



STUDENT  
MATINEE  
PROGRAM

# Discovery Guide

THE YOUNG VIC PRODUCTION OF  
ARTHUR MILLER'S **A VIEW  
FROM THE BRIDGE**  
DIRECTED BY IVO VAN HOVE

Welcome to Center Theatre Group's production of Arthur Miller's legendary 1955 drama, *A View From the Bridge*, directed and reimagined by Ivo van Hove.

The story is set in the working class-neighborhood of Red Hook in Brooklyn, New York. Many of its community members are longshoremen (dockworkers who load and unload ships) and their families, who immigrated to the United States from Italy.

A lawyer named Alfieri narrates the action. He works with the people of Red Hook and is particularly moved by the story of longshoreman Eddie Carbone. Eddie and his wife Beatrice have raised their niece, Catherine, as their own daughter. She is now 17 and excited to enter the adult world, despite Eddie's strong desire to keep her from leaving home. Beatrice's cousins, Marco and Rodolpho, arrive illegally from Italy. At first, the family is eager to help the cousins adjust to life in the United States, but Eddie becomes hostile and obsessive when one of the cousins shows a romantic interest in Catherine.



Eddie:  
**I GUESS I JUST NEVER FIGURED  
ON ONE THING.**

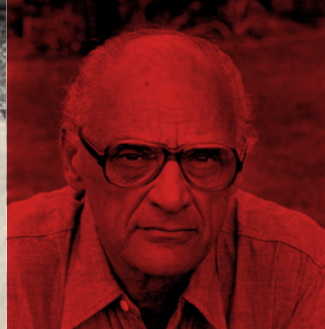
Catherine:  
**WHAT?**

Eddie:  
**THAT YOU WOULD EVER GROW UP.**

Catherine is moving from adolescence to adulthood, and this is causing tension within the Carbone household.

**?** Why can it be hard for a parent or guardian to treat a young person as an adult?

**How does watching another family's struggles help us better understand our own family?**



Arthur Miller (Playwright)

Miller is known for making ordinary, working-class people the heroes of his stories. His plays are extremely political; he wants audiences to think about how individuals and families are impacted by what is happening in the world around them.

You may be familiar with some of Miller's other famous plays, which include *The Crucible* and *Death of a Salesman*. *A View From the Bridge* is based on a true story that was told to Miller. It was also inspired by events in his own life, including his romantic relationship with Marilyn Monroe and his refusal to name names during the 1950s McCarthy-era communist witch hunts in the U.S.

**“I COULD NOT IMAGINE A THEATER WORTH MY TIME THAT DID NOT WANT TO CHANGE THE WORLD.”**

—ARTHUR MILLER

**?** How can theatre help to change the world?

**How can a theatre artist be a political activist?**

If Arthur Miller were alive today, what topics do you think he would take on?



## JUSTICE AND THE LAW

### JUST:

- agreeing with what is considered morally right or good
- treating people in a way that is considered morally right
- reasonable or proper

### JUSTICE:

the process or result of using laws to fairly judge and punish crimes and criminals

Miller's characters wrestle with issues of justice and fairness. Eddie is outraged and feels a need to take action. He is frustrated by the limitations of the law, until he figures out a way to use the law to his own advantage.



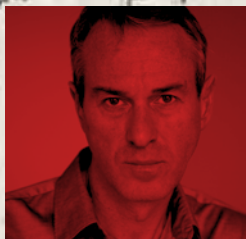
What does justice mean to you?

Is there a difference between law and justice?

What if a law feels unjust? Is it ever right to take justice into your own hands?

**“OH, THERE WERE MANY HERE WHO WERE JUSTLY SHOT BY UNJUST MEN. JUSTICE IS VERY IMPORTANT HERE.”**

—Alfieri, *A View From the Bridge*



Ivo van Hove (Director)

Belgian director Ivo van Hove is known for taking classics and reinventing them for today's world. For van Hove, this means figuring out what will be most meaningful for the audience. His version of *A View From the Bridge* strips the play of its 1950s details in order to give the story a timeless quality. The stage is nearly empty. Characters go barefoot and wear neutral, modern clothing. Van Hove uses modern music and dramatic lighting to create the mood of the play and to reveal the emotions at the center of the story.



## IMMIGRATION

In the 1950s, many Italian immigrants came to New York to make better lives for themselves and their families. They often came from desperate circumstances where there was no work and, therefore, no money.

The characters in *A View From the Bridge* all have connections to Italian immigrants, or are immigrants themselves. They live in a close-knit community that makes it possible for them to survive in this new world. However, being an immigrant isn't easy. Then, as today, immigrants face many challenges including being deported, learning a new language, and adapting to a new culture.



**“THIS IS THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT YOU'RE PLAYIN' WITH NOW, THIS IS THE IMMIGRATION BUREAU.”**

—Eddie, *A View From the Bridge*



Where does your family come from?

When did they arrive in the United States? How has this affected their lives and your life?

What kind of challenges have you seen immigrants face today?

## WELCOME TO THE THEATRE!

Founded in 1967, Center Theatre Group, a nonprofit organization, is one of the largest and most active theatre companies in the nation, programming shows year-round at the Ahmanson Theatre and Mark Taper Forum in Downtown Los Angeles, as well as the Kirk Douglas Theatre in Downtown Culver City.

**WHERE** will you be going the day of the show?

*A View From the Bridge* will be performed in the Ahmanson Theatre at The Music Center of Los Angeles, one of the largest performing arts centers in the country. The Ahmanson seats between 1,600 and 2,007 audience members, depending on the configuration of the show.

**WHO** will you meet and whose work will you see?

Theatre is a collaborative art form; it's a team sport.

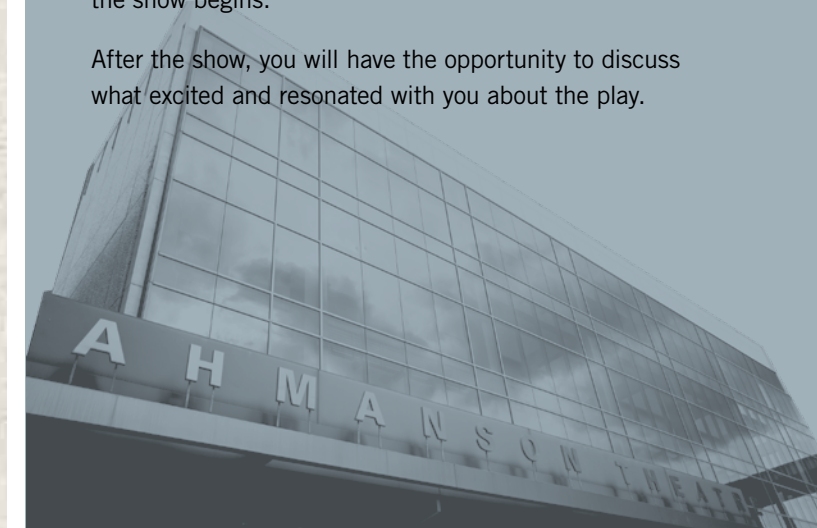
- **The creative team:** playwright, director, actors, designers (for the stage, sets, lights, costumes), musicians
- **The crew:** stage manager, crew members (who run the lights and sound and move the set pieces), dressers/costumers, make-up artists
- **The house:** house manager, ushers, maintenance staff
- **Theatre company:** producers, educators, administrative staff

**WHAT** will happen once you arrive at the Ahmanson Theatre?

When you arrive at the venue, you will be greeted by Center Theatre Group staff.

Once you're inside and seated, you'll receive a brief introduction to the event before the house lights dim and the show begins.

After the show, you will have the opportunity to discuss what excited and resonated with you about the play.



## WHY THEATRE?

At Center Theatre Group, we believe theatre creates an extraordinary connection between artists and audiences that only starts on our stages. Theatre creates the energy that feeds a city, a culture, and a society. Theatre reflects the community it serves.

# You are part of our community.

Center Theatre Group is excited to share the power of live theatre with you. It is an art form that embodies all of the arts: performance, visual, creative movement, writing, music, video, and technology. Theatre weaves all of the arts together to tell stories about what it means to be a human being.

Theatre happens LIVE, right there in front of you, in real time. The performers respond to the way you listen, laugh, gasp, and applaud. You matter as an audience member. Live theatre can't happen without you!

Thank you so much for joining us for *A View From the Bridge*. We'll see you at the theatre.

“I REGARD THE THEATRE AS THE GREATEST OF ALL ART FORMS, THE MOST IMMEDIATE WAY IN WHICH A HUMAN BEING CAN SHARE WITH ANOTHER THE SENSE OF WHAT IT IS TO BE A HUMAN BEING.”

—Thornton Wilder

Written by Lynn Clark

### Special Thanks

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