

at theREP★

2022-2023 SEASON

# DRACULA

## A COMEDY OF TERRORS



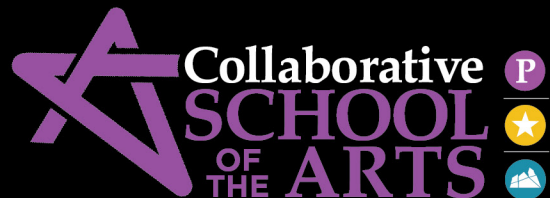
SEPT. 30 - OCT. 23, 2022

at theREP★

### STUDY GUIDE

# DRACULA: A COMEDY OF TERRORS

BY GORDON GREENBERG  
AND STEVE ROSEN



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## 41<sup>ST</sup> MAINSTAGE SEASON CAPITAL REPERTORY THEATRE | 2022-2023

### ***Dracula: A Comedy of Terrors***

by Gordon Greenberg and Steve Rosen  
September 30-October 23, 2022

### ***The Wizard of Oz***

by L. Frank Baum with music and lyrics  
by Harold Arlen and E.Y. Harbury,  
Background music by Herbert Stothart  
November 18-December 24, 2022

### WORLD PREMIERE

#### ***Secret Hour*** by Jenny Stafford

January 27-February 19, 2023

#### ***A Midsummer Night's Dream***

by William Shakespeare  
April 14-May 7, 2023

#### ***Honky Tonk Angels*** by Patsy Cline

Book by Ted Swindley,  
Music by Country's Greatest Song Writers  
July 14-August 20, 2023

### ON-THE-GO! IN-SCHOOL TOURS

#### ***Pure Poe: Tales of the Macabre***

by Edgar Allan Poe,  
Adapted by Maggie Mancinelli-Cahill  
October 11-November 5, 2022

#### ***Harriet Tells It Like It Is!***

by Karen Jones Meadows  
February 27-March 25, 2023

### OTHER

#### ***Next Act! New Play Summit 12***

June 2023

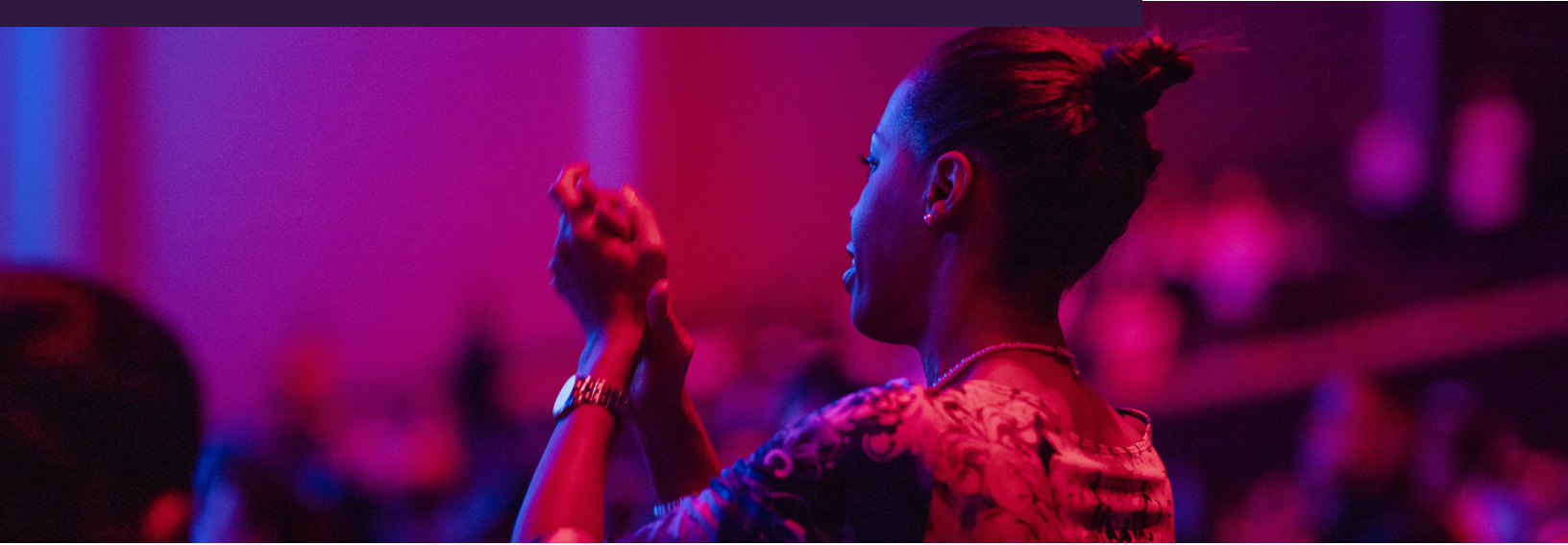
#### ***Summer Stage Young Acting Company Performances***

Summer 2023

\*This guide is a replica of theRep's past study guides for Pure Poe tours.

\*\*This study guide was researched and written, in part,  
by theRep's Dramaturgy Intern Josh Ulrich.

# ATTENDING A PERFORMANCE



Being a member of an audience is an important job. Live theatre couldn't exist without you! That job carries with it some responsibilities. Follow these simple suggestions to have the best theatre experience possible!

## BRING WITH YOU

Ideas, imagination, an open mind, observation skills and a sense of wonder

## LEAVE BEHIND

Cell phones, pagers, pen lights, food and drink and anything else that might distract you, the performers or other members of the audience

## THINGS TO DO BEFORE A PERFORMANCE

Learn about the show you are going to see, arrive on time, find your seat and visit the restroom

## DURING A PERFORMANCE

### • PLEASE DO

Applaud, laugh, pay attention to big and little details, think about questions that arise for you and stay seated until intermission/end of the show

### • PLEASE DON'T

Talk, sleep, eat or drink, distract others, use a cell phone or exit the theatre during the performance unless it's an emergency



## Dear Educator:

Welcome to Capital Repertory Theatre – and our brand-new home at 251 North Pearl St.!

We are thrilled that you are coming to see *Dracula: A Comedy of Terrors*, one of the student matinee performances in theREP's 2022-23 Season, and hope that you will find this guide to be a useful tool in your classroom!

You have permission to reproduce materials within this guide for use in your classroom. It is designed to introduce the cultural and historical context of the play as well as provide resources and ideas for incorporating the theatre experience into your curriculum. These productions by theREP are likely to generate questions, thoughts and opinions amongst your students.

The arts provide young imaginations with stimulation, points of reference, and intellectual resources for the mind and spirit. It is theREP's goal to make live theatre attendance possible for all students in the Capital Region. Tens of thousands of Capital Region students have attended student matinees and On-The-Go! performances throughout our history, and we hope to continue to grow and serve the needs of the Capital Region education community for decades to come.

Your success stories help us to keep the program funded, so please let us know how you are using theatre in the classroom. We love to receive copies of lesson plans, student work related to our productions and your letters. These are important testimonials of the value of the arts in education.

And finally, we hope you will fill out the **TEACHER EVALUATION** at the back of this guide. Completing the evaluation form will help us to continue to provide programs that serve the needs of Capital Region students.

We look forward to hearing from you!

With deepest gratitude,



**Margaret E. Hall**  
Associate Artistic Director  
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**Shai Davenport**  
Education Programs Manager  
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# ABOUT US

## theREP★

Capital Repertory Theatre (theREP) is a non-profit professional-producing theatre. In its decades-long history, theREP has produced more than 8,000 performances for the people of the Capital Region.



A member of LORT (League of Resident Theatres), theREP strives to bring quality work that explores the essence of the human condition through the stories of people, events and phenomena that shape our contemporary lives. Theatre, at its best, entertains, cajoles and inspires by engaging the heart and mind through its most powerful ally – the imagination.

There are two basic types of theatre companies: producing and presenting. theREP is a producing theatre. The theatre hires a director and designers for the set, costumes, lights and sound. The theatre's artistic director and the director select appropriate actors for all the roles in the play. Then, they all come to Albany, where the play is built and rehearsed. The resident staff of the theatre works with visiting artists to put the production together.

In addition to the main theatre space, theREP has a studio theatre that acts as a rehearsal hall and secondary venue for performances (such as Black Theatre Troupe of Upstate NY's productions of *Dead and Breathing* and *The Light* which took place in the fall and winter of 2021-2022), a costume shop where costumes are constructed and cared for, a prop shop where props are made, offices where the administrative staff works and housing facilities for out-of-town actors. theREP's sets are constructed in a scene shop that is also a part of the Proctors Collaborative.

In contrast to a producing theatre, presenting theatres (sometimes called "roadhouses") – like Proctors in Schenectady (also a part of the Proctors Collaborative) – host shows that have been designed, built and rehearsed elsewhere. Productions that tour are booked into presenting theatres. Shows that are booked into presenting houses will tour regionally, nationally or even internationally over an extended period of time. What you will see at theREP or with our On-The-Go! tours are unique to theREP where it was built. No one from anywhere else will see this production just as you see it!



**STUDENT MATINEES** | Performance at theREP @10:30am

**PRICE** | \$12 per student

**CHAPERONES** | For every 15 students, one complimentary adult ticket is provided

**LOCATION** | 251 North Pearl Street, Albany, NY 12207

**RESERVATIONS** | Contact Group Sales at 518.382.3884 x 139 |

groupsales@proctors.org

**SCHOLARSHIPS** | Visit [www.capitalrep.org](http://www.capitalrep.org) for more information and applications

**ON-THE-GO!** | For more information and to book a tour contact [onthego@proctors.org](mailto:onthego@proctors.org) | [school.proctors.org](mailto:school.proctors.org)

*Capital Repertory Theatre is one of the organizations within the Proctors Collaborative, which also includes: Proctors, Universal Preservation Hall (UPH), the Collaborative School of the Arts and the Collaborative Scene Shop.*

# LITERARY CONTEXT

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR: BRAM STOKER



Bram Stoker was born on November 8, 1847, on the north side of Dublin, Ireland. He was the third of seven children born to Abraham Stoker (1799-1876) and Charlotte Mathilda Blake Thornley (1818-1901). After surviving an unknown illness as a child, Stoker began school at the age of seven where he excelled in sports. As he grew, Stoker became interested in theater and went on to become a theater critic for the Dublin Mail newspaper, a paper that was partly owned by fellow horror writer J. Sheridan Le Fanu (Fanu was an Irish writer of Goth tales, mystery novels and horror fiction).

Stoker's interest in theater led to a lifelong friendship with English actor Henry Irving, which provided Stoker with the opportunity to travel the world and become involved in London's high society, where he would meet people such as Sir Arthur Canon Doyle (author of the Sherlock Holmes books) and James McNeil Whistler (an American-born painter).

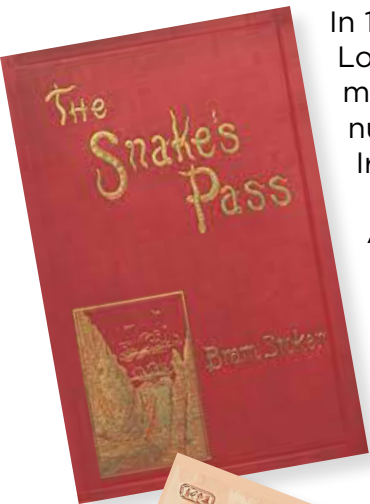
In 1878, Bram Stoker married Florence Balcombe and the couple moved to London, where he would become the acting manager and then business manager for the Lyceum Theater, a post he held for 27 years. A year after their nuptials, the couple would welcome their only child into their family, a son, Irving Noel Stoker, on December 21, 1879.

Alongside his post at the Lyceum Theatre, and a brief stint as part of the literary staff of the Daily Telegraph in London in 1890, Stoker created a fair portion of his income by penning several sensational novels; his most famous by far was that of the vampire tale "Dracula," centering around the infamous character known as Count Dracula. A story inspired by Stoker's visits to the English coastal town of Whitby and parts of Eastern Europe, and the historical accounts of Vlad the Impaler. Dracula was published on May 18, 1897.

**"Dracula" was the most popular literary work derived from vampire legends and became the basis for an entire genre of literature and film.**

Stoker also penned "The Snake's Pass (1890)," "The Lady of the Shroud (1909)," "The Jewel of Seven Stars (1903)," and "The Liar of the White Worm (1911)," but none achieved the lasting fame or success that Dracula got.

Stoker died on April 20, 1912, at the age of 64 in St. George's square.



# DRACULA

## A BRIEF SYNOPSIS

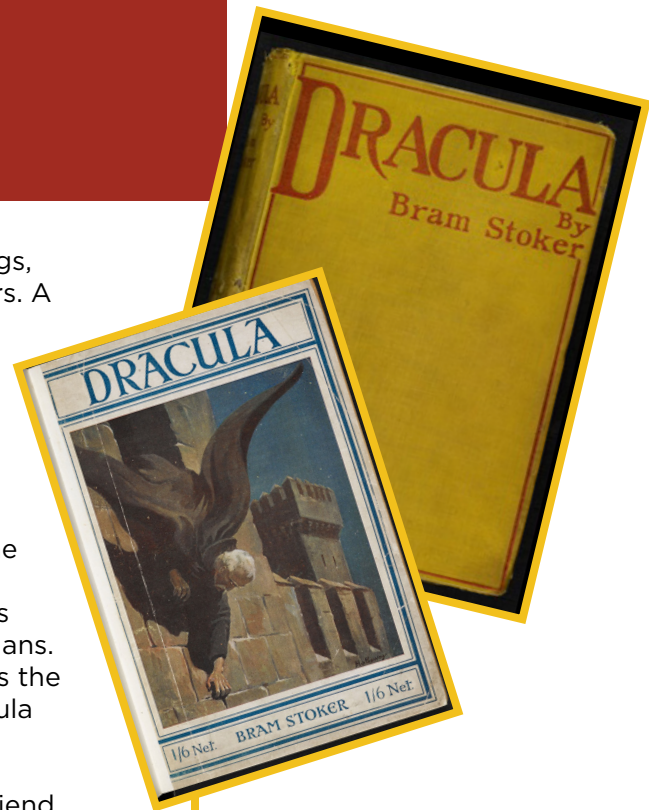
The story of Dracula is told through journal entries, letters, ship logs, newspaper clippings, and telegrams written by the main characters. A young English lawyer named Jonathan Harker has traveled to Transylvania where he meets with Count Dracula to finalize the Count's property transaction. When Harker arrives in Transylvania he encounters terrified reactions from the locals about his destination, Castle Dracula. His state of being unsettled grows as he hears the howling of wolves when he arrives at the castle. Harker notices that the Count is pale and gaunt and has some strange idiosyncrasies like lunging at Harker's throat when he cuts himself shaving. Harker is seduced by three female vampires, though he does manage to escape them, and then learns Dracula's secret, that he is a vampire and lives by drinking the blood of humans. Attempting to stave off being Dracula's next victim, Harker attacks the count, unsuccessfully, and is ultimately left trapped in Castle Dracula while the Count departs for England (with 50 boxes of dirt).

Meanwhile, back in England, Harker's fiancé, Mina, is visiting her friend Lucy Westenra to celebrate Lucy's engagement. One evening Mina discovers that Lucy has lapsed back into her old habit of sleepwalking, and when she finds Lucy, it is outside at a nearby graveyard. At first, Mina notices two small red marks on Lucy's neck and assumes that Lucy was pricked by a pin. Over the next few days, Lucy falls ill and is at times seen with a bat. Lucy goes into the care of Dr. Seward and Dr. Van Helsing, who provide her with a series of blood transfusions that don't work and decide to take further action. Shortly thereafter, Lucy dies. After her death, there are reports of an appearance of a strange creature who is attacking children in the area.

When Jonathan (who was able to escape Dracula's castle) returns to England and reunites with his love, Mina, the two marry. Jonathan's accounts of Count Dracula lead Dr. Van Helsing to believe that Lucy contracted vampirism from the count and it is Lucy, or the vampire that is now Lucy, that is tormenting the children. In order to prevent her from further killing, they unearth her corpse, stake her through the heart, cut off her head and stuff her mouth with garlic.

With Lucy "taken care of," Van Helsing, Jonathan and Mina decide to track down the Count and the boxes of dirt that he brought with him. According to lore, Dracula needs the dirt of his home country to remain healthy, so the group attempts to destroy the boxes in the hopes that they will prevent Dracula from regeneration.

Before this can take place, Van Helsing - who had noticed some changes in Mina's behavior - breaks into her room one night to find Jonathan unconscious and Mina drinking blood from a gash in Dracula's chest. Dracula vanishes from the room and moves back to Transylvania. In a determined attempt to stop Dracula once and for all, the group follows him to Transylvania where they find him buried in a box of dirt, and promptly cut off his head and stab him through the heart and Dracula crumbles into a pile of dust.



### FUN FACT:

"Dracula" is a Gothic novel, which is an English genre of fiction popular in the 18th to early 19th centuries. It is characterized by an atmosphere of mystery and horror and has a pseudo-medieval setting.

# DRACULA

## ADAPTATIONS



**Adaptation (noun): the action or process of adapting or being adapted which is to make something suitable for a new use or purpose; to change, alter, or modify.**

“Dracula” like many well-loved novels, has had its fair share of adaptations. Radio plays; stage plays; screenplays; comics, video games; cartoons; etc.

### Here are a few examples:

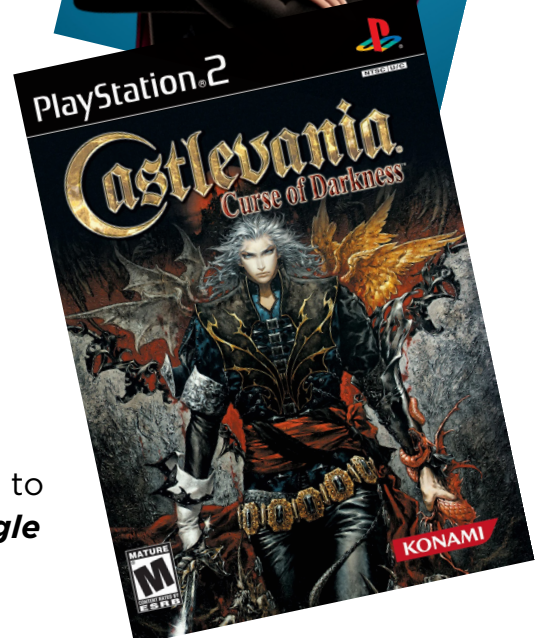
- One of the first adaptations of Dracula was the 1922 **German-made, “cult classic,” silent horror movie called “Nosferatu.”** This adaptation is actually an unauthorized and unofficial adaptation of the book, wherein the vampire that is at the center of “Nosferatu” is named Count Orlok.
- **A stage play of “Dracula”** came out in 1924, written by Hamilton Deane and John L. Balderston
- **“Dracula”** was also adopted into a trilogy of films from 1931 to 1943 with the first one focusing on the Count himself (portrayed by Bela Lugosi), and the two sequels focusing on his descendants.
- Throughout the late 1950s to early 1970s, a film production company called **Hammer Film Productions** created **nine Dracula films** as a part of a horror movie lineup alongside seven Frankenstein and four Mummy films.



# DRACULA

## ADAPTATIONS

- In 1995 the horror-comedy film, “**Dracula: Dead and Loving It**” starring the comic genius Leslie Nielsen was made.
- In 2001 a musical about the Count premiered, entitled “**Dracula, the Musical**” by Christopher Hampton and Don Black.
- Dracula appeared as the main character in the “**Hotel Transylvania**” franchise consisting of four films where he was voiced by Adam Sandler in the first three films and Brian Hull in the fourth and final film.
- A video game created and developed by Konami called “**Castlevania**” heavily references the iconic horror movies from both Universal and Hammer Film Productions.
- The character of Dracula appeared as a one-off villain in season five of “**Buffy the Vampire Slayer**”. Cartoon Network’s “**The Grim Adventures of Billy and Mandy**” features Dracula as a recurring character. And the counting Count Dracula is one of the most beloved “**Sesame Street**” characters. There was even an episode of “**SpongeBob Squarepants**” where a character is revealed to be Dracula, or more accurately, the Count Orlok version of Dracula from “**Nosferatu**.”
- Subsequently, many spin-offs of the “**Dracula**” story have been created; and many of the characters from within the story have gone on to live in the creative minds of others. (**Just Google Van Helsing ...**)



# ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHTS

GORDON GREENBERG  
& STEVE ROSEN



(L)STEVE ROSEN & (R)  
GORDON GREENBERG

Gordon Greenberg & Steve Rosen are currently in workshops for their Old Globe-commissioned new comedy “Crime and Punishment, A Comedy,” a five-actor retelling of Dostoevsky’s classic novel about mental anguish, moral dilemmas and borsht. It will premiere there in the summer of 2023.

Their send-up of Bram Stoker’s “Dracula,” “Dracula: A Comedy of Terrors,” began at the Maltz Jupiter Theatre and Chicago Shakespeare Theatre and is scheduled to play in Canada, Germany, the U.K. and New York in the next two years. It is licensed through Concord Theatricals. Their radio play version was made into an all-star podcast with John Stamos, Annaleigh Ashford, Alex Brightman, Richard Kind, Laura Benanti, Christopher Sieber, Ashley Park and Rob McClure for the Broadway Podcast Network.



Other recent works include developing a new television series for Jeffrey Seller and Disney+, a new podcast comedy series for Dori Berinstein and the Broadway Podcast Network, “Rolling Calls”, and the musical adaptation of the Universal Pictures movie starring Michael J. Fox, “The Secret of My Success” for Universal Stage Productions, which had its world premiere at the Paramount Theater in Chicago but was cut short due to COVID-19. Plans are underway for the next productions in Asia and Houston.

GORDON GREENBERG

STEVE ROSEN

Their five-actor holiday romp “Ebenezer Scrooge’s BIG (Your Town Here) Christmas Show,” a freewheeling adaptation of Charles Dickens’s “A Christmas Carol” set in America, is an annual offering at the renowned Old Globe Theatre in San Diego and the legendary Bucks County Playhouse in New Hope, PA. It is licensed through Broadway Licensing.



For more information about the playwrights, an excerpt of the script, some production images from the Maltz Jupiter production and more, visit:  
<https://www.greenbergandrosen.com/dracula-a-comedy-of-terrors>

# THE PRODUCTION

## DRACULA: A COMEDY OF TERRORS\*

by Gordon Greenberg & Steve Rosen



This production is also an adaptation of Stoker's original novel. An adaptation wherein five actors will portray all of the characters in the story. And, like the 1995 film with Leslie Nielsen, is a comedy – not really a horror story.

And here's how, or at least the short version of how, the cast list:

- **Actor 1:** Younger male presenting to play **HARKER/SUITORS/BOSUM GRAVEDIGGER**
- **Actor 2:** Older female presenting to play males **DR. WESTFELDT/RENFIELD/CAPTAIN**
- **Actor 3:** Younger female presenting to play **LUCY/KITTY/DRIVER**
- **Actor 4:** Older male presenting to play females **MINA/VAN HELSING**
- **Actor 5:** Sexy male presenting to play **DRACULA**



### CAST (IN ALPHA ORDER)

- Brenny Campbell\* (Cover)
- Kathy Fitzgerald\* (Actor 2)
- David T. Patterson\* (Dracula)
- Dan Rosales\* (Actor 1)
- Cathryn Wake\* (Actor 3)
- Jeremy Webb\* (Actor 4)

### PRODUCTION TEAM

- Directed by Gordon Greenberg
- Scenic Design, Tijana Bjelajac+
- Scenic Design Assistant, Jeff Behm
- Hari/Wigs, Michael Dunn
- Lighting Design, Rob Denton+
- Sound Design, Victoria Deinio+
- Associate Sound Design, Thomas Dixon
- Production Stage Manager, Jean Godbout\*



📷 PICTURED TOP TO BOTTOM IN ALPHA ORDER ACCORDING TO CAST LIST.

*(Based on "Dracula," by Bram Stoker & our affection for British accents) Commissioned and originally produced by Maltz Jupiter Theatre, Andrew Kato, Producing Artistic Director/Chief Executive*

*\*Denotes a member of Actors' Equity Association*

*+Denotes a member of United Scenic Artists*

# THE PRODUCTION

## SET RENDERINGS

Set designers create the world of the play according to the playwright. The world in which the actors will bring their characters to life – in the costumes designed and built specifically for the show, under the lights and with the soundscape, designed and created just for this production. The renderings – or images created/drawn by the designers – help convey what they are thinking to the director and producer (at the REP the Producing Artistic Director), prior to the first rehearsal.

***Check out renderings on this page for “Dracula.”***

***Have you ever thought about a job in the arts?***

There are SO many jobs in the world of professional theatre, could you be a set designer?



# THE PRODUCTION

## CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS



**DRACULA:** (*Transylvanian dialect*) Hugely sexy, magnetically handsome, rock star presence with a killer body. He is a narcissist whose greatest love is himself – and his leather pants. Bored with women falling all over him, he becomes obsessed with Lucy when he hears of her strength and adventurousness. The less she needs him, the more interested he is. He travels to Whitby to find her and make her his bride for eternity.

**JONATHAN HARKER:** (*RP British dialect*) prim and proper and obsessive-compulsive real estate agent, frightened of his own shadow. Engaged to his childhood crush Lucy Westfeldt and enamored of her fearlessness. Once bitten he loosens up...a lot...and becomes a Tom Jones-style rock star in leather pants.

**LUCY WESTFELDT:** (*RP British dialect*) brilliant plucky earth scientist daughter of Dr. Westfeldt, she is full of energy and the spirit of adventure and often underestimated because of her beauty. Engaged to Jonathan, but when Dracula moves to Whitby, she is curious about his strange ways and impressed by their similar interests.

**MINA WESTFELDT:** (*RP British dialect*) the less attractive, less intelligent Westfeldt daughter, she lives in her sister Lucy's shadow and is desperate for attention. She is immediately (and pathetically) receptive to Dracula's charms.

**DR. WESTFELDT:** (*RP British dialect*) Lucy and Mina's father, a blowhard; self-important misogynist given to proclamations. A doctor caring for the criminally insane, he has recently lost his wife to consumption.

**DR. VAN HELSING:** (*German dialect a la Mel Brooks*) brilliant and sturdy German vampire hunting doctor from the University of Shmutz. Deadly serious in the way Germans can be, she is accustomed to people not believing she is a real doctor. Strong, smart, and bold, she is a woman of action.

**RENFIELD:** (*cockney British dialect and salivary issues*) insane patient of Dr. Westfeldt who lives to serve and loves to eat bugs. In a word, the dude is nuts.

**KITTY:** (*cockney British dialect*) a dotty kleptomaniac patient of Dr. Westfeldt's, she serves as a maid in his house. Think Mrs. Lovett but servile and easily distracted.

**LORD CAVENDISH:** (*Scottish dialect*) Lucy's suitor; a Scottish dolt.

**LORD WINDSOR:** (*RP British dialect*) Lucy's suitor; posh, British and petulant.

**LORD HAVEMERCY:** (*Elvis dialect*) Lucy's arrogant suitor from Memphis, a la Elvis.

**DRIVER:** (*Eastern European or Russian dialect*) the male, Transylvanian driver of the carriage carrying Jonathan to Dracula's castle and tries to warn him. Borat meets Boris and Natasha.

**CAPTAIN:** (*sea captain dialect*) the salty captain of a doomed ship caught in a raging storm.

**BOSUN:** (*Irish dialect*) a scurvy seaman who goes down with the ship in a storm.

**GRAVEDIGGER:** (*cockney British dialect*) a drunk gravedigger with a secret.

# THE PRODUCTION MARKETING

## A MARKETING BLURB:

**A description of the show that is catchy and will work to draw folks to buy a ticket and come see the show.**

**Check out how Maltz Jupiter's description for the show.**

*Greenberg & Rosen's adaptation, "Dracula: A Comedy of Terrors," walks the fun line between comedy and horror. As Maltz Jupiter Theatre (the theatre that commissioned this script) said, this production combines the epic horror story of Count Dracula with a dash of Mel Brooks and Monty Python, "Dracula: A Comedy of Terrors" makes for a lightning-fast, laugh-out-loud comedy. Five world-class actors play dozens of zany characters, as they tell their story through illusion and special effects. Dracula's antics are guaranteed to raise your pulse as you emit blood-curdling screams—of laughter!*

**Check out theREP's description:**

*Ever wondered what would happen if you took Bram Stoker's legendary vampire tale and put it into a blender with the comedic influences of Mel Brooks, Monty Python and "The 39 Steps?" That's just what happens in this lightning-fast, laugh-out-loud 90-minute gender-bending, quick-change magical romp. Famed female vampire hunter, Jean Van Helsing, and her motley company chase Count Dracula from the English countryside to Transylvania and to "other frightening places," including the Capital Region. Their antics, complete with loads of local pop references, brim with enough tongue-in-cheek mayhem to fill your cup with giggles.*



## CLASSROOM DISCUSSION:

***Do either of these descriptions make you want to see the show?*** Students are asked to try their hand at writing a marketing description for "Dracula" (Or for a play, movie, or TV show that they know really well).



# VOCABULARY & THEATRE KNOWLEDGE

*Pulled, in part, from the cast list above and the style of Greenberg & Rosen's adaptation:*

- **Dialect** (*noun*) a particular form of a language which is peculiar to a specific region or social group; linguistics: a regional variety of language distinguished by features of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation from other regional varieties and constituting together with them a single language.
- **RP Dialect** – Received Pronunciation (RP) is the proper term to describe the regionally neutral accent used by many middle-class speakers in the UK, particularly in England.
- **Scurvy** (*noun*) a disease caused by a deficiency of vitamin C which particularly affected poorly nourished sailors until the end of the 18th century.
- **Salty** (*adjective*) coarse, tough, aggressive.
- **Petulant** (*adjective*) childishly sulky or bad-tempered.
- **Borat meets Boris and Natasha** – character references for the actor playing the driver; how to think about the driver's character. (*i.e.: A combination of Borat the character from the movie of the same name and Boris and Natasha, the characters.*)
- **Mrs. Lovett** – character reference for the actor playing Kitty; how to think about Kitty's character. (*i.e.: Mrs. Lovett is the baker in "Sweeney Todd" who bakes the meat pies made of human meat.*)
- **Posh** (*adverb*) in a refined or upper-class way.
- **Dolt** (*noun*) a stupid person.
- **Consumption** (*noun*) a wasting disease, especially pulmonary tuberculosis.
- **Blowhard** (*noun*) a person who blusters and boasts in an unpleasant way.
- **Misogynist** (*noun*) a person who dislikes, despises, or is strongly prejudiced against women.
- **Narcissist** (*noun*) a person who has an excessive interest in or admiration of themselves.
- **Tom Jones** – character reference for the actor playing Jonathan Harker; how to think about Harker's character. (*i.e.: Tom Jones the singer.*)
- **Mel Brooks** – character reference for the actor playing Van Helsing; how to think about Van Helsing's dialect or accent. (*i.e.: the comedy of Mel Brooks the actor/director/producer – how he might do the accent.*)
- **Elvis** – character reference for the actor playing Lord Havemercy; how to think about Havemercy's dialect. (*i.e.: to speak their lines with a stereotyped Elvis accent*)
- **Slapstick** (*noun*) comedy based on deliberately clumsy actions and humorously embarrassing events.
- **Satire** (*noun*) the use of humor, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticize people's stupidity or vices, particularly in the context of contemporary politics and other topical issues.
- **Tongue-in-cheek** – in an ironic, flippant, or insincere way.

# HISTORICAL CONTEXT

“Dracula” takes place in the late 1800s. What was happening in the world – that is now history – at the time Stoker was alive and set his story? Here are just a few things that took place in the late 1800s.

- **15th-century Romanian prince, Vlad Tepes** – more commonly known as Vlad the Impaler. Born in Transylvania as the second son of the nobleman Vlad II Dracul, he took the name Dracula (which means son of Dracul) when he was initiated into a secret order of Christian Knights known as the Order of the Dragon. In Romanian, Dracul means “dragon.” As the ruler of Walachia, now a part of Romania, Vlad the Impaler became notorious for the brutal tactics he employed against his enemies – chief among them was his preferred method of torture and death, impalement. He would drive a wooden stake through his victim’s body and then leave them to die of exposure. Some particularly gruesome accounts of Vlad the Impaler report of his dining among the impaled bodies of his victims and dipping his bread into their blood before consuming it. Such gory details of the man, who was born in Transylvania, as well as his legally adopting the name of Dracula, have convinced many scholars that Vlad the Impaler, Dracula, provided a great deal of inspiration for Stoker’s famous vampire, Count Dracula.
- **The Russo-Turkish War (1877-1878)** was part of multiple conflicts between the Imperial Russian Empire and the Ottoman Empire, conflicts that would span the 16th to 20th centuries. The Russo-Turkish war lasted from April 24, 1877, to March 3, 1878.
- Art imitates life. 137 years ago, on **October 24, 1885**, a storm hit Whitby, Yorkshire, England. The storm caused the ship the Dmitry, which had left port in Narva (modern-day Estonia), aground causing major damage and labeled her a wreck. A few years later – after interviewing several members of the Royal Coast Guard about the wreck, Stoker would write “Dracula,” and the fictional ship that the Count travels to Whitby, England on, would be called the Demeter.
- In the United States, the **1890s** were marked by a severe economic depression sparked by the Panic of 1893. This economic crisis would help bring about the end of the “so-called” Gilded Age.
- **1890** – Bram Stoker writes “Dracula.”
- **1891** – Basketball was invented.
- **1892** – the first Ellis Island Immigration Station was officially opened.
- **The Panic of 1893 was an economic depression that would last until 1897.** It was set off by the collapse of two of the country’s largest employers, the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad and the National Cordage Company.
- **1896** – the first modern Olympic Games were held in Athens, Greece.
- **1897** – the world’s oldest annual marathon in Boston, MA, races for the first time.
- **1899** – Second Boer War.



## WHERE IN THE WORLD DID “DRACULA” TAKE PLACE?

- **Transylvania** is a historical region in central Romania. To the east and south its natural border is the Carpathian Mountains and to the west the Apuseni Mountains.
- Wallachians (or Vlachs) are an eastern Romance people, the ancestors of the Romanians, who lived in the territories of what is now Romania and south of the Danube River, from ca 500 AD.
- Vlachs originate from the Romanized people of south-eastern Europe; a mix of Roman colonists and the indigenous peoples who were then Latinized.
- According to some information Stoker found at the Subscription Library in Whitby, England, the word Dracula is one used in the Wallachian language and is thought to mean devil.
- **Whitby, England** is a seaside town in Yorkshire, in northern England. It is split by the river Esk. On the East Cliff, overlooking the North Sea, the ruined Gothic Whitby Abbey can be seen (the inspiration for “Dracula”).

Check out these maps for reference points...



## GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

# IDEAS FOR CURRICULUM INTEGRATION

## ENGLISH | WRITING

1. **Write A Review:** Ask students to write a review of the REP's production of "Dracula: A Comedy of Terrors."

### Things to consider when writing the review:

- What was the most compelling or intriguing aspect of the production?
  - How did the set, lights, costumes and props add (or take away) from the production?
  - What did you think of the music and stage movement?
  - What did you think of the direction of the piece?
  - What questions arose for you, about the production, was anything confusing?
  - Would you recommend this production to others?
  - Can you make any connections between this play and other plays that you have seen?
    - Can you make any connections from the play to your own life?
2. **WRITE! A Monologue:** Students are asked to try their hand at writing a short monologue for one of the characters in "Dracula," in the form of a letter or diary entry – as Stoker's characters did when writing his novel. Who is talking; what have they just done or learned or witnessed; who is the character talking to; what are they talking about – what information are we learning about the story through this monologue; etc.
  3. **A CHARACTER'S FACEBOOK:** Students are to pick a character from the play and create a Facebook page for said character. They are to illustrate the play in its entirety, as seen through the eyes of the chosen character. This should be accomplished via Facebook status updates; photos from events the character attended (selfies, etc.); postings to other characters; postings other characters put on their timeline; etc. Be creative!
  4. **CLASSROOM DISCUSSION: LITERARY DEVICES.** Discuss what epistolary means. (Writing in diary format.) Next discuss how Stoker's novel presents readers with diary entries, as well as newspaper clippings, and ship logs as a way of relaying the story. Ask students what other stories, fiction and or non-fiction, they know where the author used this type of literary device. (i.e.: "A Christmas Story;" "The Color Purple;" "Diary of a Wimpy Kid;" "The Perks of Being a Wallflower;" "The Diary of Anne Frank...") Ask students how they think this type of storytelling will translate to a live theatre adaptation.
    - Teachers might continue this discussion by asking students to talk about how they feel about the novel to stage (or film) adaptations - which inevitably leave some things out or change certain things slightly for dramatic (and or time) purposes. (i.e.: The 7 novels that make up the Harry Potter series would have needed so many more movies if everything from the novels were to have been included.)

# IDEAS FOR CURRICULUM INTEGRATION

## THEATRE/PERFORMANCE/VISUAL ARTS

1. **Designing a Show:** Congratulations! You've been hired as one of the designers for the next production of "Dracula: A Comedy of Terrors." After reading the script, the director gives you the following information:
  - The production will take place in the late 1800s with a modern twist, leaning into the glamour of vampires. The play will be produced on a three-quarter thrust stage (audience on three sides, just like the REP's mainstage).
  - **SET DESIGNER:** It is your job to create a set that will transform the theatre into the appropriate time period and will represent all of the locations within the script. How will the design highlight the director's concept?\*
  - **SOUND DESIGNER:** It is your job to create the soundscape that supports the time period and locations in which the play takes place. What sound effects will you use? What music will you select – or will you compose new music specifically for this production? How will your soundscape help to highlight the concept for the show?
  - **COSTUME DESIGNER:** It is your job to costume the actors. What time period is the play being set in? Is it all real, all fantasy, or are there elements of both reality and fantasy (magic...)? What time of year is it? And what time of day? What events have taken place just before we see a character for the first time – and what changes (if anything)
  - **LIGHTING DESIGNER:** It is your job to create the lighting that supports the production, keeping with the time period and location(s) the play takes place, as well as the different times of day each scene takes place in. For "Dracula" we're in Transylvania, on a boat, in England; we're in castles, outdoors – in both day and night, etc.

Students are tasked with taking on one of the design roles for a production of "Dracula: A Comedy of Terrors." They are to create a PowerPoint presentation with their design choices. Images and drawings should support the time period, location, and specific needs of the production.



*\*Reference the renderings on page 12 of this guide, when assigning this project.*

# IDEAS FOR CURRICULUM INTEGRATION

## THEATRE/PERFORMANCE/ VISUAL ARTS

### 2. DRAW/Illustrate/Write:

- Students are asked to design a show poster for a production of “Dracula: A Comedy of Terrors.” This should include the art design, the theatre’s name, the show’s title, and author credit, as well as the dates and where to go to find more information/buy tickets. (Students are encouraged to research show posters prior to starting their design.)
- Students are asked to create a 5-10 cell comic, like the ones Mya Gosling creates for Shakespeare plays, that illustrates the whole story of “Dracula: A Comedy of Terrors.” Think very condensed version of events. This comic should contain images and words.

### RESOURCES CONSULTED:

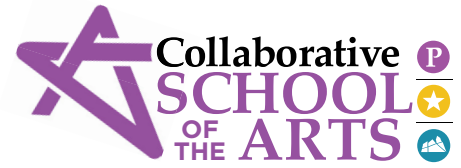
- <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Dracula-novel>
- <https://thewreckoftheweek.com/2014/02/03/no-44-the-dmitry/>
- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whitby>
- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transylvania>
- <https://www.thepeoplehistory.com/1890to1899.html>
- [https://ohiohistorycentral.org/w/Panic\\_of\\_1893](https://ohiohistorycentral.org/w/Panic_of_1893)
- [www.newworldencyclopedia.org](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org)
- [www.en.wikipedia.org](http://www.en.wikipedia.org)
- [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)

## SOCIAL STUDIES/HISTORY

1. **Classroom Discussion:** The story line of Dracula starts in an Eastern Europe town, Transylvania. It then moves to a Seaside town in England, and ultimately circles back to Transylvania. Where is Transylvania? Did you know that it is a real place – not just one made up by an author? Why might the author have selected Transylvania as the Count’s home?
2. **GEOGRAPHY:** Students are asked to consider what the geographical route that one must take from Transylvania to the seaside town of Whitby in England would have been in the late 1800s? What types of travel were available in the late 1800s to early 1900s? How long would it have taken to travel from Transylvania to Whitby?
  - Research paper on the origins of vampires within folklore
  - Discover the motifs between science and superstition
  - Write how science and technology are not always the answer to everything

# TEACHER EVALUATION:

## DRACULA: A COMEDY OF TERRORS



Your feedback is vital to the growth and continued success of the REP's educational programming. It helps us to constantly improve and to attract additional underwriting. **Please take a moment to fill out this form.**

**We encourage you to make multiple copies so that all the teachers in your group may respond.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

How you heard about the production: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**How would you rate the quality of today's performance?**

Excellent

Good

Fair

Poor

**Did attending the performance assist you in addressing classroom curriculum?**

Very Much

Somewhat

Not At All

N/A

**Were the online study materials useful in preparing students and deepening their experience?**

Very Much

Somewhat

Not At All

N/A

**Please check all that apply:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Today's performance price was affordable for my school.

\_\_\_\_\_ My school required a subsidy to afford today's performance.

\_\_\_\_\_ My school would provide performances for more students, more often, if additional funds were available.

**Any additional information / comments welcome, please attach them to this evaluation.**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The completed form may be submitted by email to:  
sdavenport@proctors.org or by mail to: Shai Davenport,  
Education Programs Manager, 432 State St., Schenectady, NY 12305

### *CREATING AN AUTHENTIC LINK TO THE COMMUNITY WE SERVE...*

**EDUCATION AND OUTREACH** are key components of theREP's mission, "to create an authentic link to the community we serve." Through a wide range of programs, theREP strives "to provide the Capital Region with theatre programming which inspires a greater understanding of the human condition" and helps "to develop future audiences by instilling the notion that theatre is a vital part of the cultural life of all vibrant cities."

### PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS

**Student Matinees (Classics on Stage):** Performances of most of the theatre's professional productions are scheduled during the school day with dramatically discounted prices for area students to allow for greater accessibility. Each season, at least one play is designated as "Classics on Stage," for its direct connections with curriculum.

**On-The-Go! In-School Tour (OTG):** Specially adapted professional productions designed to play to students on-site in schools. theREP's OTG program reaches close to 10,000+ students every year.

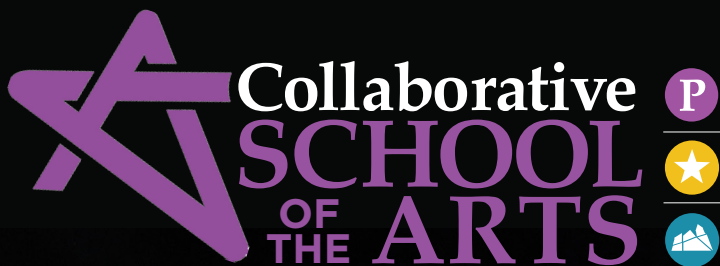
**Young Playwright Contest:** Providing students, ages 13-19, with the opportunity to submit their work to be produced on theREP's stage. In addition, the winning playwrights are given a mentorship – prior to the production of the play – with a theatre professional playwright and/or director.

**Summer Stage Young Acting Company:** Providing young actors the opportunity to work together, with leading professionals in the field, on a production that will take place on theREP's stage. Company members hone their acting skills while rehearsing and then perform the Young Playwright Contest-winning plays.

**CAST (Cultivating Arts & Students Together):** Providing students with the opportunity to volunteer at the theatre and earn community service credits at the same time. Teens get an in-depth learning experience that satisfies their passion while fulfilling their needs.

**Artists in Residency Programs:** theREP works in conjunction with school educators to bring highly trained teaching artists to work in extended residency within the classroom. Opportunities to embed the theatrical experience into the curriculum are available for teachers and students for every work in our education season.

**Career Development:** theREP is dedicated to helping build the next generation of theatre professionals with programs like the Professional Apprenticeship Program which provides year-long or summer-long paid apprenticeships (as an assistant stage manager and or crew member), and the Internship Program that provides college students internships in many disciplines of theatre. These programs are specifically for young people beginning a career in the performing arts and arts education.



DOUG LIEBIG

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