

STUDY GUIDE

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MAR MAR

GLENGARRY GLEN ROSS
BY / DE DAVID MAMET
DIRECTED BY / MISE EN SCÈNE DE PAUL FLICKER

“ ALWAYS BE CLOSING ”

SET & COSTUME DESIGN BY / DÉCORS ET COSTUMES DE MICHAEL EAGAN, LIGHTING DESIGN BY / ÉCLAIRAGES DE LUC PRAIRIE, SOUND BY / COMPOSITION SONORE DE DMITRI MARINE, STARRING / METTANT EN VEDETTE RH THOMSON, GRAHAM CUTHBERTSON, TRISTAN D. LALLA, DANIEL LILLFORD, MIKE PATERSON, MICHEL PERRON AND / ET BRETT WATSON.

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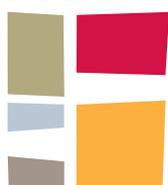

CENTRE
SEGAL
PERFORMING ARTS
ARTS DE LA SCÈNE

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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide is intended to help educators use an interdisciplinary approach to theatre learning. Due to the rights agreement for this production, there are no excerpts in this guide. You are encouraged to purchase the script or watch the 1992 film adaptation. See page 8 for the differences between the film and the play.

The synopsis, themes, and historical context refer to the script as a work of literature, while words from the director and discussions of the design are specific to this production.

Throughout this guide, discussion questions and activities will be marked with a .

Please take a moment before coming to the theatre to educate your group on theatre etiquette (page 19) and prepare them for the coarse language of this play (page 9).

All links are clickable if you are viewing this document online. You may visit page 18 for web addresses if you are viewing this document in print.

PRODUCTION

CREDITS

CAST

R.H. Thompson	Shelly Levene
Graham Cuthbertson	John Williamson
Tristan D. Lalla	Baylen
Daniel Lillford	Dave Moss
Michel Perron	George Aaronow
Mike Paterson	James Lingk
Brett Watson	Richard Roma

Written by	David Mamet
Directed by	Paul Flicker

Set & Costume Design	Michael Eagan
Lighting Design	Luc Prairie
Sound Design	Dmtri Marine
Stage Manager	Todd Bricker
Assistant Stage Manager	Luciana Burcheri
Apprentice Stage Manager	Isabel Faia



From left: Brett Watson, Mike Patterson, RH Thompson, Tristan D. Lalla, Paul Flicker, Graham Cuthbertson, Daniel Lillford, Michel Perron. Rehearsing at the Segal Centre, February 2014. Photo by Andrée Canthier.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

DEAR
AUDIENCE,

David Mamet's *Glengarry Glen Ross* is a modern masterpiece. Without a spare syllable, its language is as precise and sublime as Shakespeare's. It is a classically formed piece of theatre, following more or less the Aristotelian unities. It draws its influences from many sources, including, in my opinion, *The Book of Job*, *The Bacchae* by Euripides, Shakespeare's *King Lear*, and *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller. We also feel the heavy hand of Harold Pinter.

Mamet has recently written, "My early plays, *American Buffalo*, *The Water Engine*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, concerned Capitalism and business. This subject consumed me as I was trying to support myself, and like many another young man or woman, had come up against the blunt fact of a world which did not care."^[i] I believe that it documents a time in the American experience when the effects of the Reagan era and trickledown economics emerged. Until then, one had the reasonable expectation – without advanced degrees – of working for one company for your career, earning a fair wage (being able to support a family and educate one's children) and retire with a pension. In short, it marks the beginning of the destruction of what Paul Fussell referred to as the lower middle class and the general assault on the middle class as a whole.^[ii]

That is my take on the play going into rehearsal. But the supposed influences and issues matter not a bit, so long as you are entertained by the performance. As such, it is my only hope that the set, costumes, light and sound enhance the experience beyond seeing the play performed in street clothes on a bare stage and that the actors deliver the lines in such a way that interest is never lost in what happens in the next moment. As Mamet instructs, we come to the theatre to enjoy ourselves "and that's the only reason we come or should come."^[iii]

BON SPECTACLE,



PAUL FLICKER
Montreal, February 18, 2014.

ⁱ See David Mamet, *The Secret Knowledge: on the Dismantling of American Culture* (New York: Sentinel, 2011) at page 2. He also touches on the subject in *True and False: Heresy and Common Sense for the Actor* (New York: Vintage, 1997) and *Theatre* (New York: Faber and Faber, 2010).

ⁱⁱ See Paul Fussell, *A Guide through the American Class Status System* (New York: Simon & Schuster; 1983).

ⁱⁱⁱ Mamet, *Theatre* at page 5.

SYNOPSIS

Spoiler alert

SETTING

Chicago, Illinois, USA
Early-1980s
Act I : A Chinese restaurant and bar
Act II : A sales office

CHARACTERS

Shelly Levine, a salesman
John Williamson, the office manager
George Aaronow, a salesman
Dave Moss, a salesman
Ricky Roma, a salesman
James Lingk, a client
Baylen, a police detective

REFERENCED

Jerry Graff, a salesman who went into business for himself
Mitch and Murray, the bosses

GLOSSARY

LEADS - eg, a *lead on a sale*. Contact information for individuals who are more likely to purchase. Obtained through write-in campaigns, magazine subscription mailing lists, or any other kind of contact list, the strength of a lead depends on how it was obtained. A list from the nurses union, for example, would most likely be middle-class employed women, and therefore can be targeted with a tailored sales pitch. A premium lead would be an individual who has bought or expressed interest in buying the specific product.

SIT - eg, *to sit with a client*. The sales opportunity to give a more in-depth sales pitch to a potential client, ideally in their home.

CLOSE - eg, *to close the deal*. Obtaining a guarantee of purchase, by a contract or deposit, after which the client cannot cancel.

THE SHOT - The specific sales tactic, or deception that is being employed to coerce a client into committing.

COLD-CALLING - To target clients without leads, individuals who have expressed no interest initially or who are not expecting to be contacted.

STREAK - eg, a *lucky streak*, a *mean streak*. A string of similar results, often coincidental. Associated with superstition.

Glen Ross Farms - *proper noun*. A development that was for sale during Levene's good streak.

Glengarry Highlands - *proper noun*. A new development, and the one that the office is trying to sell with the premium leads.

Shelly Levine used to be a great salesman, but lately his numbers have been low, so **John Williamson** is unwilling to give him any good leads. Shelly superstitiously believes that he can break a bad streak with one sale. He believes this so strongly that he offers John a cut of his commission and a bribe.

Meanwhile, **George Aaronow** and **Dave Moss** are discussing work. The head office has instituted a contest that threatens their stability, their camaraderie, and their morale. They refer to Jerry Graff, a successful independent salesman. They both envy him, but fear the risk of going freelance.

In a moment of rebellion, George says the salesmen should revolt, rob the place, and reclaim their power. Dave pragmatically agrees, and expands on the plot, suggesting that Graff would be willing to buy the premium leads that have just come in. Dave has a shady reputation, he knows he would be the first suspect in a robbery, and concludes that George has to do it instead.

Simultaneously, **Ricky Roma** is filling the air with words as he drinks with **James Lingk**. The rambling transitions seamlessly into a hypnotic sales pitch.

The next day, George, Ricky, and John arrive at the office to find it has been robbed of the phones as well as most of the leads that Williamson keeps locked in his office. What is left of the leads are old and weak. **Baylen** calls Moss into Williamson's office and closes the door.

When Shelly arrives, he is on cloud nine, having just made a large sale.

Ricky and Dave fight. Dave says that since Ricky has been leading in sales he's become mean. John tells Levene that his sale isn't going to stick, and

Shelly criticizes John for his lack of experience and ignorance. The argument is interrupted when Moss leaves his interrogation, angry and insulted, and exits the office.

At that moment, James Lingk enters, causing Roma to shift the conversation immediately to an improvised skit in which Levine plays a wealthy satisfied client. Lingk stammers that his wife insists they cancel the signed deal from the night before. Roma makes excuses to leave the office and schedules a meeting for Monday, but Lingk knows that by then they won't be able to cancel. Roma says they have three business days because the cheque is only being cashed the next day, Thursday. This whole time, Baylen is trying to call the salesmen into the office.

When Williamson overhears Lingk's name, he interrupts, reassuring him that despite the state of the office, his contract is safely downtown, his cheque cashed. In this way, he ruins Roma's sale and his chance at winning the prize Cadillac from the sales contest. Roma throws up his hands and enters the interrogation.

Now alone in the office, Levene guiltily blames Williamson. He says that it was a lie that the cheque was delivered, and a harmful one. Williamson observes that the only way Levene would know it was a lie is if he had seen the contract on his desk, and the only way he could have seen that is if he was the burglar. Levene expects that Williamson will keep his secret because he brought in so much money that morning. Williamson says that he recognizes those clients. They have no money and their interest is totally fraudulent. Levene goes in to talk to the detective, and Roma calls dibs on his leads.

THEMES

AND QUOTES

FREE WILL vs. FATE

The salesmen are driven to theft in a desperate attempt to gain control of their own lives. Due to the nature of commission-based work, Williamson has absolute power over their destiny because he has the power to distribute leads.

HUMAN NATURE : DESPERATION, GREED, & MADNESS

The contest that the office finds itself involved in pits the salesmen against each other. There are elements to their behaviour that approach a descent into savagery as their desperation levels increase. They resent their colleagues for their successes, but however, the code of conduct between the salesmen saves them from a true state of barbarism, as evidenced by Shelly role-playing for Roma the instant it is required. Finally, what saves them from chaos is their mutual hatred of those forces that have control over their lives.

SELLING THE AMERICAN DREAM

Look on page 11 for a description of the American Dream. Not only do the salesmen appeal to that desire in their clients, but this ideal is what drives them personally as well: they work hard in order to support themselves and their families.

MASCULINITY

The idea of masculinity in this play is closely tied to the American Dream. These men have accepted that their role is to be independent, both financially and emotionally. The conflicts that arise between them are therefore very centred around asserting dominance over another. Lingk is a pathetic figure, first as we watch him get manipulated by Roma, who hypnotizes him with meaningless philosophy, and then see that he is fearful of his wife. We understand that Roma has sold him on independence and power, contrary to his impotent reality in his home.

LISTENING, TALKING, AND MEANINGLESS WORDS

The salesmen operate on the theory that any time someone is listening, they are vulnerable. So they talk endlessly to their targets, never listening, and filling the air with their own words, regardless of the meaning that those words carry.

In the final scene, when Shelly is berating Williamson, it becomes clear that this is a superficial truth. Williamson, listening patiently and carefully to Shelly's insults, turns listening, instead of talking, into the source of his power, having noticed that Shelly has admitted his guilt.

IN-CLASS

BEFORE SEEING THE PLAY

IN THIS GUIDE



Some resources you might want to check out before attending the theatre

Glossary, page 5

Themes, page 6

Play v. Film, Page 8

Mametspeak Exercises, page 9

Coarse Language Warning, page 9

Salesmanship & advertising, page 10

What is the “American Dream”?

Describe the ideology and symbolism that this term connotes.

Do you think the concept is grounded in reality?

How has it changed over time?

Is there an equivalent “Canadian Dream”?

How would it be different?

What would your personal version of the American Dream look like?

What is masculinity?

Is there a difference between masculinity and manliness?

What are some characteristics of the masculine stereotype?

Describe a masculine character.

Do you think those characterizations are accurate?

What does masculinity mean to you?

In your opinion, are masculine characteristics positive or negative?

How can language be used to manipulate situations?

How do certain words communicate meaning beyond their literal meaning?

Think about epithets, swears, names, or slang. How are those kinds of words different than others?

How can tone and body language change your words’ meaning?

Do you think that, in practice, people who talk have more power than people who listen, or vice-versa?

Is manipulation inherently bad?

In what kind of situation might manipulation be justified?

Read a psychologist’s take on when manipulation can be a good thing, [here](#).

What is competition?

How does the possibility of “winning” or “losing” change the way you might approach a task?

How does comparing your performance against the performance of other people change the way you might approach a task?

What makes some competition good and some bad?

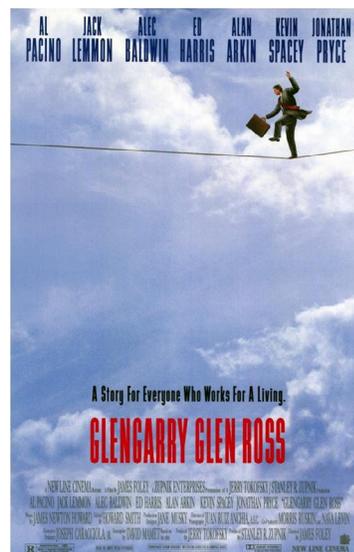
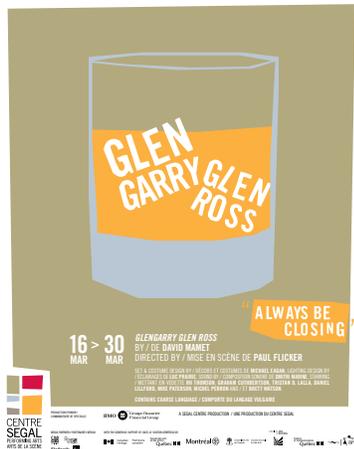
What are some examples of good competition?

If someone were to call you “competitive,” would you take it as an insult or a compliment? Why?

Read about *Social Comparison Theory* [here](#) and [here](#).

A short article about the benefits of competition can be viewed [here](#).

THE MOVIE IS NOT ENTIRELY THE SAME



Glengarry Glen Ross is a well-known movie, the script of which is also written by David Mamet. Watching the movie can be a valuable supplement to your theatre visit, but not a replacement. Below are some significant differences between the two:

MOVIE

Opens with Shelly and Moss making phone calls-- Moss's are sales calls, Shelly calls his wife and then the hospital.

The nameless consultant from the head office, played by Alec Baldwin, delivers a brutal speech, including the now-famous line "Coffee is for closers."

Moss and Aaronow scheme in the car on the way to a sit, and reminisce at doughnut shop.

Shelly visits the home of Larry, who's wife had filled out an interest card. Larry's patience wears thin.

PLAY

Opens with Shelly in conversation with John.

There is no corporate consultant in the play. The salesmen are aware of the contest before the play begins.

Moss and Aaronow conspire at the bar of the restaurant.

If your group is encouraged to watch the movie, do so with a discerning eye for what elements are non-transferable to stage. Likewise, while watching the play, consider where the flexibility of the medium of film could add or take away.

Think about:



Locations

Number of cast members

Diegetic and non-diegetic sound

Environment

Transitions

In what ways are they different? Why do you think that is?

Are there differences in meaning or subtext as a result?

Which format do you prefer, and why?

MAMETSPEAK & FUCKS

David Mamet's style of dialogue is so unique that it has its own name: Mametspeak. It is characterized by speed, repetition, and interruptions.

The excerpt to the left is a good example of this. For each concept that gets communicated throughout the play, there are several lines of stammering redundancy and vagueries surrounding it.



ASK STUDENTS to translate a simple exchange from plain English to Mametspeak. For example:

Aaronow : Are you being serious?

Moss : No, I'm being hypothetical.

If students are already aware that the robbery will take place, it may produce something more like this:

Aaronow : Are you being serious?

Moss : Yes.

ASK STUDENTS to exchange their translations and expand them back into Mametspeak, such as:

Aaronow : Are you--

Moss : What?

Aaronow : Are you--

Moss : Am I what?

Aaronow : Serious?

Moss : Am I serious?

Aaronow : Are you being serious?

Moss : I'm talking about--
(et cetera.)

ASSIGN STUDENTS various lengths, from two lines to 20.

PREPARE
YOUR
STUDENTS!

Another aspect of Mametspeak is that it is nearly always vulgar. Curse words are at once devoid of meaning and replete with subtext, in that they express little besides the emotional state of the speaker.

However, when used to excess, the listener will be less and less shocked with each new deployment of "fuck," rendering it meaningless even in the subtextual sense. In this way they become little more than space-fillers, yet another technique for filling the air with words until a lead has run out of time to think about the consequences of buying.

On page 10, you can see how this kind of language is appropriate for salesmen, especially those of questionable morality. As the dictum, "always be closing" these characters are so obsessed by their role as salesmen, even their non-professional mannerisms fill the air with words constantly, though not with meaning.



ENCOURAGE STUDENTS to get the giggles out of their system by yelling "Fuck!" as loud as you can before entering the theatre.

SALESMEN AND THEIR TACTICS



Jason Zinoman. Photo Credit Earl Wilson.



youtube.com

“My strategy was to start conversations like a slightly ridiculous showman, then pivot into a quieter voice promising straight talk. If this sounds eccentric, it may be because everything I knew about sales, I learned from *Glengarry Glen Ross*.”

Jason Zinoman, “*The Mamet School of Salesmanship*.” *The New York Times*. November 8, 2012.

The character of “The Salesman” is rarely a positive one. From Willy Loman from *Death of a Salesman* to Gill on *The Simpsons*, he lives in the collective consciousness as a desperate, lonely, and insincere figure. The salesmen in *Glengarry Glen Ross* are no exception. Why is this?

DESPERATION. Salesmen often rely entirely on commission for their income, meaning that unless they are able to sell their product, they will not have any money to live on.

LONELINESS. Salesmen strive to make their potential clients comfortable in order to increase their sense of trust. This often means locating themselves in different places, thereby keeping them away from their homes, families, and friends.

INSINCERITY. Salesmen learn to employ certain mannerisms and habits in order to sell a product. An individual who has no interest in buying, and therefore no interest in having a relationship with the salesman, may be sensitive to this facade.

In this age of online shopping and minimum-wage retail representatives, the average buyer is increasingly suspicious of those kinds of relationships, but the tactics still exist. Engaging, narrative television ads and viral YouTube videos still appeal to idealism and “lifestyle

marketing,” in which the potential buyer is convinced that a certain purchase will somehow change their life for the better.

In the article cited above, the author goes on to say that the number one challenge of sales is getting a potential buyer to listen, and to keep them listening to you for as long as you can. That basic principle has not changed, as Mamet’s salesmen keep talking until the target thinks they’re having a conversation instead of being sold to, ads like the one linked below make the target think they’re watching an interview with a celebrity.

..and then the denouement :

“Speaking of that, buy this thing.”

Salespeople still need to go out and get “sits,” but the aggressively manipulative behaviour that we see in *Glengarry Glen Ross* is, in large part, the job of marketing campaigns that strive to generate a need for the product before the salespeople begin.

READ THE
FULL ARTICLE

WATCH A VIRAL
AD (FOR BEER)

USA, 1984

AND THE DEMISE OF THE AMERICAN DREAM



Ronald Reagan

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.-- That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their powers from the consent of the governed...”

After the dramatic and traumatic events of the previous two decades in America (the Vietnam conflict, nuclear development, the space race, the Watergate Scandal), the 1980s were primarily a decade of domestic renovations.

Ronald Reagan was elected President in 1981. He is most remembered for his economic policies, which are referred to as “Reaganomics”. The four main points of that policy are :

- 1) Reduction of government spending;
- 2) Reduction of tax rates on labour and production income;
- 3) Reduction of regulatory policies;
- 4) Reduction of inflation through limiting growth of the money supply.

The policy was only partially realized, particularly in the area of reduced government spending. Tax rates were reduced significantly. Price controls were relaxed on products like gas, oil, and telecommunication.

Reaganomics employed what is called *supply-side economics*, which encouraged vendors to sell as much as they could by keeping costs low and therefore prices as well. In theory, supply-side economics boosts the economy by empowering the majority to buy. The largest companies benefited from the reduction of regulatory policies, moving manufacturing of their products overseas to countries where pay rates were less, and buying up smaller companies to reduce competition.

The term *The American Dream* was coined in 1931, but the ideas it contains go back to the founding of the country with the Declaration of Independence in 1776 (left). It expresses the ideals of this founding philosophy, and more specifically that every individual has the capacity to become upwardly mobile, regardless of their social status at birth. It implies a commensurate relationship between work and comfort--hard work has inevitable material rewards.

After the G.I. Bill (1944) gave veterans access to higher education and large pensions, a large population of citizens who had been born into the abject poverty of the Great Depression were able to join the American middle-class, working 40 hours a week to support their two-parent, multiple-child families and own property. They could do this by opening a small business or by working in one.

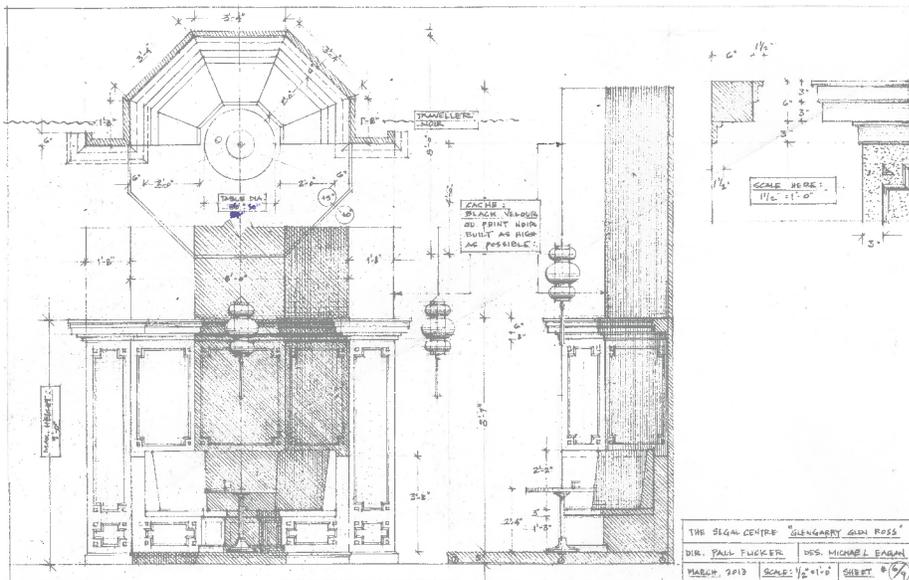
It is these small businesses that suffered under the economic policies of the 1980s. Paying many people less money cost less than paying a few people a living wage. The divide between white- and blue-collar work increased, and as mortgage rates increased due to deregulation, the housing market crashed as well, turning owned properties into burdens instead of assets.

The 20TH-century American Dream of being a stable single-income family with some disposable income, once quite possible, was becoming, aptly, a dream.

PRODUCTION DESIGN



Maquette by Michael Eagan, photo by M. Laliberté, at Segal Centre, 2014



Drawing by Michael Eagan, 2013

Set designer Michael Eagan works with the director, designers, and the technical team to evoke the environments that the play needs. He must also consider the facilities of the Segal Theatre, as well as cost and time constraints. As the performers build the scenes, they can keep the set in mind. Eagan presents the sets in the form of maquettes, which are like small-scale dioramas.

Before he can build the maquette, he must draw it to scale. Many designers today use computer programs to do this, but as you can see to the left, Eagan chooses to create highly detailed renderings by hand.

PRODUCTION DESIGN

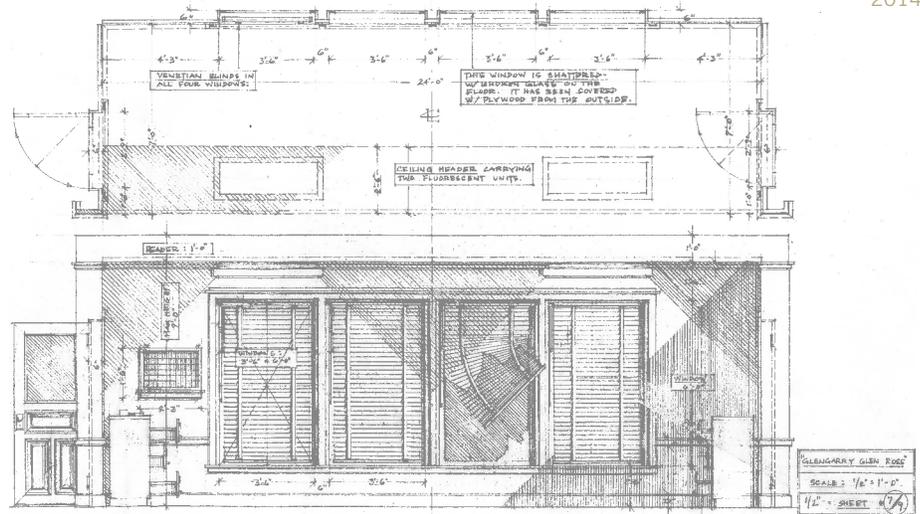
Even in these technical drawings, the designer must bear in mind the atmosphere that will be evoked. Notes like those on the sketch to the right, like “This window is shattered,” as well as the rendering of shadows on the wall, help to keep that in mind.

One of the most important things for a set designer to keep in mind is the audience. Below, see a cross section of the entire theatre, including the seats, backstage entrance, and even the technicians’ exit (far left) ensure that sight lines and proportions will stay true for all perspectives.

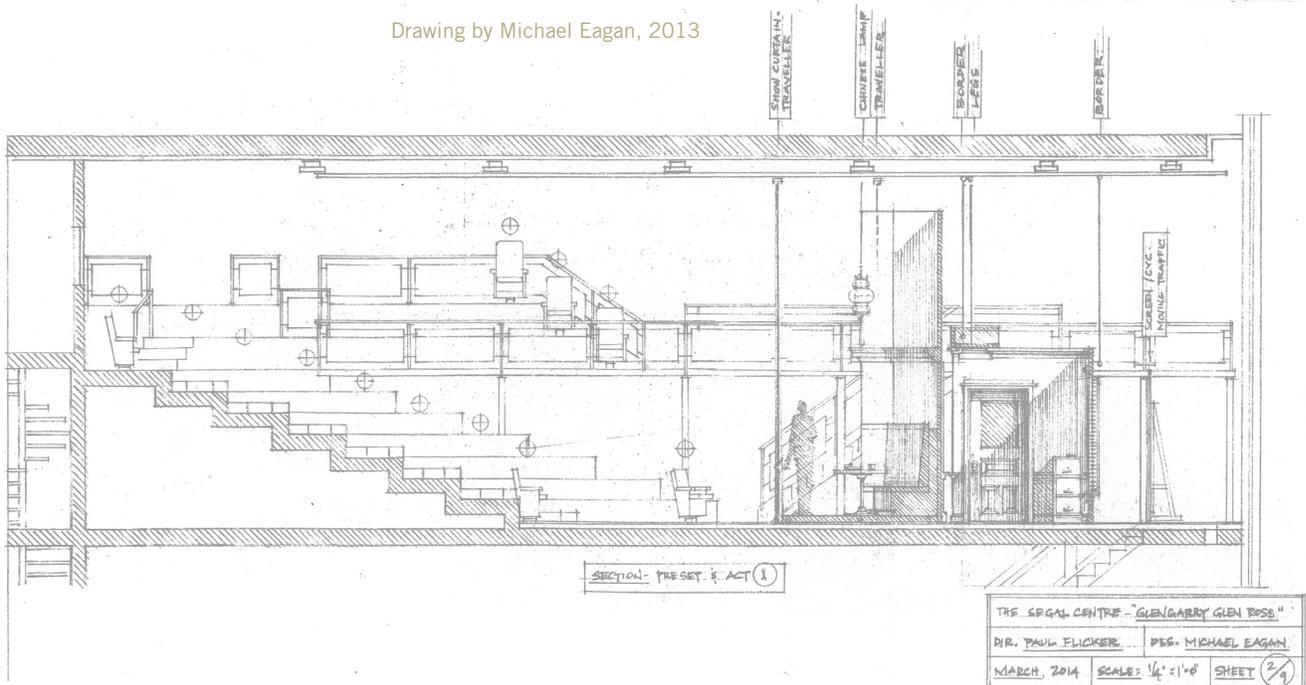
**MICHAEL
EAGAN**



Maquette by Michael Eagan, photo by M. Laliberté at the Segal Centre, 2014



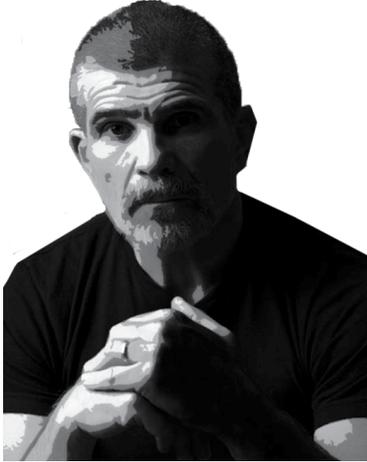
Drawing by Michael Eagan, 2013



Drawing by Michael Eagan, 2013

THE PLAYWRIGHT

DAVID MAMET



David Mamet is the author of the plays: *Race, Keep Your Pantheon, School, November, Romance, Boston Marriage, Faustus, Oleanna, Glengarry Glen Ross* (1984 Pulitzer Prize and New York Drama Critics Circle Award), *American Buffalo, The Old Neighborhood, A Life in the Theatre, Speed-the-Plow, Edmond, Lakeboat, The Water Engine, The Woods, Sexual Perversity in Chicago, Reunion* and *The Cryptogram* (1995 Obie Award). His translations and adaptations include: *Faustus* and *Red River* by Pierre Laville; and *The Cherry Orchard, Three Sisters* and *Uncle Vanya* by Anton Chekhov. His films include: *The Postman Always Rings Twice, The Verdict, The Untouchables, House of Games* (writer/director), *Oleanna* (writer/director), *Homicide* (writer/director), *The Spanish Prisoner* (writer/director), *Heist* (writer/director), *Spartan* (writer/director) and *Redbelt* (writer/director). Mr. Mamet is also the author of: *Warm and Cold*, a book for children with drawings by Donald Sultan, and two other children's books, *Passover* and *The Duck and the Goat*; *Writing in Restaurants, Some Freaks*, and *Make-Believe Town*, three volumes of essays; *The Hero Pony* and *The China Man*, a book of poems; *Three Children's Plays, On Directing Film, The Cabin*, and the novels *The Village, The Old Religion* and *Wilson*. His most recent books include the acting books, *True & False* and *Three Uses of the Knife*. *Glengarry Glen Ross* was awarded the Tony® Award for Best Revival of a Play in 2005.

David Mamet, born in Chicago on November 30TH 1947, is an acclaimed director of film and stage as well as an author and playwright of many short stories, children's stories, novels, essays, plays, and screenplays.

After completing his BA in English Literature in the 1960s, he went on to study theatre at The Neighborhood Playhouse School of the Theatre in New York City. He returned to Chicago after a year, where he worked a number of jobs, including real-estate salesman, and eventually founding the Sir Nicholas Theatre Company.

His career took off after a successful run of three plays off-off-Broadway in 1979: *The Duck Variations, Sexual Perversity in Chicago*, and *American Buffalo*. At this time, Mamet was just beginning to develop the gritty, controversial, Chicago style for which he would eventually be known.

Following the success of these plays, he began screenwriting in the early eighties, starting with a sexy, violent remake of *The Postman Always Rings Twice*. He won both a Pulitzer Prize and a Tony for *Glengarry Glen Ross*, which he adapted for film in 1992, directed by James Foley.

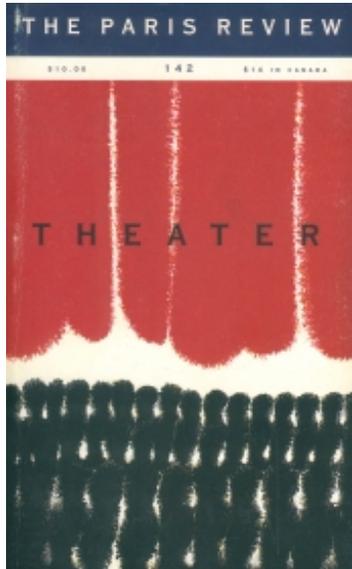
He went on to produce several more plays and screenplays, securing his position as one of the most prominent voices in contemporary American theatre.

His plays often garnered a lot of controversy, especially from feminists and other political activists for his portrayal of women, and his opinions on what is worthy to be produced. He believes that most theatre about identity politics is irrelevant on stage, opting instead for a simpler form of storytelling with a beginning, middle, and end. He has stated that this form is not only more pleasing to the audience, but that it also will "ease the disparity between the conscious and unconscious minds" (Weber 136). He continues to do just that today, with a new film in the works, written and directed by him, called *Blackbird*.

Love him, hate him, Mamet is an enormous influence in the theatre and film worlds, with his aggressive, staccato, way of writing, and uncompromising approach to depicting human nature.

AN INTERVIEW

WITH DAVID MAMET



Below, some excerpts from a 1997 interview with *The Paris Review*.
[Read the full interview here.](#)

MAMET I never try to make it hard for the audience. I may not succeed, but . . . Vakhtangov, who was a disciple of Stanislavsky, was asked at one point why his films were so successful, and he said, Because I never for one moment forget about the audience. I try to adopt that as an absolute tenet. I mean, if I'm not writing for the audience, if I'm not writing to make it easier for them, then who the hell am I doing it for? And the way you make it easier is by following those tenets: cutting, building to a climax, leaving out exposition, and always progressing toward the single goal of the protagonist. They're very stringent rules, but they are, in my estimation and experience, what makes it easier for the audience.

PARIS REVIEW What else? Are there other rules?

M Get into the scene late, get out of the scene early.

PR Why? So that something's already happened?

M Yes. That's how *Glengarry* got started. I was listening to conversations in the next booth and I thought, My God, there's nothing more fascinating than the people in the next booth. You start in the middle of the conversation and wonder, What the hell are they talking about? And you listen heavily. So I worked a bunch of these scenes with people using extremely arcane language—kind of the canting language of the real-estate crowd, which I understood, having been involved with them—and

I thought, Well, if it fascinates me, it will probably fascinate them too. If not, they can put me in jail.

[...]

PR Were you a good salesman?

M No, I was terrible. I kept identifying with the people on the other end, which is something you really can't do.

PR You're much more ruthless as a playwright than you would be as a salesman.

M I'm a fairly gentle guy. When Greg Mosher directed *Glengarry* we had a lot of salesmen come in to talk to the cast, guys who were making five million dollars a year selling airplanes or industrial equipment. These people were super closers. There's a whole substratum of people who are the closer, like the Alec Baldwin character in the movie of *Glengarry*. But the most impressive salesman was a saleswoman, a Fuller Brush lady, who came in and showed us how to do the Fuller Brush spiel. It was great. The first thing they do is offer you a choice of two free gifts, and they make sure you take one in your hand. So it's not, Do you want one? It's, Which would you rather have? And now that you've got one of their free gifts in your hand, how could you not answer their next question, which is also going to be answered—it's going to be yes, and the next question's going to be yes, and the next . . .

THE DIRECTOR

PAUL FLICKER



Paul serves as Artistic Producer of the Segal Centre for Performing Arts, where he has produced and presented plays, concerts, dance, cinema and tours since 2009. Each year he is responsible for curating and producing a subscription theatre season as well as presenting a slate of guest theatre companies, concert series and a variety of dance, cinema and special programming. He has had the opportunity to work with many of Canada's great artists, including Peter Hinton, Martha Henry, Viola Léger, RH Thomson, Douglas Campbell, Diana Leblanc, Raneé Lee, Oliver Jones, So-called, and a thousand more. Paul holds a master of philosophy in Eighteenth Century English literature from the University of Oxford and law degrees from McGill University. *Glengarry Glen Ross* marks Paul's directorial debut.

Below, some excerpts from a profile of Mr. Flicker, written by Barbara Ford and published in *The Charlebois Post*, a Montreal theatre blog (March 2, 2014). Read the full article [here](#).

“
...

After a steady diet of higher education, Flicker decided to float for a while. He sat on the beach doing re-writes for Mike and Tripp Swanhaus, who were running Eclipse Films in New York City. Elan Kunin told Flicker that the Dora Wasserman Yiddish Theatre was in desperate need of a Production Manager for their upcoming production of *Double Identity* as well as a touring production of *Green Fields*.

Flicker had met Bryna Wasserman in 2000. She was in search of a new General Manager at the time and Flicker knew he lacked the qualifications for that position. When she explained that the responsibilities of a Production Manager were to manage contracts and budgets, Flicker knew he was the man for the job. He traveled to Vienna with the company in October 2001 and once the tour wrapped, he bummed around Budapest awhile and then couch-surfed in London, catching up with former college mates.

When he arrived home again he discovered that the SBC needed a temporary replacement for the English

theatre Production Manager away on maternity leave. Flicker got the position and stayed on as Director of Production.

Now life got a lot more interesting for Flicker. His new full-time duties for the SBC Theatre were demanding and time-consuming, making it impossible to continue production managing for the Yiddish Theatre. For the next eight years, Flicker devoured every morsel of advice and expertise he could about the business of making theatre. He read hundreds of scripts (including the entire Canadian canon) and attended as many plays as he could, here and in other theatre cities. Excited by the prospect, Flicker set out vigorously to fill in the gaps of his theatrical education. Among the artists he's grateful to for sharing their wisdom are [the late] Douglas Campbell, Diana Leblanc, and Albert Schultz. Peter Hinton frequently recommended playwrights to read and productions to see. Flicker said, "I was embraced by extraordinary theatre artists who helped me learn about this craft. I consider myself very lucky".

”
...

WORKSHOPS

INNOVATIVE, INTERACTIVE

Workshops are customizable by age and group size, and can be delivered in three styles:

- Performance-Oriented;
- Writing-Oriented;
- Or a Mix of Writing and Performance Activities.



Jesse Stong



“ DARK COMEDY & CAPITALISM ”

LED BY JESSE STONG, the Segal Centre's 2013-2014 Teacher-in-Residence!

Jesse Stong is trained as a Playwright/Director (National Theatre School of Canada, 2013) as well as a Social Worker (Ryerson University, 2004) with over ten years of experience creating and delivering dynamic Writing and Performance workshops for youth/adults from all walks of life.

Currently his play about online bullying and suicide, *Shared Account*, is touring Quebec and East Coast High Schools with Geordie Theatre.

As well as being passionate for his Teacher-in-Residence position at Segal Centre, Jesse is also currently Project Manager at ELAN (English Language Arts Network) for the Quebec Youth Resource Centre.

These dynamic workshops encourage participants...

- ... to engage with the ERA and the ARTIST.
- ... to learn about a FAMOUS THEATRE PIECE and better understand the STYLE AND FORM.
- ... to gain experience as EMERGING CREATORS and PERFORMERS.
- ... to share a POWERFUL and PERSONAL group-art experience.

An experience for young creator/performers on how to write social criticism using comedy.

Participants will explore how comedy has been used dynamically in theatre to make strong statements about the world we live in, and how making audiences laugh can be one of the most effective ways to make them think.

Exploring the themes of this award winning play, youth will look at how David Mamet took dark, complicated, unlovable archetypes and turned them into entertaining and emotional journeys on the stage. Young creators will learn how to find light in dark situations, and how to poke fun at some of the most serious people on our planet.

Participants will also explore activities based on the history of Capitalism; looking closely at how this system has affected our entire world historically and developing opinions through creative activities that explore and expose both the good and bad side of a life in competition.

The Segal Centre is committed to making arts education accessible.

RESERVE TODAY!

Contact Lucie Lederhendler at 514.739.2301 ext. 8360
or llederhendler@segalcentre.org to reserve or for more information.

LINKS

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THEATRE

ETIQUETTE

1. *Glengarry Glen Ross* 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, play with zippers, or play with your programme.

This play contains mature language. Please take a moment to prepare your group for the first few “fuck”s, and be assured that you won’t even notice them after a while. Please talk with your group about the difference between good and bad vocalization: The former is inspired by the content of the play, the latter comes from a place of self-consciousness. Laughing at a joke is all right, but laughing at an actor is not.

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.

5. **Absolutely no photos or video may be taken** without the express consent of management. Violators’ devices will be seized and they will be removed from the theatre.

5. Use of cell phones, iPods, tablets, or other self-illuminating 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. Composing or reading text messages is **forbidden**.

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

Please take a moment to tell us about your experience organizing an educational outing at the Segal Centre. Use the rubric below or contact me at any time with any comments or concerns you might have.

Reply to:
Lucie Lederhendler,
Educational Programs Manager
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llederhendler@segalcentre.org
groups@segalcentre.org
Tel: 514.739.2301 ext. 8360
Fax: 514.739.9340

Thank you,



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?
Wholeheartedly 1 2 3 4 5 Never
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.

CREDITS

CONNECT WITH THE SEGAL CENTRE ONLINE

For more behind-the-scenes insight, trailers, photos, and more! We love to hear from you.



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This Study Guide was created for the Segal Centre for Performing Arts on the occasion of its production of *Glengarry Glen Ross*, by David Mamet, Directed by Paul Flicker, and running from March 16 - 30, 2014. It may be used solely for educational purposes.

It was compiled by Lucie Lederhendler, Educational Programs Manager, with contributions from Jess Fildes, Paul Flicker, and Micheal Eagan.

For information or citations, please contact Lucie Lederhendler at the coordinates below.

THE THEATRE AND YOU:

Encouraging critical participation from your students.



Encourage students to think about the idea of engagement with a work of art. Upon attending the theatre, notice the demographics of the audience. Think about how the theatre is different from a concert, a movie, or a comedy show. Do you attend performances often? Which kind?

Are there art forms at you relate to more than others?

What does it mean to you to “relate” to something?

Theatres in particular often struggle with an aging audience, focusing much effort on bringing a young audience in, through choices in programming, activities, and partial or even total price reduction. What do you think the reason is that theatre audiences are older, and what would you do to counter that?

[Click here](#) for a pre-addressed printable handout of these questions.

[Click here](#) to send an email to the Educational Programs Manager at the Segal Centre.

If your students would like to address a specific member of the Segal staff or of the *Glengarry Glen Ross* production team, please specify to whom the communication should be forwarded.

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