



Interactive Game Teachers' Guide

My character Designer

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS AND PARTNERS



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Land Acknowledgement

We recognize that Théâtre Cercle Molière is situated on the ancestral lands of the Anishinabee, Ininewak and Dakota peoples, as well as the homeland of the Métis Nation. We recognize that Manitoba is also home to the ancestral lands of the Anishininiwak and Dene. Stories have been told on these lands for millennia, and we would like to thank our ancestors, our grandmothers and grandfathers, for proudly transmitting to us the English language and the Michif language.

Credits & Collaborations

Music

Have you heard ***L'Histoire est en écriture***? This song inspired the music for the games! A big thank-you to Franco-Manitoban artists Andrina Turenne and Daniel Pélouquin-Hopfner for creating the original soundtrack for the games.



Andrina Turenne is a singer and musician from Winnipeg. She writes and performs songs rooted in her experiences, her roots and the riches of the natural world.



Daniel Pélouquin-Hopfner is an artist from the Manitoba prairies. A multi-instrumentalist, he draws inspiration from wide open spaces and the stories they hold.

Voices

The audio descriptions were recorded by two Théâtre Cercle Molière employees, Charlotte Gacougnolle and Auréna Ré. Their voices guide students as they explore the photos and characters. For each creation, they describe the image, draw attention to certain details, and end with an open-ended question to encourage observation, imagination and reflection.



Passionate about theatre and the arts in general, Charlotte Gacougnolle enjoys exploring Winnipeg's arts scene and being surprised by the city's rich cultural offerings.



Auréna Ré is a Franco-Manitoban artist, actor, voice actor and storyteller whose work explores identity, oral traditions and cultural hybridity.

Education Advisory Committee

Thank you to the Education Advisory Committee, made up of members from the Bureau de l'éducation française, the Division scolaire franco-manitobaine and the Division scolaire Louis-Riel, whose advice and reflections guided the development of the games.

Archival photos

Several images used in the games come from the Cercle Molière fonds, preserved at the Centre du patrimoine of the Société historique de Saint-Boniface. Explore the fonds at shsb.mb.ca

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Design your own Character

This game invites students from Kindergarten to Grade 3 to create a theatre character using elements inspired by plays produced or presented at Théâtre Cercle Molière since 1925. It is a simple tool for introducing the concepts of role, personality, costume and visual expression in a story.

By assembling different elements, students develop their understanding of character creation, experiment with costumes and accessories and learn to make choices that reveal an identity. Students are encouraged to connect their choices to a situation or story, while exploring the links between character, time period and atmosphere.

In the classroom, the game can support oral communication, writing or drama activities. Once a creation is complete, students are invited to save an image that can be printed, then used to describe the character, imagine their story or present their role in a scene.

Using images from the archives of Théâtre Cercle Molière, this game also introduces theatre as an expression of francophone culture and as a way to share ideas and messages. Students discover characters inspired by different eras and productions, including major works such as *Les Belles-sœurs* by Michel Tremblay, as well as Manitoba creations such as *L'Article 23*. Students are also introduced to the history of a leading French-language theatre institution in Canada and to the contributions of important figures such as Pauline Boutal.

Theatre becomes a starting point for exploring themes, asking questions and opening classroom discussions. In the context of TCM's centennial, this activity connects creation, heritage and living culture. Look closely and you might even spot the faces of recent executive directors Geneviève Pelletier and Marie-Ève Fontaine!

Have fun!

Learning Outcomes

In addition to being fun and creative, teachers can use the game to support skill development and learning related to the world of theatre and the characteristics of characters in a story:

- Identify and match different characteristics, such as traits, clothing and accessories, to create a character.
- Select elements that reflect the character's personality or role in a story and express their individuality.
- Connect the created character to an existing story or invent a new story based on the character.
- Discuss the character's role or function in a story, for example: are they the hero, an ally, an enemy or a helper?
- Identify and discuss cultural or social trends that can be observed through archival clothing and accessories.
- Encourage students to research the specific elements they used to learn more about their origin and context.
- Recognize the importance of costume in defining and communicating a character's role, time period, social status and personality.
- Connect costume choices to theatre traditions, historical periods or specific performance styles.

Free Creation Mode

Free creation mode allows students to use all the objects in the library to imagine an original character. Let your imagination lead the way!

Print your creation

Once a creation is complete, students can save their image by clicking the "I'm done!" button and you can print it. The student's creation can then be used as a visual support for an oral presentation, writing activity, drama game or classroom display.

Activity ideas

This interactive game allows students to create characters using elements inspired by photos and archival images from Théâtre Cercle Molière. It can be used as a starting point to explore the concepts of character, role and storytelling.

By manipulating costumes and accessories, students learn to connect visual characteristics to an identity, express a character's personality and make links to an existing or invented story. The game also encourages classroom discussion about roles, such as hero, ally or opponent, as well as reflection on time period, context and cultural codes connected to costumes.

In the classroom, this activity can be used to start a discussion, support a writing activity or prepare a short performance. It encourages students to observe, describe, imagine and explain their choices.

Play as a group on an interactive whiteboard or during guided discussion

- Observe the archival photo and name the character's clothing and accessories.
- Recreate the character together and discuss the open-ended question.
- Describe what the costume reveals about the character and their personality.
- Imagine what the character has just experienced and what they will do next.
- Compare two characters from different time periods.
- Connect the character to an emotion or situation.

In free creation mode:

- Create a character together as a group.
- Change one accessory and explain how it transforms the character.
- Invent a name for the character.
- Vote for the funniest, most mysterious or bravest character.

Play individually, on tablets or computers

- Recreate the character shown in the photo.
- Write reflections connected to the open-ended question.
- Describe the character using precise words.

In free creation mode:

- Invent a new character.
- Design the main character, secondary character or ally in a story written in class.
- Design a character for a set that has already been created.
- Print the character and use it to write a story.
- Describe the character's voice, walk or habits.

Activity ideas

Incorporate drama

Use existing or new characters to:

- Step into the character's role by miming, showing emotions and more.
- Act out a short meeting between two characters.
- Create a silent scene using gestures only.
- Use your voice to show the character's mood or energy.
- Invent an interview with the character.

Reading, writing and oral communication

Use existing or new characters to:

- Name the character's clothing and accessories.
- Describe the character using precise words.
- Answer the game's open-ended question orally.
- Explain creative choices.
- Tell the character's story.
- Invent a dialogue between two characters.
- Write the beginning of a play featuring this character.
- Present the creation orally to the class.

Explore culture and heritage

- Place the founding of Théâtre Cercle Molière in 1925 on a timeline.
- Observe how costumes change from one time period to another.
- Compare two characters from different plays or eras.
- Identify cultural clues in the costumes.
- Discuss the role of theatre in the francophone community.
- Imagine a character for a future TCM play.

Create artistic projects

- Print and cut out the character to place them on a set.
- Create a character profile: name, age, qualities, dreams and more.
- Add a speech bubble above the character: What are they saying?
- Make a puppet using the character.
- Create a comic strip with the character.
- Imagine this character in another time period.

Archive photos included

Gloire, Au cœur de l'histoire

PRESENTED AT TCM FROM APRIL 4 TO 9, 2016

Presented at Théâtre Cercle Molière from April 4-9, 2016 and written by France Adams, *Au cœur de l'histoire* tells the story of two children, Joëlle and Gloire, who come from different backgrounds and discover invisible threads linking them to the tragic histories of their families. Through their childlike perspective - filled with wisdom and curiosity - they learn to communicate in their own way, taking small steps toward peace.

This moving play speaks to both young and older audiences. It invites reflection on identity, roots and our place in the world today. *Au cœur de l'histoire* reminds us that being human means having the courage to listen, to remain curious and to reach out to others without judgment.

Gloire, portrayed by Gislain Kibaga, is a child from the Republic of the Congo, carrying a memory shaped by war and exile. Joëlle, played by Katrine Deniset, is connected to a family history rooted in Germany. Together, through their childlike perspectives, they learn to understand and respect one another, weaving bonds that show how listening and curiosity lie at the heart of building peace.



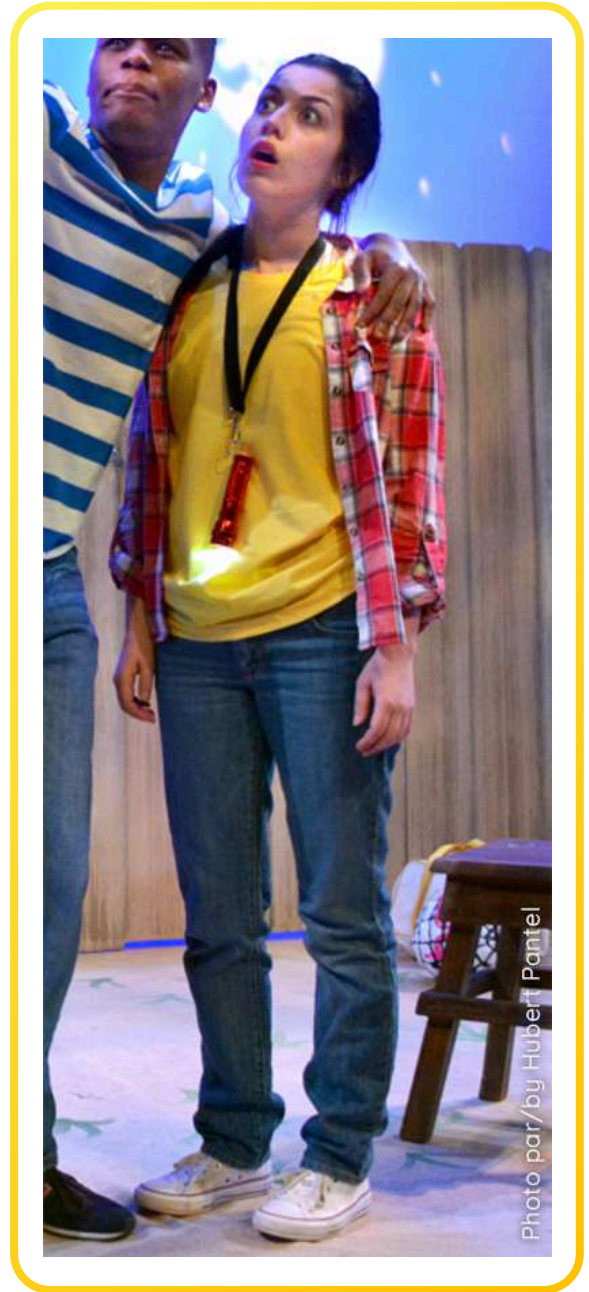
Joëlle, Au cœur de l'histoire

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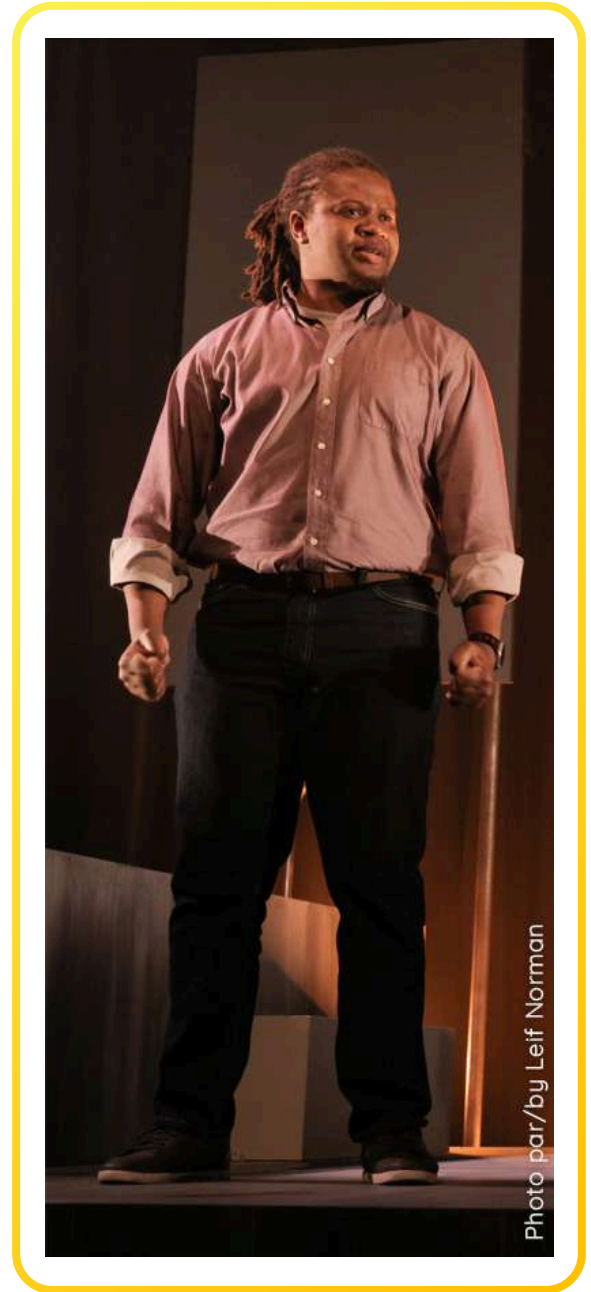


Lacina, Avec ou sans filtre

PRESENTED AT TCM IN 2022

Presented at Théâtre Cercle Molière from March 8-19, 2022 and directed by Valérie Cachard, *Avec ou sans filtre* is an original creation devised by the five artists who perform it: Lacina Dembélé, Sarah Lamoureux, Taylor Gregory, Karam Daoud and Simon Boily. Through a series of short scenes, the play explores the impact of social media on how we see ourselves and others. It addresses themes such as image, judgment, authenticity and the blurred boundaries between real life and the virtual world. The production offered an immersive experience: from the moment they arrived, audience members were invited to reflect on their own relationship with the digital world.

The character shown in the photo is **Lacina Dembélé**, who appears as himself in the play. His performance is sensitive and deeply rooted in his personal experience. Like the other artists, he took part in creating the text based on his own reflections and lived experiences. Together, the five performers create a fragmented world that mirrors the chaos of social media, blending intimate moments, social commentary and collective performances.



Germaine, Les Belles-sœurs

PRESENTED AT TCM IN 1970

Les Belles-Sœurs, a play by Michel Tremblay written in 1965, was the first play ever performed in joul, a popular, everyday form of spoken French. It was presented at Théâtre Cercle Molière in 1970 and directed by Roland Mahé.

The play tells the story of **Germaine Lauzon** (shown in the photo) is a proud, authoritative woman who is deeply attached to what she owns, who wins a large number of trading stamps and invites other women to help her paste them into booklets. As the evening unfolds, their conversations reveal dreams, jealousy and deep frustrations.



SHSB11453, Fonds Cercle Molière

Bernadette, Cet été qui chantait

PRESENTED AT TCM FROM MAY 31 TO JUNE 3, 2023 AND FROM JANUARY 14 TO 24, 2026

A crow, carried by the breeze, soars over the mountains, the valley and finally, the river. It leads the way to a small house with green shutters, tucked at the end of the road in Petite-Rivière-Saint-François. There, Gabrielle takes in the world with bright, wondering eyes: hay swaying in the wind, wildflowers blooming atop a pile of compost, shorebirds calling along the mudflats, fireflies whispering at dusk.

Loosely inspired by Gabrielle Roy's beloved book of the same name, *Cet été qui chantait* is a tender performance rich in imagery, steeped in music and anchored in stillness. Marie-Ève Fontaine and her team gently bring the poetic world of the renowned Franco-Manitoban author to life, inviting audiences of all ages, especially little ones and the young at heart, on a deeply sensory journey.

In the photo, the puppet represents **Bernadette**, Gabrielle Roy's sister, with whom she shared a very close bond and whose death, and the grief that followed, deeply shaped the writing and the world of the work.



Photo par/by Jonathan Lorange

Koumba, Empreinte(s)

PRESENTED AT TCM FROM MARCH 10 TO 25, 2023

Presented at Théâtre Cercle Molière from March 10–25, 2023 and directed by Geneviève Pelletier and Karim Troussi, *Empreinte(s)* is an international creation born from a collaboration between theatre companies from Canada, Guinea and France (Théâtre Cercle Molière, La Muse and la Compagnie du Jour). Through three characters from very different cultural and social backgrounds, the play explores contemporary issues such as digital ecology, artificial intelligence and cultural transmission.

Set against a backdrop of climate disasters, three individuals are tasked with sorting through Internet data in order to “clean up” the digital world:

- Scott, a Canadian programmer working for an international agency,
- Hervé, a French businessman constantly connected through social media,
- and Koumba, a highly educated Guinean cleaning woman, portrayed by Aminata Touré.

Deeply rooted in oral tradition and cultural transmission, **Koumba** embodies a calm, clear-sighted and critical voice that questions the ready-made solutions of the digital world. Her presence brings a humanist perspective to this unlikely trio.



Robert, Frenchie

PRESENTED AT TCM IN 1986

Frenchie, presented in 1986 at Théâtre Cercle Molière and signed by Irène Mahé and Jean-Guy Roy, tells the story of Robert Mullen, known as *Frenchie*, a former boxer who returns to his neighbourhood after serving a prison sentence. His return is shaped by the changes around him: friendships are fragile, family ties are strained and painful memories resurface. Set against the backdrop of a boxing ring – which even transforms the Théâtre Cercle Molière stage into an arena – *Frenchie* confronts his inner demons and past wounds.

The play explores themes of resilience, self-reinvention and Francophone identity in Manitoba, through powerful writing and a style that moves between light and darkness. It remains a striking reflection on the choice between anger and rebuilding.

Robert, the character shown in the photo is played by Daniel Vandal, also known for his work as a federal Member of Parliament.



SHSB36597, Fonds Cercle Molière

Bernard, Je m'en vais à Regina

PRESENTED AT TCM IN 1975

First presented at Théâtre Cercle Molière from May 2-10, 1975 and directed by Roland Mahé, *Je m'en vais à Regina* explores the life of a Franco-Manitoban family and the tensions surrounding the French language in a minority context.

The characters speak sometimes in French, sometimes in English, reflecting the lived reality of the community. The play raises questions of identity, culture and intergenerational conflict.

The character **Bernard Ducharme**, played by Jaque Rochon, is a proud and serious man who is deeply attached to the French language. He does not always understand the choices made by the younger people around him.



SHSB12076, Fonds Cercle Molière
Photo par/by Lorne Coulson

Archive photos included

Taylor, K2

PRESENTED AT TCM IN 1985

K2, written by Patrick Meyers, directed by Roland Mahé and presented at Théâtre Cercle Molière in 1985, follows two mountaineers trapped at over 8,000 metres on K2, the world's second-highest mountain. In this extreme environment, Taylor and Harold must face not only cold and danger, but also their fears, values and differing views of life. Taylor is an outgoing, impulsive and driven assistant prosecutor. He thrives on risk and excitement and wants to live life to the fullest, even if it means taking chances. As his climbing partner lies injured, Taylor struggles to hold on to hope and find a way out, gradually revealing his own vulnerabilities.

The character shown in the photo is **Taylor**, played by Paul Léveillé. His language, energy and way of thinking contrast sharply with Harold's, leading to exchanges that are sometimes humorous and sometimes deeply serious.

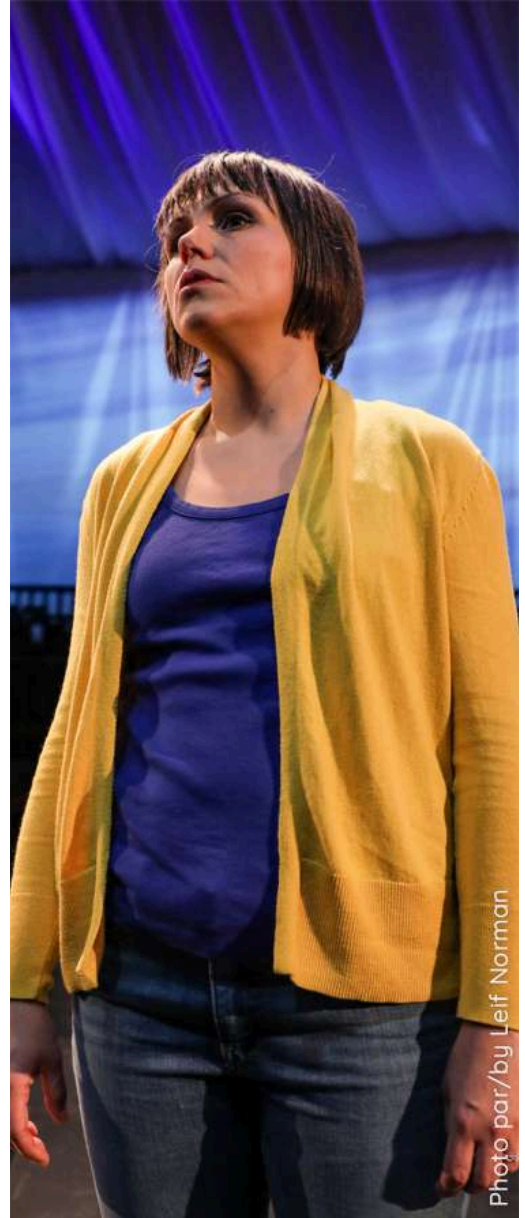


The mom, La Liste

PRESENTED AT TCM IN 2020

La liste, presented at Théâtre Cercle Molière in 2020, written by Jennifer Tremblay and directed by Geneviève Pelletier, tells the story of a perfectionist woman overwhelmed by the tasks of everyday life. She makes lists for everything - to stay organized, to manage her home, to keep control. One day, her neighbour dies suddenly and the woman feels responsible: a simple gesture, a forgotten task, might have changed everything. The play explores deeply human themes such as motherhood, isolation, mental load, friendship and the weight of guilt. It is an intimate and moving work in which many audience members can recognize themselves.

Théâtre Cercle Molière's production offers an original staging choice: the monologue is shared by four performers - **Alison Palmer**, Asma Zennati, Anna-Laure Koop and Eunice Hossana - who together portray a single woman. This artistic decision highlights the many facets of the character and gives the text a choral dimension. The minimalist, immersive stage space is inhabited with precision, unfolding in a fluid choreography where each emotion finds its place.



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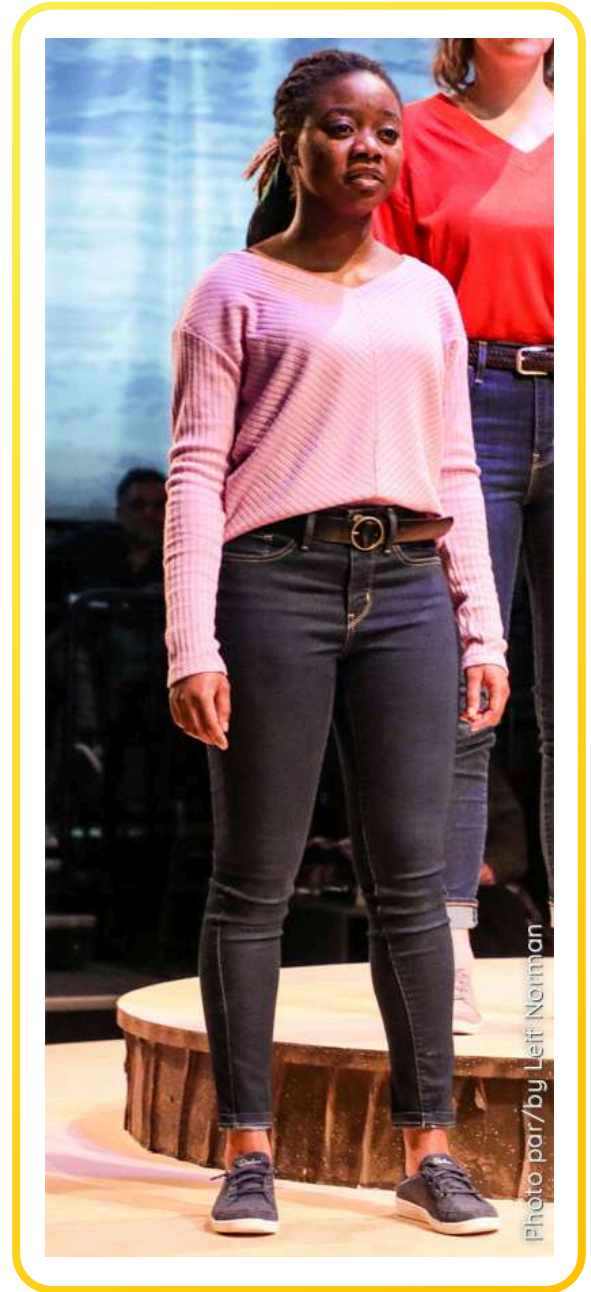


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Satia, L'Armoire

PRESENTED AT TCM FROM OCTOBER 18 TO NOVEMBER 3, 2018

L'Armoire, the World Premiere of an international co-production, tells the story of a group of voluntary and involuntary travelers in exile, as they face violence, insecurity and an overwhelming lack of privacy. In a wardrobe transformed into the trailer of a human trafficker, this motley crew of the uprooted seeks joy and hope in imagination and in the little things that keep them connected to life.

L'Armoire was presented from October 18 to November 3, 2018, at Théâtre Cercle Molière and directed by Karim Troussi.

With its international cast (from Canada, France and Morocco), hailing from numerous disciplines (theatre, music and circus), this production brings together diverse cultures and viewpoints for a multi-faceted look at all the forced migrations that cast doubt on our own lives and era.

Satia, portrayed by Amal Ayouch, appears as a silent and vulnerable woman. Charanne, played by Geneviève Pelletier, is more expressive and determined. Together, they represent two faces of wandering and exclusion: one shaped by forgetting and fragility, the other driven by anger and a call for solidarity with those who are denied a place.



Photo par/by Leif Norman

Charanne, L'Armoire

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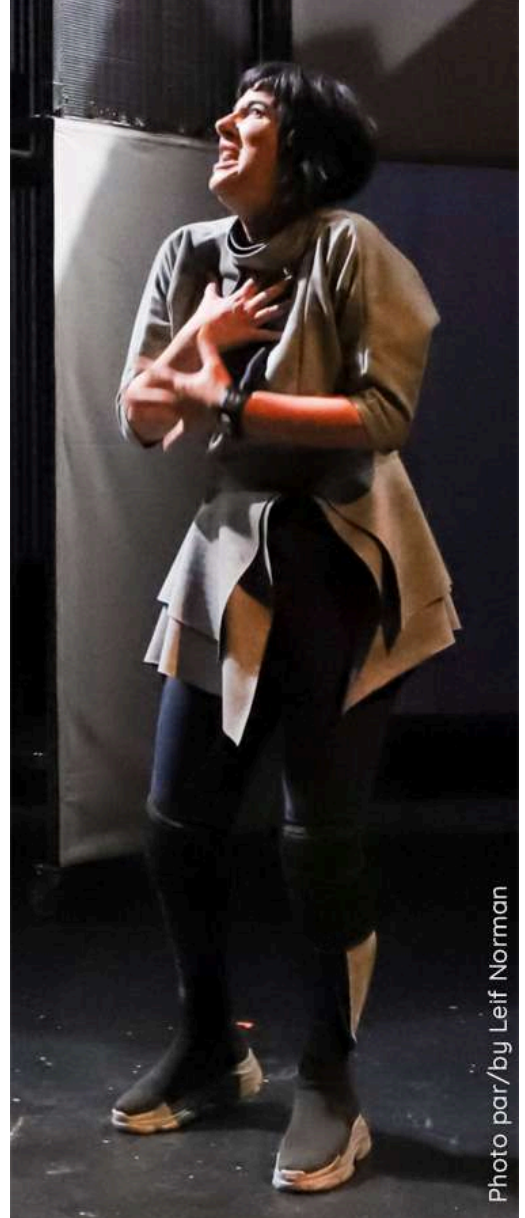


Photo par/by Leif Norman

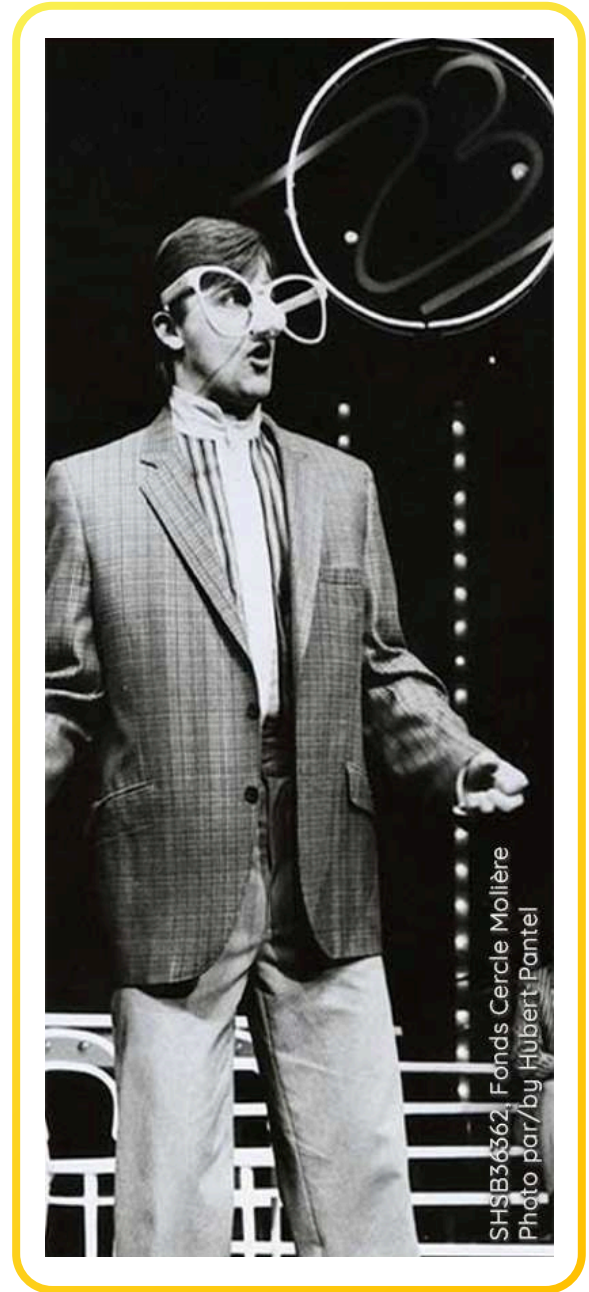
The Comedian, L'Article 23

PRESENTED AT TCM IN 1985

In 1985, *L'Article 23*, by Claude Dorge, Gérard Jean and David Arnason drew rave reviews. Produced locally and a first collaboration with the Prairie Theatre Exchange, it was a comical and accusing look at the linguistic crisis that shook Manitoba in the early 1980s. Styled as a musical comedy-cabaret, it was performed in English and French, then adapted for television.

L'Article 23 explores the linguistic rights of Francophones in Manitoba, drawing on the 1870 Act that established French and English as equal official languages. Through a series of historical and fictional characters, the play tells the story of the struggles, tensions and hopes of a community seeking recognition and justice. Blending humour, seriousness and songs, the play invites audiences to reflect on these issues.

Actor **Denis Blouin**, shown in the photo, performs several roles in this production, including McTavish (a character from 1870), a 19-year-old young man, an Anglophone teacher, as well as various humorous or caricatured characters.



Harpagon, L'Avare

PRESENTED AT TCM IN 1950

First presented at Théâtre Cercle Molière in 1950 and directed by Pauline Boutal, *L'Avare* is a classic comedy by Molière, written in 1668. It tells the story of Harpagon, a man obsessed with money. He hides his gold, refuses to share it and seeks to control everything – even his children's marriages. The play is filled with obsessions, outbursts and comic misunderstandings.

The character **Harpagon**, shown in the photo, is suspicious, grumpy and constantly worried that someone might try to take what he owns.



The boy, *Les sœurs Guédonec*

PRESENTED AT TCM IN 1936

Les Sœurs Guédonec is written in 1931 by Jean-Jacques Bernard. Presented at Théâtre Cercle Molière in 1936 and directed by Arthur Boutal, this play is an intimate drama centred on two modest, unmarried Breton sisters who welcome three lively orphans into their home for a short stay.

The play explores the contrast between the quiet orderly comfort of their daily lives and the noisy, chaotic arrival of the children, who disrupt their routine. When the children leave, a deep sense of emptiness sets in, revealing the emotional change their presence has caused. The cast included the author Gabrielle Roy.

The play received the awards for Best French Actress (Pauline Boutal) and Best French Play in Ottawa in 1936.



SHSB10909, Fonds Cercle Molière, Détail d'une photographie originale de Yousuf Karsh / Detail from an original photograph by Yousuf Karsh

Merveille, On marronne? (Si ça te dit, viens)

PRESENTED AT TCM FROM OCTOBER 20 TO NOVEMBER 4, 2023.

Presented at Théâtre Cercle Molière from October 20 to November 4, 2023 and directed by Geneviève Pelletier, *On marronne? (Si ça te dit, viens)* explores themes of individual and collective identity, memory and cultural mythologies. The story follows Adélaïde, a woman who has left her homeland to settle in a new place. There, she builds a circle of friends that becomes a new family. Yet questions continue to linger within her: what should she keep from her past? What should she let go of? What should she embrace anew? Even those closest to her are unaware of the depth and complexity of her search for identity.

Blending artistic forms such as slam poetry, music and dance, the play creates a dynamic and immersive theatrical experience. It invites audiences to reflect on how myths and stories shape our understanding of the world and of ourselves.

In the photo, actress Amélie Pelletier-Lavack portrays the character **Merveille Amer-Hic**.



Elle, Rise, Red River, Rise

PRESENTED AT TCM FROM MARCH 8 TO 23, 2024

Presented at Théâtre Cercle Molière from March 8-23, 2024 and directed by Tara Beagan, *Rise, Red River, Rise* is a trilingual play (Anishinaabemowin, French and English) inspired by real events and created as a tribute to Indigenous women, girls and Two-Spirit people who have been murdered or gone missing. The work is rooted in Treaty 1 territory and directly echoes the Drag the Red initiative launched in Winnipeg in 2014.

The play takes place in the aftermath of a series of natural disasters. A matriarch, portrayed by Tracey Nepinak, walks along the dried riverbed of the Red River with welded hooks attached to her back. She searches. She finds. Each object she recovers carries a story, a voice, a fragment of memory. Supported by the presence of ancestors, her journey becomes an act of resistance and transmission.

The character of **Elle**, played by Tracey Nepinak, embodies great dignity. She carries the memory, pain and resilience of Indigenous communities. Her costume, laden with objects, evokes both the weight of history and the strength of survivance.



Photo par/by Gin Ouskun

Alexis, Séraphin Poudrier

PRESENTED AT TCM IN 1981 (AND IN 2004)

Séraphin Poudrier is an adaptation of the novel *Un homme et son péché* by Claude-Henri Grignon, presented at Théâtre Cercle Molière from May 1-9, 1981 and directed by Roland Mahé. Set in a Quebec village, the story follows Séraphin, a cold-hearted and miserly man, the village mayor, whose obsession with money leads him to neglect those he loves. His greed ultimately isolates him.

The character on the photo, **Alexis**, is portrayed by Régis Gosselin, while Séraphin, on the right, is played by Francis Fontaine. The character Séraphin is cold, serious and deeply attached to his possessions.



SHSB35838, Fonds Cercle Molière
Photo par/by Hubert Pantel

Thank you!

Want to further explore theatre with your students?
Browse the resources for teachers
and Grade 7-12 students (in French only):
Le A à Z d'une création et d'une production théâtrale
<https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/m12/progetu/arts/a-z/index.html>



Théâtre Cercle Molière
340 Provencher Blvd.
Winnipeg, MB R2H 0G7

cerclemoliere.com

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