

BLACK SWAN STATE THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS A SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY PRODUCTION

CREATIVE LEARNING  
RESOURCE PART B

# RBCG

OF MANY, ONE

BY SUZIE MILLER  
WITH HEATHER MITCHELL  
HEATH LEDGER THEATRE / 19 MARCH – 4 APRIL



**BLACK SWAN**  
**STATE THEATRE**  
COMPANY



A SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY PRODUCTION

SYDNEY THEATRE  
COMPANY

SEASON PARTNER

CLAYTON UTZ

PRINCIPAL PARTNER





# HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

**BLACK SWAN'S CREATIVE LEARNING RESOURCES ARE ALIGNED WITH THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM FOR DRAMA, ENGLISH AND LITERATURE. THESE RESOURCES ARE OFFERED IN TWO PARTS, DESIGNED TO ENHANCE THE VIEWING EXPERIENCE AND TO SUPPORT FURTHER EXPLORATION POST-SHOW.**

**Part A** is to assist your excursion to the theatre by providing background information about the play, pre-show activities and research opportunities.

**Part B** includes production images, behind-the-scenes footage, and post-show analysis activities.

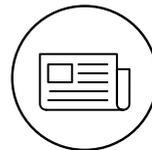
**Icons** to look out for within each pack include:



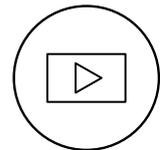
**ACTIVITY**



**DISCUSSION**



**READING**



**VIDEO**

Black Swan State Theatre Company of WA produced this Creative Learning Resource.

Compiled by Christie Sistrunk (Creative Learning Manager) and Samantha Perera (Teacher Advisory Group)

Cover Image by Rene Vaile.

Production Images by Prudence Upton.

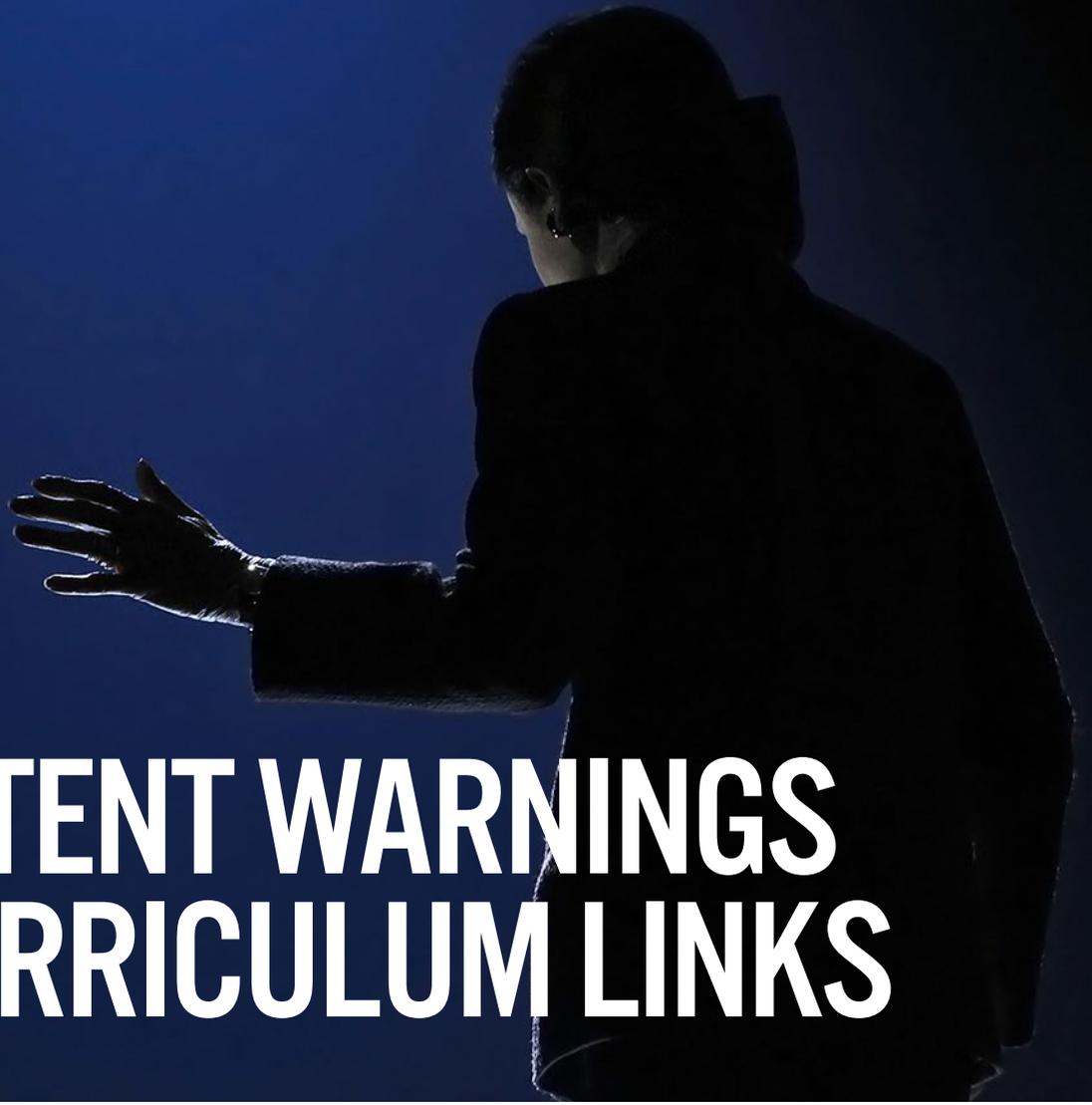
Design by Troy Barbitta.

Black Swan State Theatre Company of WA acknowledges the Whadjuk Nyoongar people as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live. We pay respects to all Aboriginal Elders and people and stand united towards a shared future.



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# CONTENT WARNINGS & CURRICULUM LINKS

## CONTENT WARNINGS

Recommended Age 12+

### MATURE THEMES AND COARSE LANGUAGE

Direct quotes as spoken by Donald Trump about leeching over women and “grabbing them by the pussy” - not seen but spoken.

Grief, loss, illness – reminiscing about deaths of family members, battles with cancer.

Suicide - in speaking about a case, Ruth tells the audience of a child who took their own life. No method is described.

Detailed content warnings can be found below.

[CLICK HERE](#)

### CURRICULUM LINKS (ATAR)

#### Drama

Unit 1: Realism and representational drama.

Unit 3: Approaches to and interpretation of text, context, form, and style.

#### Literature

Unit 1: Relationship between language, text, context, and point of view.

Unit 3: Spaces of performance; place and identity.



# ABOUT SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY

**IN 1980, SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY'S FIRST ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, RICHARD WHERRETT, DEFINED THE COMPANY'S MISSION AS TO PROVIDE "FIRST CLASS THEATRICAL ENTERTAINMENT FOR THE PEOPLE OF SYDNEY – THEATRE THAT IS GRAND, VULGAR, INTELLIGENT, CHALLENGING AND FUN."**

**JUST OVER 40 YEARS LATER, THAT ETHOS STILL RINGS TRUE.**

Sydney Theatre Company (STC) offers a diverse program of distinctive theatre of vision and scale at its harbourside home venue, The Wharf; Roslyn Packer Theatre at Walsh Bay; and Sydney Opera House, as a resident theatre company.

STC has a proud heritage as a creative hub and incubator for Australian theatre and theatre-makers, developing and producing eclectic Australian works, interpretations of classic repertoire and great international writing. STC strives to create theatre experiences that reflect Sydney's distinctive personality and engage audiences.

Strongly committed to engagement in the community, STC's Education and Communities programs aim to inspire theatre appreciation and participation not only in theatres but also in

schools, community halls, wherever people get together. STC offers an innovative School Drama program, partnering with groups in metropolitan Sydney. Through these partnerships and initiatives, STC plays a part in ensuring a creative, forward-thinking, and sociable future by engaging with young people, students, and teachers.

STC has toured work internationally to great acclaim and has worked with many of Australia's internationally renowned artists including Benedict Andrews, Cate Blanchett, Wayne Blair, Rose Byrne, Toni Collette, Judy Davis, Elizabeth Debicki, Joel Edgerton, Barrie Kosky, Ewen Leslie, Deborah Mailman, Tony McNamara, Suzie Miller, Joanna Murray-Smith, Tim Minchin, Richard Roxburgh, Sarah Snook, Andrew Upton, Mia Wasikowska, Jackie Weaver, and Hugo Weaving.

STC often collaborates with international artists and companies, and in recent years, the Company's international profile has grown significantly with productions touring extensively to great acclaim.

STC is assisted by the Australian Government through the Creative Australia, its principal arts investment, development, and advisory body; and by the New South Wales Government through Create NSW.

[sydneytheatre.com.au](http://sydneytheatre.com.au)



# ABOUT BLACK SWAN STATE THEATRE COMPANY OF WA

**BLACK SWAN STATE THEATRE COMPANY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA CREATES HIGH QUALITY THEATRICAL EXPERIENCES THAT CELEBRATE, CHALLENGE, AND INSPIRE OUR COLLECTIVE HUMAN EXPERIENCE.**

Founded in 1991, the Company has earned both critical and popular acclaim for its world premiere productions and highly distinctive reinterpretations of international theatre classics – all of which are infused with the unique culture of Western Australia. The Company is led by a Board of Directors, chaired by Francois Witbooi. Artistic Director is Kate Champion and Chief Executive Officer is Ian Booth.

State Theatre Centre Excursion Management Plan can be downloaded here.

[CLICK HERE](#)

## **OUR VISION.**

Connecting artists and audiences through the power of theatre to entertain, challenge and inspire.

## **OUR PURPOSE.**

To create exceptional, high-quality theatre that speaks to the world from our unique WA culture, landscape and moment in time.

## **OUR VALUES**

**Creativity.** Creativity is essential to everything we do.

**Connection.** We collaborate to tell stories, nurture relationships and share knowledge, to maximise the impact and reach of our company.

**Innovation.** We are forward-thinking and responsive to the changing world around us, balancing responsibility with courage to make meaningful choices.

**Quality.** We engage a skilled and trusted team, prioritising diversity and respect, to deliver exceptional outcomes for our company and community.



# ARTISTS



**HEATHER MITCHELL**  
RUTH BADER  
GINSBURG



**LUCY BELL**  
UNDERSTUDY



**SUZIE MILLER**  
WRITER



**PRISCILLA JACKMAN**  
DIRECTOR



**DAVID FLEISCHER**  
DESIGNER



**ALEXANDER BERLAGE**  
LIGHTING DESIGNER



**PAUL CHARLIER**  
COMPOSER & SOUND  
DESIGNER



**SHARON MILLERCHIP**  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR



**JENNIFER WHITE**  
VOICE & ACCENT  
COACH



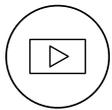
**EMMA WHITE**  
ASSOCIATE DESIGNER  
(TOUR)



**ZAC SARIC**  
ASSOCIATE SOUND  
DESIGNER (TOUR)



# BEHIND THE SCENES



Go behind-the-scenes with 7.30 Report ABC TV to meet director Priscilla Jackman and the star of *RBG: Of Many, One*, Heather Mitchell.



## DESIGN

*RBG: Of Many, One* showcases the synergy of design elements and performance, shaping audience perception and emotional engagement.



## SET

David Fleischer's minimalist set design consists mostly of a solitary chair, occasional small props (such as a table and telephone), and undulating upstage columns, made of fabric, that are lit to look like a red velvet opera curtain.



- Reflect on the significance of the solitary armchair in the set, in terms of symbolism and theme.
- Describe how the design elements delineate transitions between time and location.



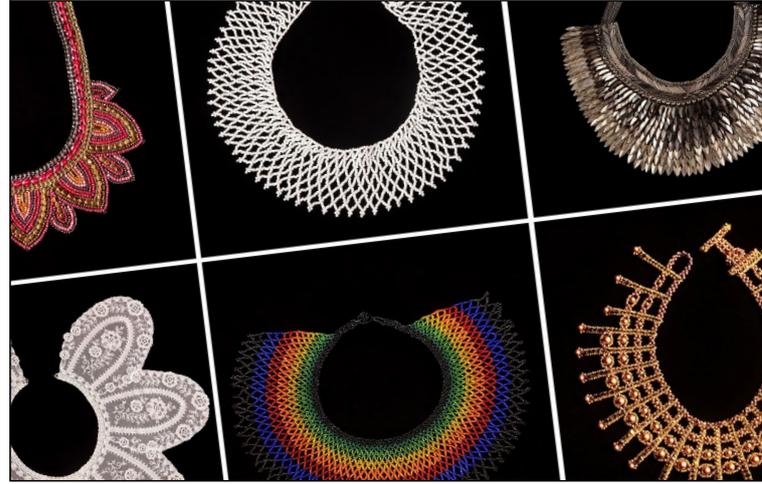
# COSTUME

Creating costumes for historical characters like Ruth Bader Ginsburg requires attention to detail and an understanding of the character's personality, style, and the time periods depicted. For Ginsburg, a Supreme Court Justice, the costumes worn reflect a balance between professional attire and her personal expression.

Interestingly, Ruth Bader Ginsburg utilised her judicial wardrobe as a form of silent protest, emphasising that her identity as a woman and a feminist was not separate from her role as a Supreme Court Justice. Her iconic jabots (collars) became emblematic symbols of her judicial commitment to gender equality, subtly expressing her views on cases. The collars ranged from simple lace patterns to intricately beaded designs and a bejewelled collar that looked like armour on the days she dissented.



[VIEW A COLLECTION GINSBURG'S JABOTS HERE](#)





# SOUND AND LIGHTING

Alexander Berlage's lighting helps the audience navigate the many shifts in time and place, whilst delivering beautiful imagery throughout the production. Paul Charlier's composition and sound design also plays a crucial role in elevating character, mood, and themes of the play.



- Discuss the juxtaposition of operas loved by RBG with the music of the Notorious B.I.G. and its impact on the play.
- Identify specific scenes where lighting played a crucial role in conveying mood, character, or themes.



- Research the life of a historical icon of your choosing and map key life events necessary to tell their life story.
- Create a mood board representing the visual and emotional elements to incorporate into your costume and set design for your selected character.
- Curate a soundtrack for a pivotal scene about their life.





# POST SHOW ANALYSIS



Throughout the play, characters express several attitudes towards aspects of society, life, or ideologies (e.g. towards motherhood, feminism, intellectual pursuits, self-determinism).

- Make a collection of visual (still) images that you think offer representations of one of these areas.
- Prepare an oral presentation for your peers, explaining why you chose those images and how they reflect certain attitudes, and values and marginalises others.
- Write a theatre review or essay, evaluating the production. Include the following elements in your analysis:

## CONTEXT AND STYLE

- How did the actor engage the audience and maintain interest throughout the show without the presence of an ensemble?
- How did the visual and audio design elements contribute to the overall experience? Were there specific elements that stood out for you?

## THEMES AND MESSAGES

- Explore any cultural or historical references incorporated into the performance. How did these references contribute to a deeper understanding of Ginsburg's life and the broader context in which she lived?

## EMOTIONAL IMPACT

- What were the most memorable moments or scenes for you, and why?

## CONCLUSION

- Summarise your overall impression of the production.



## RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships serve as fundamental themes in both literature and drama, enriching narratives with depth, complexity, and emotional resonance.

Interactions with other characters help to shape characters' identities, motivations, and actions. They may also reflect broader societal norms, values, and power dynamics.

Dramatically, characters drive the central conflicts in narratives and may even function symbolically or metaphorically.

Within the play, the relationship between Ruth and her husband Marty is not only integral to its themes but is also a strong symbol of love, unity, and equality.

Ruth's 56-year marriage was a source of mutual strength, respect, and advocacy. The couple exchanged numerous letters throughout their marriage, later compiled into a book titled *My Own Words* in which RBG expressed her admiration for her husband's cooking skills, sense of humour and unwavering support for her work.



Use the following to prompt to create a piece of writing, poster, multi-media presentation or dramatic monologue exploring the idea that "No man is an island."

## GENDER INEQUALITY

***"I don't say women's rights – I say the constitutional principle of the equal citizenship stature of men and women."***

**Ruth Bader Ginsburg**

Motivated by her own experience of sexism at Harvard Law School, inability to secure a job after graduating college, and need to hide her pregnancy when employed at Rutgers University, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, the Supreme Court's feminist icon, not only changed the law, but also transformed the roles of men and women in society.

Even though Sandra Day O'Connor sat on the US Supreme Court for twelve years before Ruth Bader Ginsburg was appointed, the Court did not have a women's bathroom until Ginsburg pointed it out.



In your opinion, what challenges and barriers still exist in the pursuit of full gender equality?



A SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY PRODUCTION

# SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY

## BLACK SWAN STATE THEATRE COMPANY IS PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY

### PRINCIPAL PARTNER



### ARTISTIC DIRECTOR PARTNER



### MAJOR PARTNERS



### INTERNATIONAL AIRLINE PARTNER



### SEASON PARTNERS



### SUPPORTING PARTNERS



### ACCESSIBILITY PARTNERS

## BLACK SWAN FUTURE FUND

Supported by Minderoo Foundation, generous philanthropists, and legacy gifts, Black Swan's Future Fund was established in 2017 to build a strong financial foundation to support growth and sustainability. The investment fund enables the delivery of works of exceptional quality, scale, and ambition. We thank those who have supported the Future Fund, in particular, we acknowledge the extraordinary generosity of Nicola and Andrew Forrest, and look forward to creating many more opportunities for our artists and audiences.

FUTURE FUND FOUNDING PARTNER





**Black Swan State Theatre Company**

PO Box 337, Northbridge, WA 6865

T (08) 6212 9300

E [learn@blackswantheatre.com.au](mailto:learn@blackswantheatre.com.au)

W [blackswantheatre.com.au](http://blackswantheatre.com.au)

