

love passion
FIGHT happiness
POWER create
family change
FEAR PRIDE honor
FATE

...antigone

Adapted by Greg Banks
Winter 2010 DTFY Tour
Eastern Michigan University
Directed by Meriah Sage

From the Director

I chose this play for several reasons. I loved the rhythm and energy in the action and lines of the script. I liked being able to present a classic story in a new way and I enjoyed the blend of the tragic and comic elements. The strong central female character, Antigone, also energized me. The themes are larger than life. How much better does it get than love, fighting for what you believe in, fear, courage, pride, greed, family, honor, war, fate, and the power of one person to make a difference?

I hope audiences are actively engaged as the story unfolds and we leave them wanting more. I hope they can empathize with some of the characters and ultimately feel a little differently upon leaving this live theatre experience. I also hope they feel the cast's and drummers' dedication in telling this story and the performers' honesty resonates within their own lives.

Like all good theatre, this has been a collaborative project. Many thanks to last year's cast of Antigone, the many creative artists who joined us this year and last and have impacted the outcome, and to all the teens who carefully watched a run through and gave us suggestions. Finally, thanks to the twelve amazing performers, drummers, stage manager, and tour manager that are a part of this show. It has been a treasured experience.

~ *Meriah Sage*



Plot Summary

The play begins with a brief introduction of the characters and the action of the play.

We then see the battle in which both of Antigone's brothers, Polynices and Eteocles, battle for power. They kill each other in single combat outside the city walls. Creon, Antigone's uncle becomes king and labels Polynices a traitor, left to rot in the middle of the city and Eteocles a hero to be buried in state. Creon decrees that anyone who buries Polynices will be considered a traitor and killed.

Antigone vows to bury Polynices and asks her sister Ismene if she will help with the burial. Ismene will not and fears for Antigone. Antigone leaves Ismene and proceeds to bury Polynices.

Upon discovering that Antigone has buried Polynices, Creon tries to convince Antigone to hide what she has done. Antigone refuses to lie and vows to bury her brother again that night. She feels she has a duty and right to honor her family and believes that if a body is left unburied their soul will wander the earth for eternity. Ismene enters and tries to claim responsibility for the act as well, but Antigone will not let her. Creon condemns Antigone to death.

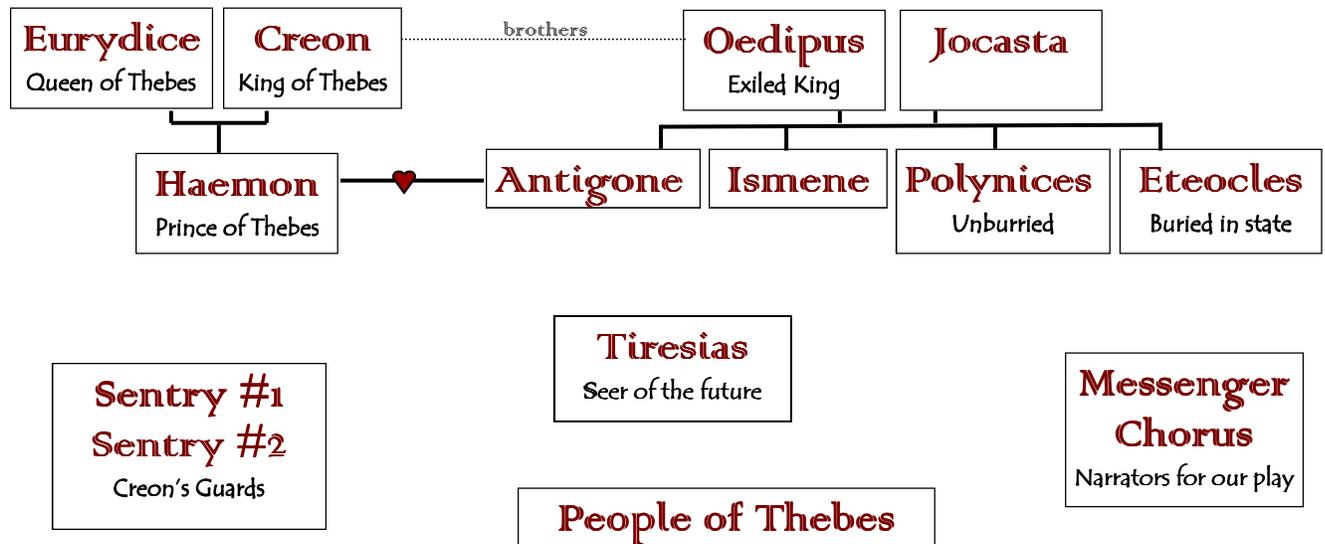
Haemon, Antigone's fiancé, tries to convince Creon, his father, that he should reconsider. Haemon loves Antigone and believes her acts are honorable. Eurydice, the Queen, joins Haemon in his argument. Creon will not be swayed. Haemon leaves to find Antigone and die with her.

Antigone is taken to a cave, locked inside and left to die. Tiresias, a blind soothsayer, arrives to tell Creon that he had made a terrible mistake. Tiresias predicts that if Creon kills Antigone, he will pay with his son, Haemon's death and a curse will fall on the city of Thebes.

Creon asks the people of Thebes what they wish for him to do. They plead for him to release Antigone and bury Polynices. Creon agrees and rushes to the cave to free Antigone. When he arrives, he finds Haemon holding the dead body of Antigone. Consumed with grief, Haemon tries to kill his father, but does not succeed. Instead Haemon chooses to die in the cave with Antigone. When Eurydice, the Queen, hears of Haemon's death, she ends her own life as well.

Creon and the city of Thebes are left amidst the wreckage and death to contemplate the consequences of power and stubborn pride.

WHO'S WHO: THE CHARACTERS



I AM NOT HERE TO UNDERSTAND.

I AM HERE TO SAY NO TO YOU.

~ANTIGONE

Ancient Greece & Greek Theatre

Ancient Greece was a culture that was highly advanced and has had an enduring effect on Western Civilization. Much of modern politics, artistic and scientific thought, literature, and philosophy derives from this ancient society.

However, ancient Greece was very much a patriarchal society. In truth, the role of women in ancient Greece was one best defined by the word separation. Women and men lived with very defined boundaries, boundaries controlled by the men. Women were restricted to the home, were often given little education, had no real status, and were viewed as inferior beings with their primary use being childbirth.

Greek drama flourished between c. 550 and c. 220 BC. The city-state of Athens was its center. Greek drama marks the beginning of theatre as we know it today. Tragedy, comedy, and the satyr play were the three dramatic genres to emerge there. Masks were commonly used, and performances took place in large outdoor amphitheatres.

Sophocles is one of the few Greek tragedians whose work has survived. Sophocles wrote 123 plays during the course of his life, but only seven have survived in a complete form: *Ajax*, *Antigone*, *Trachinian Women*, *Oedipus the King*, *Electra*, *Philoctetes* and *Oedipus at Colonus*.



CREATION

How did we create the show?

Paper/Public Art

The show begins with the audience being invited to write on the paper floor with water based markers along with the actors- engaging in public art. We invite the audience to express themselves, help create the world of the play and engage with the theatre space in this new way.

As Antigone knows, words can be powerful and using your voice to stand up for what you believe in can help change the world. With the Public Art Floor, the students are encouraged to express themselves and share their voice. They are asked to communicate their ideas specifically on the following ideas: What do you believe in? What would you give up for this? What do you want to voice?

While not illegal or vandalism, our Public Art Floor is technically a type of graffiti (although we don't use this term during the show). Graffiti is any type of public markings that may appear in the forms of simple written words to elaborate wall paintings. Graffiti has existed since ancient times, with examples dating back to Ancient Greece and the Roman Empire. Sometimes graffiti is employed to communicate social and political messages- both prominent ideas in *Antigone*.



Q & A with the Director

Drumming

In this production of *Antigone*, drumming is used to create the “soundscape” for the show— like a sound track created with live instruments. The drums used are Djembes, which are African percussion instruments. Djembes are made of goatskin and hardwood. The primary notes of djembes are "bass", "tone", and "slap", and many different rhythms are used throughout the show.

The drumming is used to punctuate powerful moments and transition the audience through the different sections of the play.



What are the most important elements of the show? The relationships and characters, conflict/tension and the environment. It is also an important for this production that we are in the round.

What do you want students to know? We created this production specifically for you. We are honored to be coming to your schools/communities and sharing this story with you. We look forward to hearing what your thoughts are about it and what you have to say. We hope it inspires you to share your voice and stand up for what you believe in and to be an active audience member in the theatre.

What do you want educators to know? We hope you'll enjoy our modern performance of this great classic piece of theatre brought to life here. *Antigone* combines Greek history/society and modern nuances and asks questions of the audience: *What do YOU believe in? Do you have the courage to stand up against social norms to fight for what you believe in? Can one person really make a difference? Must we only learn when we are old?* We invite you and your students to continue to dialogue with us by contacting us at msage@emich.edu

Fight Choreography



Stage Combat / Fight Choreography is a specialized technique in live stage plays designed to create the illusion of physical combat without causing harm to the performers.

Choreography is typically learned step by step, and practiced at first very slowly. Stage combat is risky, and it is preferable for actors to have as much training as possible. A "fight call" or a brief rehearsal before the show is performed is set aside for the actors to "mark" through the fight to increase their muscle memory. The primary goal in stage combat is always for the safety of the actors and audience.



Stage combat training includes skills such as illusory slaps, punches, kicks, throwing and holding techniques. Theatrical adaptations of various forms of fencing such as rapier and dagger, smallsword and broadsword are also common. Control is also always given to the person being attacked in stage combat as well. For example, when the actor playing Antigone is 'pushed' about during the production, it is always she who motivates the movement. It is the choreography that allows the other actors to appear to be 'pushing' her - when really it is the opposite!

OTHER ANTIGONE'S . . .



ACTIVITY

What themes, ideas, or emotions are present in these images of Antigone?



Brainstorming Questions:

1. Can you remember a time when you went against the status quo? What did you do? How did it feel?
2. What is something that you are passionate about? And how much would you give up to accomplish it?
3. Have you ever been ignored or not listened to? What did you try to do to be heard?

Activity Idea

CONDUCT A MOCK TRIAL OF ANTIGONE

Imagine that Antigone is caught trying to bury her brother. Instead of being sent to die in prison, she is put on trial. There is ample opportunity to role-play in this scenario. Perhaps Creon is the Judge.

Who would defend her?

Who would accuse her?

Will she have a team of lawyers?

Will she defend herself?

How would the larger Theban populace fit into the trial?

Are there court reporters?

~Inspired by a Children's Theatre Company (CTC) Activity

Activity Idea

RUG FLIP

(Ensemble Building)

Items Needed: 2-4 Small rugs. (2x4)-or- you can use a beach towel!

Please discuss safety before you begin!

Direction: Have a group of 8-12 students stand on the rug. The task at hand is to flip the rug over because it is on fire! No one can get off the rug and their feet and hands may not touch the floor! They will need to communicate to work together. Set a time limit –or- give the command that they may not talk to each other, to see if leaders come out, creativity, or just simple working together is forced!

Discussion Questions: In which way is teamwork an essential part of this activity?

Is there a need for someone to take on a leadership role? Explain.

Talk about the importance of balance and coordination and how they apply to the actor and or everyday life.

Activity Idea

THE KING AND QUEEN

This game sort of mimics Simon's Says! This building activity is great because Antigone deals with persecution! This activity gives us a sense of illogical persecution.

Direction: Select one student to be the king or queen! They are able to give a set of directions/ movement and oust anyone from continuing to go on for any reason they see fit: Doesn't have to be logical, in any form or format. However, personal attacks shouldn't be made on each other. Please explain this to your ensemble in great detail and as you see fit. The object of the game is to be the last person out. Switch the king/queen every few minutes.

EX: Queen: Everyone jump on one foot... John you are out.

John: Why.

Queen: Go to the dungeon!

Discussion: Discuss unfair treatment through historical times.

Questions PRE SHOW

Some of our theatrical challenges that we had to overcome were - the battle of Thebes, different locations, several deaths, etc. How would solve these challenges??

How could you create a soundscape or video for this story?

Read the first part of the plot. Stop after the first paragraph or two. What do you think happens next?

Questions POST SHOW

What did you notice? What did we use to tell the story?

Whose side were you on and why?

What moments were the most entertaining to you? If you could change the ending would you?

If you could cast famous people in those roles who would you pick and why?

What other shows/movies/songs, etc have similar themes?

Audience Behavior & Theatre in the Round

The performers in a live show can hear what you are saying and doing in the audience. They can also feel the energy in the room and tell if you are engaging in the live show by actively watching and listening.

Remember

- It's ok to laugh, clap and respond to performers during the show! You're part of what makes the show happen!
- Listen and watch the performers carefully. Be sure to also notice the acting & design choices (sets, costumes and lighting).
- Please do not talk, whisper, unwrap candy or make loud noises during the production.
- Absolutely no photography or recording is permitted (including camera phones).
- Please turn off your cell phone, blackberry, etc. No texting or calling.

Thank you!

Recommended Links to check out:

Drumming

<http://www.african-music-safari.com/djembe-history.html>

Greek Theatre

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xlP3IElnowM>

Stage Combat

<http://www.artofcombat.org/index.html>

Eastern Michigan University Theatre

734.487.1220 Emu_theatre@emich.edu
www.emich.edu/emutheatre

Upcoming EMU Theatre for Youth Productions:

Bud, Not Buddy, School and Family Matinees, April 2010

CAST BULLETIN BOARD

Moments . . .
Thoughts . . .
Quotes . . .
Inspirations . . .

My character LIVES! ... That is more than the other characters of the play can say.
-TOMMY SIMON, SENTRY/GUARD

ACTIVITY

How could this play be written from another character's point of view?



What would I fight for?
Like Antigone - family!
-Ariel Jones, Chorus

ACTIVITY

What would you fight for?
When have you been cast aside or overlooked?

Creon is an angry, confused man brought to power before he was ready. His is a black and white world; he is uneasy with shades of gray.
-KENTON JONES, CREON



Haemon hopes to change his father's mind concerning Antigone's death...so much pain in his idiocy, and he wishes it could be some other way.

-Evan Mann, Haemon

The journey I went through discovering Eurydice, and of being a part of the ensemble, would be best surmised as a jigsaw puzzle. I knew the outcome would be eye-catching and spectacular, but getting there took a painstaking amount of work and patience.
-Ravynne Gilmore, Eurydice



Ismene talks about everybody else in the play- Antigone, Haemon, Eurydice, the two brothers- but doesn't really get spoken of herself until she finally stands up to Creon- but even then, her words are cast aside.

- Laura Williams, Ismene

