

National Theatre Collection



Kin

Learning Guide

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About This Guide

This learning guide supports the Gecko's production of **Kin**, created by Amit Lahav, which opened on **12 January 2024** at the **National Theatre**.

Our packs are designed to support viewing the recording on the **National Theatre Collection**. This pack provides a plot synopsis with timestamps to allow you to jump to specific sections of the play, and detailed content warnings to assess suitability for your classroom.

Here you'll find all the information you need to enable you to study the production and write about it in detail. You'll also find pointers for further research.

Background Information

Recording Date – 24 January 2024

Location – Lyttelton Theatre, National Theatre

Recommended Age – 13+

Cast

Devising Performer.....Lucia Chocarro

Devising Performer / Rehearsal Director.....Chris Evans

Devising Performer.....Madeleine Fairminer

Devising Performer.....Mario Garcia-Patrón Álvarez

Devising Performer.....Vanessa Guevara Flores

Devising Performer.....Saju Hari

Devising Performer.....Kenny Wing Tao Ho

Artistic Director / Devising Performer.....Amit Lahav

Devising Performer.....Wai Shan Vivian Luk

Devising Performer.....Miguel Hernando Torres Umba

Creative Team

Director.....	Amit Lahav
Set and Costume Designer.....	Rhys Jarman
Lighting Designer.....	Chris Swain
Sound Designer.....	Mark Melville
Composer.....	Dave Price
Producer.....	Rae Lee
Producer.....	Rosalind Wynn
Production Manager.....	Mat Ort
Producing Assistant.....	Malachy Luckie
Assistant Director.....	Andres Velasquez
Company Stage Manager.....	Alyssa Watts
Technical Stage Manager.....	Jake Channon
Lighting Associate.....	Pablo Fernandez Baz
Sound Engineer.....	Sharon Tsang
Design Associate.....	Blythe Brett
Costume Supervisor.....	Gayle Playford
Costume Supervisor.....	Becky-Dee Trevenen

Content Warning Details

Including Timestamps

Violence and Abuse

Violence

- Whole play – there is mock fighting throughout
- The soldiers pretend to kick civilians (0:17:43 - 0:18:07)
- Julio's family are beaten by a guard (0:34:54
- The young boy is beaten by his family (0:43:50)
- The young boy, now grown, throws off his parents (0:52:33)
- The young boy, now grown, punches civilians (0:53:01 - 0:53:30)
- Julio's family are beaten by a guard (0:54:46)
- Leah is pushed by a soldier (1:07:17)

Discrimination

Racism / Xenophobia

- The soldiers get a civilian to wipe white paint into his skin, remove his turban and put on a new hat, whitewashing him and removing his identity (0:48:00)
- Julio and his family assimilate (1:04:17 - 1:05:17)

Death and Trauma

Death / Dying

- Julio dies (1:06:24)

Explicit Content

Sexual Intimacy

- Simulated sexual intercourse for a brief moment (0:01:57)

Others

Flashing Images (Seizure Warning)

- The soldiers bang on tables as the lights flash violently (0:15:50 - 0:22:57)

- The lights flash as Leah and Joseph huddle together (0:25:30) •

More banging and flashing lights (0:44:45)

- As the civilian leaves, the soldiers' music becomes distorted and sinister, and the lights begin to flash (0:50:07 - 0:50:50)

- Explosions (0:58:37)

- After Julio enters the barracks there are two flashes (1:06:24)

Sudden Loud Sounds

- Sudden loud shout from a soldier (0:46:22)

- Explosions (0:58:37)

Drinking

- Act One, Scene One – the opening of the play shows the soldiers dancing and singing with beers

- The soldiers dance and drink (0:45:11 - 0:51:21)

- The soldiers hand the civilian a beer (0:48:32)

Smoking

- Act One, Scene One – the opening of the play shows soldiers dancing and singing with cigarettes
- Scene Two: As the soldiers deal with Leah, they are smoking cigarettes
 - The soldiers bang on tables while smoking (0:15:50 - 0:22:57)
 - A soldier at the door smokes a cigarette (0:38:18)
 - Two soldiers smoke as Leah and Joseph beg for food (0:41:45)
 - Two soldiers try to get the young boy's attention (0:43:13)
 - The soldiers dance and drink (0:45:11 - 0:51:21)
 - The soldiers smoke with the civilian (0:48:32)
 - A soldier pulls out a cigarette to smoke (0:53:47)
 - Soldiers smoking (1:06:31 - 1:07:40)
 - Soldier smoking (1:08:42)

Displacement

- Whole play – both families are forcibly displaced throughout.



Plot Synopsis with Timestamps

Act One, Scene One - Opening (0:00:12)

The stage is minimally decorated with a wooden door and paneling, and a string of lights hanging from the ceiling. It looks like the inside of a barracks. Music begins to play.

A group of soldiers opens the show with raucous singing and a dance routine. They break into smaller groups to continue dancing, drinking beers and smoking cigarettes. Eventually some soldiers exit, leaving four in the centre, drinking heavily.

Scene Two - Leah (0:04:05)

The scene shifts as an officer enters to scold the soldiers, who quickly try to make themselves more presentable. We move outside the building.

A small table and chair with a clipboard are set up outside as the officer sorts through paperwork. Another soldier pulls down a barrier. Civilians arrive with suitcases and are let in one by one. The officer checks their paperwork, stamping as they present it.

When Leah, a woman in blue, shows her paperwork, a spotlight focuses on her. The soldier leads her to a dimly lit room behind the desk and leaves. More soldiers come to remove her coat, and one brings a paint and brush to draw a yellow line down her back. They start questioning her before leaving. She pulls out a photograph and holds it gently.

Scene Three - Leah Remembers (0:07:10)

As Leah sits, a puppet appears across the stage, lit by a single lamp, and begins to read Psalm 137: 'By the rivers of Babylon, we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.' Another puppet joins, and they fade into the background. Leah gazes solemnly at them.

A new puppet approaches, sharing stories of their travels and moving closer to Leah. She reaches out, and the puppet pulls her to the centre of the room. They dance together, reliving her past experiences, when a male voice is heard.

Leah goes towards the voice and finds a soldier in a living room who stamps paperwork and hands it to her. He clears some rags off the furniture, leaving her alone. She settles into an armchair.

Scene Four - Leah Unites with her Family (0:10:00)

A man enters, also with a yellow stripe down his back - her husband, Joseph. They embrace tightly, soon joined by their two children, a boy and girl, all sharing the same yellow stripe. Their joy turns to dancing as the stage slowly spins. They manage to get the TV working, and pull out plates for a meal.

The dimly lit stage suddenly brightens, with the simple living room at the centre against a red backdrop. More people arrive, and the civilians dance, mimicking work. Back in the living room, the family seems happier as a man arrives with money and a new hat for Leah and Joseph, bringing them great joy.

Scene Five - The Young Soldier (0:15:50)

Suddenly, the stage goes dark except for a single light on two soldiers huddled over a table. As the light flickers, the soldiers bang rhythmically on the table. More tables and soldiers are illuminated across the stage.

One soldier addresses the audience while another shines a spotlight toward them. Four more soldiers enter, with one dressed up, pretending to be a civilian trying to gain entry. The soldier pretends to kick the civilian, causing laughter among the others, and more soldiers join in the mockery.

One the floor, soldiers sit with a civilian boy. When he stands, the soldiers leave. He sits in a chair, writing while his parents watch TV. They begin to argue, upsetting the boy but they console him, before returning to the TV.

Two soldiers appear, smoking cigarettes. The boy approaches them but is quickly pulled back by his parents. The soldiers bang on the table again, exciting the young boy.

Scene Six - Leah's Family are Displaced (0:22:57)

Civilian work in a field. One hands Joseph some paperwork and they argue. Joseph looks tormented as he returns to his family, showing them the papers, which distresses them. Someone arrives with an eviction notice.

They are cast out. The stage goes dark as civilians carry handheld lights to illuminate themselves amid the chaos, putting on life jackets. A bright light is seen as the group signals for rescue.

Scene Seven - Julio's Family (0:27:23)

From behind the stage, two men climb up with suitcases, helping a woman and another man. They walk forward, relieved to be on land. One man introduces himself as 'Julio' and introduces his family, leading the audience in some clapping. One man starts dancing but is scolded by the woman. They sit on their suitcases.

Looking across the stage, they see Leah's family huddled around their belongings in the house. Julio's family tries to enter the house, seeking warmth, leading to a conflict between the two groups. Julio and his family are left outside.

As Julio's family watches, a man enters behind a barrier railing, allowing a couple dressed in blue to enter. Julio's family attempts to gain entry but is barred and assaulted by the doorman. They spend the night on the floor trying to comfort each other.

A red door appears behind them, watched over by a soldier demanding a visa. One family member enters the red door.

Scene Eight - Leah's Hunger (0:38:57)

Leah is alone on stage, singing under a spotlight. Her daughter enters with a saucepan, and they move to a sparsely furnished room with a table, rug, and instruments. Leah and Joseph sing together, but they soon argue. Their children fade into the background, leaving Leah and Joseph alone.

They approach two soldiers sitting on a table eating bread, handing them a paper bag and asking for crumbs. The soldier puts the leftovers into the bag and spits in it, demanding them to take it. Joseph reluctantly does so, and they return to their family.

Scene Nine - The Young Soldier (0:42:53)

The scene shifts back to the young boy and his parents. As they watch TV, the boy wanders towards the soldiers but is pulled back by his family. The soldiers make advances, and the boy is beaten by his family, left on the floor. The soldiers approach him, bringing him under a lamp. They bang on the table and the boy joins in. He shouts and cheers with other soldiers in the barracks before leaving. More soldiers join the dancing.

Scene Ten - Assimilation (0:45:57)

The member of Julio's family who went through the door reappears in the barracks. Soldier brings him to a table, where one soldier yells at him. The soldiers laugh as the civilian looks awkward. One soldier asks him to remove his turban and gives him a handkerchief. As he wipes himself, he rubs white paint on his skin. The soldiers continue to laugh, giving him a new hat and a briefcase, effectively whitewashing him and erasing his identity. They offer him a beer and a cigarette, then bring him back to the other soldiers, who applaud his transformation. They all dance together.

The civilian then returns to the table, puts his turban back on, and leaves the barracks. The music shifts to a more sinister tone before suddenly becoming calm and angelic.

Scene Eleven – The Young Soldier Grows Up (0:52:13)

The young boy, now grown, pushes away his parents as they try to bring him back. He slowly removes his civilian clothes and puts on soldier's attire, punching anyone who approaches. He pulls out a cigarette as a red door appears behind him.

Scene Twelve – Julio's Family Try Again (0:54:06)

We return to Julio as his family member exits through the door. He shows them the suitcase he's acquired and approaches the barrier railings but is denied entry. In a similar motif to Leah and her family, we see a bright light behind the group. Distraught, the man with the turban opens the suitcase and puts on the cap and tie to assimilate, but his family removes it and puts his turban back on.

Scene Thirteen – The Explosions (0:57:20)

Leah and her family are in the living room when Julio's family arrives. They briefly huddle around the TV together arguing. Suddenly, loud explosions and bright lights destroy the house. Only Julio and Leah's daughter remain. They fight with each other until puppets enter from either side, carried by family members. They comfort the children before fighting resumes. The matriarchs enter and take the children away. They dance together, showing a moment of compassion, before the other family members return to fight again.

Leah's family is left huddled around their instruments.

Scene Fourteen - Julio Left Behind (1:03:54)

Julio's family removes their traditional dress and rubs white paint on their faces, putting on ties and hats. However, Julio decides to change back into his normal clothes. They approach the barrier railings and are finally allowed entry, leaving Julio behind. A soldier escorts Julio into the barracks.

Scene Fifteen - Leah's Torment (1:06:40)

A soldier spits food into a bag and hands it to Leah and Joseph. More soldiers drag Joseph away while another torments Leah. She dances in the centre of the stage under a dim light, as various people appear and vanish, including:

- Joseph, who kisses her forehead
- A soldier smoking
- Multiple people praying
- Someone playing an instrument
- A soldier stamping papers
- Leah's family
- Soldiers with a paper bag

As Leah moves, the ceiling lowers until she disappears behind it, leaving a black stage.

Scene Sixteen - Out at Sea (1:10:46)

Slowly, the lights rise on both families wearing life jackets, as the same bright light shines behind them. Soldiers also wear life jackets. Behind them, the sky shimmers like blue waves, as they push and pull each other across the stage.

One by one, cast members come to the front of the stage to share their personal experiences as immigrants. As they blow the whistles of their life jackets, the music swells, and the show concludes.

The End

Find Out More

We hope that you have enjoyed watching and studying Kin. Don't forget that there are many more fantastic productions to explore as part of the National Theatre Collection.

We hope that watching this recorded production has made you feel inspired to see and make live theatre. [Why not find out what's happening at your local theatre and how you can get involved?](#)

Learning Hub

You can find more resources for schools and teachers on the National Theatre's Learning Hub. Search by key stage, subject, theatrical style or practitioner and discover an ever-growing library of short films, learning guides and digital exhibitions.

Find out more: <https://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/learn-explore/schools/teacherresources/>

National Theatre Archive

More materials relating to the production including the costume bible, poster, prompt scripts, programme, stage management reports and more are held at the National Theatre Archive, which is free to visit.

Find out more: <https://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/archive>

Our Funders

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Thank you