

SAME TIME NEXT YEAR

By / De BERNARD SLADE Directed by / Mise en scène de DIANA LEBLANC

STUDY GUIDE

> 29 April - 20 May **2012** 29 avril - 20 mai **2012**



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This guide was compiled for the Segal Centre for Performing Arts. It may be used soley for educational purposes. Please contact Lucie Lederhendler, Educational Outreach and Group Sales Coordinator, with any questions or comments at Ilederhendler@segalcentre.org or 514.739.2301 #8360 or fill out the form (page 17) and mail or fax it to the coordinates provided.

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Playwright Director

Set & Lighting Designer

Costume Designer

Sound Designer

Video Artists

Stage Manager

Apprentice Stage Manager

George Doris Bernard Slade Diana Leblanc

Phillip Silver

Eo Sharp

Keith Thomas

George Allister & Patrick Boivin

Melanie St. Jacques

Danielle Skene

R.H. Thompson Michelle Giroux

SYNOPSIS [SPOILER ALERT!]

When we first meet **GEORGE** in **1951**, he is a certified public accountant who lives in New Jersey with his wife and three children. Every February, he travels to Mendecino, California to work for a client.

DORIS is a housewife from Oakland, California. She never completed high school, married her first boyfriend and has three children as well. Every February, Doris visits Northern California for a religious retreat while her family visits her mother-in-law.

Doris and George first meet each other the previous evening at the restaurant of the inn where they are both staying. Having experienced an immediate and profound chemistry, they spend the night together. The play opens on the morning after their affair begins. As they dress, they talk about their lives, their spouses and children, and their guilt for their actions, but they also express the elation they feel in each other's company.

They continue to see each other every year in the same room on the same weekend in February. We next see them five years later. Since the last time they met, Doris has moved to the suburbs and joined a book of the month club. George has a new baby girl. As they are getting comfortable, George receives a call from his daughter Debbie, who cannot find the tooth that just fell out and is afraid that the tooth fairy won't be able to find it. As George reassures her, he becomes so overcome with guilt that he decides he must go to her on the next plane. Doris confesses that she almost ended their ritual several times over the last year, that she did not intend to come this year, and that when they part that night, it will be the last time they see each other. He stays.

Another five years pass. George has recently become impotent, and Doris is eight months pregnant. She surprises him with this news, and he is disappointed, having thought his lust for her would be a panacea for his condition, now realizing that they cannot have sex this weekend. Instead, they share secrets: George can't swim and is an excellent pianist; Doris has been having sex dreams about George. In the difficult first months of her pregnancy, Doris was confined to her bed and in that time completed a correspondence course to earn her high school diploma. Once again, they cannot keep their hands off each other, but when they embrace, Doris falls into labour. George is frantic while he tries to reach a doctor, but when Doris says that the baby is on its way, he calms down and delivers it himself, in their bed at the inn.

Four years later, when George and Doris meet in 1965, she has enrolled at the University of California Berkeley and taken up liberal, hippie mannerisms. George, in contrast, has become politically conservative. Every conversation they attempt is thwarted by an argument, but their romantic attraction successfully calms them, until Doris discovers that George voted for Barry Goldwater for president. They engage in a heated argument, during which George reveals that his eldest son, Michael, was killed in the war. He has since been emotionally numb, but this confession opens him, and he falls, sobbing, into Doris' sympathetic arms.

The next time we see them is the morning after their meeting in 1970. They are comfortably and amicably in bed. Doris has gotten a nose job and now runs a successful catering business. George's social conservatism has been abandoned in favour of psychoanalysis and soul-searching, and he now makes a living playing at a piano bar. Doris confesses to George that her success is causing tension in her marriage, and that her husband has disappeared. He calls while Doris is out of the room for a moment, and George convinces him to stay in his marriage.

Five years after this, George is teaching accounting part time at a university and Doris has been approached to run for public office. Doris' marriage is strong, but George's wife has passed away. He asks Doris to marry him but she refuses. Hurt, George leaves to marry an old family friend. Doris falls sobbing onto the bed, and George returns--the other woman was a false ultimatum that he couldn't keep, and they embrace, promising to meet every year of their lives.

THEMES

TIME CHANGE CHANGE as they age, w People change as they age, with time, for better and worse.

The world changes, and it affects our lives.

Some things do not change.

Unchanging spaces can be a reprieve.

MORALITY

& GUILT Does feeling guilty about something mean that it's wrong?

Individual moral codes often do not align with social doctrine.

FAMILY & RELATIONSHIPS **Obligations to loved ones can** outweigh all other considerations. Family and love have control over

individual actions.

TIMELINE: SELECT EVENTS

Same Time, Next Year opens five years after the final combat of World War II and follows two Americans through a time span that sees economic highs and lows, political upheavals, war, protest, and innovation. Outside of the calm of the inn, the world during these 25 years experiences the Korean War, the Cold War, and the Vietnam War; but also the technological advances that put humans in space and on the surface of the moon. These decades also saw the emergence of the civil rights movements for women, African-Americans, and gays, fighting against institutionalized prejudicial practices that often condoned violence.

The Servicemen's Readjustment Act (the GI Bill) is passed in the U.S., providing extensive benefits to military veterans, including housing, education, and healthcare.

Combat of World War II ends in East Asia and Europe.

The Korean Peninsula is divided along the 38th parallel by U.S. authority. The northern region is controlled by the U.S.S.R., and the southern region by the U.S.

Fundamental differences between a communist and capitalist leadership lead to cross-border skirmishes.

1950

North Korean forces cross the border into South Korea--the first significant conflict of the Cold War.

THE FIRST TIME: 1951

The Korean War involves 22 members of the United Nations including Canada, and 3 communist nations.

U.S. President Truman lifts the state of war from Germany and Japan.

The headquarters of the United Nations opens in Manhattan, New York.

Nuclear tests are being conducted by the U.S. and U.S.S.R.

Julius and Ethel Rosenberg are sentenced to death for espionage, accused of giving Soviets nuclear technology.

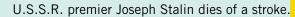
General Douglas McArthur is fired by President Truman.

The first transcontinental television broadcast occurs.

Direct-dial coast-to-coast telephone service begins in the U.S.

Luis E. Miramontes invents an oral contraceptive.





An armistice ends the Korean War.

Alfred C. Kinsey publishes his second study, Sexual Behaviour in the Human Female.

19<mark>54</mark>

President Eisenhower authorizes hundreds of millions in aid to Vietnam, but advises against U.S. intervention.

Mass polio vaccination begins in Pittsburgh.

19<mark>55</mark>

A civil war begins in Vietnam between the South Vietnam Army and the North Vietnam Army.

THE SIXTH TIME: 1956

The first black student to attend the University of Alabama is suspended after riots.

Eight communist states of Eastern Europe convene to sign the Warsaw Pact, an agreement of defensive alliance; Hungary eventually withdraws.

Soviet troops withdraw from Budapest after a Hungarian rebellion.

Polish workers protest communist rule but are crushed.

Anti-communist student uprisings in Hungary are crushed by soviet troops and tanks.

West Germany integrates into NATO.

French, British and Israeli forces vie for control of the Suez Canal, but without international support. Egypt retains control, beginning the end of French and British Imperialism.

The Cold War is still going on, as the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. develop the strategic theory of of mutually-assured destruction and the world lives under the threat of nuclear annihilation.

Elvis Presley appears on the Ed Sullivan Show.

Allen Ginsberg writes Howl.



The Governor of Arkansas calls in the National Guard to prevent African-American students from enrolling in Central High School. President Eisenhower later provides federal troops to safely escort them.

West Side Story premieres on Broadway.

Sputnik 1, the first artificial satellite, is launched into Earth's orbit.

Fidel Castro's revolutionary army begins attacking Havana, Cuba

19<mark>59</mark>

The St. Lawrence seaway is opened. Two American soldiers are killed in Vietnam--the first American casualties of the conflict.

19<mark>60</mark>

Four students stage a sit-in at the Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina. Months later, Woolworth's serves its first African-American customer.

Many African countries gain their independence from France. John F. Kennedy defeats Richard M. Nixon in the U.S. presidential elections.

THE 11th TIME: 1961

Cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin becomes the first human in space.

John F. Kennedy is inaugurated as the President of the United States.

American families are advised to build bomb shelters.

The Berlin Wall is erected.

South Africa gains its independence following a UN condemnation of Apartheid.

The U.S. officially enters the conflict in Vietnam.

Social justice organizations Amnesty International, the Peace Corps, and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) are begun.

The social activists known as the "Freedom Riders" challenge the Supreme Court decision to keep interstate buses racially segregated. When they arrive in Alabama, a violent mob attacks the protestors.

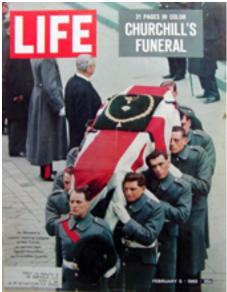
The "Bay of Pigs" invasion of Cuba begins, and fails in two days.



All transactions between the U.S. and Cuba are banned. Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* is published. The Front de libération du Québec bombs a Canadian Army recruitment centre. Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. writes *Letter from Birmingham Jail.* Malcolm X delivers the speech *Message to the Grass Roots* in Detroit, Michigan. President Kennedy calls for the Civil Rights Bill, which would condemn discrimination against African Americans and Women. President Kennedy is assassinated.

The Beatles' *I Wanna Hold Your Hand* and *I Saw Her Standing There* are released in the U.S.

THE 15th TIME: 1965



Sir Winston Churchill dies.

The modern Canadian flag is adopted, replacing the Canadian Red Ensign design.

The first American troops arrive in Vietnam.

A clash between Alabama state troopers and civil rights demonstrators becomes known as "Bloody Sunday," the first of several such clashes.

Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr. leads several marches through Alabama.

President Lyndon B Johnson enacts the Voting Rights Act, outlawing discriminatory and disenfranchising voting legislation.

With the consent of Fidel Castro, a mass immigration of Cubans to the United States begins.

Tokyo passes New York City as the largest city in the world.

19<mark>66</mark>

The first test of the drug LSD (known as acid) is conducted in California.

Demonstrations opposing the Vietnam War are held across the U.S.

The May 16 notice is issued by the Communist Party of China, effectively beginning the Cultural Revolution.

The summer gains the title "Summer of Love" by virtue of American counter-culture movements hosting "Human Be-ins;" peaceful protests

The U.S. Supreme Court lifts the ban on interracial marriage.

Expo '67 is held in Montreal.

1969

John Lennon and Yoko Ono stage their demonstrative "Bed-In" in Montreal. The Gay Rights movement begins in New York City with the Stonewall riots. The American lunar module Eagle lands on the moon's surface and the moon walk is broadcast live on television.

THE 20th TIME: 1970



56 countries ratify the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Earth Day is celebrated for the first time in the U.S.

Four students at Kent State University are killed and nine are injured by the National Guard during a peaceful protest of the invasion of Cambodia.

Jimi Hendrix dies.

The October Crisis begins in Québec when the Front de libération du Québec kidnaps a British diplomat.

The Soviet Union lands a remote-controlled robot on the moon's surface, and another on the surface of Venus, that transmit data back to earth.

The soap opera All My Children begins on the ABC network.

The first hand-held calculator retails for \$395

Pakistan announces plans to start a nuclear program.

A demonstration in Northern Ireland turns violent when British forces open fire on participants, precipitating an upsurge in support for the Irish Republican Army, who opposed Northern Ireland's union with the United Kingdom.

Shortly after Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau's visit, President Richard M. Nixon meets Chairman Mao Zedong in The People's Republic of China.

The Palestinian paramilitary group "Black September" kidnaps and murders 11 Israeli Olympians in Munich, Germany.

Atari releases "Pong," the first widely distributed arcade video game.

After it is revealed that a burglar of the Democratic National Committee headquarters at the Watergate complex in Washington, D.C. is associated with President Nixon, the president resigns his office and is succeeded by Gerald Ford.

THE 25th TIME: 1975

The U.S.S.R. breaks a 3-year-old trade agreement with the U.S.

Margaret Thatcher becomes the Conservative leader of the U.K.

Same Time, Next Year by Bernard Slade premieres in New York City.

North Vietnam conquers the south and South Vietnam surrenders unconditionally, subsequently unifying as a Communist country.

Soviet spacecraft Soyuz 19 and U.S. spacecraft Apollo 18 rendezvous in space.

The television program Saturday Night Live premiers.

U.S. congress passes the Metric Conversion Act, obliging U.S. commerce to convert to the metric system of measurement.

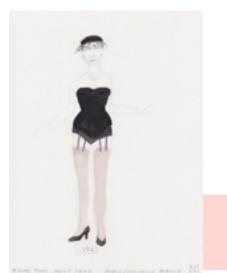


Although most of these events are not directly dealt with in the pages of *Same Time, Next Year*, historical context is an important starting point when analyzing a play.

Whereas the previous pages describe the setting, the following pages go into the formal elements of the work, such as text and design.

THE LOOK OF THE TIME







Look at the following drawings by costume designer Eo Sharp and read the excerpts included, which are chosen to reflect the time and the cultural phenomena that inform style. Think about the text and subtext that designers must consider when creating their work.

Some cultural events of 1951 are the premiere of the television show *I Love Lucy*; the coining of the term "Rock'n'Roll"; and the development of an abstract expressionism by such artists as Willem deKooning and Jackson Pollock.

Fashion designer Christian Dior's full skirts, cinched waists, and narrow shoulders became an occidental standard for women; while men's clothes still reflected a memory of military tailoring, with straight lines and wide shoulders.

"I live in a two bedroom duplex in downtown Oakland, we have a 1948 Kaiser, a blond three-piece dinette set, Motorola TV, and we go bowling at least once a week." Doris, Act One, Scene One.

The Merry Widow was the first undergarment of its kind, called a corselet, and released by the company Warner's in 1955. It was named after the successful 1905 operetta of the same name. A corselet is a single clothing item with elements of a girdle or corset and of a brassiere. Developments in female undergarments have paralleled steps forward in women's rights movements, as women demand greater freedom of movement, easier adornment, and more choice. The corselet was more comfortable than a corset, being made of stretch material, but still far less comfortable than the panty hose that followed.

Fashion designers like Balenciaga introduced ladies' capes. Skirts narrowed to a pencil and clingy knit fabrics were beginning to be used to outerwear, allowing for a more Edwardian silhouette.

"It's my merry widow...It mashes you in and pushes you out in all the right places. But it cuts off circulation so you can't breathe."

Doris, Act Two, Scene Two.

American women in the 20th century have a higher high school graduation rate than men. However, the difference in earnings between high school graduates and non-graduates did not become significant until the 70s. Immediately following the war, women left the labour force, but within a decade 25% of married women were employed.

First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy became a style icon, commissioning designer Oleg Cassini to interpret A-Line, European silouhettes.

"I'm much better at housework lately. Now I'm only two years behind in my ironing. Must be the nesting instinct. Anyway, the day my diploma came in the mail Harry bought me a big corsage and took me out dancing, Well, we didn't really dance--we lumbered. Afterwards we went to a malt shop and had a hot fudge sundae." Doris, Act Two, Scene Three.



THE SOUND OF THE TIME: MUSIC YOU'LL HEAR DURING THE PLAY, BY COMPOSER

KEITH THOMAS

f I Knew You Were Comin Eileen Barton



The emphasis in Act Two, Scene One, is on the enormous divide between Doris and George, so the designers strive to illustrate that with the extremes of fashion. Doris' costume is informed by the androgynous and East-Indian-inspired hippie style, which is a current trend. George's resolutely masculine suit is conservative in its opposition to this trend and underlined by its sombre colour.

The Harvard professor referenced in the quote below is psychologist $H_{\rm SHO}$ Timothy Leary, who advocated the use of psychodelic drugs as a way to resist societal convention.

"I'll tell you what's 'bugging' me. The blacks are burning down the cities, there's a Harvard professor telling my kids the only way to happiness is to become doped up zombies, I have a teenage son with hair so long he looks exactly like Yvonne deCarlo."

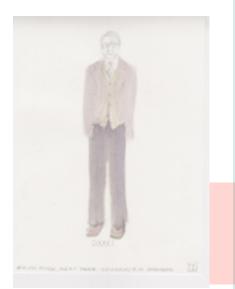
George, Act Two, Scene One.



Members of the American Feminist movement of the late '60s challenged women's isolation from each other, and formed groups for discussion, called "Conciousness-Raising Groups," and intended to focus attention on specific political issues. Additionally, this public sharing would bring women's issues out of the realm of "private" "personal" or "socially irrelevant."

George: Is that why you went into business? to make money? Doris: No, I wanted power, too. And it finally got through my thick skull that attending CR groups with ten other frustrated housewives wasn't going to change anything.

Act Two, Scene Two



By 1975, political and social turmoil had calmed somewhat, and leisure and pop culture boomed. Performers like David Bowie and Elton John topped the rock charts, and Earth, Wind & Fire dominated disco. Synthetic fabrics were in wide use for their ease of care and longevity.

George: How are you and Harry... emotionally? Doris: Comfortable [...] it's not such a bad state. The word's been given a bad reputation by the young.

Act Two, Scene Three

Tony Orlando

links

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Is the infidelity in this play wrong? Does it become less or more wrong as the years pass and their relationship becomes more intimate?

Why do George and Doris stay with their spouses? **Do you think it is possible to be in love with two people at once?** Do you think passion or comfort is more important to a long-term life partnership?

The passage of time is central to *Same Time, Next Year*. There are some ways in which the scenes we are presented are an escape, as though George and Doris age one day a year. For example:

Doris and George have recurring rituals, such as telling trite stories about their spouses.

The physical attraction between them remains strong.

Both George and Doris undergo personal changes that are incidental to the outside world, like:

Doris gets her high school diploma.

George and Doris both have more children.

George stops working as an accountant.

Doris gets a nose job.

Other elements of these scenes, however, deal directly with the changes in the world outside. Such as:

When they meet, the song *If I Knew You Were Coming I'd've Baked a Cake* is playing in the restaurant.

George's eldest son dies fighting in the Vietnam War.

Stemming from the conversations of the women's movement, Doris starts her own company.

George takes up psychoanaylsis.

After seeing the play, what impression are you left with about the passage of time?

How did the design contribute to the momentum of the play?

Think about the sound design and song selection, blackouts, scene breaks, and costumes.

How did the performers age themselves? What are some potential challenges in casting a play like this, and what are some potential challenges in performing it?

THE PLAYWRIGHT

Born in St. Catherine's Ontario, **Bernard Slade** began his theatre career acting in Canadian summer stock. He and his wife, Jill Foster, founded the Garden Centre Theatre in Vineland, Ontario in 1954. His first project as a writer was an hour-long comedy that aired on the CBC-TV in 1958. When this work met with American success, Slade decided to pursue writing full-time. He moved to Hollywood in the next decade, and wrote such television shows as *The Partridge Family, Bewitched*, *The Flying Nun*, and *Love on a Rooftop*.

Same Time, Next Year represented Slade's return to theatre when it premiered on Broadway in 1975. He adapted it for the critically-acclaimed 1978 film of the same title.

Bernard Slade is known for his lighthearted comedies with memory and nostalgia as a major throughline.

Selected Plays

Simon Says Get Married (1960) A Very Close Family (1963) Same Time, Next Year (1975)* Tribute (1978) Romantic Comedy (1979) Special Occasions (1982)

*Drama Desk Award Outstanding New Play (American)

THE DIRECTOR

Montreal-born, Toronto-based director Diana Leblanc was in the National Theatre School of Canada's first acting class in 1960. After acting at Stratford, Shaw, Tarragon, Canstage, the Grand, and many others, she began directing in 1991. From 1992 until 1997, she was the artistic director of the Théâtre Français de Toronto. She is a founding member of Toronto's Soulpepper Theatre Company. She has also worked in film and television. In 1998, Leblanc was awarded a grant from the Prix Alliance Française of Paris for her work building bridges between English and French cultures. The Segal Centre has welcomed Leblanc on many occasions, most recently when she directed A View from the Bridge in 2011.

Selected Directing Credits STRATFORD SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL:

Macbeth (1999) Death of a Salesman (1997) Romeo and Juliet (1997) Sweet Bird of Youth (1996) Long Day's Journey into Night (1994) CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY: The Rape of Lucretia (1999)

Le Dialogue des Carmélites (1997) **SOULPEPPER THEATRE:**

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? (2009) The Real Thing (2006) Zoo Story (2004) The Maids (2002) A Streetcar Named Desire* (1999) **THE SEGAL CENTRE:**

A View from the Bridge (2010) Harvey (2010) Tryst (2009) The Odd Couple (2008) Fallen Angels (2006) Rose (2005)

* toured to the Segal Centre

THEATRE ETIQUETTE

Please take a moment to prepare your students or group for their visit to the Segal Centre. Explain to them what is meant by good theatre etiquette and why a few simple courtesies will enhance the enjoyment of the play for all audience members.

1. Same Time, Next Year will be performed in the main theatre of the Segal Centre. Performances at the Segal are for both groups and the general public. It is important that everyone be quiet (no talking or rustling of materials) during the performance, so that others do not lose their immersion in the "world of the play". Please do not unwrap candy, or play with zippers or with your programme.

2. Do not put your feet on the back of the seat in front of you and please do not climb over seats.

3. If you plan to take notes on the play for the purpose of writing a review, please do not try to write them during the performance. Seeing you do this can be distracting for the actors. Please wait until intermission or after the performance is finished to write your reflections.

4. Use of phones or cameras is strictly prohibited inside the theatre. Absolutely no photos or video may be taken without the express consent of management. Composing or reading text messages, chats, or emails is forbidden.

5. Use of cell phones, iPods, tablets, or other selfilluminating electronics is strictly prohibited in the theatre. The light from these devices is visible from the stage and in the audience. It is extremely distracting to the artists on stage and inconsiderate to your fellow audience members.

6. Your seat is only guaranteed until the moment the theatre doors close. Late entry is very disruptive; if a patron is tardy we ask that they please follow the instructions of our front-of-house staff.

7. ENJOY THE SHOW!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR

FEEDBACK

It would be a pleasure to hear about your experience of bringing your group to the play.

1. How would you rate your experience? Extremely positive 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely stressful

2. How much do you feel your group benefited from the experience? Very much 1 2 3 4 5 Very Little

3. Would you recommend the experience to other group leaders?Wholeheartedly12345Never

4. Will you consider bringing a group to the theatre again? Wholeheartedly 1 2 3 4 5 Never

5. What did you enjoy most about coming to see the play?

6. What aspect of coming to the theatre did you find problematic?

We welcome all additional comments.

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