

REP
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HAM

YOUTH GUIDE

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A Note from Engagement

The first time I ever saw *Fat Ham* was almost exactly one year ago. Lelena Moore, Savannah Coleman, and I were in New York for the National Finals of the Next Narrative Monologue Competition (NNMC). As part of the weekend festivities, all the National Finalists from across the country were invited to see *Fat Ham* at a Sunday matinee. First, we ate lunch with Jonathan McCrory from National Black Theatre, one of the two theaters partnering to produce the show. Then, we walked to the American Airlines Theatre (now the Todd Haimes Theatre) and sat in the front of the first balcony—my favorite seats.



It made for one of my favorite theater experiences to date: sitting with talented high schoolers from across the country, hearing them laugh, gasp, and snifle, and watching them dance to the music. I remember screaming at the end of the show like I was at a live concert rather than a Broadway play.

Afterwards, we were invited to meet the cast of the show. This cast was particularly generous with their time and energy. They answered questions about their path to Broadway, what they thought about the state of American Black theater and gave advice to the teenagers. They stayed much longer than promised, taking pictures, joking around, and congratulating the National Finalists. The vibe was "Black joy," and it is a feeling I am so excited to continue this year as Seattle Rep produces its own version of *Fat Ham*.



*The 2023 Next Narrative Monologue Competition National Finalists on stage with the cast of Broadway's *Fat Ham*.*

There are lots of ways to enhance your experience of Black joy at *Fat Ham*: get some food from our partners at Emma's BBQ, come to a panel or actor talkback, learn some choreography from show choreographer Jimmy Shields at Teen Night, peruse our Art Walk featuring 21entities, celebrate August Wilson's birthday on April 27, and so much more!

And, if you'd like to cheer on this year's NNMC National Finalists, or learn about how YOU can compete next year, check out seattlerep.org/nnmc.

See you at the Theater!



Deanna Martinez

Director of Arts Engagement



Director of Arts Engagement Deanna Martinez, 2024 NNMC Seattle Regional Winners Joshua Rhodes and Lyric Coley, 2024 NNMC Seattle Regional Runner-Up Kaelynn Miller, and 2024 NNMC Event Host and 2023 NNMC Seattle Regional Winner Lena Moore. Photo by Sayed Alamy.

Who is James Ijames?

James Ijames is a Pulitzer Prize-winning and Tony Award-nominated playwright, director, and educator.

James' plays have been produced by Flashpoint Theater Company, Orbiter 3, Theatre Horizon, Wilma Theatre, Theatre Exile, Azuka Theatre (Philadelphia, PA), National Black Theatre, JACK, The Public Theater (NYC), Hudson Valley Shakespeare Theater, Steppenwolf Theatre, Definition Theatre, Timeline Theater (Chicago IL), and Shotgun Players (Berkeley, CA), and have received development with PlayPenn New Play Conference, The Lark, Playwright's Horizon, Clubbed Thumb, Villanova Theater, Wilma Theater, Azuka Theatre, and Victory Gardens



James is the recipient of the 2011 F. Otto Haas Award for an Emerging Artist and two Barrymore Awards for Outstanding Direction of a Play for *The Brothers Size* with Simpatico Theatre Company and *Gem of the Ocean* with Arden Theatre. James is a 2015 Pew Fellow for Playwriting, the 2015 winner of the Terrance McNally New Play Award for *WHITE*, the 2015 Kesselring Honorable Mention Prize winner for *...Miz Martha*, a 2017 recipient of the Whiting Award, a 2019 Kesselring Prize recipient for *Kill Move Paradise*, a 2020 and 2022 Steinberg Prize recipient, and **the 2022 Pulitzer Prize for Drama recipient and a 2023 Best Play Tony Award nominee for *Fat Ham*.**

James was a founding member of Orbiter 3, Philadelphia's first playwright producing collective.

He received a B.A. in Drama from Morehouse College in Atlanta, GA and a M.F.A. in Acting from Temple University in Philadelphia, PA. James is an Associate Professor of Theatre at Villanova University. He resides in South Philadelphia.

Learn more at jamesijames.com.

Headshot by Justin DeWalt

The Inspiration Material:

A Summary of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*

▶ **Warning: Potential Spoilers Ahead!**

TL;DR: Hamlet sees his dead dad's ghost, pretends to go crazy with revenge, actually goes crazy with revenge (debatable), and everyone dies.

Short *Hamlet* Summary

The ghost of the King of Denmark tells his son Hamlet to avenge his murder by killing the new king, Hamlet's uncle. Hamlet feigns madness, contemplates life and death, and seeks revenge. His uncle, fearing for his life, also devises plots to kill Hamlet. The play ends with a duel, during which the King, Queen, Hamlet's opponent, and Hamlet himself are all killed.

More Detail: ~2.5-minute read

Act I

Late at night, guards on the battlements of Denmark's Elsinore castle are met by Horatio, Prince Hamlet's friend from school. The guards describe a ghost they have seen that resembles Hamlet's father, the recently deceased king. At that moment, the Ghost reappears, and the guards and Horatio decide to tell Hamlet.

Claudius, Hamlet's uncle, married Hamlet's recently widowed mother, becoming the new King of Denmark. Hamlet continues to mourn for his father's death and laments his mother's lack of loyalty. When Hamlet hears of the Ghost from Horatio, he wants to see it for himself.

Elsewhere, the royal attendant Polonius says farewell to his son Laertes, who is departing for France. Laertes warns his sister, Ophelia, away from Hamlet and thinking too much of his attentions towards her.

This above all: to thine own self be true.

— HAMLET, ACT 1 SCENE 3

The Ghost appears to Hamlet, claiming indeed to be the ghost of his father. He tells Hamlet about how Claudius, the current King and Hamlet's uncle, murdered him, and Hamlet swears vengeance for his father. Hamlet decides to feign madness while he tests the truth of the Ghost's allegations (always a good idea in such situations).

Act II

According to his plan, Hamlet begins to act strangely. He rejects Ophelia while Claudius and Polonius spy on him. They had hoped to find the reason for Hamlet's sudden change in

behavior but could not. Claudius summons Guildenstern and Rosencrantz, old friends of Hamlet, to find out what's got into him. Their arrival coincides with a group of travelling actors that Hamlet happens to know well. Hamlet devises a play for them to perform, which includes scenes that mimic the murder of Hamlet's father. During rehearsal, Hamlet and the actors plot to present Hamlet's play before the King and Queen.

Act III

At the performance, Hamlet watches Claudius closely to see how he reacts. The play provokes Claudius, and he interrupts the action by storming out. He immediately resolves to send Hamlet away. Hamlet is summoned by his distressed mother, Gertrude, and on the way, he happens upon Claudius kneeling and attempting to pray. Hamlet reasons that to kill the King now would only send his soul to heaven rather than hell. Hamlet decides to spare his life for the time being.

Polonius hides in Gertrude's room to protect her from her unpredictable son. When Hamlet arrives to scold his mother, he hears Polonius moving behind the arras (a kind of tapestry). He stabs the tapestry and, in so doing, kills Polonius. The ghost of Hamlet's father reappears and warns his son not to delay revenge or upset his mother.

***What a piece of work is man!
— HAMLET, ACT 2 SCENE 2***

Act IV

Claudius sends Hamlet to England, supposedly as an ambassador, just as King Fortinbras of Norway crosses Denmark with an army to attack Poland. During his journey, Hamlet discovers Claudius has a plan to have him killed once he arrives. He returns to Denmark alone, sending his companions Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to their deaths in his place.

Rejected by Hamlet, Ophelia is now desolate at the loss of her father. She goes mad and drowns after falling into a brook.

***What dreams may come when we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
must give us pause.
— HAMLET, ACT 3 SCENE 1***

Act V

On the way back to Denmark, Hamlet meets Horatio in the graveyard (along with a gravedigger), where they talk of the chances of life and death. Ophelia's funeral procession arrives at the very same graveyard (what luck!). Hamlet confronts Laertes, Ophelia's brother, who has taken his father's place at the court.

A duel is arranged between Hamlet and Laertes. During the match, Claudius conspires with Laertes to kill Hamlet. They plan that Hamlet will die either on a poisoned rapier or with poisoned wine. The plans go awry when Gertrude unwittingly drinks from the poisoned cup and dies. Then both Laertes and Hamlet are wounded by the poisoned blade, and Laertes dies.

Hamlet, in his death throes, kills Claudius. Hamlet dies, leaving only his friend Horatio to explain the truth to the new king, Fortinbras, as he returns in victory from the Polish wars.

Source: [*The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust*](#)

Fat Ham Character Breakdown

- **Juicy:** A thicc, beautiful young Black man who is a kind of Hamlet. All Juicy wants to do is finish his online degree in Human Resources and get out of town. He is introspective. Juicy sees the world for what it could be. He confides in Tio about seeing Pap as a ghost and seeking revenge for his father's death.
- **Tedra:** Juicy's mom, who is married to her late husband's brother. She seeks affection and doesn't like to be alone. Tedra encourages Juicy to be himself no matter what anyone else says. She is a kind of Gertude.
- **Rev:** Tedra's new husband, Pap's brother, Juicy's uncle, and the new head of the family barbecue restaurant. Rev doesn't like Juicy. He wants Juicy to be "manly" and uses Juicy's tuition money to renovate the bathroom. Rev spends most of his time at the smoker cooking barbequed meats and regularly degrades the people around him. He is a kind of Claudius, potentially keeping a secret from the family.
- **Pap:** Juicy's father and Rev's brother, and Tedra's former husband before his murder in prison. Pap appears to Juicy as a ghost who wants Juicy to avenge his death. Pap is rude, violent, stubborn, and never understood Juicy. He doesn't know how to express his feelings. Pap used to run the barbecue restaurant when he was alive.
- **Opal:** Juicy's closest friend. Opal detests wearing dresses. She isn't interested in being confined to the gender roles reinforced by her mother. Opal secretly likes girls. She wants to figure out who she is as a person. Opal is a kind of Ophelia who doesn't want a tragic ending.
- **Larry:** A young man in the Marines who has post-traumatic stress disorder and doesn't want to shoot a gun. Larry struggles with his feelings toward Juicy. He wishes he could be like Juicy—"soft." Larry is a type of Laertes who experiences loyalty, rage, and awkwardness. He isn't ready to be his true self around the people around him.
- **Rabby:** Opal and Larry's mother, and Tedra's friend who is ready to party. She believes in the Lord and makes it known. Rabby is proud of her children for following suitable gender roles. She is not always self-aware but shares funny moments while playing a kind of Polonius.
- **Tio:** Juicy's cousin who is always ready for a good time. Tio encourages Juicy to not let family trauma and cycles of violence define him as a person. He wants to go into the cannabis industry by opening a little boutique. Tio is loyal and mirrors Hamlet's best friend, Horatio.

Fat Ham Detailed Synopsis

We find Juicy wearing all black and preparing for his mother and uncle's wedding reception while Tio watches OnlyFans on his phone. Juicy tells Tio that he hates living at home because his Uncle Rev moved in with his mom. Tio points out that Juicy's father Pap—who was murdered in prison—hasn't even been dead for a week yet, while Juicy's mother, Tedra, has already remarried (and to make things worse, married her late husband's brother, Rev).

The ghost of Pap appears to Juicy and asks him to avenge his death. Juicy tells Pap that Tedra married his brother. Pap tells Juicy that their family has a lot of generational trauma that they've been passing down. Pap tells Juicy that Rev paid people to murder him in prison by stabbing him in the neck. The ghost leaves and Juicy tells Tio about what happened.

Tedra enters and Juicy asks her if she misses Pap. Tedra shares, "My memory of him won't let me miss him."

Juicy shares with Tio that he thinks Uncle Rev killed his father and that Pap's ghost wants revenge. Juicy isn't sure if he loves his dad. Tio tells Juicy he is carrying inherited trauma, but he doesn't have to let it define him.

Rev enters with the meat smoker. Rev tells Juicy that he is bringing down the mood and tells him to change out of his black clothes into something more festive. After Juicy goes inside the house, Tedra asks Rev if he told Juicy that they used all his tuition money for a bathroom renovation. Rev tells Tedra that someone should tell him. Tedra feels bad for Juicy, but Rev tells her it's time for Juicy to grow up. Tedra brings up selling the barbecue restaurant since people are not coming like they used to when Pap owned the place. Rev disagrees.

Juicy comes out of the house wearing a "Momma's Boy" t-shirt and a festive scarf, all of which Tedra gave Juicy for Christmas. Rev is upset. Tedra tells Juicy that they both just want him to be happy for them, but then tells Juicy she spent all his tuition money. They have a heart-to-heart conversation. Tedra tells Juicy she is not built to live alone and just wants to be with someone. Juicy tells his mom he just wants her to be happy.

Larry enters, wearing his U.S. Marine uniform. Rev greets Larry and tells him he thinks Juicy is annoying. Larry and Juicy exchange a few words. Larry tells Juicy he wants him to see him in uniform.

Juicy tells the audience a story about when he was seven years old. He asked his mother for a Barbie for Christmas. She bought it for him, but Pap threw it in the smoker because it wasn't "manly." Tedra sits by Juicy and looks out to the audience as well. She asks Juicy if the audience thinks she's trashy for marrying her late husband's brother. Tedra tells Juicy to share with the audience how awful Pap was for mistreating her. Tedra leaves to fix Rev a

plate. Juicy is annoyed. Rabby and Opal come in carrying some food to share. After a quick catch-up, everyone goes to check out the new bathroom except Juicy and Opal.

Juicy tells Opal he's never seen her in a dress before. Opal tells Juicy that her mom made her wear it. Opal knows something is up with Juicy. Juicy asks Opal if she wants to help him kill someone. Opal doubts Juicy is capable of killing anyone. Opal tells Juicy she likes girls. Juicy tells her they are in a tough spot.

Everyone comes out of the house. Tedra compliments Opal on her dress and asks if she is going to participate in the debutante ball. Opal says no, despite Rabby saying yes and insisting that Opal is going to look pretty and not like a boy. Tedra reminisces about how Juicy asked Opal to marry him when they were little.

Rev tells the group that it is time to eat. After a prayer at the table, Tedra asks Juicy to bring out their karaoke machine. Tedra sings the first song, dedicating it to her new boo. Tedra asks Juicy to sing the next song, despite Rev saying that no one wants to hear Juicy sing. Juicy breaks the fourth wall and shares a monologue from *Hamlet* with the audience. Opal doesn't see the audience and thinks Juicy is weird for talking to no one. Opal tells Juicy he could run away, but he doesn't want to leave his mom.

The group decides to play charades with the "elders" versus the "youngin's." When it's Juicy's turn to act out a phrase, using gestures he performs Rev killing his father, with the winning phrase being, "The preacher killed the cook." Rev and Tedra exit into the house.

Juicy, Rabby, Opal, and Larry are left outside. Rabby tells Opal and Larry she has plans for them. Larry tells Rabby he doesn't like fighting in the Marines. Opal says she could be a Marine, but Rabby quickly says no; Rabby wants Opal to go to college.

Tedra and Rev fight inside the house. Rabby and Opal go to find them and Juicy and Larry are left alone. Juicy asks Larry if he's killed people while fighting as a Marine. Larry shares that killing people plays on a loop in his mind and needs Juicy to understand this. Larry tells Juicy he is soft and that's not a bad thing. Larry asks Juicy if he can touch him. Juicy says yes. They share a moment. Larry tells Juicy he wants to kiss him, but not now because he is scared someone might see them, then heads towards the house. Juicy shares a monologue from *Hamlet* with the audience.

Tedra comes out of the house, telling Juicy they need to talk. The ghost of Pap appears to Juicy and tries to convince him to kill Rev. Tedra becomes worried and asks Juicy who he's talking to. Juicy tells Tedra that Rev killed Pap. Rev calls Tedra to come inside the house. Tedra disappears into the house while Juicy begins to cry.

Everyone but Rev and Tedra re-enter. Juicy tells Larry that he should tell his mom how soft he wants to be. Larry tells Juicy he isn't ready to share his truth and he and Juicy get into a physical fight. Juicy says Larry will never be ready to share his truth. Rabby has overheard all of this and is speechless.

Juicy tries to make peace with Larry, but Larry slams Juicy's face into the table. He's upset because this wasn't Juicy's secret to share. Larry and Opal hug, then Larry exits into the house. Opal tells her mom she likes girls. Rabby shares that her husband met her while she was stripping in Tallahassee. Tio tells them this new level of transparency with each other is refreshing. Juicy asks if anyone else wants to share something to process.

Tedra and Rev come out of the house. Rev heads right for Juicy, demanding to know what Juicy told Tedra about him. Juicy tells everyone that Rev killed Pap. Rev denies it, calling Juicy a liar. Juicy responds that Ghost Pap came to him, but Rev continues to deny his involvement. He tells Juicy he is here to stay and is not going to go anywhere. Rev begins to eat a rib. Juicy starts to leave. Rev lunges for Juicy but begins to choke on his food. Tedra tells Rev to stop playing around, but Rev is really choking. Tedra asks Juicy to do something. Juicy tries to perform the Heimlich maneuver, but Rev pushes him away because he doesn't want Juicy to touch him. Tedra begs Rev to let Juicy help him. Rev dies.

Everyone looks out into the audience. Juicy shares that they are all supposed to die (like in *Hamlet*). Tedra asks why, and Juicy says the story is a tragedy. Juicy doesn't want to die but says stories have structure. Tedra shares that the dead remind us to live. Juicy looks out into the audience and asks if it's okay if they continue. Everyone begins to fix themselves a plate of food while stepping over Rev's body. They are all happier and calmer. They eat.

Larry re-enters wearing a whole new outfit. Tedra and Opal tell Larry he looks beautiful. Juicy tells Larry he looks like himself. Rabby asks Larry if this makes him happy. Larry says yes.

End of Play

Fat Ham(let)

What to know about *Hamlet* (1599-1601) to understand *Fat Ham* (2021)

By Amy Thone, dramaturg

William Shakespeare wrote *Hamlet* between 1599-1601. A profound and unsettling revenge play, it had numerous precursors that Shakespeare almost certainly would have been aware of, found in Scandinavian, Italian, Spanish, and Arabic folklore and literature. This story about a person at terrible odds with his family and his legacy is an old one, and it keeps shapeshifting in remarkable and heartbreaking ways. Now we have James Ijames' *Fat Ham*, its own death-defying piece of theater magic. How is this play similar and how is it different from its "source" material?

THE SIMILARITIES

The Protagonist • In both plays we have a musing, melancholy main character, dressed in all black, mourning the surprising death of his father and the quick remarriage of his mother to his uncle. In Shakespeare's play that character is Hamlet, and in *Fat Ham*, it's Juicy.

The Speeches • Both Hamlet and Juicy speak directly to the audience, pouring out their hearts with words. They both ponder the genius of humanity with this famous speech:

*What a piece of work is a man!
how noble in reason!
how infinite in faculty! in form
and moving how
express and admirable!
in action how like an angel!
in apprehension how like a god!*

The Ghosts • In both plays, our thoughtful and perplexing lead character is urged to act by the ghost of his dead father. And then, the main character interrogates himself and us about mortality and murder.

THE DIFFERENCES

The Setting • *Fat Ham* takes place at a wedding celebration at a Southern backyard barbecue. *Hamlet* is set in the freezing and echoey halls of Denmark's vast palace, Elsinore.

The Context • Instead of the royal takeover that happens in *Hamlet*, in *Fat Ham* we have an expensive bathroom makeover and a new lead barbecue pit master.

The Characters • All the characters from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* show up in *Fat Ham*, but with different names and some different relationships:

Hamlet	Fat Ham
Hamlet, the protagonist, or main character	Juicy
Claudius, Hamlet's uncle, and murderer of his father	Rev, pig farmer and pit master, Pap's brother
Hamlet's father	Pap, Juicy's father
Gertrude, Hamlet's mother	Tedra, Juicy's mother
Polonius, advisor to Claudius	Rabby, Tedra's friend
Laertes, Polonius' son	Larry, Rabby's son, a Marine
Ophelia, Polonius' daughter and love interest of Hamlet	Opal, Rabby's daughter, one of Juicy's only friends
Horatio, Hamlet's friend	Tio, Juicy's cousin

THE END

Hamlet is famously a tragedy and ends with a wrecked Horatio on a stage littered with corpses. But in *Fat Ham*, Ijames poses the question: can we tell a different story? Watch to find out!

Palpable Queer Black Joy

An Interview with Director Timothy McCuen Piggee

Seattle Rep: What excites you most about directing *Fat Ham*?

Timothy McCuen Piggee: I am most excited about the individuals that I have the good fortune to partner with on *Fat Ham*. This creative team is exceptional, so welcoming and imaginative. I'm also excited to see how this company of actors will illuminate the play.

There's a lot of discussion about what [playwright] James Ijames has written, and everyone seems to have their own opinion as to what it is. Is it an adaptation of *Hamlet*? Is it a reflection of *Hamlet*? Is it informed by *Hamlet*? I'm excited to share with the audience what this team of creatives and I feel that this play is. I'm excited to be in collaboration like this. It's so rare; this is a singular experience in my career so far. I've been living with this play in my head for a year, and it's been the best of daydreams to have and be preoccupied with.

SR: Stepping back from *Fat Ham* for a moment, what is your relationship with Shakespeare's *Hamlet*?

TMP: I read it as a young person, then experienced live performances and film adaptations, but I've never performed in or directed *Hamlet*. So, it's been fun to view it from a new perspective, being at the age I am versus when I was young, and the things that resonate with me now that didn't when I was younger.



Timothy McCuen Piggee, Aishé Keita, Chip Sherman, Dedra D. Woods, and Reginald André Jackson in rehearsal for *Fat Ham* (2024). Photo by Sayed Alamy.

To me, the questions I have about both *Fat Ham* and *Hamlet* are, what obligations do children owe their parents? When does a child manifest the autonomy of being their own person? ("I am of you, but I am not you.") I think that's something that the characters Juicy, Opal, and Larry, and any young person—in particular, any queer young person—might be trying to answer.

SR: We're thrilled to have this production built in-house by local artisans and starring a largely local cast. How do you see this production as a showcase for local artistic talent?

TMP: In terms of the artisans and production staff at Seattle Rep, I'm waiting for someone to say "no!" They are very much on board and excited to make this the most unique experience. As far as the cast, all but one actor has some connection to Seattle. I'm so excited to have audiences think, "I'm going to see an old friend" or "I had no idea that *that* was inside them." These actors get to reveal themselves in new ways.



Chip Sherman and Taj E.M. Burroughs in rehearsal for Fat Ham (2024). Photo by Sayed Alamy.

SR: Is there anything else you would like audiences to know before they see the show? Anything you'd like them to take away?

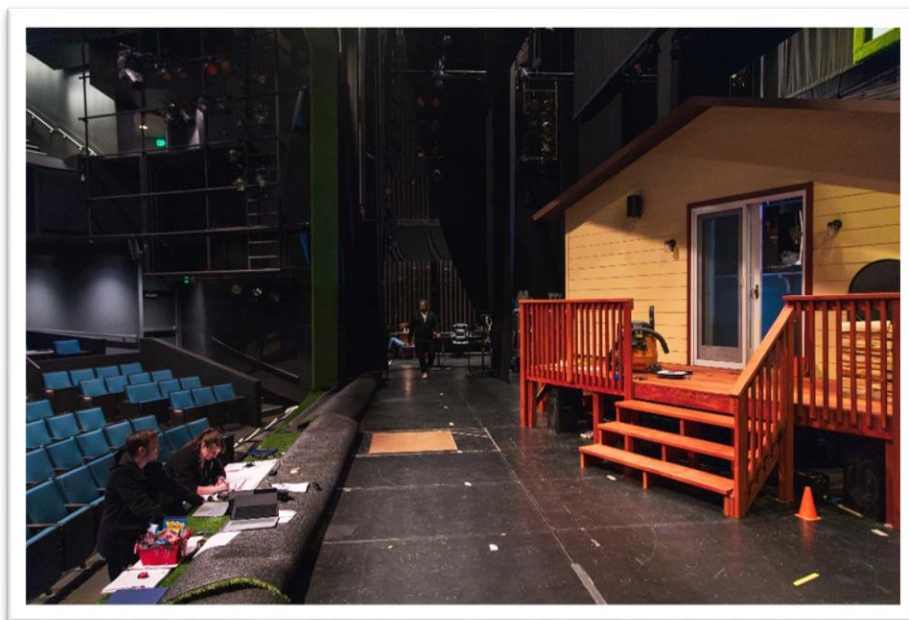
TMP: Audiences don't have to sit on their hands! They should feel free to participate; this is an interactive piece.

There's a lot of generational trauma that is talked about and experienced in the world of the play. Everyone knows (or will know now) that in *Hamlet*, pretty much

everyone is dead at the end. But what the character of Juicy offers is different from *Hamlet*: In *Fat Ham*, Juicy is the one voice that stands up and says, "We don't have to live our inherited trauma." It is important to the team and I that the representation of Black joy—and specifically queer Black joy—should be palpable throughout this performance. You may not know much about aspects of African American life, as many times what we see are only representations of Black and Brown bodies being traumatized. There is the mundane in *Fat Ham*, but there's also the extraordinary, and people who live in our community should know that Black joy can spring out of nowhere. Then it can turn to something else, and then when least expected, it can spring forth again.

There's an awful lot of joy in the community because that is how we've had to survive and stay sane. How do we make sense of the world that we're asked to move through? If you don't have a sense of humor about it or if you can't look at it through the lens of the safety valve of what humor can do, we'd go mad. I think that's another sort of harmonic to the play *Hamlet*, because people go crazy in that play, and I think the young people in *Fat Ham* are potentially on the brink of it. Goodness knows the adults are! But one way to heal or cope with that is through the embrace of joy.

There's something that I discovered about a year ago: I heard an interview by a theater artist by the name of Ravi Jain, and he says that "We're always playing to three audiences at the same time: Those who know it, those who don't know it, and those for whom it means everything." With *Fat Ham*, we hope to achieve all three.



The set of Seattle Rep's production of *Fat Ham* under construction. Scenic design by Caite Hevner.

Glossary

Review this list of terms to help you along as you watch *Fat Ham*.

- **Aggrandize:** To exaggerate or enhance the importance, power, or status of something or someone.
- **Anachronistic:** Pertaining to something that is out of its proper chronological or historical order.
- **Aspirational:** Describing something that represents one's hopes, goals, or desires.
- **Bound:** Having a strong sense of duty or obligation; also means moving or leaping with great force.
- **Brusque:** Abrupt or curt in manner; blunt or short-tempered.
- **Cacophony:** A harsh, discordant mixture of sounds or noises.
- **Colonel:** A high military rank, typically below the level of a general.
- **Conjecture:** An educated guess or inference based on incomplete information.
- **Custom:** A traditional practice or behavior specific to a particular group or culture.
- **Deceased:** No longer living; dead.
- **Dilate:** To expand or enlarge, especially in the context of pupils dilating in response to light.
- **Engrained:** Deeply embedded or firmly established.
- **Gumption:** Spirited initiative and resourcefulness.
- **Hodgepodge:** A mixture or jumble of various unrelated elements.
- **Inmate:** A person confined to an institution such as a prison or hospital.
- **Jack Bauer:** A fictional character and the lead protagonist of the Fox television series "24."
- **Kitsch:** Art, objects, or design considered to be in poor taste because of excessive garishness or sentimentality.
- **Liminal:** Relating to a transitional or in-between state, often characterized by ambiguity or uncertainty.
- **Mortality:** The state of being subject to death; the condition of being mortal.
- **Nauseous:** Feeling sick or queasy; causing a feeling of discomfort.
- **Nuptials:** A formal term for a wedding or marriage ceremony.
- **Optimism:** Hopefulness and confidence about the future or the successful outcome of something.
- **Paragon:** A model of excellence or perfection; someone or something that is considered the best in a particular category.
- **Rabid:** Extremely enthusiastic or fanatical.
- **Sublime:** Of outstanding beauty or excellence; inspiring awe or admiration.

Resource List

Fat Ham explores many challenging themes. If you are looking for support around these topics within the Puget Sound region, check out the following resources. And as you are able, please consider volunteering for or donating to these incredible organizations.

Need to talk to someone now?

Text HOME to 741741 to reach a counselor free at Crisis Text Line.

ALCOHOL & DRUG USE SUPPORT

- **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:** For emotional and substance use support 24/7, dial 988 or go to 988lifeline.org
- The **Washington Recovery Helpline** (1.866.789.1511) offers confidential, anonymous, 24-hour help for Washington State residents with substance use disorders: warecoveryhelpline.org
- Teenagers in Washington State can connect with **Teen Link** (1.866.833.6546) to have their questions about substance abuse answered confidentially: teenlink.org
- **National Drug Helpline:** Call the 24/7 helpline at 1.844.289.0879 and/or go to drughelpline.org/drug-addiction-hotline/washington/

COMBATTING FATPHOBIA

- **The Body Is Not An Apology** is an international movement committed to cultivating global radical self-love and bodily empowerment: thebodyisnotanapology.com
- **The National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance** is a multigenerational, intersectional social justice organization creating opportunity for big bodied people and building community for fat people and our loved ones through education, advocacy, and support: naafa.org

LGBTQIA+ SUPPORT

- **Seattle's LGBTQ+ Center** (formerly Gay City): gaycity.org/resources
- **Seattle Public Library's LGBTQ+ Community Resources:** spl.org/programs-and-services/social-justice/lgbtq/lgbtq-community-resources
- **Lambert House LGBTQ+ Youth Resources:** lamberthouse.org/resources

BLACK COMMUNITY RESOURCES

- **King County Equity Now (KCEN)** is a pro-Black advocacy and policy organizing nonprofit focused on developing liberated Black communities that own and control the resources and systems that impact Black lives: kingcountyequitynow.com
- **Black Lives Matter Seattle-King County:** BLMSKC is a grassroots, volunteer-run, social-justice nonprofit organization focused on the empowerment and liberation of Blacks and other people of color through advocacy and direct action. blacklivesseattle.org
- Support local Black-owned businesses through:
 - **Seattle Good** (seattlegood.org/support-black-communities/)
 - **Intentionalist** (intentionalist.com/black-owned-small-businesses/)
 - Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle **Black Business Directory** (urbanleague.org/black-business-directory/)
- **Lavender Rights Project:** LRP elevates the power, autonomy, and leadership of the Black intersex and gender diverse community through intersectional legal and social services. lavenderrightsproject.org
- **Hey, Black Seattle!:** An organization that supports people of the African diaspora in finding the cultural experiences and community resources they need to thrive while living in the Seattle area. heyblackseattle.com/community-resources/hey-black-seattle
- **Pacific Northwest Black Pride:** PNW Black Pride seeks to inspire communities of color to preserve their place in history and to advance new opportunities for future growth. nwblackpride.org/about-black-pride
- **Nile's Edge Healing Arts Center:** Focuses on de-colonizing health and education so that under-served communities can holistically flourish. nilesedge.com
- **Yusephinum LLC:** A Queer, BIPOC, Seattle-based artist collective. yusephinum.com
- **Northwest African American Museum:** Celebrating 16 years of educating, celebrating and honoring Black history in the Pacific Northwest and beyond. naamnw.org
- **Creative Justice:** Uses art as a vehicle to lift up the power of young people of color, youth from low-income families, and LGBTQA youth. creativejusticenw.org

Lesson Plan: Compare & Contrast the Hams

CURRICULUM STANDARDS:

- **OSPI WA ELA Standard 7**
Analyze *multiple interpretations* of a story, drama, or poem (e.g. recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text.
- **COMMON CORE Standard 2**
Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

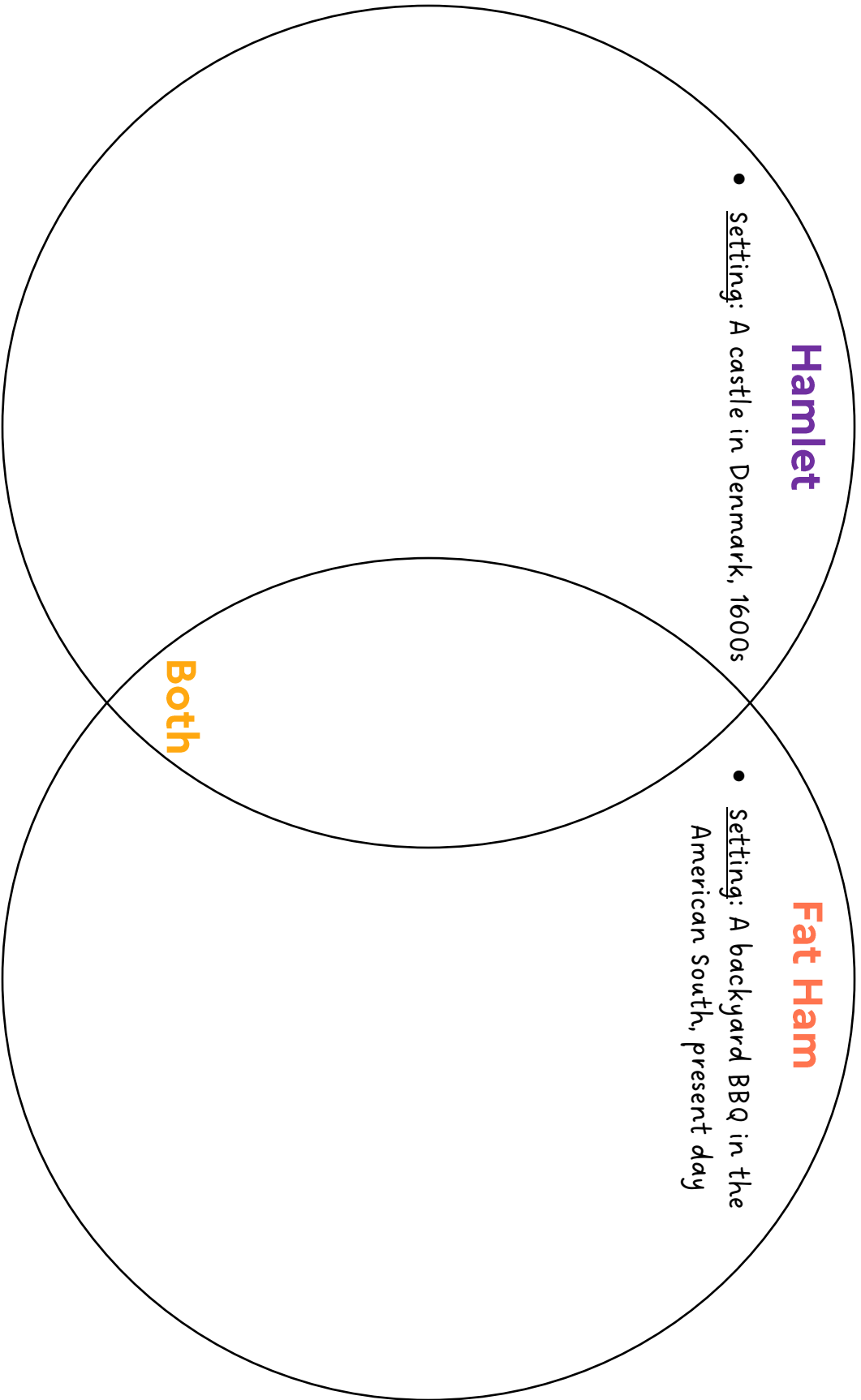
ACTIVITY:

Compare and contrast Shakespeare's *Hamlet* with James's *Fat Ham*. Use the following list to place your ideas in the graphic organizer on the next page, pg. 22 (the "Setting" is done for you). Then, use the organizer to write a 5-paragraph Compare/Contrast Essay to the prompt.

- ✓ Setting
- Characters
- Tragedy/Comedy
- Language
- Play within a play
- Theme: Death
- Theme: Masculinity
- *Other ideas of your own!*

ESSAY ASSESSMENT:

How does James James reference and utilize the language, elements, and ideas of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*? How does *Fat Ham* deviate from the source material? How do these choices create a compelling original play?



Hamlet

- Setting: A castle in Denmark, 1600s

Fat Ham

- Setting: A backyard BBQ in the American South, present day

Both

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH AT SEATTLE REP

Teen Nights

On select Fridays throughout our 2023/24 Season, teens are invited to see our shows for \$5 (with a TeenTix membership) with a free pre-show reception, fun activities, and a chance to hang out in a youth-only space! Pre-show Teen Night events begin at 6:30 p.m., followed by a 7:30 p.m. performance.

2023/24 Teen Nights

- *Fat Ham* – Friday, April 26, 2024
- *Jinkx Monsoon & Major Scales: Together Again, Again!* – Friday, June 14, 2024

Check out all of Seattle Rep's Youth Engagement offerings!



THERE'S MORE TO EXPERIENCE IN OUR LOBBY!

When you come to Seattle Rep, arrive to the show early (our lobby opens an hour before each show starts) and enjoy these engagement opportunities in our lobby.

ART WALK

While Seattle Rep is known for its art on stage, you don't want to miss the powerful art in our lobby, too. As the season progresses, check out the ever-changing work in our lobby Art Walk, located to the left of the Bagley Wright Theater Doors 4 and 1, near the main-level Bagley restrooms and Wellness Room. We will be highlighting three different local artists this year whose art and/or intersectional identities reflect the themes you will see on stage. This program is in partnership with local gallery organization A/NT Gallery.

A/NT Gallery has been a pillar at Seattle Center as a welcoming, non-juried art space with new FREE shows opening each month. If you are interested in displaying your own art or want to discover more local artists, contact A/NT Gallery at:

info@antgallery.org or 206.233.0680.

LISTENING STATION

In the Seattle Rep lobby, check out our Listening Station, located under the big staircase as you enter the theater. Look out for rotating music and podcasts at our Listening Station that elevates the motifs of the shows on stage.

FATHAM

