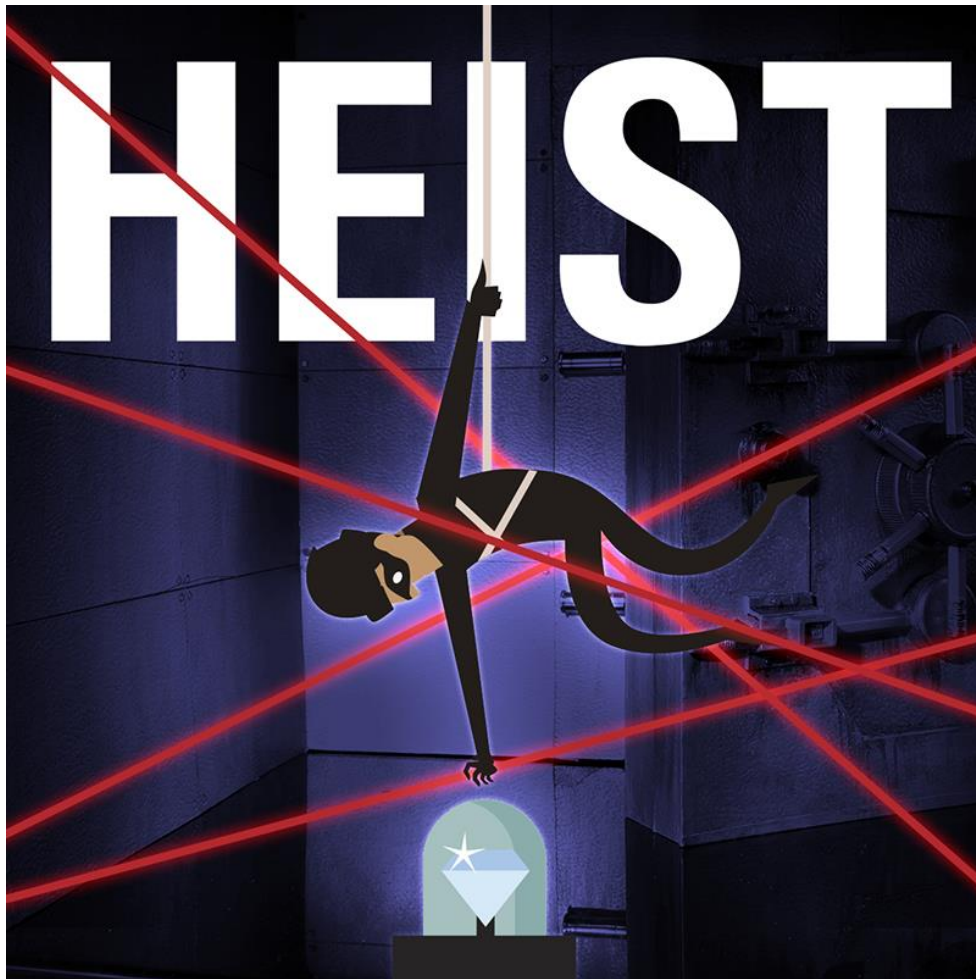


## ***HEIST***

### ENRICHMENT GUIDE



**By Arun Lakra**

**Directed by Haysam Kadri**

**Produced in Association with The Grand Theatre**

**SEASON SPONSOR CAPITAL POWER**

We wish to acknowledge that the land on which we gather is Treaty No. 6 territory and a traditional meeting ground and home of the First Nations, including both the treaty signatories – Cree, Saulteaux, Nakota Sioux, Stony and Cree-Iroquois – as well as other Indigenous peoples, such as the Blackfoot and Métis, who occupied this land. We extend our appreciation for the opportunity to live, create and perform on this territory.

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## **THEATRE ETIQUETTE**

Going to the theatre is an engaging and interactive experience. We want you to be an active participant when you see our shows; laugh when it's funny, cry when it's sad, gasp when it's shocking, and enjoy the experience as much as possible. But we want you to do this in the most respectful way possible, for both the performers and your fellow audience members. To ensure the most positive experience, please review the following information prior to arriving.

### **THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE NOT ALLOWED IN THE THEATRE:**

- No outside food or beverages. Only beverages purchased in the lobby and placed in a Citadel Sippy and bottled water will be allowed in the theatre. Unwrapped ice cream bars may be taken into the theatre. Please enjoy all other snacks in the lobby.
- Cameras and other recording devices (please note that taking photographs or other recordings in the theatre is strictly prohibited by law).

### **BASIC COURTESY:**

- Please turn OFF and put away all electronic devices such as cell phones, iPods, video game systems, etc. prior to entering the theatre.
- Do not place your feet on the seat in front of you.
- The actors onstage can see and hear the audience during the performance – it is important that audience members not talk, move around, or fidget during the performance, as this can be distracting for the actors, as well as fellow audience members.
- There is no dress code at the Citadel Theatre, but we respectfully request that patrons refrain from wearing hats in the theatre.
- For the safety of those with allergies, please refrain from using perfumes or scented products before coming to the theatre.
- Please do not place backpacks or other bags in the aisle in front of your feet, as this may impair the ability of persons to exit the row in an emergency.

### **INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR:**

Citadel Theatre representatives watch carefully during performances for inappropriate behaviour, especially behaviour that could endanger an actor or audience member.

Inappropriate behaviour includes, but is not limited to:

- Talking in the audience
- The use of laser pointers or other light or sound-emitting devices
- Interfering with an actor or the performance (tripping, throwing items on or near the stage, etc.)

Audience members identified as engaging in this type of behaviour will be removed from the theatre during the performance or at intermission.

## CHARACTERS

MARVIN: The Boss

RYAN: The Gilligan

ANGIE: The Mary-Lou

KRUGER: The Popeye

FIONA: The Geek

THE SPIDER: The Target

## SYNOPSIS

Inspired by caper films like *Ocean's Eleven*, *Heist* is a fast-paced, heart-racing play about a diamond heist gone wrong. Can this band of criminals pull off the perfect robbery? Full of diamonds, guns, lasers, betrayal and an incredible cast of characters.

## TERMS AT A GLANCE

*This section defines and offers context for some of the key terms used throughout the Production.*

**Accutane:** A type of retinoid medication that treats severe acne.

**Altitude:** The height of an object or point in relation to sea level or ground level.

**Altruistic:** Showing a selfless concern for the well-being of others.

**Bitcoin:** A type of digital currency in which a record of transactions is maintained and new units of currency are generated by the computational solution of mathematical problems, and which operates independently of a central bank.

**Calibration:** The process of configuring an instrument to provide a result for a sample within an acceptable range.

**Cirque du Soleil:** A Canadian entertainment company and the world's largest contemporary circus producer, known for its visually stunning and theatrically innovative performances that blend acrobatics, dance, and music, without using animals.

**Equinox:** An astronomical event occurring twice a year (spring and autumn) when the Earth's axis is tilted neither towards nor away from the Sun, resulting in approximately equal daylight and nighttime hours globally.

**FOMO:** FOMO stands for "fear of missing out," a feeling of anxiety or worry that stems from the perception that other people might be having a better time or experiencing something enjoyable without you,

**Fortunato Heist:** A perfect heist that no one sees coming, despite being a part of the ride.

**Greenpeace:** An independent global campaigning network, founded in Canada in 1971 by a group of environmental activists.

**Gucci:** Saying something is "gucci" means it's good, cool, or excellent.

**Homeostasis:** Any self-regulating process by which biological systems tend to maintain stability.

**Infrared:** Electromagnetic radiation (EMR) with wavelengths longer than that of visible light but shorter than microwaves.

**Kalākaua:** The last king and penultimate monarch of the Kingdom of Hawai'i, reigning from February 12, 1874, until his death in 1891.

**Karmic circle:** A repeating pattern of events, emotions, or realizations that some believe are opportunities for learning and growth.

**Nanometers:** A measure of length in the metric system. A nanometer is one billionth of a meter.

**Sleight of hand:** A cleverly executed trick or deception.

**Spectral Fractionator:** A technique used to enhance the identification and quantification of proteins and peptides by separating samples into fractions before spectral analysis.

## THEMES

### CREATING A HEIST STORY

*“My father once told me, when a heist has been so brilliantly conceived, so meticulously schemed, aged to perfection, and executed with impunity, this is known as a Fortunato Heist.”*

–Marvin, *Heist*

A heist story is a narrative focused on a meticulously planned and executed theft, often involving a team of skilled individuals with specialized abilities, where the thrill lies in the intricate details of the plan and the high-stakes nature of pulling off a seemingly impossible crime; essentially, a story about a "big score" that requires clever strategy and teamwork to succeed.

#### Key elements of a heist story:

##### A skilled crew:

Each member has a unique skill set that contributes to the overall plan, like a hacker, a lockpick, a driver, or a muscle.

##### High-value target:

The item being stolen is usually valuable and difficult to acquire, like a priceless artwork, a large sum of money, or a sensitive piece of technology.

##### Intricate planning:

The heist involves detailed preparation, scouting the location, and anticipating potential obstacles.

##### Time pressure:

The team often has a limited time frame to execute the plan, adding to the tension.

##### Internal conflicts:

Even within the team, there might be personal tensions or mistrust that could jeopardize the heist.



*Heist Production Photo*

*Photo featuring Priya Narine and Callan McKenna Potter*

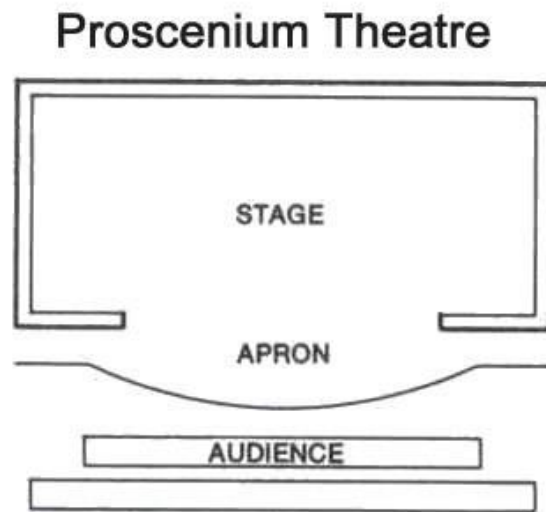
*Image credit: Dahlia Katz*

## PRODUCTION ELEMENTS

### PROSCENIUM STAGE

A proscenium theatre is a specific style of theatre. Several features define a proscenium theatre, and this particular theatre layout is extremely common; if you have ever been to see a live performance, especially in a high school auditorium, chances are high that you have seen a proscenium theatre. In addition to proscenium style theatres, it is also possible to find black box theatres, theatres with thrust stages, theatres in the round, and numerous other configurations of stage and audience.

The classically defining feature of a proscenium theatre is the proscenium arch, which frames the stage for the audience. In addition, the audience faces the stage directly, with no audience on the sides of the stage, and the stage in a proscenium theatre is typically raised, allowing the audience to see more clearly. Modern proscenium theatres sometimes lack the proscenium arch, but they are still called “proscenium theatres” because they retain the other characteristics of this style of theatre.



Proscenium theatres originated in the 1600s, and became immensely popular by the 1700s. There are certain advantages of a proscenium theatre, such as the fact that the stage doesn't have to be as open, allowing people to conceal props, sets, and orchestras in the wings or near the stage without having these things visible to the audience. A proscenium theatre also creates a sense of staged grandeur, with the proscenium arch acting almost like a picture frame, giving the audience the sense that they are looking into a scene.

### INTERVIEW WITH *HEIST* PLAYWRIGHT, ARUN LAKRA

#### 1. *What was your inspiration for creating Heist?*

My family and I have always loved heist movies like *Oceans 11*. During the pandemic, I felt like I wanted to write (and watch) something like that, something FUN! Something I could take my wife, my teenage kids, and my parents to, that we could all enjoy together. Happily, a theatre company in Indiana asked me to write a 'heist' play. Our goal became to create a sizzling, popcorn-munching, edge-of-your-seat, mind-morphing, twisty-mystery, heist-whodunnit, *Knives Out* meets *Oceans 11* kind of show. Something my son could watch, and then turn to me with a serious look, and say, “Dude, I didn't hate it.”

## 2. What are the most important aspects to creating a story about a heist?

Right from the beginning, there were three things I knew I wanted to focus on...

The element of surprise: We all know plot twists and whodunnits are most satisfying when we don't see things coming. The challenge for me was that audiences are so smart these days. Especially the younger generation, who consume content on multiple platforms simultaneously and always seem to be ahead of the story. How on earth, I kept asking myself, could we possibly surprise them?

The team: My favourite movies in the genre involve assembling a quirky team to pull off a seemingly impossible heist. Everyone has their own skills, personality, and backstory, and the dynamic among the team members creates excitement, romance, betrayal, and mystery. And also, ideally, makes us laugh. So I knew we needed a brilliant and captivating team - both on and off the stage!

Cinematic experience: Right from the beginning, the goal was to give the audience a high tech theatrical experience they hadn't seen before on stage, with video projections, a high energy musical score, drones, and lasers combining to create a dazzling, visual, "cinematic" show. To blur the lines between movies and theatre.

## 3. How does creating a story about a heist for the stage differ from a creating a story about a heist for a film? Are they different?

When I was first approached to write a heist play, I said no. It seemed like an impossible task. How could we possibly bring the sizzle and thrills of a glitzy Clooney/Pitt hundred million dollar Hollywood extravaganza to a simple stage? In movies, we have the benefit of using sneaky camera angles, flashbacks, quick cuts, and by using the camera strategically, we can draw the audience's eye to (and away from) important things. On stage, we have an audience who is watching our every move the whole time. I knew this would be a challenge. It turns out (dun dun dun!), it was also a cool opportunity.



Arun Lakra

Photo credit: John Shin



## THE POPULARITY OF THE HEIST GENRE

The heist film or caper film is a subgenre of crime films and the caper story, focused on the planning, execution, and aftermath of a significant robbery.

One of the early defining heist films was *The Asphalt Jungle* (1950), which *Film Genre 2000* wrote "almost single-handedly popularized the genre for mainstream cinema". It featured robbers whose personal failings ultimately led to the failure of their robbery. Similar films using this formula were *Armored Car Robbery* (1950), *The Killing* (1956), and *The Getaway* (1972). By the 1990s, heist films began to "experiment and play with these conventions," incorporating elements such as comedy into their stories.

Films in the heist genre tend to follow the planning, execution and aftermath of one large robbery. While there can be smaller crimes leading up to the major crime, this major crime is the centerpiece of the film and is the event which informs much of the film's plot. As a result of this, heist films tend to focus on the process of the crime, often planned in great detail, followed by extended exposition of the heist itself.

"The heist films permit us to live vicariously as criminals: exciting risk-takers who break the law without hurting anyone. This victimlessness – or as close to it as possible – is crucial in the mythologizing of a heist" Duncan Campbell, a journalist who covered the Hatton Garden burglary in detail for The Guardian. Deep within us, we want to be part of the heist ourselves.



Armoured Car Robbery  
Image credit: Unknown



Lupin  
Image credit: Netflix

"Every character in any movie is more fascinating when they're flawed," Ed Palattella, who has written about American bank robberies. "In a lot of cases, the audience identifies with the bank robbers more than they identify with the people who are trying to catch them. You look at Bonnie and Clyde: in real life, they were pretty cold-blooded killers and robbed some banks but mainly convenience stores. But the movie *Bonnie and Clyde* makes them out to be counter-cultural antiheroes. They're more sympathetic than the people who are chasing them."

And while these factors engineer a failsafe success to the heist genre, what assures resonance is the plot itself dazzling with anti-capitalist undertones.

The joy of burglary is in watching the relocation of wealth, where the "anti-heroes" who have been defeated by life or cheated by systemic inadequacies work together to set things right — not just for themselves but also for other system's other hostages. Think *Lupin*, where Assane Diop, as the son of a Senegalese immigrant, uses his skillset to avenge the working-class in the shadow of a powerful French dynasty.

## CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

*Participation as an audience member at the Citadel Theatre aligns with the Alberta Education Curriculum.*

### Drama (Junior High)

**GOAL I-** To acquire knowledge of self and others through participation in and reflection on dramatic experience.

**Objectives-** The Student will:

- Strengthen their powers of concentration.
- Extend the ability to think imaginatively and creatively.
- Extend the ability to explore, control and express emotions.
- Extend the ability to explore meaning through abstract concepts.
- Develop the ability to offer and accept constructive criticism.

**GOAL II-** To develop an appreciation for drama and theatre as a process and art form.

**Objectives-** The Student will:

- Develop awareness of various conventions of theatre.
- Develop awareness of drama and theatre by viewing as great a variety of theatrical presentations as possible.
- Develop the ability to analyze and assess the process and the art.
- Develop recognition of and respect for excellence in drama and theatre.

### Drama (10-20-30)

**GOAL I-** To acquire knowledge of self and others through participation in and reflection on dramatic experience.

**Objectives-** The Student will:

- Extend their ability to concentrate.
- Extend understanding of, acceptance of, and empathy for others.
- Demonstrate respect for others — their rights, ideas, abilities and differences.
- Demonstrate the ability to offer, accept, and reflect upon constructive criticism.

**GOAL II-** To develop competency in communication skills through participation in and exploration of various dramatic disciplines.

**Objectives-** The Student will:

- Demonstrate understanding of integration of disciplines to enrich a theatrical presentation.

**GOAL III-** To develop an appreciation of drama and theatre as a process and art form.

**Objectives-** The Student will:

- Explore various conventions and traditions of theatre.
- Broaden knowledge of theatre by viewing as great a variety of theatrical presentations as possible.
- Demonstrate the ability to critically assess the process of art.
- Demonstrate recognition of and respect for excellence in drama and theatre.
- Develop an awareness of aesthetics in visual and performing arts.

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<[Why Do Heist Shows, Movies Appeal To Us?>](#)

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<[Borrow a Plot #1: the Heist](#)>

## FURTHER READING & RESOURCES

[CRACK THE CODE to Heist Story Structure!](#)

[Best Heist Movies of All Time](#)

[Arun Lakra website](#)

[Arun Lakra and Haysam Kadri on HEIST at the Grand Theatre](#)

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## GOVERNMENT AND FOUNDATION FUNDERS



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