2008-2009
HOT SEASON FOR YOUNG PEOPLE PRESENTS

THE ILIAD

Aquila Theatre Company
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This performance is presented through arrangements made by Baylin Artist Management.

Funding for the ArtSmart program is generously provided by

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THE ILIAD – BOOK ONE

The Aquila Theatre Company

"The Iliad is the story of a raging anger and its human toll. The poem recounts 'the rage of Achilles,' the greatest of the Greek heroes fighting in the war against Troy.... This far-reaching fury has its origins, not in the enmity of the Greeks and Trojans, but in the day-to-day tensions of the Greek camp, where a long-standing rivalry between Achilles and his commander Agamemnon flares up in a bitter quarrel. As it opens with this episode of internecine strife, the Iliad draws us into a world of warrior aristocrats for whom honor, gained and regained in the front lines of battle, is paramount. Under conditions of extreme pressure, their carefully cultivated distinctions of status give way to contention and hostility.... The rest of the Iliad works out (the) consequences, charting the course of Achilles' rage as it intensifies, changes directions, and finally subsides. Achilles' self-willed estrangement from his former companions places him in unexpected situations that open up new and often painful perspectives on his role as a supremely great warrior."


The Aquila Theatre Company was founded in London in 1991 by Peter Meineck and has been based in New York City since 1999. Aquila presents a regular season of plays in New York, at international festivals, and tours to approximately seventy American towns and cities a year. The name, AQUILA, means EAGLE in Latin. Aquila’s mission is to make classical theatre accessible and real to everyone.

Note: Throughout this guidebook, Homer's epic is referred to as the Iliad, while the title of the play is THE ILIAD – BOOK ONE.
NOTES ABOUT THIS PRODUCTION

Our main consideration in transferring the *Iliad* into a modern-dress production was to bring the story to life during World War II. The costuming, staging and music all grew out of this concept. We felt that creating the feel of a black-and-white movie would allow this great story to speak to a modern audience more clearly. How can we find meaning in war? Homer’s *Iliad* is a 2700 year-old text originally created for performance that tells the story of the rage of Achilles, the cost of war, and his personal search for honor and meaning.

—Peter Meinek, Director

- The Greek lyrics heard in this production, set to music by a modern composer, are the first seven lines of the Ancient Greek text that make up the invocation to the Muse.
- The words of the play, taken directly from Lombardo’s translation, remain true to the original and refer to the life and beliefs of the ancient Greeks.
- Homer’s poem, the *Iliad*, is laid out in 24 books, or chapters. The Aquila Theatre Company’s production of the *Iliad*, focuses on Book One, and also includes portions of Book Two and Nine.
- When you see the play, the Greek soldiers – Achilles, Agamemnon, Odysseus, and their companions will be wearing the uniforms of Allied soldiers in World War II, and you will hear the sounds of modern warfare: booming guns, exploding bombs, hissing smoke.
- The production is inspired by the book cover of Stanley Lombardo’s translation, which boasts a photograph of the D-day landings in Normandy, entitled, “Into the Jaws of Death.”

Into the Jaws of Death - U.S. Troops wading through water and Nazi gunfire (June 6, 1944).
http://history1900s.about.com/library/photos/bljdday4.htm
THE ILIAD – BOOK ONE

KEY CHARACTERS

**ACHILLES**: The Greek’s greatest warrior. The prophets warned that the Greeks could not conquer Troy without Achilles. The prophecy also revealed, however, that if he fought against Troy he would be killed.

**AGAMEMNON**: Leader of the Greek forces at Troy. When the Greek army tried to set sail for Troy, Agamemnon was forced to sacrifice his daughter, Iphigenia, to appease the Goddess Artemis.

**ATHENA**: The Greek goddess of wisdom, war, the arts and justice. In the Iliad she is on the side of the Greeks.

**BRiseiS**: A young woman given to Achilles as a war prize.

**CALCHAS**: A Greek soothsayer, or prophet.

**CHRYSEIS**: The daughter of Chryses, given to Agamemnon as a war prize.

**CHRYSES**: A priest of Apollo from Chryses, a city near Troy.

**HEPHAESTUS**: The god of fire, blacksmithing and volcanoes, was born ugly and lame. He is a great craftsman.

**HERA**: Queen of the Greek gods, wife of Zeus, and goddess of marriage and birth. In the Iliad, she takes the side of the Greeks.

**NESTOR**: The oldest of the Greek heroes battling Troy.

**ODYSSEUS**: King of Ithaca.

**THETIS**: A sea goddess and mother of Achilles

**ZEUS**: King of the Greek gods. In the Iliad he is usually neutral, unless influenced by special requests for help.

THE STORY

The Iliad stretches back nearly three thousand years to tell the story of the Greek invasion of Troy. When Paris, a prince of Troy, steals the beautiful Helen from her husband, King Menelaus of Sparta, a thousand Greek ships set sail to punish the Trojans. The Greek army, under tile command of King Agamemnon, lays siege to the city of Troy for ten years. As the story unfolds, Agamemnon comes into conflict with Achilles, the bravest of all the Greek warriors; their conflict is the central theme of the Iliad.

Before the action of the Iliad begins, the Greek forces had raided several cities near Troy and taken many prizes of war. The choicest prize by far was a beautiful young girl named Chryseis, daughter of Chryses, an elderly and respected priest of the god Apollo. The girl was awarded to Agamemnon as tile commander of the Greek army.

The play opens in the Greek camp on the Trojan shore. When Agamemnon refuses to release Chryseis, her father, Chryses, calls upon Apollo to send a terrible plague to kill the Greek forces. The prophet Calchas warns that the only way to appease Apollo and end the plague is to give Chryseis back to Chryses. Agamemnon agrees to surrender Chryseis only if he can take Briseis, a girl that Achilles won and now loves. Enraged, Achilles is restrained by the goddess Athena from killing Agamemnon - his commander - on the spot. Achilles calls to his mother, the sea goddess Thetis, and on her advice decides to withdraw from battle.

Thetis ascends Mt. Olympus to ask Zeus, the king of the gods, to turn the war against the Greeks in Order to punish Agamemnon. Zeus’ wife, Hera, catches Thetis with her husband and begins to scold him. Zeus lashes out in anger, until Hephaestus, the lame god of the forge, lightens the gloomy atmosphere on Mt. Olympus with his comical behavior. Keeping his promise to Thetis, Zeus works out a plan to destroy the Greek army. He sends a false dream in the form of Nestor, Agamemnon’s most trusted advisor, to tell Agamemnon to launch an all-out attack on Troy that very morning. Without Achilles, however, the war will go very badly for the Greeks.
Understanding the World of the Iliad

The aim of every hero is to achieve honor, that is, the esteem received from one’s peers.

The Homeric Gods
The gods in the Iliad represent a realm of powerful beings who are constantly involved in human affairs and who resemble human beings but who also differ from them in important ways. The Homeric gods can control all the different forces that shape human life, from the weather to emotions to social practices and institutions.

All human endeavors occur under the sponsorship of the gods, and Homeric poetry frequently alludes to the divine support that underlies one human act after another. On the battlefield, for example, a spear often meets its mark because a god makes sure that it does or falls uselessly to the ground because a god has chosen to deflect it. The gods also have individual favorites whose interests they promote, and they also take sides in the war. The gods' superior power does not make them nobler than mortals, or less passionate in the pursuit of their individual interests.

The Homeric gods not only have more power than human beings, they also have greater knowledge of fate; they know what is destined to happen and act consciously to bring that about. For many modern readers, the activities of the gods and the existence of fate seem to drain the human characters of their autonomy, to turn them into puppets. It is important to recognize, however, that divine intervention is almost always in harmony with the pre-existing qualities and instincts of those human characters. While the Homeric gods resemble humans to a striking extent in their appearance and their emotions, they differ in the crucial respect that they are not subject to permanent change, including above all, death; they are immortal.

Nonetheless, the human characters in the Iliad experience their lives as involving choices, often difficult ones, and they expect to be judged by the consequences of their choices despite the fact that those choices - like all human actions - are sponsored by the gods and bring about what is fated.

Heroic Code
Honor is essential to the Homeric heroes, so much so that life would be meaningless without it. Thus, honor is more important than life itself. When a hero is advised to be careful to avoid a life-threatening situation in battle, his only choice is to ignore this warning. A hero's honor is determined primarily by his courage and physical abilities and to a lesser degree by his social status and possessions. The highest honor can only be won in battle. Here competition was fiercest and the stakes were the greatest.

The heroic ideal in the Iliad is sometimes offensive to modern sensibility, but what is required here is not the reader's approval, but understanding of these heroic values. One can only understand the Iliad, if one realizes what motivates action in the poem. Indeed, Homeric heroism is savage and merciless. Thus the hero often finds himself in a pressure-filled kill-or-be-killed situation. Success means survival and greater honor; failure means death and elimination from the competition for honor. But victory in battle is not enough in itself; it is ephemeral and can easily be forgotten. Therefore, the victor sought to acquire a permanent symbol of his victory in the form of the armor of the defeated enemy. Occasionally, prizes from the spoils of war are awarded for valor in battle as in the cases of Chryseis and Briseis, who belong respectively to Agamemnon and Achilles. The importance of these captive girls as symbols of honor is evident in the dispute which arises in Book 1.

http://ablemedia.com/ctcweb/netshots/homer.htm
Homer’s Iliad?

There is a lot of debate about the origins of the Iliad we read today. A poet known as Homer is said to have authored the Iliad, but no one can prove that such a person ever existed. It is generally believed that the Iliad was composed sometime between 750 and 725BC. The translations of the Iliad that we read today are based upon medieval and Renaissance manuscripts, which were themselves copies of ancient manuscripts that were lost countless years ago.

More People, Places and Terms for Understanding the Iliad

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iliad</td>
<td>Story of Troy – <em>Ilios</em> or <em>Ilion</em> is the Greek for Troy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muse</td>
<td>Goddess or the power regarded as inspiring a poet, artist, thinker, or the like.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invocation</td>
<td>The act of calling upon a deity for aid, protection, inspiration, or the like.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pylos</td>
<td>In the Peloponnese, an area ruled by Nestor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thebe</td>
<td>A city near Troy, where Chyrseis was found.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cilla</td>
<td>Town near Troy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phthia</td>
<td>Home of Achilles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hades</td>
<td>The Underworld and the name of the god of the Underworld.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myrmidons</td>
<td>Troops of Achilles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achaeans</td>
<td>Name for the Greeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other names for the Greeks</td>
<td>Dorians, Argives (people of Argos), and Danaans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peleus</td>
<td>Achilles’ father and the husband of the nymph Thetis (mother of Achilles).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priam</td>
<td>Is King of the Trojans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idomeneus</td>
<td>Leader of the Cretan forces on the Greek side.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scene from THE ILIAD – BOOK ONE
A long narrative poem that describes heroic deeds in a formal, “ceremonial” style. Like all narrative poems, an epic tells a story, generally in chronological order.

All epics share common characteristics. First, the hero, the main character, is of noble birth or at least of high social position. Often the hero is a prominent historical or legendary figure. Second, the setting is vast, involving entire races, the world, or the universe. Third, the action consists of deeds requiring great courage and valor. Sometimes supernatural forces—gods or demons—help or hinder the actions of the hero, who might also possess superhuman capabilities.

In addition, a few structural characteristics are common to most epics. Often, the speaker begins by stating a theme, a controlling idea or message, or by invoking a Muse or higher power, for inspiration. Then the narrative begins, usually without any presentation of background information. The reader or listener is plunged immediately into the midst of a crisis. Epics frequently include long formal speeches and “catalogs,” or lists, describing warriors, battles, or objects.

(From McDougal, Littell Literature, English Literature Purple Level 1985.)

**The Ancient Iliad**

Long after the events of the actual Trojan War, oral poets created different versions of the story as they recited the Iliad extemporaneously in public performances. Although the poets used a formal structure that dictated the rhythm and number of syllables in each line, they were free to change their poems during the performance to tailor the story to the interests of the audience. Such oral storytelling was entertainment for listeners, knitting together social, historical and cultural experiences, perhaps like modern “epic” movies provide entertainment for contemporary audiences.

To hear excerpts of the epic poem as the Ancient Greeks might have performed it go to: [http://wiredforbooks.org/iliad/](http://wiredforbooks.org/iliad/).

(Recited by Professor Stanley Lombardo)

Professor Lombardo developed his translation by giving live performances of the work – the same method used to create the original poem. Lombardo has given dramatic readings of his translations on campuses throughout the country, as well as at such venues as the Smithsonian Institution and the Chicago Poetry Center and on National Public Radio.
PERFORMING A MODERN ILIAD

In this activity, students will adapt an excerpted passage from the Iliad into a spoken-word performance for a modern audience.

Preparation: Make copies of the narrative for each student. Passage may be shortened into excerpts for the latter part of this activity. Plan to give the same passage to more than one small group. Suggested excerpts are noted in the passage on p. 8.

Introduction: Discuss Epic Poetry with the class (see p. 6) and remind students that the tale of the Iliad was performed as oral epic poetry before it was ever written down. If possible, listen to Stanley Lombardo’s recitation in ancient Greek.

Activity: Hand out the excerpt from the Iliad (p. 8) to each student. Divide class into groups of 4-6 students. Allow time for students to carefully read the excerpt and ask any questions.

1. Instruct students to work as a team to create an effective performance of the narrative excerpt. Let the following questions guide them:
   - What can we do with our bodies, voices, and movement to help the audience to see, hear and feel these words? Look for opportunities to add movement and music.
   - How do we create character(s) out of a narrative?
   - Should we create characters?
   - How do we help the actors/audience understand how high the stakes are in this story?
   - What are some options for how to use the actors?
   - Decide if the group should always speak in unison or divide the piece up amongst the actors?
   - Should there be moments when people speak in pairs or larger groups or solo?
   - How do we keep the performance “active” and interesting for the audience - rather than just reciting lines?

2. Allow time for the students to experiment with their ideas for an adaptation. Allow them time to rehearse.

3. Have students perform their interpretation for the class. Allowing students to see more than one interpretation of the same scene will illuminate the variety of ways in which the task may be handled.

Reflection: Following the performances take some time to reflect on the work.
   - What were some of the choices you noticed from each group?
   - What were some of the challenges your group faced along the way?
   - Did any of the choices you saw surprise you?
   - Do you have new ideas now that you’ve seen several versions?
   - Do you think the challenges you dealt with would be the same for the Aquila Theatre Company?
   - What discoveries did you make along the way?

Share: Following the excerpt from the Iliad (p. 8) is the corresponding section of the script from Aquila’s THE ILIAD – BOOK ONE (p. 9). Note that Aquila has elected to use the actors’ own names rather than create character names for the ensemble members. There are also several lines edited out. It might be interesting for the students to compare their adaptation to this one, looking for similarities and differences in how the lines were shared and divided as well as cuts made, etc. It might also be fun for the students to try to stage Aquila’s adaptation.
And she left him there, angry and heartsick
At being forced to give up the silken-waisted girl.
Meanwhile, Odysseus was putting in
At Chryse with his sacred cargo on board.
When they were well within the deepwater harbor
They furled the sail and stowed it in the ship's hold,
Slackened the forestays and lowered the mast,
Working quickly, then rowed her to a mooring,
Where they dropped anchor and made the stern cables fast.
The crew disembarked on the seabeach
And unloaded the bulls for Apollo the Archer.
Then Chryses’ daughter stepped off the seagoing vessel,
And Odysseus led her to an altar
And placed her in her father's hands, saying:

"Chryses, King Agamemnon has sent me here
To return your child and offer to Phoebus
Formal sacrifice on behalf of the Greeks.
So may we appease Lord Apollo, and may he
Lift the afflictions he has sent upon us."

Chryses received his daughter tenderly.

Moving quickly, they lined the hundred oxen
Around the massive altar, a glorious offering,
Washed their hands and sprinkled on the victims sacrificial barley. On behalf of the Greeks Chryses lifted his hands and prayed aloud:

"Hear me, Silverbow, Protector of Chryse,
Lord of Holy Cilla, Master of Tenedos,
As once before you heard my prayer,
Did me honor, and smote the Greeks mightily,
So now also grant me this prayer:

Lift the plague
From the Greeks and save them from death."

Thus the old priest, and Apollo heard him.

After the prayers and the strewing of barley
They slaughtered and flayed the oxen,
Jointed the thighbones and wrapped them
In a layer of fat with cuts of meat on top.
The old man roasted them over charcoal
And doused them with wine.
Younger men
Stood by with five-tined forks in their hands.
When the thigh pieces were charred and they had
Tasted the tripe, they cut the rest into strips,
Skewered it on spits and roasted it skillfully.
When they were done and the feast was ready,
Feast they did, and no one lacked an equal share.
When they had all had enough to eat and drink,
The young men topped off mixing bowls with wine
And served it in goblets to all the guests.
All day long these young Greeks propitiated
The god with dancing, singing to Apollo
A paean as they danced, and the god was pleased.
When the sun went down and darkness came on,
They went to sleep by the ship's stern-cables.

Dawn came early, a palmetto of rose,
Time to make sail for the wide beachhead camp.
They set up mast and spread the white canvas,
And the following wind, sent by Apollo,
Boomed in the mainsail. An indigo wave
Hissed off the bow as the ship surged on,
Leaving a wake as she held on course through the billows.

When they reached the beachhead they hauled the black ship
High on the sand and jammed in the long chocks;
Then the crew scattered to their own huts and ships.
VAISHNAVI
And she left him there, angry and heartsick
At being forced to give up the silken-waisted girl.

JOHN
Meanwhile, Odysseus was putting in
At Chryse with his sacred cargo on board.
When they were well within the deepwater harbor
They furled the sail and stowed it in the ship’s hold,
 slackened the forestays and lowered the mast,
Working quickly, then rowed her to a mooring,
where
They dropped anchor and made the stern cables fast.

RICHARD
The crew disembarked on the seabeach
And unloaded the bulls for Apollo the Archer.
Then Chryses’ daughter stepped off the seagoing vessel,
And Odysseus led her to an altar
And placed her in her father’s hands.

NATASHA
Chryses received his daughter tenderly.

RICHARD
(Kneeling)
“Hear me, Silverbow, Protector of Chryse,
Lord of Holy Cilla, Master of Tenedos,
As once before you heard my prayer,
Did me honor, and smote the Greeks mightily,
So now also grant me this prayer:
Lift the plague From the Greeks and save them from death.”

VAISHNAVI
And Apollo heard him.

NATASHA
After the prayers and the strewing of barley
They slaughtered and flayed the oxen,
Jointed the thighbones and wrapped them
In a layer of fat with cuts of meat on top.

JOHN
The old man roasted them over charcoal
And doused them with wine. Younger men
Stood by with five-tined forks in their hands.
When the thigh pieces were charred and they had
Tasted the tripe, they cut the rest into strips,
Skewered it on spits and roasted it skillfully.

JAMES
When they were done and the feast was ready,
Feast they did, and no one lacked an equal share.

BRIAN
When they had all had enough to eat and drink,
The young men topped off mixing bowls with wine
And served it in goblets to all the guests.

RICHARD
All day long these young Greeks propitiated
The god with dancing, singing to Apollo
A paean as they danced, and the god was pleased.

SONG & DANCE (2x)

When the sun went down and darkness came on,
They went to sleep by the ship’s stern-cables.

VAISHNAVI
Dawn came early, a palmetto of rose

BRIAN
Time to make sail for the wide beachhead camp.

NATASHA
They set up mast and spread the white canvas,
And the following wind, sent by Apollo,
Boomed in the mainsail. An indigo wave
Hissed off the bow as the ship surged on,
Leaving a wake as she held on course through the billows.

RICHARD
When they reached the beachhead they hauled the black ship
High on the sand and jammed in the long chocks;
Then the crew scattered to their own huts and ships.
WAR OF WORDS

Students will explore the argument between Achilles & Agamemnon and consider its relevance in the heroic and modern world.

Preparation: Make copies of the script excerpt on page 11-12 for each student.

Introduction: Review “The Heroic Code” (page 4) with the class. Discuss what motivates the ancient heroic figure.

Activity: Hand out the excerpt from THE ILIAD – BOOK ONE to each student. Divide class into groups of 4-6 students. Allow time for students to silently read the excerpt.

1. Students from each group will take the roles of Achilles and Agamemnon in the scene. Have them read the scene aloud for the other members of their group.
2. Follow with a small group discussion. The following questions may be discussed with the larger group and/or copied or written on the board for each group to have their own discussion:
   a. What is the scene about? What are they fighting about?
   b. How would you describe the tone or nature of this war of words between two honored war heroes?
   c. Does the nature of this war of words remind you of any public figures you can name? Anyone you know personally? Any current events you may have read about in the newspaper or seen on the nightly news?
   d. The stakes are very high for the characters in this scene. Have the stakes ever been this high for you or your friends?
   e. Had you ever considered that ancient Greek war heroes might have a fight of this nature?
   f. Does the scene make you wonder about how wars are started, won and lost?
   g. What function do the women serve in this scene (whether they are mentioned or actually appear in the scene?)?
   h. How do you feel about women being the sought after and fought over as a ‘prize?’
   i. Are women still considered a prize today? In what circumstances?
3. Ask students to consider another setting in which this argument could erupt. Encourage groups to think very broadly – from another war setting to an elementary school playground, or a fictional futuristic setting. Ask students to edit the excerpt to reflect their new setting and add instructions for staging, including the actors’ movements, costuming, and set. Ask groups to report on their new setting and why they chose it. (If time allows, students can act out parts of their scenes.)
4. After the groups share their ideas, discuss: What do these situations have in common? What does it reveal about human nature? What does it reveal about war? What is/is not “heroic” about these individuals?
5. (This could be a post-performance review.) Explain to the class that the Aquila Theatre Company has decided to set the play THE ILIAD-BOOK ONE within World War II. Why do you think the director made this choice?

Reflection

Has doing the activity helped you to see any correlation between the ancient Greeks and our modern times? In what way is the ancient tale relatable to us today?
AGAMEMNON

“You damn soothsayer!
You’ve never given me a good omen yet.
You take some kind of perverse pleasure in prophesying
Doom, don’t you? Not a single favourable omen ever!
Nothing good ever happens! And now you stand here
Uttering oracles before the Greeks, telling us
That your great ballistic god is giving us all this trouble
Because I was unwilling to accept the ransom
For Chryses’ daughter but preferred instead to keep her
In my tent! And why shouldn’t I? I like her better than
My wife Clytemnestra. She’s no worse than her
When it comes to looks, body, mind, or ability.
Still, I’ll give her back, if that’s what’s best.
I don’t want to see the army destroyed like this.
But I want another prize ready for me right away.
I’m not going to be the only Greek without a prize,
It wouldn’t be right. And you all see where mine is going.”

ACHILLES

“And where do you think, son of Atreus,
You greedy glory-hound, the magnanimous Greeks
Are going to get another prize for you?
Do you think we have some kind of stockpile in reserve?
Every town in the area has been sacked and the stuff all divided.
You want the men to count it all back and redistribute it?
All right, you give the girl back to the god. The army
Will repay you three and four times over – when and if
Zeus allows us to rip Troy down to its foundations.”

AGAMEMNON

“Some suitable prize of their own choice, something fair –
But if it doesn’t, I’ll just go take something myself,
Your prize perhaps, or Ajax’s, or Odysseus’,
And whoever she belongs to, it’ll stick in his throat.

But we can think about that later.
Right now we launch
A black ship on the bright salt water, get a crew aboard,
Load on a hundred bulls, and have Chryseis board her too,
My girl with her lovely eyes. And we’ll want a good man
For captain, Ajax or Idomeneus or godlike Odysseus –
Or maybe you, son of Peleus, our most formidable hero -
To offer sacrifice and appease the Arch-Destroyer for us.”

ACHILLES

“You shameless, profiteering excuse for a commander!
How are you going to get any Greek warrior
To follow you into battle again? You know,
I don’t have any quarrel with the Trojans,
They didn’t do anything to me
to make me
Come over here and fight, didn’t run off my cattle or horses
Or ruin my farmland back home in Phthia, not with all
The shadowy mountains and moaning seas between.
It’s for you, dogface, for your precious pleasure -
And Menelaus’ honor – that we came here,
A fact you don’t have the decency even to mention!
And now you’re threatening to take away the prize
That I sweated for and the Greeks gave me.
I never get a prize equal to yours when the army
Captures one of the Trojan strongholds.
No, I do all the dirty work with my own hands,
And when the battle’s over and we divide the loot
You get the lion’s share and I go back to the ships
With some pitiful little thing, so worn out from fighting
I don’t have the strength left even to complain.
Well, I’m going back to Phthia now. Far better
To head home with my curved ships than stay here,
Unhonored myself and piling up a fortune for you.”

AGAMEMNON
“Go ahead and desert, if that’s what you want!
I’m not going to beg you to stay. There are plenty of others
Who will honor me, not least of all Zeus the Counselor.
To me, you’re the most hateful king under heaven,
A born troublemaker. You actually like fighting and war.
If you’re all that strong, it’s just a gift from some god.
So why don’t you go home with your ships and lord it over
Your precious Myrmidons. I couldn’t care less about you
Or your famous temper. But I’ll tell you this:
Since Phoebus Apollo is taking away my Chryseis,
Whom I’m sending back aboard ship with my friends,
I’m coming to your hut and taking Briseis,
Your own beautiful prize, so that you will see just how much
Stronger I am than you, and the next person will wince
At the thought of opposing me as an equal.”

(Athena enters)

ACHILLES
“Daughter of Zeus! Why have you come here?
To see Agamemnon’s arrogance, no doubt.
I’ll tell you where I place my bets, Goddess:
Sudden death for this outrageous behavior.”

ATHENA
“I came to see if I could check this temper of yours,
Sent from heaven by the white-armed goddess Hera, who loves and watches over both of you men.
Now come on, drop this quarrel, don’t draw your sword.
Tell him off instead. And I’ll tell you,
Achilles, how things will be: You’re going to get
Three times as many magnificent gifts
Because of his arrogance. Just listen to us and be patient.”

ACHILLES
“When you two speak, Goddess, a man has to listen
No matter how angry. It’s better that way.
Obey the gods and they hear you when you pray.”

(Achilles puts his sword away – and tears into Agamemnon again)

ACHILLES
“You bloated drunk,
With a dog’s eyes and a rabbit’s heart!
You’ve never had the guts to buckle on armor in battle
Or come out with the best fighting Greeks
On any campaign! Afraid to look Death in the eye,
Agamemnon? It’s far more profitable
To hang back in the army’s rear – isn’t it? –
Confiscating prizes from any Greek who talks back
And bleeding your people dry. There’s not a real man
Under your command, or this latest atrocity
Would be your last, son of Atreus.
Now get this straight. I swear a formal oath:
    By this scepter, which will never sprout leaf
Or branch again since it was cut from its stock
In the mountains, which will bloom no more
Now that bronze has pared off leaf and bark,
And which now the sons of the Greeks hold in their hands
At council, upholding Zeus’ laws –
    By this scepter I swear:
When every last Greek desperately misses Achilles,
Your remorse won’t do any good then,
When Hector the man-killer swats you down like flies.
And you will eat your heart out
Because you failed to honor the best Greek of all.”
It is hard to conceive the epic scope of this decisive battle that foreshadowed the end of Hitler’s dream of Nazi domination. The D-Day operation of June 6, 1944 brought together the land, air and sea forces of the allied armies in what became known as the largest invasion force in human history. The operation, given the codename OVERLORD, delivered five naval assault divisions to the beaches of Normandy, France. The beaches were given the codenames UTAH, OMAHA, GOLD, JUNO and SWORD. The invasion force included 7,000 ships and landing craft manned by over 195,000 naval personnel from eight allied countries. Almost 133,000 troops from England, Canada and the United States landed on D-Day. Casualties from the three countries during the landing numbered 10,300. By June 30th, over 850,000 men, 148,000 vehicles, and 570,000 tons of supplies had landed on the Normandy shores. Fighting by the brave soldiers, sailors and airmen of the allied forces western front and Russian forces on the eastern front led to the defeat of German Nazi forces. On May 7, 1945, German General Alfred Jodl signed an unconditional surrender at Reims, France.

After years of meticulous planning and seemingly endless training, for the Allied Forces, it all came down to this: The boat ramp goes down, then jump, swim, run, and crawl to the cliffs. Many of the first young men (most not yet 20 years old) entered the surf carrying eighty pounds of equipment. They faced over 200 yards of beach before reaching the first natural feature offering any protection. Blanketed by small-arms fire and bracketed by artillery, they found themselves in hell.

When it was over, the Allied Forces had suffered nearly 10,000 casualties; more than 4,000 were dead. Yet somehow, due to planning and preparation, and due to the valor, fidelity, and sacrifice of the Allied Forces, Fortress Europe had been breached.

What does the D stand for in D-Day?

The “D” is derived from the word "Day". “D-Day” means the day on which a military operation begins. The term "D-Day" has been used for many different operations, but it is now generally only used to refer to the Allied landings in Normandy on June 6, 1944.

Why was the expression "D-Day" used?

When a military operation is being planned, its actual date and time is not always known exactly. The term "D-Day" was therefore used to mean the date on which operations would begin, whenever that was to be. The day before D-Day was known as "D-1", while the day after D-Day was "D+1", and so on. This meant that if the projected date of an operation changed, all the dates in the plan did not also need to be changed. This actually happened in the case of the Normandy Landings. D-Day in Normandy was originally intended to be on 5 June 1944, but at the last minute bad weather delayed it until the following day. The armed forces also used the expression "H-Hour" for the time during the day at which operations were to begin.

http://www.ddaymuseum.co.uk/faq.htm

The Charge of the Light Brigade  (excerpt)
Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell.

They that had fought so well
Came through the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.
INTO THE JAWS OF DEATH

STAGING THE ILIAD - BOOK ONE

Have you ever been inspired by a photo or painting? Students will:
1) Investigate the photo “Into the Jaws of Death.”
2) Consider other images of war as inspiration for staging a play.

Preparation: Print copies of the photograph “Into the Jaws of Death” for each student. Page 2 of this guidebook has a larger version of the photo and includes production notes that will be helpful in the next activity.

Introduction: Have students take at least one solid minute to observe the photo, “Into the Jaws of Death.”
Do not share the name or context of the photo until after the following discussion.

1. Discuss students’ observations of the photo and have one or more students document the discussion on whiteboard or pad.
Suggestions of reflective questions to open the discussion might include:
• What do you see in this photo?
• What is the photographer’s perspective in the photo?
• What has just happened? What is about to happen?
• How does this photo make you feel?
• What does this photo make you wonder?
• Which war do you think this photo is from?
• If you were to give the photo a title what would it be?

2. Explain that this black-and-white photograph was taken by a member of the U.S. Coast Guard from a WWII landing craft on D-Day as the Americans landed on the beaches of Normandy, France and is titled “Into the Jaws of Death”
• Does this title feel “right” to you?
• Why do you think it’s called “Into the Jaws of Death”?
• Did our brainstorming observations and discussion match up well with the facts about the photo?
• Does the photo have more impact once you know the circumstances?

3. Share with students that this photo was the cover for Stanley Lombardo’s translation of the Iliad. Aquila Theatre Company uses the Lombardo translation in their production. Aquila was also inspired by the photo, “Into the Jaws of Death.” Holding a strong belief that the Iliad is a timeless story, Aquila set their production during WWII.
• What connections do students see between WW II and the Iliad?
• What effect does changing the time period and environment have on the story?
• What effect does it have on the audience?
• What other stories have been re-set in modern times? What makes a “timeless” story?
Creating a Stage Concept

Preparation: Collect images of war from a variety of time periods and history, excluding WW II. The images may be paintings, photos, even graphic images found in magazines, books, or the internet. Students may aid in gathering images and finding them on the web. Have students work in groups of 4-6, and relay the instructions below for each working group.

Introduction: We are going to look through various images of warfare and consider how they might serve as inspiration for a production of the Iliad set during a different war.

1. Look through the images, and choose one that peaks your interest or pulls at your emotions.

2. Take some time to observe the image in the same way we just observed “Into the Jaws of Death.”
   • What do you notice about this image?
   • What event or time period is this image from?
   • What is taking place in the image? What has just happened? What happens next?
   • What title might suit the image?
   • What emotions does the image document?
   • What emotions does the image produce in the viewer?

3. As a team, design a production of the Iliad re-set during the time of this image. Directors and producers have many theatrical tools to communicate a different era. Consider how you would use the following:
   • costumes
   • lighting
   • sound effects
   • music
   • colors
   • casting of actors
   • choreography

4. Present these ideas to the class.
   Options for presentations may include:
   • Drawing ideas on a poster board or large paper with descriptive captions.
   • Using photos from magazines and newspapers and arranging them on poster board with descriptive captions.
   • Describe production ideas in writing or use any combination of these suggestions.

Presentations: Allow students time to work on their projects. Side-coach to keep them on track and encourage some risk-taking in their concepts. Have each group present their work to the class. Allow time for the class to respond to the presentation. Keep the reflections geared to considering the ideas presented….not necessarily the form in which they are presented, rather the thinking behind it.

Reflection:
   • How did you use your image as a guiding concept for your production design?
   • Why did you think this version would or would not work?
   • What discoveries did you make along the way?
   • What were some of the challenges you faced?
   • What new insights have you gained about the Iliad?
SHORT IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

ACTIVITY IDEA: Have students write their own idea for an epic. Perhaps based on the war in Iraq; or Viet Nam; or another time in history that they are studying. Homer’s Iliad was not written about Homer’s time but of a time gone by. Likewise, Aquila’s production while modern is not happening in the present. It might be interesting to have students address the question of how long it takes to have an historical perspective on current events. When does it become history that we can see with some measure of objectivity?

ACTIVITY IDEA: Create a time line of the key events in the Iliad. This can be played like a board game using index cards to represent the key events and characters in the Iliad. Students can mount the cards on a board or butcher paper with a time line on it. The challenge is to put the events/characters in the correct relationship to one another. This can be done in teams and the fastest team with the most correct placements wins!

WEBSITES WITH LESSON PLANS

A Story of Epic Proportions: What makes a Poem an Epic?
Lesson plans referencing the Iliad and other epic poetry and the Epic Hero Cycle
http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=587

Nashville Parthenon Educational Resources
http://www.nashville.gov/Parthenon/Education.htm

GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY/SOURCES USED FOR GUIDEBOOK

Iliad by Homer Translated by Stanley Lombardo
Introduction by Sheila Murnaghan
The Iliad - Book One – script; adaptation by Aquila Theatre Company
Keynotes The Iliad: Book One Aquila Theatre Company – StateTheatreNJ.org written and designed by Lian Farrer; edited by Katie Pyott and Jennifer Cunha

Websites:
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