) tells the story of Kira, an orphaned girl with a twisted leg in a society that chooses to leave the disabled exposed to die in the fields. *Messenger* (2004) features characters from both previous novels and ties them to the story of Matty, who delivers messages through the dark forest surrounding his village. *Son* (2012) follows the story of Claire, birth mother of Gabriel from *The Giver*.

Lowry’s other works include a series of nine novels about Anastasia Krupnik—a girl “just trying to grow up”—and four novels about Anastasia’s younger brother Sam. “I use the *Anastasia* books to make myself laugh and to lighten up between serious books,” says the author. “But I also use them to deal with serious topics in a different way, disguised by humor.” Lowry’s more recent *Gooney Bird* series focuses on creativity and story-telling.

“I think it is my own children, all of them grown now, who have caused me to expand my view,” says Lowry. “One of my sons was a fighter pilot in the United States Air Force; as a mother during the Gulf War, I was newly stunned into fear for the world and a heightened awareness of the necessity to find a way to end conflict. One of my daughters has become disabled as a result of a disease of the central nervous system; through her, I have a new and passionate awareness of the importance of human connections that transcend physical differences.

“And I have grandchildren now. For them I feel a greater urgency to do what I can to convey the knowledge that we live intertwined on this planet, and that our future as human beings depends upon our caring more, and doing more, for one another.”
Discussion Questions

Before seeing the play:

Discuss other plays, movies, operas, or ballets you have seen that are adaptations of books you have read. What did you like or dislike about those performed adaptations? What would you have done differently in your adaptation?

Go online and read about other productions of this play in other cities. Remember to use the playwright’s name when doing your search. What can you find out about other plays Eric Coble has written? What did reviewers say about other productions of this play? After seeing the IRT’s production, write your own review.

After seeing the play:

What do the words utopia and dystopia mean? Should humans strive to create a perfect society? Why or why not? Can perfection be achieved? Discuss the flaws in Jonas’s community. When and how does a utopia become dystopia?

Discuss whether we live in a world that celebrates sameness or differences. During your discussion, factor in the past and the present, theory and reality, industrial nations and third world countries.

What is a rite of passage? What are some typical rites of passage? With each rite of passage, what do you believe you gain or lose? In what ways have rites of passage changed from generation to generation?

The hero in The Giver is a 12-year-old boy, a reminder that children are capable of achieving great feats and motivating change. In groups discuss other young literary heroes. What makes these characters so appealing? What lessons can we take away from their stories? Name some real-life boys and girls who have made a difference in their local and national communities. What inner qualities make a person become a hero?

In the play the Giver says to Jonas, “I have great honor. So will you. But you will find that that is not the same as power.” What does this statement mean? Is either power or honor better than the other? There are many famous people (actors, musicians, dancers, athletes, celebrities) who might be said to have great honor. How have different people used such honor to wield power—to influence the world (in good or bad ways)?
Art often imitates life. Sometimes life imitates art. What in *The Giver* captures a true picture of your life? Consider such things as family, friendships, education, professions, social courtesies, and attitudes. What in *The Giver* is different from your life? What can we learn from both the similarities and the differences?

What happens to Jonas and Gabe at the end of the story? What is “Elsewhere”?

How did what you saw on stage compare to the image you created in your mind when you read the book? Was the storytelling clear, compelling, and entertaining? Why or why not?

Have you read Lois Lowry’s original book, *The Giver*? Have you seen the recent film? Compare and contrast the book, the film, and the play. In what areas was one version more effective than the others? In what areas was each less effective? Which did you feel told the story in the most compelling way? Why?

In this story there is a clear system for messaging. In our world who controls the messages we receive? How does this influence us as individuals and as a society?

In life we all have to make choices, what is the cost of the choices you make?

**Activities**

**Before seeing the play:**

If you have read the book *The Giver*, try imagining how parts of the story might be presented on the stage. In class or with friends, assemble a director and a design team—scenery, costume, lighting, and sound designers—and create your own “look” for the play. Take a section of the story that you all enjoyed the most, draw it, stage it, and present your concept to the class or your parents.

Research the process of adaptation. What steps does a writer go through to create his or her own work based on another person’s work? Is the original work in public domain? What is a copyright? How do you obtain the rights? How do you submit your work to publishers of plays? Where can you go for new play development?
Activities

After seeing the play:

Although The Giver has been chosen by many school systems to be part of the curriculum, it has also been challenged. Find more on banned books and intellectual freedom at http://www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/intfreedom/censorshipfirstamendmentissues/index.cfm. Imagine that your rights to read the book and/or to see the play were being challenged. Prepare a defense for The Giver and present your case to your class. This article at http://www.ala.org/ala/newspresscenter/news/pressreleases2007/january2007/edwards07.cfm offers information that may be useful in your presentation. Why is it important that citizens have the right to challenge books they feel are inappropriate? Why is it important for those who disagree with that opinion to speak up in defense of such books?

What is civil disobedience? How do the choices of Jonas and the Giver relate to this concept? What has the world gained and lost from dissension? Research famous dissenters of the past and present. How have their actions been a force for improvement and/or destruction in the world?

Improvisation: “Dreams and Nightmares” Divide into groups of four to five people. Each person shares a dream or nightmare; then each group chooses one to dramatize. Cast the characters, decide on props or use pantomime, rehearse, and perform. This exercise is more fun using imagery and metaphor. Example: Instead of someone saying, “I am hungry,” you might have an actor who plays talking food; or a character might say, “Oh no, I’m a hotdog with chili sauce!”

In The Giver, Asher struggles with word usage in a community that attempts to be very precise with language. As a group, make a list of commonly misused words and phrases. Do some research on the subject. There are hundreds of books and websites. Here are a few just to get you started.


http://wsuonline.weber.edu/wrh/words.htm

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_commonly_mis-used_English_words

New York Times Dictionary of Misunderstood, Misused, & Mispronounced Words by Laurence Urdang

100 Words Almost Everyone Confuses and Misuses (The 100 Words) by Editors of the American Heritage Dictionaries
Writing Prompts

What are people willing to give up in the search for security? What are people willing to give up in the search for freedom? Cite cultural, historical, and personal examples.

How you would feel if you discovered that someone or something important in your life wasn’t what you thought it was. What would happen if your perception of your life was shattered?

Are memories important to your family? Who is the memory keeper in your family? Why is this person the keeper of your family’s memory? How and when does this person share those memories? Who in your family do you believe is the receiver?

Along with The Giver, the IRT has produced a number of plays that are adaptations of popular literary works such as The Velveteen Rabbit, A Christmas Carol, Who Am I This Time?, An Iliad, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Dracula, and later this season The Hound of the Baskervilles. Think about a novel or short story that you have read lately and tell us why you believe it would be good to adapt into a play. Share with us the major messages of the story that would be appealing to a diverse audience. Share with us how you might present the production. Choose a favorite part of the book and write your own stage adaptation of that section.

In The Giver, each person is assigned a career based on the evaluation of an outside committee. Write a poem on the theme of what others see in you versus how you see yourself.

An actor builds his or her character from three things: what the character says; what the character does; what others say about the character. Often, an actor will create an inner monologue to fill out a moment. Select a character and write an inner monologue for one of his or her high emotional moments. For example: What is Fiona thinking after she gets her assignment as Caretaker for the Old? What is Jonas feeling when his name is skipped during the Ceremony of Twelve?

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 actors’ 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
Resources

Books:

For Younger Readers:
Gossamer by Lois Lowry
A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle
The Chronicles of Narnia books by C. S. Lewis
The Golden Compass, The Subtle Knife, & The Amber Spyglass by Philip Pullman
The Pigman by Paul Zindel
Lord of the Flies by William Golding
The Chocolate War by Robert Cormier
Uglies, Pretties, Specials by Scott Westfeld
The Host by Stephanie Meyer

For Older Readers:
Finding Blue, Messenger, & Son by Lois Lowry
Animal Farm by George Orwell
1984 by George Orwell
Brave New World by Aldous Huxley
Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury
Anthem by Ayn Rand
Walden Two by B.F. Skinner
Living Walden Two by Hilke Kuhlmann
the Hunger Games trilogy by Suzanne Collins
Divergent trilogy by Veronica Roth
Delirium by Lauren Oliver
Ender's Game series by Orson Scott Card
Resources

Websites:


http://www.loislowry.com/ — the author’s official website

http://www.loislowry.com/pdf/Newbery_Award.pdf — Lois Lowry’s Newbery Award acceptance speech

http://www.ala.org/advocacy/banned

— the American Library Association’s Banned & Challenged Books page

https://www.aclu.org/about-aclu — the American Civil Liberties Organization

Films:

the *Star Trek* series and films (1966– )

*Gattaca* (1997)

*Dream Parlor* (1999)

*The Utopian Society* (2003)

*Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow* (2004)

*Aeon Flux* (2005)

*The Island* (2005)

*Knowing* (2009)

*Push* (2009)

the *Hunger Games* films (2012–2015)

*Divergent* (2014)

*The Giver* (2014)
Glossary

assimilated
Absorbed into the culture and mores of a population or group.

buoyancy
The upward force that keeps things afloat in liquids. If the weight of an object is less than the weight of the amount of liquid it displaces, the object will float.

climate control
Schemes for artificially altering or controlling the climate of a region. Climate control can be practiced on a small scale with something as simple as an air conditioner, or it can be a more global, all-encompassing initiative.

fish hatchery
Fish hatcheries are used to cultivate and breed large numbers of fish in an enclosed environment. Fish hatcheries typically involve a lot of manual labor. Fish farms use hatcheries to cultivate fish to sell for food, or for ornamental purposes, eliminating the need to find the fish in the wild and even providing some species outside of their natural season. They raise the fish until they are ready to be eaten or sold to aquarium stores.

imprecise
Vague or inexact. Imprecise language is a word that does not quite fit the thing or feeling it is describing.

obsolescent
No longer useful, in style, or current.

sanitation
The hygienic means of promoting health through prevention of human contact with the hazards of wastes. Hazards can be either physical, microbiological, biological, or chemical agents of disease.

usages
The way in which words or phrases are actually used, spoken, or written in a speech community. Usages are particular expressions in speech or writing.
Works of Art

Last summer the IRT initiated a unique collaboration with one of Indianapolis’s most prolific artists, Kyle Ragsdale. IRT executive artistic director Janet Allen worked with Kyle to create an original piece of art to represent each of the IRT’s nine plays that make up the upcoming 2014-15 season. The IRT is using these images throughout the season and displaying them at the theatre.

The Giver

“I thought of 20 ways for a really fun poster. I actually made the image first on my iPad and then took it back and painted from that. It went through maybe three revisions back and forth of what I liked and what they liked, and then we finally came to a good consensus.”

—Kyle Ragsdale

“We are so grateful and incredibly fortunate that Kyle accepted our invitation to create original art for us. He creates such theatrical work. It was fascinating to see how an artist reacted to our art. We can’t wait to show off his work as we show off our work.”

—Janet Allen
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.