

STUDY GUIDE

The New Canadian Curling Club



By Mark Crawford

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THE NEW CANADIAN CURLING CLUB

STUDY GUIDE

Created by Desirée Pappel

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Character Guide

Stuart MacPhail*: 74 years old - sixth generation Canadian of Scottish ancestry

Charmaine Bailey*: 54 years old - came to Canada twenty-seven years ago from Jamaica

Anoopjeet Singh*: 41 years old - came to Canada ten years ago from India

Mike Chang*: 26 years old - came to Canada three and a half years ago from China

Fatima Al-Sayed*: 17 years old - came to Canada two months ago from Syria

Katie/Kate: Stuart's granddaughter and Mike's girlfriend

Marlene: Stuart's ex-wife

Andy Galbraith: Skip of another curling team

*Character descriptions taken from *The New Canadian Curling Club* final production script.

Synopsis

The scene opens on several characters in a curling rink. Due to an unforeseen accident, Stuart MacPhail finds himself as the temporary replacement leading a weekly curling program to welcome new Canadians to the community. Charmaine, Anoopjeet, Mike, and Fatima are the "newcomers" who attend this first session. However, this gathering does not meet anyone's expectations, due in part to Stuart's off-putting, racist remarks. The element that appears to have brought this unlikely group of characters together is Stuart's ex-wife, Marlene.

One week later, Stuart and the new Canadians find themselves back at the curling club, only this time, Stuart announces that he will be their permanent coach. Stuart continues to make off-handed, prejudiced comments throughout the lesson, and the group nominates Mike to talk to him since he is dating Stuart's granddaughter, Kate. Meanwhile, it is mentioned that Anoopjeet is applying for a promotion at the Tim Horton's where he works with Charmaine.

Mike talks to Stuart about his remarks, but he continues to make them. This week, Stuart has arranged for the new Canadians to curl a practice game against a team from another league. The game does not go well; it is only their third week, but Stuart says the team's performance was embarrassing.

The new Canadians are chatting in the bar after their game and more is learned about their lives. During this time, Stuart stops by and mentions The Highlander Bonspiel. He encourages Mike to join another team to play in this event.

The following week, Stuart has arranged for a game against Andy Galbraith's team, last year's champions, so they can scout Mike for The Highlander. During the game, Stuart is insulting and the team finally tells him they do not want him as their coach. Anoojeet is also uncharacteristically grumpy and it is revealed that the promotion he sought was given to a seemingly less competent co-worker. At the end of the scene, Fatima has received upsetting news that seems to be about her brother, who is still in Syria.

It is two weeks later. Stuart and Mike discuss that Katie has given them both ultimatums in an attempt to encourage them to get along with each other. Even though Mike is taking over the team, he asks Stuart to help him learn to skip a team because they are entering The Highlander Bonsel. The team plays a game and are improving.

Over the next while, Mike takes advice for the team from Stuart, unbeknownst to the other players. During this time, the chatter on the ice reveals that Fatima and Charmaine are focused on getting her brother to Canada and Anoojeet is job hunting.

After a difficult game, the team finds out that Mike has been getting help from Stuart. At the same time, it is stated that Fatima's brother coming to Canada is problematic because he has been labelled as "high risk." Meanwhile, Anoojeet is planning to move away because he cannot find a job; he attributes this to racial prejudice. A discussion follows between Mike and Stuart about the inherent racism that exists in Canada. Once various team members have stormed off, Charmaine and Stuart discuss why he quit curling in the first place. Stuart reveals that it was too difficult for him to play with someone other than his son after he died. They go on to discuss the healing power of curling: it is a sport that brings people together and helps them to "show up."

Despite the argument, the team comes together for the bonsel and Stuart gives them a "pep talk" to show that curling is about the people with whom you play the game, and not the game itself.

Once the bonsel begins, the team dons new uniforms in red and white made by Charmaine. Their first game is against Galbraith's team. They hold their own during the opening ends, but due to unforeseen circumstances and injury, they manage to get Stuart curling again as a replacement. Despite this, they lose the game.

Before the play ends, Anoojeet is given an opportunity to become the manager of a new Tim Horton's. Stuart also acknowledges that Mike and Katie will get married. In the end, the five of them have come together and Canada is said to be a good place.

Setting

The New Canadian Curling Club is set in the present in the curling rink of a small Canadian town.

Contextual Background

Immigration and Canada

The Canadian government believes that diversity makes Canada strong. The country has a history of welcoming immigrants as well as refugees and recognizes that this country was built on the contributions of both Indigenous peoples and immigrants. The government's goal is to welcome 300,000 permanent residents to Canada annually. In 2016, 296,346 permanent residents came to live in Canada. This was the highest number since 2010. This was due in part to Canada's promise to accept Syrian refugees. Planned immigration levels for 2018-2020 range from 310,000-340,000.

There are several categories of immigration in Canada, including economic immigrants, sponsored family members, and resettled refugees or protected persons. Economic immigration is used to meet the economic needs of various regions in Canada. Sponsored family members include the spouses/partners, children, parents, and grandparents of immigrants. Refugees fear persecution or are in danger in their home countries.

The majority of immigrants to Canada come from the Philippines, India, Syria, People's Republic of China, and Pakistan.

Canada can also be found in the top 10 global international study destinations. International students contribute approximately \$15 billion annually to the Canadian economy. In 2016, over 266,000 students had permits to study in Canada.

Despite these statistics, there are factors that make applicants inadmissible to Canada. These factors include security reasons, human rights violations, criminality, health background, financial reasons, and misrepresentation.

Racism in Canada

The following resources explore Canada's complex history of immigration and racism :

Institutionalized Racism in Canada Timeline:

<https://bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/SocialJustice/Issues/Antiracism/RacismTimeline.pdf>

Prejudice and Discrimination in Canada: This article explores the following topics – early settlement, influx of immigrants, Black and Asian experience, early 20th century, wartime persecution and backlash, WWII, Indigenous experience, diversity versus melting pot.

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/prejudice-and-discrimination>

The Story of Komagata Maru:

<https://humanrights.ca/story/the-story-of-the-komagata-maru>

The Chinese Head Tax the Chinese Exclusion Act:

<https://humanrights.ca/story/the-chinese-head-tax-and-the-chinese-exclusion-act>

Japanese Canadian Internment and the Struggle for Redress:

<https://humanrights.ca/story/japanese-canadian-internment-and-the-struggle-for-redress>

Syria

The cause of the refugee crisis in Syria is a civil war that began in 2011. This conflict is between the Ba'athist Syrian Arab Republic, which is led by Syrian President Bashar al'Assaad, as well as its allies and the forces that oppose this government. The war began because people who were protesting to have the president removed were met with violence. This ongoing war involves several countries and has had the second most deaths of any war during the 21st century. It is estimated that more than 570,000 people have been killed since the conflict began.

Between January 1, 2015, and May 10, 2016, approximately 25,000 Syrian refugees came to Canada. 85% of these refugees are couples with children. 20% of government assisted Syrian refugees could speak English or French. In 2015 and 2017, Syria had the most displaced refugees in the world. In fact, 10% of refugees were from Syria.

Doctors Without Borders

In the play, Fatima tells us that her brother stayed in Syria to be in a group that helps people for medicine. Doctors Without Borders is a global group known for helping people with their medical needs in crisis situations. The group began in 1971 and has won the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts. They now have 40,000 staff who work in more than 65 countries. Their goal is to help people in crisis after natural disasters, during epidemics, and in conflict zones. Donations fund the group as they strive to be neutral, impartial, and independent.

At the time when Fatima's family came from Syria, it was difficult for Doctors Without Borders (DWB) to help in Syria, largely because the Syrian government had not given them permission to work in the country. Despite this, DWB operated several facilities in Northern Syria and supported other facilities within the country. They also worked in bordering countries to help Syrian refugees. DWB points out that medical supplies were scarce in Syria and that hospitals were bombed during attacks.

Playwright Biography



Mark Crawford, playwright

Mark Crawford is a Canadian actor and playwright from a small town called Glencoe, Ontario, where his family farmed. After experiencing theatre as a child, he graduated high school and decided to attend the University of Toronto and Sheridan College to study theatre. Currently, he resides in Stratford, Ontario.

After working as an actor across Canada for ten years, a play he wrote premiered in 2014. His works include *Stag and Doe*; *Bed and Breakfast*; *The Birds and the Bees*; *Boys, Girls, and Other Mythological Creatures*; and *The New Canadian Curling Club*. His work has been performed across Canada, internationally, and has set records.

Glossary

Sponsor: one who assumes responsibility for another person

Resettlement: to place someone to stay again or anew, especially to move people to a new place to live.

Resident: a physician serving a period of advanced training in a medical specialty that normally follows graduation from medical school and licensing to practice medicine.

Demo: a demonstration that shows an act, process, or means.

Redneck: an often disparaging term used to designate a person whose behaviour and opinions are similar to those attributed to a white member of the Southern rural labouring class.

Franchise: a business granted the right to market a company's goods or services in a particular territory.

Citizenship: the status of being an inhabitant who is entitled to rights, privileges, and protection from a government

United Nations: an international organization, made up of 193 member states, that is guided by purposes and principles such as peace, respect, co-operation, and harmony.

Timbit: a bite-sized sphere made of Tim Horton's donuts

Heckle: to harass and try to disconcert with questions, challenges, or gibes.

Concede: to admit that you have lost in a competition.

Curling Terms

From the "Glossary of Curling Terms" on the Curling Canada website.

Bonspiel: A curling competition or tournament.

Burned stone: A stone in motion touched by a member of either team, or any part of their equipment. Burned stones are removed from play.

Button: The circle at the centre of the house.

Hacks: The foot-holds at each end of the ice from which the stone is delivered.

Hammer: The team with the last stone in any given end of play. The 16th delivered stone in any end is called the "Hammer"

Hog line: A line 10 meters from the hack at each end of the ice.

House: The rings or circles toward which play is directed consisting of a 12-foot ring, 8-foot ring, 4-foot ring and a button.

Lead: The first player on a team to deliver a pair of stones for their team in each end.

Pebble: A fine spray of water applied to a sheet of curling ice before commencing play.

Second: The curler who delivers the second pair of stones for their team in each end.

Skip: The player who determines the strategy, and directs play for the team. The skip delivers the last pair of stones for their team in each end.

Slider: Slippery material placed on the sole of the shoe, to make it easier to slide on the ice.

Sweeping: The action of moving a broom or brush back and forth in the path of a moving stone.

Tee line: The line that passes through the centre of the house parallel to the hog line and backline.

Vice-skip, third, or mate: The third player on a team to throw two stones in each end. Generally this player acts as the skip when the skip is delivering their stones and assists with shot selection decisions.

Suggested Classroom Activities

Prior to Seeing the Production : Anticipation Guide

1. Discuss a time when you felt unwelcome or uncomfortable in a new experience.
2. Discuss a time you made a false assumption about someone before getting to know them.
3. What challenges might newcomers face when adjusting to life in a new country?
4. Discuss the ways in which sports can bring people together.
5. In what ways can cultural diversity strengthen a country?
6. What are different ways people deal with grief?

After Seeing the Production : Thinking about the Play

The following questions can be used for class discussion, responses, or in some cases, essay topics. Possible answers or examples have been provided for several questions.

1. What do the characters in the play learn from each other?
2. What do the characters have in common?
3. What are examples of discrimination and stereotypes in the play? How are the characters affected by these? How does the audience react when they are used? How can this type of stereotyping and discrimination affect people in real life? *Stuart's many offensive comments (referring to people as black, yellow, brown, white red; says smoke signals could be sent to attract Indigenous peoples; "Where's home for you?" referring to country of origin; "ya never know who the Uniteds are letting in these days"; speaking louder to attempt to overcome language barriers; referring to the team as the International House of Pancakes; you people...), Anoopjeet not being given the promotion and his difficulty in finding a new job, the assumption that Fatima's brother is involved in a terrorist organization, Mike's patients asking for a "Canadian" doctor...*
4. Mike watches YouTube videos to help improve his curling skills. Discuss the benefits and shortcomings of learning this way.
5. What are the qualities of an effective coach?
6. What role does *Tim Horton's* have in the play? *It offers opportunities, it allows people to make connections (with their co-workers and with clients in the community like when Stuart recognizes the staff), sharing Timbits becomes a bonding experience...*
7. How do we see the characters deal with their loss or grief? Are these methods healthy?
8. In what ways do the characters in the play help one another? Discuss the benefits of helping others.
9. Discuss the potential challenges in staging this story as a play.

10. Discuss Mike's statement that it is untrue that people in Canada are "so nice; so accepting."
11. Discuss the ways in which the play conveys or challenges community behaviours.
12. Compare a time when you had a new experience to the new experiences of the characters in the play.

Welcoming Newcomers

Canada aims to add around 300,000 immigrants to the population annually. Immigrants say Canadians are usually polite and kind to them. However, they also say that they do not feel fully accepted and that Canadians are not very welcoming. What can Canadians do to change this?

- Learn names and how to pronounce them properly
- Invite newcomers to social activities to get to know them
- When people make racist jokes or use stereotypes, challenge them
- Show a newcomer around school or the community
- Start a conversation with newcomer
- Remember that when someone does not know the language, it can be helpful to speak slower and use easier words
- Invite a newcomer to your place or visit their home
- Explain what the rules at school are
- Invite a newcomer to your party
- Help a newcomer learn to use public transit, like the city bus
- If you speak their language, you can offer to translate, but you can also encourage them to practice speaking English with you
- Tell the newcomer where the best places to go are and when the best community activities happen. You can also invite them to join you at these events
- Introduce them to your friends
- Talk to them about Canadian culture, values, customs, sports...
- Ask about where they are from and their language. You can even learn a few new phrases!
- Encourage your friends to welcome newcomers

Canadian Activities

According to many Canadians, curling is a challenging yet fun activity that helps pass the time in winter. In the play, a group of "new" Canadians are united by this sport. Create a list of ten activities that you could do with Canadian newcomers to share Canadian culture with them and

to help them to make the most of living in this country. Then, compare your list with a small group of classmates. Discuss your choices and as a group agree on a new list of ten activities to present to the class.

Variant: Choose one activity and explain why you would share it with a newcomer, why it exhibits Canadian culture, and how it helps people make the most of living in Canada.

Idioms

Throughout the play, characters (usually Stuart) use idioms when speaking. These include:

- No dice
- Give it more juice
- Pull up your socks
- Getting creamed
- Bigger fish to fry

Discuss the impact of these expressions on the characters. *They can create a barrier to understanding because their meanings are not derived from the words themselves, like when Stuart tells Fatima to “giver more juice.” She Googles the term, but still misunderstands what Stuart wants. By the end, she is using the phrase correctly, “Stuart! How much juice should I giver?”*

When is a time you did not understand the meaning of an idiom?

Which idiomatic expressions are common in your language community? Are you familiar with their origin?

Curling Etiquette

Stuart describes curling as a “The Gentleman’s Game” because of the etiquette that curlers are supposed to follow. This includes:

- Shaking hands at the beginning of the game and wishing them “Good curling.”
- No cheering or heckling during the game
- Calling your own fouls (admitting it if you touch a stone with your foot or broom)
- Conceding that the other team has won if your team will not win

What etiquette is present in other sports? Why is this important in sports? What does it teach the players?

Review

Write a review of the play:

When preparing to write, think about your initial reaction to the play. You can also explore the purpose of the play and the effectiveness of the production for the audience.

Your review should have an introduction, body, and conclusion that include the following information:

- Your text's introduction should include information from the program, such as the title, the actors, director, and writer.
- Your text's body should summarize the plot, give the setting, and comment on the characters and content.
- Your conclusion should clearly state whether you liked or disliked the play and whether or not you would recommend seeing it to others.

Finally, edit and revise your writing prior to submitting your work. You can also do this with a partner. Think of the following:

- Is the information complete and easy for my audience to understand? Is the information I referenced from the play accurate?
- Have I used a variety of words and sentences?
- Have I used correct grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation?

Act It Out

Work with a small group to create scenes that could have occurred off stage. Think of the following for scenes for inspiration:

- Marlene recruiting "new" Canadians to try curling
- Anoojjeet being told he did not get the promotion
- Kate's discussion with Mike about getting along with Stuart
- Katie's discussion with Stuart about getting along with Mike
- Fatima's discussion with her dad when he confronted her about curling and she convinced him to come watch

Connections to the Curriculum

Dramatic Arts:

- DR–CR1 The learner generates ideas from a variety of sources for creating drama/theatre.
- DR–CR2 The learner experiments with, develops, and uses ideas for creating drama/theatre.
- DR–CR3 The learner revises, refines, and shares drama/ theatre ideas and creative work.
- DR–R1 The learner generates initial reactions to drama/ theatre experiences.
- DR–R2 The learner critically observes and describes drama/theatre experiences.
- DR–R3 The learner analyzes and interprets drama/ theatre experiences.

English Language Arts:

- 1.1.1 Express Ideas
- 1.1.4 Express Preferences
- 1.2.2 Explain Opinions
- 2.1.2 Comprehension Strategies
- 2.2.1 Experience Various Texts
- 2.2.2 Connect Self, Texts, and Culture
- 2.2.3 Appreciate the Artistry of Texts
- 2.3.1 Forms and Genres
- 2.3.3 Vocabulary
- 2.3.4 Experiment with Language
- 2.3.5 Create Original Texts
- 4.2 Enhance and Improve
- 4.3 Attend to Conventions
- 4.4 Present & Share
- 5.1.1 Cooperate with Others
- 5.1.2 Work in Groups
- 5.1.3 Use Language to Show Respect
- 5.2.3 Appreciate Diversity

Physical Education/Health Education:

- K.1.S1.C.1 Demonstrate an understanding of the rules and etiquette
- K.1.S1.C.2 Apply the terminology associated with the skills and rules for selected team activities/sports

Social Studies:

VI-005 Appreciate Canadian cultural pluralism.

KI-019 Describe effect of stereotyping and discrimination on individuals, communities, and regions.

9.1.3 Living Together in Canada

List of Resources

- <http://bipt.ca/wp-content/themes/UWD/100WaystoWelcome.pdf>
- https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/annual-report-parliament-immigration-2017.html#sec1_1
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/refugees.html>
- <https://bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/SocialJustice/Issues/Antiracism/RacismTimeline.pdf>
- <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/prejudice-and-discrimination>
- <https://humanrights.ca/story/the-story-of-the-komagata-maru>
- <https://humanrights.ca/story/the-chinese-head-tax-and-the-chinese-exclusion-act>
- <https://humanrights.ca/story/japanese-canadian-internment-and-the-struggle-for-redress>
- <http://www.canadiantheatre.com/dict.pl?term=Crawford%2C%20Mark>
- <http://mqlit.ca/playwrights/mark-crawford/>
- <https://www.doctorswithoutborders.ca/article/syria-crisis-update-november-28-2016>
- <https://www.doctorswithoutborders.ca/content/about-us>
- Crawford, Mark. *The New Canadian Curling Club*. 2018.
- <https://www.curling.ca/about-curling/getting-started-in-curling/glossary-of-curling-terms/>
- <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syrian_Civil_War
- Grade 9 Social Studies Canada in the Contemporary World A Foundation for Implementation
- Grades 9 to 12 Dramatic Arts Manitoba Curriculum Framework
- <https://www.merriam-webster.com/>
- Senior 1 and Senior 2 Physical Education/Health Education: A Foundation for Implementation
- Senior 2-4 English Language Arts Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes
- <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=120851>
- <http://www.timhortons.com/ca/en/menu/timbits.php>
- <https://www.un.org/en>
- <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2019001/article/00001-eng.htm>

Study Guide Creator Biography

Desirée Pappel has been teaching English Language Arts in Manitoba high schools since 2008. During that time, she has also taught the occasional dramatic arts class and been involved with improvisation, both inside and outside of school. In 2010, she began her involvement with Royal MTC's Winnipeg Fringe Theatre Festival and started working as a volunteer team leader at venues soon after. Creating study guides for Royal MTC fuses her love of education and theatre. This document for *The New Canadian Curling Club* is the fourth study guide she has written for Royal MTC.

Pappel's favourite production in recent years is *Dear Evan Hansen*. She saw it with the original Broadway cast, including Ben Platt in the title role. The production featured many musical numbers that packed a powerful emotional punch. The story of discovering one's identity is relatable for anyone who is or has been an adolescent. Pappel believes that all young people should see this musical.

Regional Tour Info & Schedule

Throughout our touring history, Royal MTC has brought a variety of professional theatre productions to rural communities. Selected productions over the decades include *The Fantasticks* (1965/66), *The Promise* (1972/73), *Billy Bishop Goes to War* (1981/1982), *The Glass Menagerie* (1989/90), *Transit of Venus* (1995/96), *The Drawer Boy* (2000/01), *Tempting Providence* (2009/10), *Miracle on South Division Street* (2013/14), *Armstrong's War* (2014/15), *Last Train to Nibroc* (2016/17), *A Christmas Carol* (2017/18) and *Buying The Farm* (2018/19).

Royal MTC is pleased to present THE NEW CANADIAN CURLING CLUB

By Mark Crawford

Directed by Miles Potter

January 7 - February 7, 2020

The regional tour schedule / ticket info and a downloadable tour poster can be found here:

<https://royalmtc.ca/Festivals-Events/Regional-Tour.aspx>

Royal MTC Theatre Etiquette at John Hirsch Mainstage

Arrive Early: Latecomers may not be admitted to a performance. Please ensure you arrive with enough time to find your seat before the performance starts.

Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices: Please **TURN OFF** your cell phones/iPods/gaming systems/cameras. We have seen an increase in texting, surfing, and gaming during performances, which is very distracting for the performers and other audience members. The use of cameras and recording devices is strictly prohibited.

Talking During the Performance: You can be heard (even when whispering) by the actors onstage and the audience around you. Disruptive patrons will be removed from the theatre. Please wait to share your thoughts and opinions with others until after the performance.

Food/Drinks: Food and outside drinks are not allowed in the theatre. Where there is an intermission, concessions may be open for purchase of snacks and drinks. There is complimentary water in the lobby.

Dress: There is no dress code at the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, but we respectfully request that patrons refrain from wearing hats in the theatre. We also strive to be a scent-free environment, and thank all patrons for their cooperation.

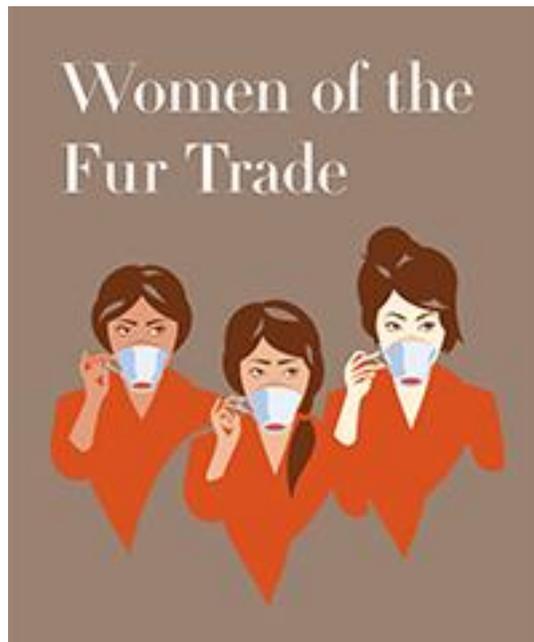
Leaving During the Performance: If an audience member leaves the theatre during a performance, they will be readmitted at the discretion of our Front of House staff. Should they be readmitted, they will not be ushered back to their original seat, but placed in a vacant seat at the back of the auditorium.

Being Asked to Leave: The theatre staff has, and will exercise, the right to ask any member of the audience to leave the performance if that person is being disruptive. Inappropriate and disruptive behaviour includes, but is not limited to: talking, using electronic devices, cameras, laser pointers, or other light- or sound-emitting devices, and deliberately interfering with an actor or the performance (tripping, throwing items on or near the stage, etc.).

Talkbacks: All Tuesday evening performances, student matinees and final matinees at Royal MTC feature a talkback with members of the cast following the show. While watching the performance, make a mental note of questions to ask the actors. Questions can be about the story, the interpretation, life in the theatre, etc.

Enjoy the show: Laugh, applaud, cheer and respond to the performance appropriately. Make sure to thank all the artists for their hard work with applause during the curtain call.

Up Next at Royal MTC

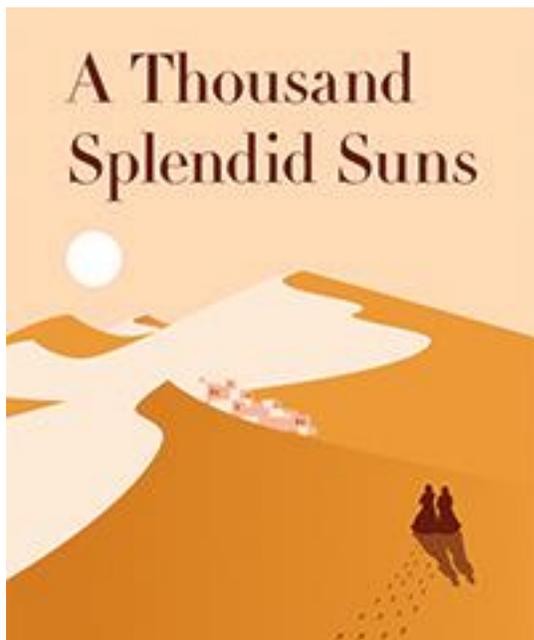


Women of the Fur Trade

By Frances Koncan
Tom Hendry Warehouse

Feb 27 – Mar 14, 2020
11:30AM Student Matinee Mar 11
ASL Interpreted Performance Mar 12
Grade 9+

Topics: Red River Valley First Nations and Metis people, Riel Rebellion, feminism, gender relations, identity, friendship
Advisory: Strong language, some suggestive sexual language, Louis Riel's execution is discussed and symbolically depicted.



A Thousand Splendid Things

By Ursula Rani Sarma
Based on the book by Khaled Hosseini
John Hirsch Mainstage

Mar 19 – Apr 11, 2020
11:30AM Student Matinee Apr 9
Grade 10+

Topics: Afghanistan, perseverance, reputation, love, loyalty, belonging, gender relations, friendship
Advisory: Mature content, physical violence, domestic violence

Book your tickets today!

Phone 204 954 6413

Email Thomas turish@royalmtc.ca