

THE SANDRA FEINSTEIN-GAMM THEATRE

GROUND^{ED}

BY **GEORGE BRANT**

DIRECTED BY **JUDITH SWIFT**



STUDY GUIDE

GAMM
EDUCATION

sandra feinstein-

GAM
theatre

30TH
2014
2015
SEASON

401.723.4266

GAMMTHEATRE.ORG

172 EXCHANGE STREET
PAWTUCKET, RI

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*This study guide was prepared by
Steve Kidd, Kate Hanson, Tracy Morreo, and Susie Schutt.*

Design by Courtney A. Martin



Liz Hayes
Photo by Peter Goldberg

**ACT
I**

WELCOME

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Dear Educator,

The Sandra Feinstein-Gamm Theatre is pleased to offer you this study guide to prepare you and your students for our production of *Grounded* by George Brant. In this study guide you will find background information about the play and playwright, an inside look at our production, as well as activities for your classroom and questions for discussion. We recommend using this study guide before your visit to The Gamm, as well as after to debrief with your students.

We would like to offer a workshop with your classroom/school before your visit to help prepare your students for the play. These workshops will get students out of their seats and up on their feet engaging in the themes, motifs and the language of the play. Kinesthetic engagement with language and literature ensures students deep comprehension and text-to-self connection that encourages students to invest in reading and literacy-learning. Much of this work was discovered, developed and inspired by the ArtsLiteracy Project at Brown University. Their strategies and models for learning continue to serve as a foundational pedagogical tool for all Gamm Education programming, including our PLAY (Pawtucket Literacy and Arts for Youth) in-school residencies.

Attending a production addresses several Common Core Standards in Theatre Arts Standards in Aesthetic Judgment, Cultural Contexts, and Communication, as well as many of the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards in Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening. We have included a list of standards that align with attending a performance and using our study guide.

We would love to hear from you about your experiences using this study guide. It is a great help to us as we build on our education program from year to year. We look forward to seeing you at The Gamm!

Susie Schutt,

Education Director, susie@gammtheatre.org

Kate Hanson,

Education and Outreach Coordinator, kate@gammtheatre.org

THEATER AUDIENCE ETIQUETTE

What is so exciting about attending the theater - especially in a smaller space such as The Gamm - is that it is live! Live theater is different from other forms of entertainment; unlike film and television you are encouraged to pay close attention and actively engage your imagination.

You, the audience, are mere feet (and sometimes inches!) away from the actors; therefore, you play an active role in the experience. **The actors can see and hear any distracting behavior such as talking, text messaging, unwrapping candy, the ringing of cell phones, etc.** This can affect the actor's concentration, disrupt the performance, and ruin the experience for other audience members. So we ask that you refrain from talking or making any noise during a performance. *Thank you!*

Discuss with your students the particular demands and benefits of attending a live performance. Perhaps have them brainstorm how theater is different from film, television and sporting events.

COMMON CORE GUIDE

Here is a list of College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards that align to the information and activities in our guide:

- Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.2] *See Themes and Questions for Discussion*
- Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.3] *See Themes and Questions for Discussion*
- Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.4] *See our Activity for the Classroom*
- Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7] *See examples throughout our study guide, including the link to our interview with the director.*
- Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.9] *See our interview with George Brant as well as Supporting Materials*
- Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.3] *See our Activity for the Classroom*
- Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1] *See Themes and Questions for Discussion*
- Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2] *See examples throughout our study guide, including the link to our interview with the director.*

ACT II

PLAY & PLAYWRIGHT

ABOUT GEORGE BRANT *(from georgebrant.net)*

George Brant's plays include *Elephant's Graveyard*, *Grounded*, *The Mourners' Bench*, *Salvage*, *Three Voyages of the Lobotomobile*, *Grizzly Mama*, *Any Other Name*, *Defiant*, *Dark Room*, *Miracle: A Tragedy*, *Good on Paper*, *Ashes*, *NOK*, *The Lonesome Hoboes*, *One Hand Clapping*, *The Royal Historian of Oz*, *Lovely Letters*, *Three Men in a Boat*, *Borglum! The Mount Rushmore Musical*, *Tights on a Wire* and *Night of the Mime*.

A Core Writer at the Playwrights' Center, his work has been produced by local companies Trinity Repertory Company and Elemental Theatre collective, as well as internationally by such companies as Gate Theatre of London, Unicorn Theatre, and Traverse Theatre, among others. His scripts have been awarded the David Mark Cohen National Playwriting Award from the Kennedy Center, the Smith Prize (*Grounded*), a Fringe First Award, a Creative Workforce Fellowship, among others. He received his MFA in Writing from the Michener Center for Writers at the University of Texas at Austin and is a member of the Dramatists Guild. He is published by Samuel French, Oberon Books and Smith & Kraus.



George Brant | Photo by by Mark Turek

ABOUT *GROUND*ED:

The personal and the political are indistinguishable in American playwright George Brant's gripping one-woman play about a hot-rod fighter pilot whose unexpected pregnancy ends her career in the sky. Reassigned to fly remote-controlled drones in Afghanistan from a windowless, air-conditioned trailer near Vegas, "The Pilot" hunts terrorists by day and goes home to her family at night. But what happens when the boundaries blur between the desert in which she lives and the one she patrols?

Suspenseful and searing, beautiful and blistering, Brant's multi-award-winning new play explodes our assumptions about modern warfare and unapologetically tells a story of our times.

George Brant describes the one character in *Grounded* with:

THE PILOT [is] a woman in her mid-to-late 30's. She should have no allergies or asthma after 12 years of age, distant vision of at least 20/200 but corrected to 20/20, and near vision of 20/40 but corrected to 20/20. She should have a sitting height of between 2 foot 9 inches and 3 foot 4 inches, and a vertical standing height of between 5 foot 4 inches and 6 foot 5 inches tall. She should possess normal color vision and meet other physical weight requirements, with no more than 32% body fat. She should be able to complete a 1.5 mile run in 13 minutes and 56 seconds or less, as well as complete 50 sit-ups and 27 push-ups in a timed test of one minute each. She should have graduated at the top of her class and have a well-rounded education. She should possess heightened situational awareness.

A CONVERSATION WITH GEORGE BRANT, AUTHOR OF *GROUNDED*

Interviewed by Gamm Resident Scholar
Jennifer Madden

Hailed as a phenomenon by *The New York Times*, Brant's *Grounded* is experiencing an astonishing level of success: twelve productions in less than twelve months all across the world. Theater critic Mark Blakenship advises, "If you haven't heard of George Brant's play *Grounded*, then you should jot down the name. No matter where you live, it's probably coming to a theater near you."

Congratulations on the tremendous success of *Grounded*. What's the experience been like, and did this success take you by surprise?

The experience has been almost an out-of-body one. I had hopes for the play, and personally felt it was one of the best things I've written, but the response that it has received caught me completely by surprise.

***Grounded* has been produced all over the United States, the United Kingdom and as far away as Australia and Sweden (September 2014). Have you managed to see every production?**

I have had the good fortune to see every production thus far, and it has been an absolute thrill to see how the play has been interpreted by different actors, directors and designers. Each production has been so creative in how they've approached the script, and each has been quite different, from the actor's interpretation to the poster design.

Why do you think the play has resonated so strongly with audiences, both nationally and internationally?

I think the fact that there are many audience entry points to the play has been one of the keys to its appeal. Whether you yourself are struggling with balancing job and home, concerned with drone policy or creeped out by the rising surveillance culture, there's something to seize on in the play.

What inspired you to write the play?

I was drawn to the drone subject a few years ago, curious about how they were operated, their increasing use, and the moral questions they raised. I wasn't intending to write about the pilots of the planes, but I ended up intrigued by their story, particularly by the mental challenge presented by this new method of waging war.

Why did you choose to write in a female voice, and a solo one at that?

It wasn't until I imagined "The Pilot" as female that the play began to form in my mind. Initially I thought the play would be a more conventional one with a number of characters, but the story sparks didn't start to fly until I considered the play as a solo female voice.

How much research did you have to do? Were you able to conduct any interviews?

I found the "Stars and Stripes" military magazine particularly helpful in my research, and appreciated the frankness with which it presented the surprising mental hardships the drone pilots are facing. I read every drone article I could come across, every op-ed piece pro or con, as well as researched female pilots and women in the military in general. I even came across a drone children's book. I am particularly grateful to an Air Force Lt. Col. who read the script and gave me feedback on the military terminology in the play. The research continues to this day. My friends keep sending me articles and I keep reading them!

Your use of music in the play is exhilarating. Why AC/DC?

Yes, music is very important to "The Pilot", and the play in general. The AC/DC was a happy accident; while I was writing the script I was at WordBridge Playwright's Lab, and a wonderful costume designer there mentioned she was listening to AC/DC on the way to rehearsal that day. I put it in as a place-holder, but it ended up being an integral part of the play. I wasn't particularly a fan of the band before, but now when I see a production, I always look forward to hearing which songs have been chosen to play.

Finally, what's next for you?

I've got a few projects I'm juggling at the moment: a couple possible screenplays, and plays about an evangelical-run prison and the gospel singer Sister Rosetta Tharpe. ■



WHO MADE IT HAPPEN:

ON STAGE:

The Pilot: **Liz Hayes**

BEHIND THE SCENES:

Directed by **Judith Swift**

Set Design by **Sara Ossana**

Costume Design by **Marilyn Salvatore**

Lighting Design by **Matthew Terry**

Sound Design by **Charles Cofone**

Stage Management by **Stef Work**

Production Manager: **Jessica Hill**

Assistant Stage Manager: **JonPaul Rainville**



Liz Hayes

Photo by Peter Goldberg

DIRECTORS' NOTES:

VALLEYS OF DRY BONES by Judith Swift, Director of *Grounded*

There's no hiding my politics when it comes to the issue of drones. But before I drone on, let's set some ground(ed) rules: Wordplay is fair game when it comes to Brant's writing in which people are grounded (taken out of the wild blue yonder and planted in the Vegas world of rubber tire landscaping) and grounded (when ethical equilibrium has the governmental stamp of approval). "Behind the lines" is newly defined, well, behind the lines of the script where deserts are both havens for the enemy or the base of operations for missions to be accomplished. Pink ponies compete with blue skies for the rightful path of female gendered aspirations. The spilling of blood is rendered meaningless when its color is leached away and rendered into gray technologically captured images of bodies cut down by unmanned flying machines. But why do drones offend the vast majority of the world's sensibilities?

Consider: How do you earn a Purple Heart if you have no physical wound? Has anyone ever received one for the agonies and suffering of a wounded mind racked with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder? There have been critiques of modern day soldiers as somehow deficient because they fell victim to PTSD but wars have long had terms to capture that omnipresent casualty of war. The thousand yard stare, battle fatigue, shell shock - these terms and more have attempted to give name to the erosion of the human spirit endemic to warfare. How is the use of a drone any different than conscription? During the Civil War, the Conscription Act of 1863 allowed a drafted man to pay a commutation fee of \$300 to hire someone to enlist as a substitute in his place. This was part of a long-standing and honorable practice (honor is conveniently defined by the powerful) in which the poor were fodder for warfare, and even today as in the Civil War we see "a rich man's war, but a poor man's fight." The major distinction is that drones have acknowledged market value and poor folk are endlessly fecund and replaceable without Pentagon asks and Congressional approvals.

Another distinction lies in the need for heroism as a fundamental rationale for war, as a glorified human endeavor. The heroics of warfare have long been the stuff of legend, poetry, cinema, memorials, cultural artifacts and nationalistic pride. But a drone pilot in a trailer? Could he or she be as easily mistaken for a meth dealer with an Xbox breaking bad as a highly trained technician licensed to kill? Is the increasing use of drones – begun in earnest under George W. Bush, a man not unfamiliar with the rich man’s war and the buffer of wealth and family connections, and intensified under Barack Obama – fundamentally practical or morally bankrupt? And what of the fighter pilot, long held as the daredevils of our fighting forces? In *The Story of G.I. Joe*, a 1945 cinematic homage to the World War II infantryman, director William Wellman, who had served as a fighter pilot in World War I, was notorious for his low opinion of the infantry but he eventually sprinkled the film with non sequiturs extolling the courage of the “boots on the ground” as worthwhile brothers-in-arms to the guys with their “heads in the clouds.”

Ultimately Brant has created a parallel universe in which one has to confront the moral underpinnings of war as a societal chess game. Relegated to the status of Tennyson’s six hundred, the pawns had always been those destined for Flanders Fields, but the game has changed. They – and we – have a window on the “collateral damage,” which is a tidy phrase for the innocent and powerless that fall victim to war. In drone warfare, even the genuine enemies cannot look their foe in the eye and fight valiantly for beliefs so at odds with those of their enemy. The drone’s eye is a technical wonder that never blinks and is impervious to the grains of sand, blinding sun, and fatigue of ever-searching sameness. The superior warrior is the drone pilot relegated to Naugahyde and a joystick. There is no camaraderie of the hunt, the target, the hit. No adrenaline rush from fighting the g-force and sighting enemy aircraft from a bubble canopy. The grounded pilot is connected to the target by technology only with no risk to her person, aided by eagle-like vision akin to sighting voles in a field. What of courage? Sacrifice? Even a sense of fair play? Much like roulette or baccarat, do drones turn combat into a game in which the losses are destructive to the very essence of one’s selfworth? Be it Las Vegas, Iraq or other lands either rich with oil or metamorphosed into playgrounds for the hedonistic, the cycle continues as we spin carbon into gold. Drones are just one dehumanizing tool. That genie is out of the bottle.

The hand of the LORD was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. He asked me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” ...

Then he said to me, “Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to it, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Come, breath, from the four winds and breathe into these slain, that they may live.’” So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army.

—Ezekiel 37:1-14

To see more from the Director, see Act V: Supporting Materials

DRAMATURGICAL NOTES:

WHY WE SHOULD CARE ABOUT DRONES

By Jennifer Madden, Gamm Theatre Resident Scholar

The nature of warfare continually evolves, as we devise increasingly lethal, more removed methods of slaughter.

In the vanguard of remote control combat is the drone, with its unblinking “Gorgon stare” that sees through walls, hovers over targets for days, raining missiles called Hellfire. Proponents argue that drones are ideal for targeting suspected terrorists abroad, providing surgically precise attacks with less boots on the ground, with fewer casualties on both sides. Critics call the lack of transparency surrounding drone strikes troubling and argue that they violate international and human rights laws.

“If other states were to claim the broad-based authority that the United States does, to kill people anywhere, anytime, the result would be chaos.”

UNITED NATIONS REPORT 2010



AP Photo (Kirsty Wigglesworth)

The era of the combat drone began in earnest following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. According to a 2013 Time article, the Pentagon currently has 7,500 drones (up from a mere 50 just 10 years ago) and “more than a third of the aircraft in the Air Force’s fleet are now unmanned.” The Bureau of Investigative Journalism reports that the CIA has launched 380 strikes in Pakistan since 2004 (a country with which we are not at war), with anywhere from 2,347 to 3,792 killed including up to 957 civilians with as many as 202 children among them. Drone strikes are often less “surgical” than one would hope with an “effective casualty radius” of 200 feet. Currently only the United States, Britain, and Israel use combat drones but reports suggest 87 other nations possess some form of unmanned aircraft. “Clandestine strikes carried out by Washington in far-flung corners of the world,” writes Guy Savoy for The Washington Times, “have set a precedent that could be ugly.”

The increasing development of drones also raises the possibility of hijacking. While physically stealing an \$11-million dollar aircraft might be difficult, overtaking it by hacking into its software is an increasing danger. A University of Texas professor accepted a challenge made by Homeland Security and with minimal effort, managed to hijack and overtake a drone in flight.

What about the effects of remote control warfare on drone pilots? Yes, physical danger is eliminated but the pilot’s experience may not be any less psychologically damaging. The Economist reports: “Drone pilots experience mental-health problems at the same rate as fighter pilots deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan, according to a 2013 study by researchers for the Pentagon.” Moreover, the current supply of operators can’t keep up with the demand leading to overwork and quick burnout.

One potential solution for helping overworked, traumatized drone pilots is to completely remove the human element. Currently, the Pentagon is developing autonomous pilot-less drones armed with artificial intelligence. Killer robots might seem the stuff of dystopian fantasy but they are fast becoming a reality. A Human Rights Watch report states that “human-out-of-the-loop weapons (or robots) are capable of selecting targets and delivering force without any human input or interaction” based on “guilty” patterns of behavior. Rory Talen, writing about lethal autonomous robotics (LARS) for Salon, argues that this lack of human input would lead to a “poverty of context.” How does a robot distinguish between patterns of guilty and innocent behavior?

Finally, consider the domestic use of drones for commercial and surveillance purposes. The Federal Aviation Administration hopes to integrate unmanned aerial vehicles into civilian airspace by 2015. In his Time article “Rise of the Drones” Lev Grossman writes: “Drones are the most powerful surveillance tool ever devised, on or offline.” Grossman also observes “drones are evolving faster than Americans’ ability to understand how, legally and ethically, to use them,” and soon small drones might be as readily available and affordable as smart phones. The question is when we fully understand the consequences of our amazing new toys will it be too late?

To see more about drones, see Act V: Supporting Materials

ACT IV

DISCUSSION & WRITING

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1. How did the **set design** aid in the telling of the story? What would you change and why?
2. What sort of **atmosphere** was created with the lighting, sound, and video design?
3. What does the Gamm **poster** (also the cover of this study guide) tell you about the play? What sort of poster would you design for this play and why?

TOPIC: **Women in Revolution**

The Gamm's 30th Season focuses on examining the female experience in times of change or conflict. The Pilot experiences life changing events that cause her to become "grounded" and we follow her journey through this internal conflict.

Questions for Free Write or Discussion:

- What is a strong woman? Is The Pilot a strong woman?
- What are the pilot's moments of strength? And weakness?

TOPIC: **Script Structure**

Unlike most other plays, *Grounded* is performed by one actor. Another distinguishing characteristic of this one woman show is the structure of the text. Typically, plays have the name of the character to the left, followed by their line of dialogue; however, this script is split into small chunks, separated by short line breaks, and doesn't have any periods. With its concise language and unique structure, the play resembles a poem.

Questions for Free Write or Discussion:

- What is the benefit of writing a play in a poem-like structure?
- Why do you think George Brandt wrote this as a one woman show? How would it have been different if multiple characters were included?
- What choices could the production team make to ensure the performance stays engaging, even though there is only one person on stage?

THEME: **War**

From sticks and stones to bows and arrows, and from black powder muskets to reaper drones, the face of war has drastically changed over time. Some may argue that using these drones, or Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), leads to the desensitization of war. Removing the threat of death during "combat" causes internal and external conflict for The Pilot.

Questions for Free Write or Discussion:

- Is removing the threat of death a benefit? Does it devalue life?
- Why do you think The Pilot had such a hard time dealing with the stress of her job?
- How did The Pilot's home life interfere with her work life? And vice-versa?

THEME: **Color**

The Pilot uses color as a metaphor for her experiences, relationships, and emotions. A metaphor is a word or phrase that is used to represent something else. For example, she uses the color blue as a symbol for freedom and happiness. Flying her plane through the bright blue sky gives her a sense of independence and power. She also uses the color grey when describing feelings of turmoil and guilt. Grey represents the deaths she causes behind the safety of her drone. The Pilot, who demonstrates many masculine qualities, uses pink when coming to terms with her daughter's gender identity.

Questions for Free Write or Discussion:

- What colors would you use to describe Freedom, Identity, and Guilt? Why?
- How are metaphors helpful when writing a story? How did these metaphors aid your understanding of The Pilot's story?
- What other colors did you notice in the play? What could they have meant?

ACTIVITY FOR THE CLASSROOM

WRITE A COLOR POEM

DESCRIPTION:

As previously discussed, The Pilot uses **color metaphors** to explain her experiences. The play is also written with succinct, poetic language, with short line breaks and no periods.

Here are some examples directly from the script:

I want the sky
I want the blue
But I can't kill her
I can't kill her
I can't

This excerpt is said after The Pilot finds out she is pregnant and is debating whether or not to get an abortion.

I press the button
I watch the screen
A moment
A moment
And
boom
A silent grey boom

This excerpt is said when The Pilot kills people with her drone for the first time.

► **Have your students think of a color that reminds them of an experience or an emotion.** Then have them write a poem about their thoughts. Encourage your students to use imagery and vivid language. Remind them to think of their five senses and to allow their surroundings to inspire them. When the writing process has concluded, open the floor for a poetry reading for anyone who feels comfortable sharing their work.

ONLINE ARTICLES

CONFESSIONS OF A DRONE WARRIOR

<http://www.gq.com/news-politics/big-issues/201311/drone-uav-pilot-assassination>

BLOWN AWAY BY 'GROUNDED': DRONE WARFARE UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

<http://www.thenation.com/blog/177909/blown-away-grounded-drone-warfare-close-and-personal#>

VIDEO

AN INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR JUDITH SWIFT

<http://youtu.be/T2oalld4e-c>

GAMM INSIDER MAGAZINE: SPOTLIGHT ON “GROUNDED”

New this season! An email-based collection of reviews and articles gathered from across the web. Email susie@gammtheatre.org to request it be sent to your email address.

Liz Hayes as *The Pilot*
Photo by Peter Goldberg



**MORE
TO
COME**

EPILOGUE

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THANK YOU for joining us for *Grounded* and for working with this Study Guide to ensure the best, most comprehensive theatrical and educational experience. Please be in touch if you would like us to visit your classroom before or after you attend *Grounded*.

Our Education Department provides classes for students of various grade levels, as well as a month-long Gamm Summer Intensive for summer time theater fun. We hope you will join us for more student matinees at The Gamm!

UPCOMING STUDENT MATINEES:

HEDDA GABLER

by Henrik Ibsen

• Friday October 24, 2014

THE HOUSE OF BLUE LEAVES

by John Guare

• Friday, March 6, 2015

MORALITY PLAY

based on the novel by Barry Unsworth
adapted by Tony Estrella

• Friday, January 16, 2015

• Friday, January 30, 2015

MARIE ANTOINETTE

By David Adjmi

• Friday, May 1, 2015

TO BOOK A MATINEE

contact Tracy at tracy@gammtheatre.org or 401-723-4266 ext. 12.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT GAMM EDUCATION

find us on the web at www.gammtheatre.org or reach Susie Schutt at 401 723 4266 ext. 17.

GAMM
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A LOOK AT THE GAMM'S 30TH SEASON

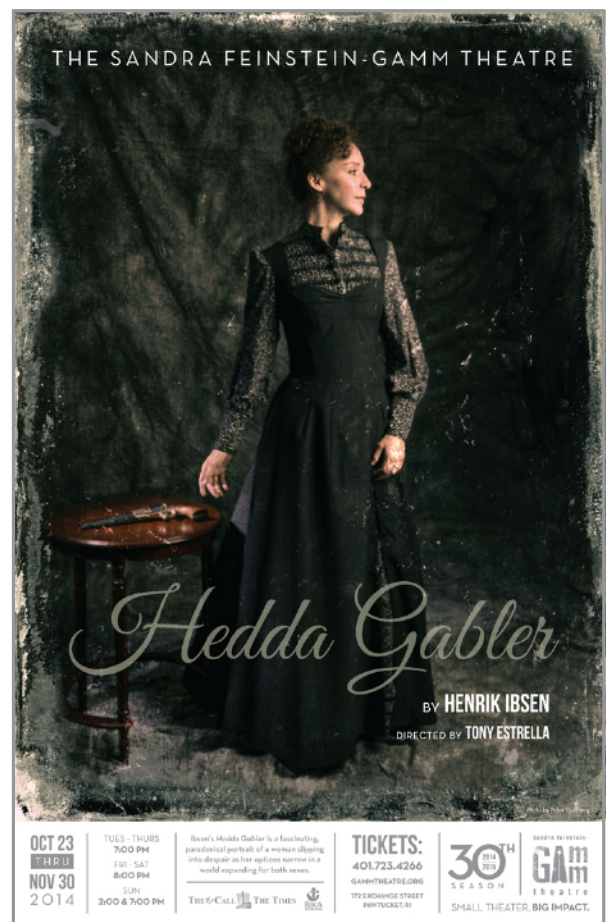
A combination of classic and contemporary works, set over hundreds of years of world history, the 2014-2015 Season is an entertaining and evocative line-up that speaks as a whole to American society today.



"We're excited to celebrate our 30th anniversary season by traveling in time from the mid-14th century to the early 21st. This includes a world premiere medieval murder mystery and a one-woman tour-de-force about drone warfare. Along the way, we peek into the palaces of revolutionary France, visit the home of a bored house wife in Victorian Norway, and witness the wild goings on in a Vietnam-era New York tenement."

—TONY ESTRELLA, Artistic Director of The Gamm

SEASON 30 starts with the Rhode Island premiere of a new work by George Brant. An avalanche of a play, *Grounded* makes the security state and our war on terror personal and impossible to ignore. Then, for the first time since its 2010 hit run of *A Doll's House*, The Gamm returns to Henrik Ibsen with an unflinching look at the playwright's most complex heroine, *Hedda Gabler*. The new year opens with a thrilling world premiere, 10 years in the making! *Morality Play*, adapted for the stage by Tony Estrella from the best-selling novel by Booker-Prize winner Barry Unsworth, is historical fiction in the form of a Plague-time whodunit, with fascinating insights on the evolution of story telling. John Guare's comedy classic, *The House of Blue Leaves*, follows--a masterful commentary on American exceptionalism and the fine line between optimism and self-delusion. The season closes with *Marie Antoinette*, David Adjmi's alternately hilarious and shocking take on the 1% vs. the 99%.



► LEARN MORE AT GAMMTHEATRE.ORG