A unique, bilingual production featuring actors, writers, and designers from Scotland and Québec.

Directed by:  Serge Denoncourt  
Written by:  Clare Duffy & Pierre Yves Lemieux  
November 2011 – Montréal  •  March 2012 – Scotland  

STUDY GUIDE
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Founded in 1987, Imago Théâtre is one of the longest running independent English language theatre companies in Montreal.

**Imago provokes discussion.** Our productions tackle controversial, often contentious issues such as war, adoption, mental health, and marginalization.

**The artist is at the centre of Imago’s activities.** Whether producing new work or contemporary plays new to Montreal audiences, Imago champions the talents of Montreal’s finest artists.

**Imago productions break down linguistic and cultural barriers.** We are dedicated to fostering a dialogue between Anglophone and Francophone artists, and to promoting women’s voices, both on and off stage.

**artistic director**

Clare Schapiro has been involved in the creation of theatre for the past 30 years. She has worked as an artistic director, producer, teacher, and actor. She founded and directed two very distinct, ground-breaking Montreal-based theatre companies: Créations Etc., a unique performing arts company for young people (1978); and co-founded the culturally relevant Theatre 1774 (now Infinithéâtre), which addressed Montreal’s linguistic identity (1988). Clare has been Imago Théâtre’s Artistic and General Director since January 2000, producing and developing original Canadian plays, mentoring the work of emerging directors and actors,orchestrating various community outreach projects, and acting as a consultant on several professional theatre committees.

“The most aesthetically refined English language company in Montreal.”  
- Le Devoir
our collaborators

Stellar Quines Theatre Company

“\textit{A company with amazing depths of energy, maturity and skill.}”
- Scotland on Sunday

\textbf{Stellar Quines Theatre Company} was formed in 1993 to facilitate the creative work of women in Scottish theatre. It makes theatre that is driven by women and where women are at the forefront of all the creative roles. It is the only company in Scotland to work with women in this way, and it does this in collaboration with the men who share its vision.

\textbf{Stellar Quines Theatre Company} is known for its eclectic range of high quality, theatrical styles. It is driven by its vision to be bold, relevant and brave and is held in high regard by theatre makers, promoters and audiences across Scotland for its critically acclaimed and award-winning productions. It prizes collaboration, both at home and abroad, and strives to bring new writing to as many people as possible.

\begin{center}
\textbf{artistic director}
\end{center}

\textbf{Muriel Romanes} has over 30 years of experience in theatre both as an actor and director. She was the Associate Director of the Royal Lyceum Theatre in Edinburgh and is one of the co-founders (1993) of the Stellar Quines Theatre Company where she has been the Artistic Director since 1996. Her recent directorial credits include: The Unconquered by Torben Betts, Judith Adam’s theatrical adaptation of Muriel Spark’s The Girls of Slender Means at the 2009 Edinburgh Fringe Festival, and Linda Griffiths’ Age of Arousal, which premiered at Edinburgh’s Lyceum Theatre in March 2011 before touring Scotland this Spring, receiving rave reviews and multiple award nominations.
We have arrived at a circus, or rather a freak show, directed by an enthusiastic ringmaster. He is offering up his latest find. More extraordinary than the bearded woman, the Siamese sisters or the fattest woman on earth, he presents to us Ana, the woman who multiplies herself!

Ana has a gift. When she is confronted with an important decision, she is able to take both options. At the age of 16, Ana, an isolated teenager, gives birth. Ana is without resources and in a difficult situation. She therefore has to choose between sacrificing her life for the baby, or killing it to save her own.

Rather than choosing, Ana multiplies herself. While the first Ana keeps the child, the second Ana kills it and runs away. We then follow both these women, and all the other “new Anas” who appear as the story unfolds.

Imagine having that power to take both paths. “What if I never got married?” “What if I never had children?” “What if I had chosen another career...another country?”

Genius artist or assassin, strip dancer or priest’s wife, Ana’s life is a fascinating journey. It is the portrait of many women who must make extremely difficult decisions. It is also a reflection on the difficulties of creation (from giving life to creating art) and the consequences creation has on oneself and others.

What is rational, what isn’t? Is Ana really a freak, a mad woman, as the ringmaster believes? Or is she an artistic genius? Does Ana speak in earnest? Is she a liar or a goddess? Is a woman who chooses to run off to other lives a monster?

The Ana here with us now in the theatre is able to see all of the selves she is and has been. Ana needs to tell us her story because she has been to the darkest places on Earth. She has given everything away in order to be here and tell this story. Everything she is now, is on stage tonight.
Meet the Director

Serge Denoncourt (QC)

Serge Denoncourt is known as a true man of the theatre with more than 80 productions to his credit. Co-founder of Montreal’s Théâtre de l’Opsis in 1984, he has explored the great classics and the modern repertoire with equal interest. He breathed new life into the Théâtre du Trident in Quebec City as the company’s Artistic Director from 1994 to 1997. Steeped in theatre tradition and known for the visual beauty of his shows, which are typically marked by heightened imagery, vivid use of color and a deep examination of subtext, Serge also stages operas and delves into the world of variety shows. Among his latest creations are the Serbian Roma show GRUBB, CRISS ANGEL’s Believe for the Cirque du Soleil, Beau Dommage’s musical Le blues de la métropole, Michel Tremblay’s Thérèse et Pierrette à l’école des Saints-Anges and Fragments de mensonges inutiles, and Le Projet Andromaque at l’Espace GO.

Meet the Playwrights

Clare Duffy (UK) and Pierre Yves Lemieux (QC)

Clare Duffy wrote and directed Money...the game show for the Arches and Traverse Theatre in March 2011, as a winner of the Platform 18 Arches Award. She co-founded Unlimited Theatre in 1997 and continues to write and create new work as a core artist, working nationally and internationally across different media. She is currently commissioned by Magnetic North: Edinburgh, to write Some Other Stars about a man with ‘locked-in syndrome.’ Clare’s first full-length play, Crossings was produced and published in 2005 by Sgript Cymru. It won a Pearson award and a residency at the West Yorkshire Playhouse. She has also written drama for Radio Four and is in the final year of her doctorate research at Glasgow University.

Pierre Yves Lemieux is not confined to a particular genre when it comes to playwriting. He is the author of a dozen brilliant comedies and many wonderful creations, adapting and rewriting: Mr. Smytchkov, The Sound and the Fury, Comédie Russe, À propos de Romeo and Juliette, La sirène et le harpon (Opsis). The Three Musketeers and Scaramouche (Denise Pelletier). Les estivants, Tristan and Isolde (TNM) Claude, Suzanne, Simon (Duceppe). His most recent creations are Les rois du ciel, Lapin et compagnie and Beauty and The Beast (TNM-4D’Art), which will tour internationally in 2013.
Meet the Cast of ANA

The Quebecers

Catherine Bégin

Winning first prize in tragedy, first prize in classical drama, and second prize in modern theatre, Catherine Bégin was 20 years old when she graduated from the Conservatoire National d’Art Dramatique in Montreal in 1959. She immediately began her professional career working in theatre and television and she has not stopped since. She was a sought-after actress during the golden age of televised dramas in Québec, appearing regularly in many series over 35 years. These days, she performs on stages large and small in Montreal and also works in television, film and radio. She has acted in many plays directed by Serge Denoncourt, including (Oncle) Vania; Teatr (Théâtre de l’Opsis); and Le Pays Dans La Gorge (Théâtre Populaire du Québec). Bégin won the Prix Victor-Morin for theatre in 1999. She was nominated for best female actress in a supporting role for L’homme en lambeaux at the 2001 Masques, winning the award in 2005 for Jouliks and receiving the nomination again in 2007 for Au retour des oies blanches.

Alain Goulem

Alain Goulem has many years of stage and film work to his credit. Some of the theatres Alain has performed at include The Stratford Festival of Canada, Centaur Theatre (Montreal), The Citadel (Edmonton), and Manitoba Theatre Centre (Winnipeg). Alain has directed for the stage at Geordie Theatre, Theatre Lac Brome, Hudson Village Theatre and Imago Theatre, where he helmed the world premiere of Colleen Wagner’s Down From Heaven. Film and TV credits include regular roles on 18 to Life (CBC), The Tournament (CBC), Le Negotiateur (TVA) and Sauve Qui Peut (TVA) as well as featured roles in Snake Eyes, and the upcoming feature films Eddie and Kin.

Dominique Leduc

Dominique Leduc is an actress and a cofounder of Momentum theatre. Her work within the company has led her to write and direct several shows, including Game, 7 façons d’apprêter un cadavre, and most recently, L’ardent désir des fleurs de cacao. As an actress, she has appeared on many stages, such as le Théâtre du Nouveau Monde, Espace GO, La Licorne and Théâtre Denise-Pelletier. With Momentum, Leduc recently acted in Buffet Chinois and Mycologie, the newest creation of Stéphane Crête. During the 2010-2011 season, she toured Quebec with the play Piaf, performing the eponymous lead role. On television, she has acted in numerous soap operas and series, including Providence, Yamaska, Les Hauts et les Bas de Sophie Paquin, Temps dur, Ces enfants d’ailleurs and Cauchemar d’amour, which earned her a Gemini Award nomination. Leduc plays the role of Esther in the popular children’s TV series KABOUM. She has also appeared in several films, such as Alexis Durand-Brault’s feature film Ma fille, mon ange and Love-moi, the major work of filmmaker Marcel Simard.
Lisa Gardner

Lisa trained at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, graduating in 2004. After a successful audition on the day of her graduation, her first professional job was as a guest lead actress in the BBC’s popular supernatural series *Sea of Souls*. Since then she has been working steadily in the theatre, radio and television. Her theatre credits include, *Company Policy*, *Targets*, *Velvet Love* and *Drawing Bored* all for Play, Pie & a Pint; *Hoors* (Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh & UK Tour); *Last of the Red Hot Lovers* (UK Tour); *What ever Happened to Baby Jane?* (Citizens Theatre, Glasgow); *A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Othello* (Bard in the Botanics, Glasgow); *Tales from Hollywood* (Perth Theatre); *Pre-Paradise* Sorry Now and The Serpents Egg. She has recorded many radio dramas for BBC Scotland, BBC Radio 4 and two series of the comedy Sabotage with Demus Productions. Earlier this year, Lisa left the Scottish television series River City after playing the character Jo Rossi for three years.

Selina Boyack

Selina Boyack trained at the Royal Scottish Academy, winning the Gold Medal upon graduation. She has worked extensively with new writing, collaborating with Suspect Culture on *8000 Metres* (Tramway, Glasgow), *A Different Language* (Trieste/Glasgow) and *The Escapologist* (Tramway); and with Anthony Neilson on *Stitching* (The Bush Theatre, London; Traverse, Edinburgh) and *The Menu* (National Theatre). She has worked with Stewart Laing on *An Argument About Sex* (Tramway) and at Oran Mor Theatre on *Gods Are Fallen*, *All Safety Gone* and *Stage Fright*. Other theatre work includes *Private Lives* (Citizens Theatre, Glasgow), *An Ideal Husband* (Theatre Clwyd), *The Winters Tale* and *A Midsummer Nights Dream* (Royal Lyceum, Edinburgh), and *Habitats* (Tron Theatre, Glasgow). Film work includes Alice Todd in *Sweeney Todd* (John Schlesinger) and Shirley in *The Debt Collector* (Anthony Neilson). She was nominated Best Actress for *Stitching* by the TMA & The Stage Awards and she received the same nomination from Scottish Theatre Critics Awards for her appearances in *The Last Yankee* and *8000 Metres*.

Magalie Lépine-Blondeau

Since her graduation from the National Theatre School in 2005, Magalie has had no shortage of projects. In theatre, she performed in Molière’s *L’Amour médecin* (2005), followed by *Don Juan*, directed by Lorraine Pintal at Théâtre de Nouveau Monde. She continued to explore this repertoire at Théâtre Denise-Pelletier in *Fourberies de Scapin* (Daniel Paquette, 2007). She performed in Théâtre de l’Opsis’ production of *Comment j’ai appris à conduire* (2007-08), reprising her role for the play’s Quebec tour in 2009. Her work with Théâtre de l’Opsis continued the following year with *Il campiello*, directed by Serge Denoncourt. On television, Magalie hosted the popular kids program *R-Force* on VrakTV from 2006 to 2007, for which she was nominated for a Gemini Award in 2008. She starred in the show *Fan Club* on the same channel, which was a hit amongst young viewers, earning nominations at the 2009 Gemini Awards and the 2010 Artis Gala. She currently acts in several television series, such as *C. A.; Les étoiles filantes; PROVIDENCE;* and 19-2. In film, she has worked with Xavier Dolan in *Les Amours Imaginaires* and *Laurence Anyways*. She has also appeared in the feature films *Ma tante Aline* and *Le Secret de ma mère*. 
Frances Thorburn
Frances Thorburn is both a theatre maker and a singer songwriter. Her last production for the theatre was her most challenging yet. She played Marilyn Monroe in a new play by Sue Glover entitled *Marilyn*, opening at the Citizen's theatre in Glasgow and touring to the Lyceum theatre in Edinburgh. Before that she was hosting her own performance night showcasing songs from her debut album, *The Needle is the Haystack*, to a sell out crowd at the Arches Theatre in Glasgow. She has performed in London’s West End in *Fiddler on the Roof* and has also been part of the season at Shakespeare’s Globe, performing in *Antony and Cleopatra* and a new play by Howard Brenton, *In Extremis*. Frances is very happy to be reunited with Muriel Romanes who directed her in *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* years ago. She is delighted to have the chance to collaborate with Imago, working in such a vibrant city as Montreal with some of the most exciting theatre makers in the world.

Meet the Design Team

Louise Campeau - set design
Louise Campeau is a widely recognized set designer and graduate of the National Theatre School (1984) who has designed more than fifty productions with 14 theatre companies – from the largest and most established, to the smallest and most experimental: Théâtre de l’Opsis, Théâtre de l’Île à Hull, Théâtre du Nouveau Monde, Théâtre Denise-Pelletier, Compagnie Jean Duceppe, Théâtre de Quat’Sous, Espace GO et Théâtre du Rideau Vert. Louise Campeau has collaborated with numerous theatre directors, including: Luce Pelletier, Daniel Roussel, Daniel Brière, Brigitte Haentjens et Denise Guilbault. Devoted colleague of Serge Denoncourt, she has designed sets for the majority of his productions, including *Les Feluettes*, for which she won Les Masques prize for Best Set Design. She was awarded the Siminovitch prize that same year for the quality of her work; “Ms. Campeau is an extraordinary theatre artist whose work gives set design a whole new meaning and whose dedication towards the craft is unequaled.”

Martin Labrecque - lighting design
Martin Labrecque is, beyond a doubt, one of the most gifted and acclaimed lighting designers of his generation. Innovative and flexible, he works in theatre, circus, dance and film with equal ease, grace and boundless enthusiasm. Winner of four Masque Awards, Martin Labrecque boasts nearly a hundred lighting designs to his name. Since he launched his career in 1994, he has been a dependable collaborator with some of Quebec’s most distinguished directors: Alexis Martin, Claude Poissant, Martine Beaulne, René Richard Cyr, Michel Monty, Luce Pelletier and Carl Béchard and he has designed nearly thirty productions for Serge Denoncourt. His most stunning lighting designs to date are those for the Cirque du Soleil’s *Québec 2008* for Quebec City’s 400th anniversary, The Cirque Éloize, and Pierre Lapointe’s daring *Mutantès*. 
Gabriel Coutu Dumont – Video designer

Gabriel Coutu Dumont is a multidisciplinary artist creating projects both under his own name and as co-founder of the collectives RACAM, nAnalog and Silent Partners. A trained photographer, Gabriel produces multimedia installations, photography, drawing and graphic arts projects while traveling between Montreal, New York, Mexico, China and Europe. In recent years he has focused on video creation, live performance, and video scenography for sound-art events. Gabriel’s recent work has included video-design for two operas and a busy schedule of live shows on the international electronic music scene across various genres, as well as ongoing photography projects. Since 2007, he has been using photography as an object, as raw material for an installative approach. Recent photographic exhibitions include Sketches of Synchronicity, which toured Canada from 2006-2010 and Living in Different Worlds at Galerie Donald Brown.

Philip Pinsky – Composer/Sound designer

Philip Pinsky is Associate Artist at the Royal Lyceum Theatre, for whom he has acted as composer and sound designer for Everyone, Peter Pan, Confessions of a Justified Sinner, Copenhagen, The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, Mary Rose, Macbeth, Trumpets and Raspberries, The Glass Menagerie, Living Quarters, The Winter’s Tale, The Merchant of Venice, Faust 1 and 2 and DeoxyriboNucleic Acid. He has designed for such companies as: Stellar Quines, National Theatre of Scotland, Traverse, Almeida, Grid Iron, Dundee Rep, Lung Ha’s and Red Shift. TV credits include Art & Soul, Ninewells, Harley Street, Seaside Rescue, and What Not To Wear (BBC). He has worked on educational projects for NTS Learn, he is the winner of the 2005 Critics Award for Theatre in Scotland for best use of music in theatre and was nominated for a Sony Music Award for Extraneous Noises Off (BBC Radio 3).

Megan Baker – Costume designer

Megan studied at Falmouth School of Art and completed her BA (Hons) in Fashion and Textiles at Middlesex Polytechnic. Immediately after graduating, Megan started working as a freelance milliner and textile designer, with her own label designs selling in London, New York and Paris. In the 1990s, Megan worked in theatre, as a Costume Supervisor at the Theatre Royal Stratford East and later in the same role at Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre. From 1997, she worked as a freelance costume designer for rep and touring companies. Megan was appointed as Head of Performance Costume at Edinburgh College of Art in 1998. She supervises the BA, MA and MFA Performance Costume degrees, as well as the work of PhD students. She is currently external assessor of Huddersfield University’s BA (Hons) in Costume Textiles.
Postmodernism and the Theatre

In its style, script, staging and characters, ANA is a piece of postmodernist theatre. Postmodern and Postmodernist are words you might hear a lot in reference to art, architecture, and contemporary culture and society. But what do these words mean?

Let’s define some terms:

Using the word “Postmodern” to describe a play or any piece of art (be it visual art, literature, architecture or music) can have multiple connotations. “Postmodern” identifies a historical period after the modern era of the 19th and early 20th century. On the other hand, “Postmodernist” is used to describe cultural creations and concepts that possess the qualities of postmodernism not as an historical period, but as a structure of ideas, beliefs and aesthetics.

Within this structure of ideas, Postmodernism reacts against Modernism, subverting its philosophy, culture and politics. The grand, linear narratives than defined Modern history, culture and identity are abandoned in Postmodernism, which instead supports multiple, fluid narratives and is open to various perspectives and identities. Postmodernism in art is marked by a stylistic eclecticism – where various forms, genres, cultures and ideas mingle together, in a variety of contexts.

To understand Postmodernism in theatre, first we must discuss the Modern theatre tradition...
“Modern” theatre of the 19th and early 20th centuries was dominated by Naturalism and Realism. Realist dramas, such as those by male playwrights Henrik Ibsen (A Doll’s House, The Wild Duck, Hedda Gabler), Anton Chekhov (The Cherry Orchard, Uncle Vanya, The Three Sisters) and Eugene O’Neill (Long Day’s Journey into Night), employed familiar, domestic subjects, settings and conflicts. Their work pulled theatre away from palaces and the lives of the rich and royal, and into middle-class kitchens and parlours, where the audience could be immersed in the everyday drama of family life. Dramas would follow traditional narrative structure, with a clearly defined beginning, middle, and conclusion.

Corresponding to Realism’s ascent in playwriting was Russian theatre practitioner Konstantin Stanislavski’s system of acting. Stanislavski’s system pushed actors to connect emotionally and physically to a character and an environment, and shunned presentational acting – that is, delivering lines directly to the audience, with exaggerated emotions and gestures. Through the Realist aesthetic, the idea of the “fourth wall” came into popularity. On stage, actors would pretend the audience was not actually there by establishing an imaginary fourth wall between themselves and the spectators, therefore creating a more “real” environment.

However, while Realism maintained a strong hold on modernist theatre traditions, there were other theatre artists during this same period who were making theatre which confronted these modernist conventions. The anti-realist theatre of Bertold Brecht, Samuel Beckett, Eugene Ionesco and Harold Pinter developed alongside realist theatre of the 19th and 20th centuries. Their work, while within the same era, challenged Realism with a theatre that embraced absurdity, alienation, and fragmented narratives and characters. It is difficult to position their work within Modernism or Postmodernism, as it contains aspects of both styles.
In the same way as Postmodernist art rejected the master narratives of Western culture, Postmodernist theatre embraces **multiplicity** and **fragmentation** within its narratives, characters, and settings. The concept of pluralism is often invoked in Postmodernist theatre. **Pluralism**, put simply, is the acknowledgement and acceptance of diversity in reality, politics and culture. In Postmodernist theatre, we find pluralism in:

- **Narratives:** Linear narratives are exchanged for multi-dimensional, simultaneous narratives, which do not necessarily follow the traditional structure of beginning, middle and end.

- **Voices:** Female, queer, marginalized and alternative voices are brought to the stage, eschewing the heterosexual white male's former dominance of the theatre.

- **Theatre traditions and styles:** Postmodernist theatre draws from a variety of theatre traditions, from other cultures and nations, into one creation. This is called intercultural performance.

- **Characters & Casting:** Non-traditional and gender-neutral casting occurs frequently in Postmodernist theatre. Men and women may play roles of the opposite sex and actors are not limited by their ethnicity in terms of roles they can play. Character identities are no longer unified, but fragmented into a collage of texts, environments, and cultural contexts.

**Discussion Questions**

- Ana is a character whose identity is fragmented to the very core. When faced with a decision, she splits herself, becoming a different person, in a different time and place. Think about the places Ana has lived, the people she has encountered, and the things she does – how do all these elements inform her identity? How does she change in each new place and time where she exists? How does she stay the same?

- Think about other ways in which the production is Postmodernist. Consider the playwrights, the structure of the story, the set design, and the cultures and time periods you see on stage.

- Are there moments in the play where the fourth wall is broken? Why do you think this happens? How does it affect your experience of the play?
The Inanna Myth

The character of Ana is inspired by the ancient Sumerian Goddess Inanna. Inanna is the central character of the first known story recorded in Sumerian Cuneiform script, which is over 5000 years old and set in the city of Ur. The play ANA retells the Inanna myth, exploring the plight of women’s suffering throughout the ages and the connection between depression, madness and creativity.

Inanna was a goddess who represented sexuality, reproduction and fertility and was considered the ‘Mistress of the Me’. In Sumerian society the ‘me’ represents civilized order, such as politics, family, and agriculture. Inanna is also associated with the celestial body Venus. Rather than traveling across the sky like most planets, Venus moves erratically across the sky, rising in the east and the west in the morning and evening. Similarly, Inanna is said to possess an erratic and unpredictable nature.

Inanna’s Story

The myth follows Inanna as she tries to attend the funeral of her sister’s husband. Her sister was Ershkigal, Goddess of the Underworld, and she hated Inanna deeply. For her journey, Inanna donned elaborate garments that represented all of her powers. When she arrived at the seven gates of the Underworld, Ershkigal had ordered the gatekeepers to only allow her to enter if she gave them each one of her garments. Thus, by the time Inanna arrived at Ershkigal she was naked and powerless. Inanna died while in the underworld but was brought back to life by the god Enki. However, Inanna was unable to leave the underworld until she found someone to replace her. After realizing that her husband Dumuzi was not mourning her death, Inanna agreed he would spend half the year in the underworld and Ershkigal would spend the other half. Inanna regained her powers but regretted her decision for she missed her husband when he was gone. This depressing and infertile period of her year came to correspond with the Fall and Winter months, whereas the happy and fertile period when she was reunited with her husband became associated with Spring and Summer.
What is Depression?

Depression is a condition that negatively affects one’s thoughts, behaviour and body functioning. In Canada, approximately 11% of men and 16% of women will experience major depression at some point in their lives. There are many contributing factors to the development of depression. It is thought that individuals may be born with a genetic vulnerability to depression, which can develop into clinical depression if the individual experiences manifold negative life experiences such as stress in their work or personal life, or alcohol and drug addictions. Thus, both nature and nurture contribute to the development of major depression.

Why Are Women More Susceptible to Depression Than Men?

It is not known definitively why women have such higher rates of depression than men. However many theories contribute to our understanding, including biological susceptibility, the stress of striving to fulfill unrealistic female stereotypes, and dissatisfaction with female gender identities.

It is possible that women’s hormonal fluctuations, or genetics may contribute, but more likely it is societal influences such as status, gender roles, and stereotypes that bring about the high rates of female depression. Women are usually socialized to be nurturing and emotional mother figures, but this stereotype is extremely difficult to live up to, considering the multiple roles modern women fulfill in their everyday life. For example, working mothers spend an average of about 70 hours a week with their children, whereas working fathers spend an average of only 30 hours a week with their children. However, it is women rather than men who tend to feel dissatisfied with the amount of time they designate to spend with their children. It is this constant striving for perfection, and the pressure to fulfill unrealistic female stereotypes that may account for the high rates of depression among women.

The female desire for perfection is shown in this scene between Ana on the Isle of Skye and her Mother:

Ana Skye: No. I want to stay with you mama. When I grow up I’m going to be just like you.

Mother: You will be very unhappy then. I am worthless, less than the pigs.

Ana Skye: What am I worth?

Mother: You have to learn to keep your mouth shut. They are getting so suspicious of you and your weird ways.

Exploring Depression in ANA

Ana is cursed from birth, cursed with the gift of splitting, of becoming someone else, in a different time, in a different place. In moments of crisis, of betrayal, of murder, Ana can split and re-create herself. And yet Ana cannot escape the darkness of her past, for she is forced to live with the consequences of all the lives she creates. Ana’s story explores the complicated relationship between womanhood, creativity and depression.
Stereotypes and Gender Identities

Below is a list of female and male stereotypical characteristics. Do you recognize any of these traits in Ana?

**Characteristics of the Female Stereotype**
- Affectionate
- Gullible
- Cheerful
- Childlike
- Compassionate
- Does not use harsh language
- Eager to soothe hurt feelings
- Feminine
- Flatterable
- Gentle
- Loves children
- Loyal
- Sensitive to the needs of others
- Shy
- Soft-spoken
- Sympathetic
- Tender
- Understanding
- Warm

**Characteristics of the Male Stereotype**
- Acts as a leader
- Aggressive
- Ambitious
- Intelligent
- Assertive
- Athletic
- Competitive
- Defends own beliefs
- Dominant
- Forceful
- Has leadership abilities
- Independent
- Individualistic
- Makes decisions easily
- Masculine
- Self-reliant
- Self-sufficient
- Strong personality
- Willing to take a stand
- Willing to take risks

Gender stereotypes have a significant effect on gender identities. Additionally, the extreme amount of importance placed on women’s physical attractiveness in Western society adds yet another pressure to women’s identity and self-image. Studies show that girls are less satisfied with their physical appearance than boys by as early as third grade. Thus, gender stereotypes and other social expectations can be significant contributing factors to the high rates of female depression.
Why Are Creative Individuals So Susceptible to Depression?

Ana Star: They wanted to stop me dancing...like trying to stop me breathing. So one me defended myself. The other me, because there is always more, escaped...out of the frying pan and into the fire.

Current research suggests that artists have a high susceptibility to develop depression. This is possibly because divergent thinking – a key characteristic of gifted artists – has high social risks. Daring to think and act with originality, creativity and fantasy usually requires one to challenge social norms, which can lead to ostracism, an unsupportive environment and other forms of social stress. However, depression may also act as a catalyst for creativity, challenging individuals to use art as a means to reinvent, re-examine and better understand their lives.

As both women and artists are susceptible to depression, it is not surprising that many established female artists throughout history have been known to suffer depressive illness, including Virginia Woolf, Sylvia Plath, Georgia O’Keeffe and Emily Dickinson.

Through all her different lives, art remains a stable element of Ana’s identity, influencing her actions, behavior and dreams. She draws upon her vast life experience in order to create, using art as a means to express herself, to gain emancipation, and to connect with others. Sometimes her creations are celebrated but often the people around her try to suppress her creative desires and subdue her divergent thinking.

Discussion Questions

• Does Ana use creative outlets to cope with the darkness she experiences? Or are Ana’s experiences of darkness a result of her creativity?

• How do other characters in the play support or repress Ana’s art? Consider Ana’s experience as both a dancer and sculptor.
Butler believes that gender identity is formed through a combination of historical, psychological, and social contexts. Concepts of identity are brought to life by society, are rehearsed throughout history, and performed by us (the actors, so to speak) in our daily lives. From this perspective, gender is not an expression of a person’s essential self, but is something that is created, adopted and adapted through a “stylized repetition of acts.” Butler writes, “The various acts of gender creates the idea of gender, and without those acts, there would be no gender at all.”

Ana is an artist, a performer, a mother, a murderer, a prostitute, a woman, and a goddess. She lives through the lives of many influential and controversial women throughout history. Her sense of self is always shifting, as each time she must make a consequential decision, she splits herself and takes both paths. Her identity is fluid, never fixed. Ana lives up to many expected norms of female identity, behavior and sexuality, yet she also defies these norms in many of the lives she lives.

The play’s depiction of female identity and gender strongly relates to Judith Butler’s postmodernist theories of performativity and gender. Judith Butler is a contemporary queer theorist who rejects the idea that gender and identity are stable, unchanging essences of our selves, and instead proposes the idea that gender and identity are performed.

Performing Identity

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The kinds of acts that Butler is referring to can be as simple as the way we talk, the way we walk, and the clothes we wear, and as complex as the relationships we cultivate between our family, friends, and partners.

Because these socially accepted acts are constantly repeated over time, gender is constructed to comply with a model of truth and falsity, right and wrong. It this model which unfairly privileges heterosexuality as ‘normal’ and all other sexual persuasions as abnormal or wrong. As Butler writes, these ‘correct’ and ‘incorrect’ behaviours are dealt with accordingly by society: “Performing one’s gender wrong initiates a set of punishments both obvious and indirect, and performing it well provides the reassurance that there is an essentialism of gender identity after all.” By highlighting gender’s constructed nature, Butler fights for the rights of oppressed identities (such as gay, lesbian, and transgender) that do not conform to the artificial rules of gender normativity.

Accepting different kinds of acts and behaviours into our ‘script’ can change these unfair norms. “If the ground of gender identity is the stylized repetition of acts through time, and not a seemingly seamless identity, then the possibilities of gender transformation are to be found in the arbitrary relation between such acts, in the possibility of a different sort of repeating, in the breaking or subversive repetition of that style.”

Therefore, ideas of gender can be shifted and expanded through subversive acts which attack gender norms.

**Discussion Questions**

- How does Ana uphold and reject female gender norms?

- Can you think of situations in the play where Ana is punished for her behavior? Who punishes her? Why do they do this?

- Think of Ana as a loving mother, and Ana as a killer. Consider Ana’s relationships with men (such as Jeff, her lover) and with women (such as Meg, the travelling farrier). It may be helpful to revisit the gender stereotypes that were introduced in the previous section.

- What kind of a portrait of femininity do all the ANAs create in the play?
Ana’s Influence

Ana and Jacques-Louis David

When she is living in Paris during the Reign of Terror, Ana poses for Jacques-Louis David. Jacques-Louis David was a prominent French painter who lived from 1748-1825. He was a strong supporter for the French Revolution and was imprisoned for his beliefs after Maximilien Robespierre lost his power in 1794. Jacques-Louis David paintings were neoclassical in style and many depict famous figures and leaders of the revolution.

Eugene Delacroix - Liberty Leading the People

In the play, it is suggested that Jacques-Louis David thinks of painting Ana as lady Liberty, since after Ana poses for him he tells her, “It’s uncanny. I dreamt last night of Liberty, bare breasted and crushing the mouths of the little boys as she penetrates the barricades” (31). In fact, the painting David described in the play was not realized until 1830 when Eugène Delacroix painted “Liberty Leading the People”, which depicts a woman personifying liberty in the French Revolution.

Interesting Fact: The main figure in Liberty Leading the People inspired the Statue of Liberty, which was given to the United States of America by the French in 1886.
In ANA, Jacques Louis-David abandons painting Ana because of her sexual appeal and after kissing her, David and Ana discuss the death of his brother Marat:

**Ana Killer**  
Tell me. Tell me your terrors.  

**J-L**  
I betrayed him. My brother Marat.  

**Ana Killer**  
Yes. He is sitting now in his bath, copying the lists of the counter revolutionaries who will be guillotined tomorrow. His skin torments him. His only relief is to sit in the bath.  

**Ana Killer**  
I know him.  

**J-L**  
Of course you do. Of course.  

**Ana Killer**  
He speaks well.  

**J-L**  
The people love him. He is more use to us as a martyr.  

**Ana Killer**  
Tell me how will she kill him?  

**J-L**  
She will stab him.  

**Ana Killer**  
He deserves it.  

**J-L**  
So do I.

*The Death of Marat* is one of Jacques Louis-David’s most famous paintings. Marat was a friend of Jacques Louis-David’s who was assassinated by Charlotte Corday in 1793. Marat suffered from a skin disease from which only bathing could provide relief. Marat had a desk placed on top of his bathtub so he could work in furthering the French Revolution out of the bath. Charlotte Corday entered Marat’s house under the pretense that she had a list of people who were against the revolution and therefore needed to be executed. After handing him the list, she stabbed Marat and he died in the bath as is depicted in the painting. Charlotte Corday was guillotined for her crime.
Ana and Charles Darwin

Within the play, ten-year-old Ana encounters Dr. Charles Darwin in 1851, just after Darwin’s ten-year-old daughter Annie has died. During their discussion about why some creatures live and others die, Ana’s thoughts seem to greatly influence Darwin’s:

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**Darwin**  So why does one creature disappear and not another? Who decides who dies and who lives?

**Ana**  Nobody decides. The animals we see have what it takes to live. That’s all. Something the others didn’t have. And maybe one day they won’t have what it takes either. Some others will. That’s the way it is. Everything has to keep changing. If you change, you live.

**Darwin**  What do you mean?

**Ana**  If you change, you live. If you live, you’ve changed. Those that don’t change die.

**Darwin**  You know, I think I agree with you.

---

Charles Darwin lived from 1809-1882 and his theory of evolution by natural selection has had one of the most significant impacts on science, culture and religion in human history. This theory, which was published in *On the Origin of Species* in 1859 states that species evolve over multiple generations to have a better chance of surviving in their environment through the process of natural selection. Thus, just as Ana said, species that are better suited to survive will live to pass on their genes to future generations, whereas those that are not suited to survive will die, and therefore their genes will not be passed on.
After reading *On the Origin of Species*, the British philosopher, biologist and sociologist Herbert Spencer coined the phrase ‘survival of the fittest’ in 1864 to describe natural selection, and Darwin soon picked up the phrase himself. Survival of the fittest refers to Darwin’s theory that species that are best adapted to their environment will be most likely to survive. This theory was, and continues to be controversial because it conflicts with the religious belief of creation, which states that all species were created by God.

**Anne Darwin**

Charles Darwin’s eldest daughter Anne Darwin (known as Annie) passed away at age ten in 1851, after suffering from scarlet fever and tuberculosis. Darwin wrote a memorial on April 30, 1851 commemorating Annie’s short but full life. He wrote, “Her joyousness and animal spirits radiated from her whole countenance and rendered every movement elastic and full of life & vigour.” Darwin also described Annie as a child who “danced well, & was extremely fond of it”, and wrote, “When going round the sand-walk with me, although I walked fast, she often used to go before pirouetting in the most elegant way, her dear face bright all the time, with the sweetest smiles.” Annie Darwin’s love for dancing, and the energy she radiates strikes many similarities with the character of Ana.

**Discussion Question**

- How might have Annie Darwin’s young death affected Charles Darwin’s ideas of natural selection (i.e. survival of the fittest)?
Within the play, Ana visits Dr. Sigmund Freud’s office in 1910. Dr. Sigmund Freud was a famous psychiatrist and psychological theorist who lived from 1856 to 1939 in Vienna, Austria. Freud’s ideas within the realm of psychology were very controversial and were not well received by the medical community during his lifetime. However, his theories have had a lasting impact on psychology and our understanding of human culture. The basis of Freud’s theory is that there are three levels to one’s mind: the conscious, preconscious and unconscious.

- **The conscious mind** is what one thinks of, or is aware of, in any given moment.
- **The preconscious mind** is everything that is stored in one’s memory and can be easily retrieved.
- **The unconscious mind** (which is by far the largest) includes everything that is stored deep in one’s memory and cannot be easily retrieved. Freud believes this usually includes dark memories and emotions derived from past traumas.

To treat his patients, Freud developed a form of therapy called psychoanalysis. Freud considered the goal of psychoanalysis was “to make the unconscious conscious” (Boree 2011). In order to make the unconscious come to light, Freud employed the technique of free association, where he would say words or show pictures to the patient and asked the patient to instantly say whatever came into his or her head. Freud believed that what the patient said in response to the prompts provided insight into his or her unconscious.

When Freud analyses Ana in his office, he asks her to tell him whatever word comes into her head when she hears the words he reads from the cards. Freud tells Ana:

“What interests me is not the words themselves but what lies behind them. We are looking for memories from the far distant past, fragments of memory if you like. Imagine that your memories are shattered into a thousand pieces. We might be able to take these pieces and analyze them and find an explanation, for example, for your need to dance. Just as an archaeologist does when he finds the hand of a statue, and then a foot and discovers as a result that the statue is of Venus or of Zeus...By making connections.”
Interestingly, Freud had both a famous patient and a daughter by the name of Anna...

**Anna O.**

Freud’s patient Anna O. was initially the patient of his mentor and friend Dr. Joseph Breuer. Anna was a twenty-one year old German woman who developed a bizarre set of symptoms including paralysis, hallucinations and speech difficulties (including speaking only in her second language English instead of German), in which no physical causes could be found. Breuer diagnosed Anna O. with hysteria, which was defined as physical symptoms that are a result of an emotional trauma. Breuer used “therapeutic technical procedure” to help Anna O. understand the underlying meaning of her symptoms. This case had a great impact on the development of Freud’s psychoanalytic theory. Interestingly, many of Anna O’s symptoms are similar to Ana’s behaviour with Freud. For example, remember how Ana tells Freud that she understands every language and can translate every language, but only speaks French?

**Anna Freud**

Freud’s daughter Anna was born in 1895 and was his youngest of six children. Anna was very inquisitive and by 1910 was already fascinated with her father’s work. In 1918 Freud began psychoanalysing his daughter and they both attended the 1920 International Psychoanalytical Congress. Anna began working in psychoanalysis, and of her collaboration with her father once wrote, “We felt that we were the first who had been given a key to the understanding of human behaviour and its aberrations as being determined not by overt factors but by the pressure of instinctual forces emanating from the unconscious mind.” Ana disagrees with Anna and Sigmund Freud’s ambition to understand the human mind. She tells Freud “It’s very foolish, doctor, to want to understand. A huge mistake to want to take possession of the words of others the way you do.”

**Discussion Questions**

- Who appears to Ana during her session with Freud? What is her reaction to this vision? Do you think this is a vision from her conscious mind, her preconscious mind, or her subconscious? Why?
Scene Study Exercises

Most plays are made up of many scenes. The scenes are the building blocks of the play itself, and it is helpful when studying a play to break it down and analyze the text scene-by-scene. Try to think of this as an investigation; there are clues here and there that will help you understand the meaning of the scene, and thus the play as a whole.

_Night. Outside. Mother is wearing a yellow dress and carrying a bag. She is creeping out, lighting her way with a lantern. Suddenly Ana is standing in front of her in the field of light._

Mother

Oh God!

Ana Skye

(Cold) What are you doing mama?

Mother

I’ve got to go.

Ana Skye

Why? Why are you going?

Mother

You’re too young to understand.

Ana Skye

I’m four next week.

Mother

And I’m 19. So there. I’m older than you and I know more about it.

Ana Skye

You are leaving.

Mother

Get out of my way. You’re in my path. Always in my road.

Ana Skye

It’s not my fault.

Mother

It’s not mine either!

Ana Skye

I’ll make it better mama.

Mother

I’ll go mad. I’m already...Ana. Ana. I’m desperate. If I stay I’ll do something desperate.

Ana Skye

But I can look after you mama. I can. I can make it all go right. I can. I can get out of your way. I can put buttercups all along the way. I can do anything. What kind of girl do you want me to be?

Mother

I saved you. You’re big and strong now. You don’t need me anymore. I have to go. Gart will protect you. You will look after him.

Adopted mother tries to move Ana Skye to one side but Ana Skye struggles with her.

Ana Skye

I do. I do need you. Please. Please don’t go. Please. Why don’t you love me?
Mother
Love? I love you...I just can’t bear to look at you. I look at you and I see how ugly I am.

Adopted mother pushes Ana Skye to one side roughly and leaves.

Ana Skye
(Screaming) Ma ma. Ma ma. (She calls after Mother) You can’t escape. I can have you back here any time I want. You’ll see.

MC
Ana splits at moments of great choice. She can take both paths.

MC brings over an ancient mirror. Ana looks at herself.

Ana Skye
I’m four years old and I have been abandoned twice. Does this make me hate mothers? Does this mean that I never want to be a mother?

MC walks the image of the other Ana in the mirror away from her.

MC
Ana split when her mother left. One Ana swore

Ana Skye
I am going to find you mama. With every breath I will call you back.

MC
And the other Ana swore

MC pretends to be the other Ana.

Ana (other)
I have no mother. I am a daughter of the world.

Discussion Questions

1. What is the central conflict of the scene? Is this conflict resolved by the end? If so, how?
2. What do you think was happening in the lives of the characters just before the scene started? What do you think they do afterwards?
3. How does this scene, and the conflict within it, relate to the play as a whole? What function does it serve in advancing the plot or explaining the characters?

Now that you’ve got a better idea of what the scene is doing, you can start imagining other avenues of exploration.

4. Try to boil the scene down to four lines, two for each character, while retaining the important aspects of the original text.
5. Can you imagine another possible ending for the scene? Try introducing a character halfway through, and see what happens. Remember that this character will bring something new, but may not erase the conflict that already exists within the scene.
6. Recontextualize the scene in time or space, or both. This scene takes place in a mountain village in the Isle of Skye in 700 AD. How would it be different if it was set in present day? Or in Montreal?
Theatre allows for all sorts of experimentation; this is one of the wonderful things about it as an art form. A play can still be a play without a setting, without lights, even without dialogue. But a play cannot exist if there are no characters. What would the audience watch, and how could the playwright tell a story, if not through characters? There are, however, infinite types of characters, just as there are infinite types of personalities that could exist. The study of characters can be the key to the action of the play.

**Choose a character from the above scene, and answer the following questions:**

1. What does this character want right now? This should be something simple, like to dance, to have a baby, to discover someone’s secret. If it’s not explicitly written in the scene, imagine what she might want to cause her to act the way he does.
2. What does this character want out of life? What are her ultimate goals? Does she want to be rich? To be loved? To have a family?
3. What are the obstacles that are keeping this character from getting what she wants? Remember that there are always obstacles. If you can’t find them, your character’s motivation might be wrong.

**Now that you know a bit more about your character’s hopes and dreams, let’s try extrapolating from them. This is often how playwrights work, beginning with characters, and allowing them to act out a story in the playwright’s imagination.**

4. Write a stream-of-consciousness monologue as your character. Don’t censor yourself, don’t worry about spelling or punctuation, or even subject matter. Just imagine what might be going on in your character’s head and then free-write until you’ve filled up a page.
5. Write the first few paragraphs of a biography on your character. What did he accomplish in his life? How will he be remembered?
6. Write a short scene involving your character, either ten years in the future or ten years in the past. Make sure to think about objectives and obstacles.

**Now let’s try directing!**

1. How would you stage this scene? Who moves where, and why?
2. If you were on the design team, what would the scene look like? You can talk about your artistic vision as a whole, or just one aspect (i.e. set, lighting, sound, costumes, makeup, etc.) Your design should enhance the overall meaning of the scene.
3. Give some specific instructions for the actors (these are called character notes). How do the characters stand, speak, move?
Be A Theatre Critic

Whether the audience loves a show or hates a show, they always have an opinion. Specific, well-developed opinions are important components of a theatre review. It is helpful to reflect and organize your thoughts soon after watching a play so that you can remember how you felt about each aspect of the play. Criticism is not just a response to art; it can be a creative act in itself. Remember, any viewpoint is valid, just as long is it can be backed up by convincing argumentation.

1. What do you think the play was trying to do? What did it want to teach you or make you feel, and why?

2. Where do you think the play succeeded and where did it fail? Explain your reaction.

3. How well was the overall production executed (acting, directing, writing, set, lighting, sound, costumes, etc.)?

4. How did each element of the production contribute to the overall meaning of the play?

5. Given the chance, how would you stage the play?
Sources:

**Postmodernism in the Theatre**


**The Inanna Myth**


**Women, Depression, and Creativity**


**Performing Identity**


**Freud**


Darwin


Jacques Louis David


For more information on ANA - the play, the process, the artists, and the upcoming tour of Scotland - be sure to visit our website: www.imagotheatre.ca/ana