



## ArtSmarts

2004-2005 Wells Fargo School Matinee Series

### *The Invisible Man*

AQUILA THEATRE COMPANY

March 4, 2005 11:00am

Jackson Hall, Mondavi Center

Dear Teacher:

We hope you find this CueSheet helpful in preparing your students for Aquila Theatre Company's matinee presentation. This guide provides information about the company, a synopsis of the play, a biography of H.G. Wells, and some discussion topics for students. Also included in the guide is a review of audience etiquette.

Your students will be seeing a guided tour of H.G. Wells' *The Invisible Man*. This is not a condensed version of the play. An actor will be introducing the main characters and providing a narrative link between key scenes, which are acted out in full costumes with the full set and props. The presentation will be followed by a question and answer session.

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**AQUILA THEATRE COMPANY**

Innovative and dynamic, the Aquila Theatre Company has gained a well-earned international reputation as one of the foremost producers of touring theatre. Aquila presents high quality and inventive productions of classical drama under the artistic leadership of founder, Peter Meineck, and associate director, Robert Richmond. Since its inception in 1991, the company has won both critical and academic acclaim for its work worldwide as it changes the perceptions of classical drama by freeing the spirit of the original text and allowing the widest possible audience to enjoy these great plays as live, visceral, and above all, entertaining theatre.

Aquila tours extensively throughout North America and Europe and is the Company in Residence at New York University's Center for Ancient Studies. It has presented regular runs in New York, London and multiple performances in major cities across the United States including Los Angeles, Boston, and Washington, D.C. Additionally, the company stages performances at festivals such as "Summer Shakespeare" at the 5,000 seat Mann Center in Philadelphia, The New Victory Theater in New York City, the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. and the Bermuda Festival.

The highly respected Aquila Education Program consisting of, in part, special school performances and participatory Master Classes has been presented in over 250 North American schools, universities, museums, libraries and community centers. The Aquila Theatre Company for Young Audiences works in partnership with the Lincoln Center Institute presenting first-rate classical drama to schools in New York.

For further information on Aquila Theatre Company, please visit: [www.aquilatheatre.com](http://www.aquilatheatre.com).

**The Aquila Theatre Company**  
Peter Meineck, Producing Artistic Director  
*Presents*

## *The Invisible Man*

By H. G. Wells

Adapted by P. W. Meineck

### Cast

Griffin, <i>the invisible man</i>	Louis Butelli
Mrs. Hall, <i>the publican's wife</i>	Lindsay Rae Taylor
Teddy Henfrey, <i>the clock jobber</i>	Natasha Piletich
Mr. Hall, <i>the publican</i>	Ian Lowe
Dr. Cuss, <i>the general practitioner</i>	Andrew Schwartz
Rev. Bunting, <i>the vicar</i>	Kenn Sabberton
Sandy Wadgers, <i>the carter</i>	Heather Murdock
Mr. Bobby Jaffers, <i>the village constable</i>	Kenn Sabberton
Thomas Marvel, <i>the country tramp</i>	Lincoln Hudson
A Mariner	Kenn Sabberton
Dr. Kemp	Andrew Schwartz
Col. Ayde, <i>the chief of police</i>	Lincoln Hudson

*All other parts are played by members of the ensemble*

## **H.G. WELLS' *THE INVISIBLE MAN***



Set in Victorian rural southern England, *The Invisible Man* tells the story of a talented young English scientist named Griffin who makes a startling discovery. Obsessed with the notion of invisibility, Griffin sets out on a secret quest to put his radical theories into practice eventually rendering himself completely invisible. But science goes too far and the invisibility proves more a curse than a blessing pushing Griffin further and further away from society until he becomes a hunted specter.

*The Invisible Man* begins when a mysterious man, Griffin, arrives at a rural English inn on a cold and stormy night. In this small English town, it is odd to have visitors in the middle of winter. Even stranger is the fact that the man's face is completely covered with bandages. This, of course, sets the townspeople to gossiping.

Eventually, Griffin is evicted from the inn due to his violent episodes and because he has stopped paying rent. Griffin then reveals his "secret" and escapes the town unseen. He goes on the run, frightening everyone with whom he comes in contact. He finds this entertaining until he discovers that he is a hunted man.

The process that made Griffin invisible is also slowly making him insane and soon Griffin is driven to a life of crime. He encounters an old friend, Dr. Kemp, while robbing his house. Disturbed by Griffin's story, Dr. Kemp decides to turn him in to the authorities. Griffin then tries to kill both Dr. Kemp and the police who attempt to capture him. Dr. Kemp then runs for his life and is able to escape by running through the crowded streets of the neighboring town. After a wild chase through the town, Griffin is hunted down and killed by the townspeople.

In *The Invisible Man*, H.G. Wells asks us to consider what it means to be human and how fragile modern society can be. He examines the very nature of existence and questions the achievements of scientific discovery in a beautifully written and ultimately tragic scientific adventure story that has enthralled generations of readers.

## **H.G. WELLS (1866-1946)**



H.G. Wells, English novelist, journalist, sociologist, and historian, was one of the fathers of modern science fictions. Wells' best-known books are *The Time Machine* (1895), *The Invisible Man* (1897), and *The War Of The Worlds* (1898). His published works made bold, thrilling and often dangerous predictions about the state of humanity in the face of rapid developments in modern science and colossal changes in society. His work has often provided the inspiration for dramatic retellings

H.G. Wells was born on September 21, 1866 in Kent, England. His father was a shopkeeper and a professional cricketer, and his mother served as a housekeeper at a nearby estate. In 1883, Wells became a teacher-pupil at Midhurst Grammar School. He obtained a scholarship to the Normal School of Science in London where he studied biology. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in 1890.

As a novelist, Wells made his debut with *The Time Machine* (1895), a parody of English class division and a satirical warning that human progress is not inevitable. The work was followed by such science-fiction classics as *The Island Of Dr. Moreau* (1896), *The Invisible Man* (1897) and *The War of the Worlds* (1898). *The First Men On The Moon* (1901) was a prophetic description of the methodology of space flight and *The War In The Air* (1908) describes a catastrophic aerial war. *Love And Mr. Lewisham* appeared in 1900, *Tono-Bungay* and *The History Of Mr. Polly* in 1909. Wells also published critical pamphlets attacking the Victorian social order, among them *Anticipations* (1901), *Mankind In The Making* (1903) and *A Modern Utopia* (1905).

Adapted from [www.online-literature.com](http://www.online-literature.com).

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

Talking with your teacher, friends, and family about a performance after attending is part of the

experience. You can now compare ideas, ask questions and find out how to learn even more. Here are some questions to think about:

1. How would you describe *The Invisible Man* to a friend?
2. What did you like best about *The Invisible Man* and why? Was it what you had expected?
3. Imagine that you are a newspaper reporter in England in 1897. Write a series of brief news reports about the Invisible Man.
4. What were some of the ways you used your own imagination in understanding the plot?
5. What kinds of costumes, props, or makeup did the performers wear? How did it affect the performance?

## **ATTENDING THE THEATER**

***What is expected of student audiences at the matinee:***

- \* Enter the auditorium quietly and take seats immediately;
- \* Show courtesy to the artist and other guests at all times;
- \* Demonstrate appreciation for the artist's work by applauding at the appropriate times;
- \* Refrain from making unnecessary noise or movements;
- \* Please eat lunch before or after the performance to avoid disruption;
- \* Please turn off cell phones and pagers.
- \* Flash photography is strictly prohibited.
- \* Relate any information acquired from the pre-matinee discussion to the new information gained from the matinee.

***What you can expect of your experience in a performing arts theater:***

A theater is a charged space, full of energy and anticipation. When the house lights (the lights that illuminate the audience seating) go down, the excitement level goes up! Theaters are designed so that the voices of the singers and actors and the music of the musicians can be heard. But this also means that any sound in the audience: whispering, rustling of papers, speaking and moving about, can be heard by other audience members and by the performers. Distractions like these upset everyone's concentration and can spoil a performance.

The performers on stage show respect for their art form and for the audience by doing their very best possible work. The audience shows respect for the performers by watching attentively. Applause is the best way for audience members to share their enthusiasm and to show their appreciation for the performers. Applaud at the end of a performance! Sometimes the audience will clap during a performance, such as after a featured solo. Audience members may feel like laughing if the action on stage is funny, crying if the action is sad, or sighing if something is seen or heard that is beautiful. Appreciation can be shown in many different ways, depending upon the art form and the culture(s) of the people in the audience. While the audience at a dance performance will sit quietly, other types of performance invite audience participation.