

# THE CONTAINER



## October 10-27, 2019

**BURNING  
C O A L  
THEATRE  
COMPANY**

written by Clare Bayley  
directed by Avis Hatcher Puzzo

**CAM**  
RALEIGH

# THE CONTAINER

presented by Burning Coal Theatre with CAM/Raleigh  
written by Clare Bayley | directed by Avis HatcherPuzzo

"They didn't care. They don't  
want us in the country!  
It doesn't matter what our  
story is."

**October 10-27, 2019**

Thursdays - Saturdays at 7 & 9 pm  
and Sundays at 2 & 4 pm

**All performances at CAM:**  
**409 W. Martin Street, Raleigh**

\$25 per ticket | \$20 for Seniors (65+) | \$15 for Active Military,  
Teachers, & Students (all Thursday night shows are \$15)  
Sunday, October 13 is audio described & pay-what-you-can day.

**CAM**  
RALEIGH

**BURNING  
COAL  
THEATRE  
COMPANY**



Man bites Dog  
Theatre Fund



unitedarts  
council

**SHUBERT  
FOUNDATION**

Burning Coal is funded in part by the City of  
Raleigh based on recommendations of the Raleigh  
Arts Commission. This project was supported by a  
grant from the Man bites Dog Theatre Fund.



**919.834.4001 | [burningcoal.org](http://burningcoal.org)**

**DAVNER THEATRICALS, INC.**  
**PO BOX 90904**  
**RALEIGH, NC 27675**

**Nonprofit Org.**  
**U.S. Postage Paid**  
**Raleigh, NC**  
**Permit No. 1613**

**CAST:** Rimsha Azfall, Lakeisha Coffey,  
Holden Hansen, Darius Shafa, Juan Isler,  
Cheleen Sugar-Duckworth

**PRODUCTION TEAM:** Gabrielle  
Abrams - PSM; Matthew Adelson - Lighting & Scenery;  
Katie Beazley - AD; Rebecca Bosen - Diets; Mia Carson  
- Master Electrician; Rebecca Hodge - Dramaturgy;  
Danielle James - Props; Eric Kildow - Study Guide; Greg  
Osbeck - TD; Meredith Riggan - Scenic Artist; Christy Rose  
- Sound; Carry Vaughan - House Manager; Madison Doss -  
Graphics; John Capetanos, Veronic Colon, Samantha Kiser,  
Sarah Sun - ASMs

## EUROPEAN MIGRANT CRISIS

Though written in 2007, *The Container* resonates strongly with the topic of the ongoing European Migrant Crisis<sup>1</sup> (aka The Refugee Crisis<sup>2</sup>) which began in 2014/2015 and continues to this day.<sup>3</sup> It is marked by a massive influx of refugees and other migrants coming to Europe by water over the Mediterranean Sea, or overland through Southeast Europe and Turkey. This influx of immigrants (an umbrella term for asylum seekers, refugees, economic migrants, and others) has encountered resistance in many European countries and helped feed populist resentment in some of them.<sup>4</sup>



Irish Naval Service rescuing migrants

Numerous elements have contributed to the expanded influx of immigrants to Europe, including poverty, violence, civil war, and hardship linked to human-driven climate change.<sup>5</sup> Of these, refugees fleeing violence and war make up the largest demographic, of those arriving in Europe, more than 50% come from three countries: Syria, Iraq, & Afghanistan.<sup>6</sup> Syria, Afghanistan, & South Sudan make up some 55% of all refugees worldwide. In worldwide terms, Europe hosts roughly 17% of displaced people. Rates of arrival by sea and land have declined since a peak in 2015, but the situation remains ongoing.

Alongside refugees, economic migrations has also been a major factor in the crisis. As opposed to fleeing oppression or violence at home, economic migrants seek better living conditions and job opportunities that may not exist in their



Migrants at a camp in Calais

- 1 "Europe migrant crisis". BBC News. 4 November 2015. Retrieved 25 November 2015
- 2 Ruz, Camila (28 August 2015). "The battle over the words used to describe migrants". BBC News. Retrieved 25 November 2015.
- 3 "EU migrant crisis: facts and figures | News | European Parliament". [www.europarl.europa.eu](http://www.europarl.europa.eu). 30 June 2017. Retrieved 28 March 2019.
- 4 Marozzi, Marco (2015). "Construction, Robustness Assessment and Application of an Index of Perceived Level of Socio-economic Threat from Immigrants: A Study of 47 European Countries and Regions". *Social Indicators Research*. 128: 413–437. doi:10.1007/s11205-015-1037-z.
- 5 "Want To Reduce Migration? Spend Money On Climate Change, Not Border Security". Retrieved 24 December 2018.
- 6 "Asylum applicants in the EU". Eurostat. Retrieved 13 June 2018.

country of origin. Those seeking a better life have accounted, over the past 10 years, for 70% of the increase in Europe's workforce, filling crucial gaps in the labor market.<sup>7</sup> The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development has declared that such immigrants have not provided noticeable disruption to any country's gross domestic product.

According to sources such as *The Guardian* and *La Stampa*, a small number of migrants have been agents of terrorist organizations such as the Islamic State. In 2016 and 2017, two major plans by the Islamic State were foiled by The European Police Organization (Europol).<sup>8</sup> Such numbers have been miniscule, however, and general consensus that alarmism over migrants as a terrorist threat is largely a tactic used to foment outrage by nationalist or populist politicians.



Migrants crossing from Serbia to Hungary

Though the peak of the crisis has passed, it is not over. In recent years, countries of origin have begun to shift, with larger numbers coming from Sub-Saharan Africa and the Sahel region. Michael Møller, of the United Nations Geneva Office, noted particularly that the prevalence of cell phones among young people acts as something of a magnet. In seeing what is happening in other parts of the world, they are drawn to a better life and may not be put off by perilous journeys or harsh living conditions.<sup>9</sup> Quite simply, Europe has become a beacon of a better life and many will try anything to achieve it.

---

7 "Migration Policy Debates" PDF. Migration. OECD. 2014. Retrieved April 2018.

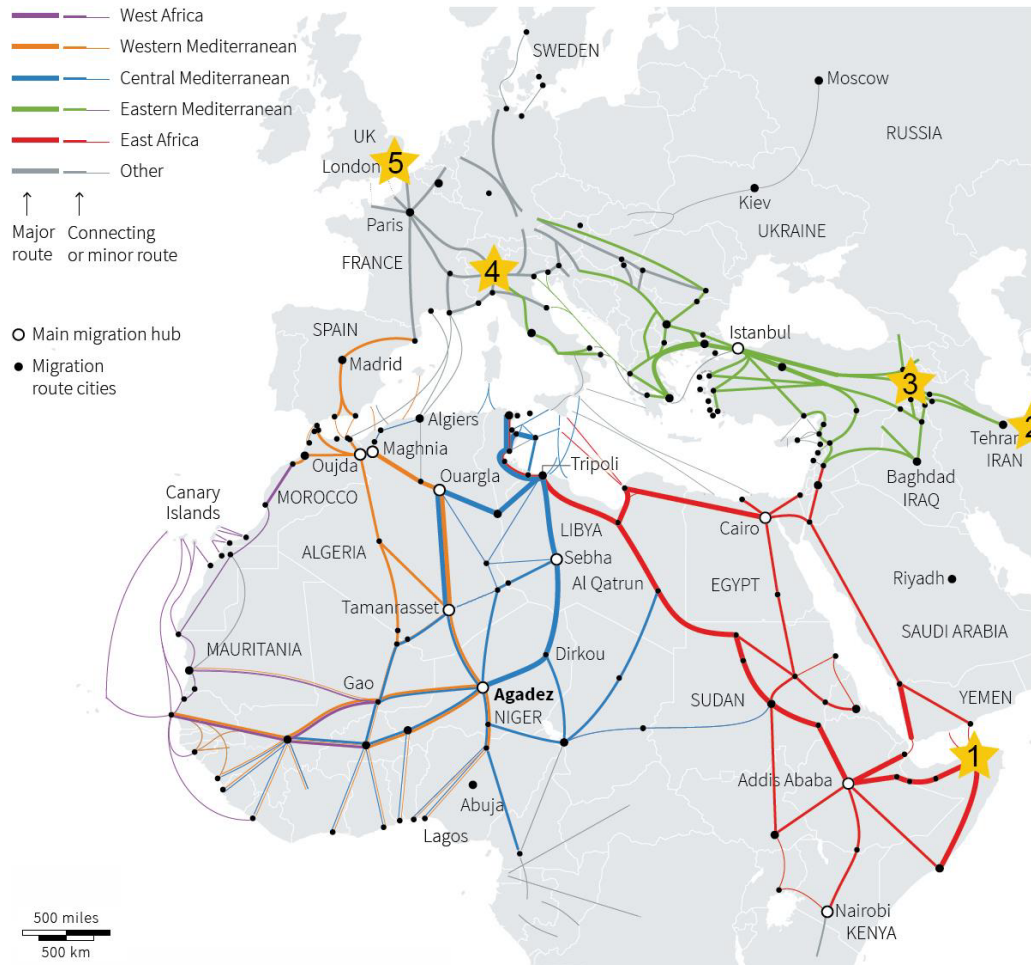
8 Townsend, Mark (5 February 2017). "Isis paying smugglers' fees in recruitment drive among child refugees". *The Guardian*. ISSN 0029-7712. Retrieved 7 March 2019.

9 "EU's migrant nightmare: Arrivals in Spain rocket as smugglers slash crossing price to £800". *Daily Express*. Retrieved 4 November 2017.

## THE ROUTES THEY TOOK

By Rebecca Hodge

When we meet the characters at the beginning of *The Container*, they have all already been on long journeys in search of a safe and steady life. The map below from Reuters demonstrates the most common routes migrants take to get into Europe, with the numbered stars demonstrating important places specific to *The Container*.



**1. Somalia**, origin of Fatima and Asha.

**2. Afghanistan**, origin of Ahmad and Mariam. It is so far away it is not even on this map, located east of Iran.

**3. Southeast Turkey**, origin of Jemal.

**4. The northern border of Italy with France**, where the beginning of *The Container* is located.

**5. Southern United Kingdom**, particularly London, where the characters are hoping to complete their journey.

## SOMALI CIVIL WAR

The Somali Civil War, which some of the characters in *The Container* are fleeing, is a series of armed conflicts and instability that has persisted in the Horn of Africa from 1991 to the Present. In 1991, the military government of Siad Barre was overthrown by armed opposition, leaving a power vacuum.

In order to address the disorder and fighting, United Nations Peacekeeping forces entered the nation and Somalia was rated as a "failed state."<sup>10</sup> Peacekeeping forces would remain until 1995, when they would withdraw having incurred heavy casualties but without establishing central authority.<sup>11</sup> The withdrawal of the United Nations and lack of central authority allowed the local establishment of customary and religious law in a hodgepodge throughout the nation. This meant government by tribal law in some villages, while others were subject to Islamic Sharia, and still others had managed a modicum of civil governance in some regions.

In 2000, a transitional government was established, and in 2006 Ethiopian troops seized most of southern Somalia from the Islamic Courts Union. With the loss of territory, the ICU shattered into numerous radical Islamic movements, including notably, the Al-Qaeda aligned Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab has been fighting both the Somali government and African Union Peacekeeping forces for control of the country. Though they have been driven

from the cities, the radical Islamists control large swathes of rural territory through the nation. Central authority was finally reestablished in 2012. However, the Federal Government of Somalia still does not exercise control over the full country. International stakeholders have labelled it a "fragile state."<sup>12</sup>



Abandoned Somali Tanks during the Civil War



Battle Standard of Al-Shabaab

<sup>10</sup> Anderson, Jon Lee (December 14, 2009). [\*"The Most Failed State"\*](#). *The New Yorker*.

<sup>11</sup> Central Intelligence Agency (2011). "Somalia - Government - Judicial branch". *The World Factbook*. Langley, Virginia: Central Intelligence Agency.

<sup>12</sup> Balthasar, Dominik (November 19, 2014). [\*"New Approaches Are Needed for State-Building in Somalia"\*](#)

## KURDS IN TURKEY

The Kurds, an Iranic people from Western Asia, have a long history of oppression and victimization at the hands of the Turkish government. An ethnic minority, Kurds compose somewhere between 15% and 20% of the overall Turkish population, primarily concentrated in the Southeast of the country. This region is generally viewed by Kurds as "Turkish Kurdistan," though this is not an official designation recognized by the Republic of Turkey.



Kurdish Man Leaping the Fire at Newroz

Since the establishment of the Republic in 1923, discrimination against Kurds has been common alongside periodic massacres and other official oppressions. The terms "Kurd" and "Kurdish" were suppressed in favor of the term "Mountain Turks" until 1991,<sup>13</sup> and the Kurdish language is largely forbidden as a language of instruction in Turkish schools.<sup>14</sup>

This systemic oppression is accompanied by periodic state violence. During the Dersim rebellion, a Kurdish response to the 1934 Law on Resettlement, the province of Dersim was largely depopulated via the killing of 13,160 and exiling of 11,818 civilians by the Turkish Army.<sup>15</sup> In 1930, 15,000 people were killed in the Zilan area in response to the Ararat rebellion.<sup>16</sup> Human rights abuses have continued, with the European Court of Human Rights issuing thousands of condemnations against Turkish actions since early 1970. The latest of which concerns the 2014 mass execution of villagers.<sup>17</sup>



Kurds protesting a 2014 seige

13 Baser, Bahar (2015). *Diasporas and Homeland Conflicts: A Comparative Perspective*. Ashgate Publishing. p. 63. ISBN 978-1472425621.

14 Toumani, Meline. *Minority Rules*, New York Times, 17 February 2008

15 David McDowall, *A modern history of the Kurds*, I.B.Tauris, 2002, [ISBN 978-1-85043-416-0](https://doi.org/10.1017/9781850434160), p. 209.

16 Robin Leonard Bidwell, Kenneth Bourne, Donald Cameron Watt, Great Britain Foreign Office, *British documents on foreign affairs: reports and papers from the foreign office confidential print. From the first to the Second World War. Turkey, Iran, and the Middle-East, 1918-1939. The Turkish revival, 1921-1923*, University Publications of America, 1997, ISBN 978-0-89093-603-0, p. 106.

17 "The European Court of Human Rights: Case of Benzer and others v. Turkey" (PDF) (Mass execution of Kurdish villagers).

## SYNOPSIS

*The Container* is about five desperate people trying to reach the United Kingdom in a shipping container. Two flee poverty and violence in Somalia, two flee religious extremism in Afghanistan. One seeks a better life away from official oppression and discrimination in Turkey. They have gambled everything, and already come far, in their quest for a better life. However, they cannot know what lies for wait in them ahead.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Clare Bayley is a playwright and author who's plays often center around current events with a core of interpersonal relationship. She attended David Edgar's playwrighting MA course in Birmingham, and she is a former theatre editor of the INDePeNDeNT. Her plays include *Blue Sky*, *the Woman Who Swallowed a Pin*, *the Shift*, and *Blavatsky*. She is an Amnesty award winner.



## THE COMPANY

**Cheleen Sugar** is a native of Natchez, MS and is excited to be making her debut with Burning Coal Theatre. She is a proud graduate of Tougaloo College and in 2016 received a master of music in vocal performance from the University of Mississippi. She has been acting since she was a teen and has appeared in such plays as *Crimes of the Heart* (Chick Boyle), *Flyin West* (Sophie Washington), *Richard III* (Lady Anne), *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Mistress Page). She will kick off 2020 as Lady Macbeth with *Sweet Tea Shakespeare*. She is grateful to her family for their support and the cast and crew of *The Container* for the opportunity to do what she loves.

**Darius Shafa** - A student at NC State and an amateur actor. He's worked with NC State's Theatrefest, Cape Fear Regional Theatre, and others in the area over the past few years. He's especially fond of Oscar Wilde, comedy, and the history of the Middle East. This is his third show with Burning Coal.

**Holden Hansen (Ahmad)** is a Professor of Theatre at UNCP, where he has been teaching and directing since 1997. Film credits include 42 (Directed by Academy Award Winner for Best Screenplay Brian Helgeland), and Arthur Newman (with Academy Award Winner for Best Actor Colin Firth and Emily Blunt). TV credits include: Bessie (with Queen Latifah), Death in Small Doses, Young Indiana Jones Chronicles. Recent stage credits include: (For Burning Coal Theatre) Written on the Heart (Thomson), The Heretic (Professor Kevin Maloney), The Seafarer (Sharky) (with Obie Award winner Randolph Curtis Rand), Inherit the Wind (E.K. Hornbeck), Hamlet (Claudius), A Midsummer Nights Dream (Oberon/Theseus). For Raleigh's Hot Summer Nights: Gods of Autumn (with Tony Award Winner for Best Actor in a Musical Jarrod Emick and Jessica Phillips), Wait Until Dark (Mike Talman). For Cape Fear Regional Theatre: Driving Miss Daisy (Boolie) (with Bo Thorpe and Lawrence Hamilton). For (Givens Performing Arts Center's Professional Artist Series) Romeo and Juliet (Montague), The Three Musketeers (Treville). (For Uprising Theatre Company's Shakespeare in the Pines) A Midsummer Night's Dream (Egeus). Holden is a company member of the Burning Coal Theatre Company in Raleigh, NC, and is the recipient of the UNC Board of Governors Excellence in Teaching Award (2017-18) and the UNCP Adolph L. Dial Endowed Award for Scholarship/Creative Work (2012).

**Juan Isler** is a music business graduate of Winston-Salem State University. He has experience on and behind the stage. His acting ability was seen in The Wiz (Burning Coal) Porgy and Bess (JTP) Memphis (RLT) and Ain't Misbehavin' (NRACT). His sound design was heard in Bent (JTP) King Charles III (Burning Coal) Blood Done Sign My Name (RLT) and Ain't Misbehavin' (NRACT).

**Lakeisha Coffey** made her first professional appearance in Durham, NC at Manbites Dog Theater in The Overwhelming. She has performed in other Manbites productions to include the farewell production of Wakey, Wakey, The Best of Enemies, brownsville song: a b-side for Tray, Spirits to Enforce, ...the Death of Walt Disney, Life Sucks. and The Miraculous and the Mundane. Additional Stage credits include I Love My Hair... and I Love My Hair...the Remix (FORTY/AM); Crumbs From the Table of Joy, Gidion's Knot (Bartlett Theater); The Mountaintop, A Doll's House Remodeled (Justice Theater Project); For Colored Girls...(SheCow Productions/Burning Coal Theatre Second Stage); A Raisin in the Sun, The Waiting Room (Raleigh Little Theater); Boston Marriage (Ghost & Spice); The Jade City Chronicles Vol. 1, Our Town (Little Green Pig). She has also served as stage manager & costume designer for several Triangle theater productions. She is part of the Creative Development Team for the inaugural BullCity Black Theater Festival held in March 2018 in Durham, NC. She is also a founding member of Bulldog Ensemble Theater. Upcoming productions: Having Our Say (North Carolina Theater, November 2019); Orange Light (Bulldog Ensemble Theatre, January 2020)

**Rimsha Afzal (Mariam)** is thrilled to have the opportunity to work in another Clare Bayley production. She performed in Blue Sky in 2016 and admires Bayley's ability to lend a truthful voice to the tragic narratives that are at the forefront of our reality. In addition to acting, Rimsha is a graduate student at Duke and is the Artistic Director of The Ink Project, a playwrighting organization based in the Triangle ([www.inkproject.org](http://www.inkproject.org)). She would like to dedicate this performance to the millions of refugees across the globe who have no choice but to risk their lives daily because they are unable to return their homes; may we see them, may we hear them, may we always provide a home for them.

**Katie Beazley (Assistant Director)** is a recent graduate from Samford University with a BFA in Musical Theatre. She had previously directed 26 Pebbles and Eleemosynary, along with assistant directing The Crucible at Samford. She would like to thank her family and friends for their support, the cast and production team for their hard work, and Burning Coal for this opportunity.

**Matthew E. Adelson (Lighting Designer)** Previously for Burning Coal: Churchill's Shorts, Ashe In Johannesburg, Iphigenia in Splott, Darkside, The Greek Trilogy, Written On The Heart, Dark Vanilla Jungle (London/Cockpit), 2016 Second Stage, Spoonface Steinberg, The Iron Curtain Trilogy (Raleigh and London/Cockpit), The Diary of Anne Frank, Ruined, Shining City, The Shape of the Table, The Seafarer, The Prisoner's Dilemma, Inherit The Wind, Pentecost, Einstein's Dreams (1998 and 2006 productions), Miss Julie, James Joyce's The Dead, The Man Who Tried To Save The World, Travesties, The Doll's House, and Romeo and Juliet. Recent credits include: The Goat or, Who is Sylvia? and Shrek, The Musical (Berkshire Theatre Group), The Three Musketeers (Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey) and Curve of Departure (Chester Theatre). Matthew is the Production Manager for the Five College Dance Department (Amherst, Hampshire, Mount Holyoke, Smith and the University of Massachusetts Amherst) and is a graduate of the Yale Drama School.

**Meredith Riggan (Scenic Artist).** Meredith is a North Carolina based artist and is excited to be returning to Burning Coal Theatre Company for the production of The Container. She has previously painted for Burning Coal in the productions of The Great Celestial Cow, Ashe in Johannesburg, The Weir, Stuff Happens, King Charles III, Normal Heart, Peter Pan and Wendy, Darkside, The Royal, Heizenberg , Written on the Heart, Skylight, SPOONFACE STEINBERG, The Wiz, and Good. After receiving her Bachelor's Degree in Scenic Art from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, Meredith has worked as the Scenic Charge Artist at several theatres around North Carolina including Half Pint Theatre, Sweet Tea Shakespeare, Triad Stage, City Arts-Greensboro Children's Theatre, The Winston Salem Theatre Alliance, ECU Loessin Playhouse, along with several freelance jobs such as repairing sculptures for the Greensboro Children's Library and painting custom pet portraits through her business, Riggan Originals.

**Eric S. Kildow (Dramaturg/Study Guides)** is Assistant Professor of Theatre at Kent State University in Ohio and works as a freelance dramaturg & director. As an artistic associate of the London-based Loitering With Intent Theatre, he presented the devised work TurnRight/TurnLeft: A Manual for the End of the World at the Fleet Street Theatre in Hamburg, Germany. He is a member of the Stage Directors & Choreographers Society, Literary Managers & Dramaturgs of the Americas, the Lincoln Center Theatre Director's Lab and the Burning Coal Company of Artists. For Burning Coal: Man of La Mancha, Brigadoon, As You Like It, Shining City, Good, Ruined, The Heretic, (Three Man) Tempest, The Jesus Fund, The Diary of Anne Frank, Fayetteville Street, Outrunning Bullets, ASYLUM, The Wiz, Blue Sky, Spoonface Steinberg, Oakwood 2016, Skylight, Written on the Heart, Heisenberg, The Royale, Darkside, Peter Pan & Wendy, The Normal Heart, King Charles III, Stuff Happens, & Ashe in Johannesburg. <http://www.eskildow.com>

**Cole Train (Assistant "Painter")**. Cole Train is excited to be a part of another production at Burning Coal Theatre. He has been "assisting" his Scenic Artist Mom in several theatres since he was 7 weeks old. He has no formal training in Scenic Art, but will retrieve a paint brush occasionally. He is great at supervising projects, looking cute, and tries to leave a paw print on every set. Cole Train is a 10/10 good boy.

**Christiana Rose** composes and designs experiences through sound and movement working across the disciplines of theater, cinema, experimental music, and contemporary circus. Rose holds a BM in Technology in Music and Related Arts (TIMARA) and a BA in Cinema Studies from Oberlin College and Conservatory of Music. She is currently pursuing an MA in Digital Musics at Dartmouth College designing interactive systems for musical expression for aerial-dance and acrobatics. Notable works include Peter Pan and Wendy (theater), le corps électronique (circus/music/theater), append (dance/circus/music) and The American Skin (cinema). website: [www.christiana-rose.com](http://www.christiana-rose.com)

**Xinmeng (Sarah) Sun** graduated from William Peace University in May of 2019 and majored in Art Administration. In my free time, I really love to watch music or theater productions. I had been working with Wild Party, Five Women's Wearing the Same Dress, Assistant, Beauty and Beast and Speech and Debate. I mostly work with props, and headset. I do enjoy backstage work not only I get to know the theater better, because every show needs those crew people to make sure the whole show runs smoothly. In the future, I am hoping to work at a theater or a museum, and one of the interests for me is company manager, because this position gets you to travel around places and take care of the whole group.

# NC STATE EDUCATION STANDARDS

The state of North Carolina values the skills and competencies of Arts education due to their applicability to other disciplines. These productions are designed to give your students exposure to the competencies and specific standards listed below.

This production and the related study materials will provide students with specific knowledge and skills to address the following Standard Course of Study Competencies and Objectives in the Theatre Arts.

- COMPETENCY GOAL 1: The learner will write based on personal experience and heritage, imagination, literature, and history.
  - Grades 3-5
    - 1.02: Recognize the beginning, middle, and end of a story
    - 1.03: Infer lessons from multicultural stories, fairy tales, tall tales, legends, and myths.
    - 1.06: Refine reading comprehension by using verbal and non-verbal communication.
  - Grades 6-8
    - 1.01: Recognize and explain unique characteristics of the dramatic script such as dramatic structure and dialogue.
    - 1.04: Produce written, verbal, and visual responses to written and/or performed dramatic material.
    - 1.05: Identify themes and plots from multicultural literature.
  - Grades 9-12
    - 1.03: Compare and contrast play structure in relation to other forms of literature.
- COMPETENCY GOAL 7: The learner will analyze, critique, and construct meaning from informal and formal theatre, film, television, and electronic media productions.
  - Grades 3-5
    - 7.01: Build skills to critique self and others in a respectful and constructive manner.
    - 7.03: Convey personal reactions to various texts.
    - 7.05: Communicate emotions and thoughts evoked by performance.
    - 7.07: Suggest alternative characters, settings, or events after viewing or participating in a performance.
  - Grades 6-8
    - 7.01: Recognize and practice audience etiquette.
    - 7.03: Develop verbal, visual and written responses to works of informal and formal theatre, film, television, and electronic media productions from various cultures.
    - 7.04: Express meaning perceived from informal and formal theatre, film, television, and electronic media productions.
  - Grades 9-12
    - 7.02: Develop and relate a world view of theatre in society.
- COMPETENCY GOAL 8: The learner will understand context by analyzing the role of theatre, film, television, and electronic media in the past and present.
  - Grades 3-5
    - 8.04: Experience live or recorded performance
    - 8.05: Discuss the similarities and differences between live and recorded theatrical events.

*Ashe in Johannesburg* is also designed to address the following Core Curriculum Anchor Standards in Language Arts Literacy and Social Studies.

- Reading Anchor 4: Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
- Reading Anchor 6: Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
- Writing Anchor 2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- Writing Anchor 7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.