



*The* **THREE**  
**MUSKETEERS**

SYRACUSE  
**stage**  
EDUCATION

STUDY GUIDE

# Study Guide

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DEPARTMENT OF  
**DRAMA**

Syracuse University  
College of Visual and Performing Arts

PRODUCTION OF

# *The* **THREE MUSKETEERS**

ADAPTED BY

Catherine Bush

FROM THE NOVEL BY

Alexandre Dumas

DIRECTED BY

Robert Hupp

FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER

D.C. Wright

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This adaptation of *The Three Musketeers* was first produced at Barter Theatre, Abingdon, VA. Richard Rose, Producing Artistic Director.  
*The Three Musketeers* is presented by special arrangement with Catherine Bush.  
September 20 - October 8, 2017



**As you take your students on the exciting journey into the world of live theatre we hope that you'll take a moment to help prepare them to make the most of their experience. Unlike movies or television, live theatre offers the thrill of unpredictability.**

**With the actors present on stage, the audience response becomes an integral part of the performance and the overall experience: the more involved and attentive the audience, the better the show. Please remind your students that they play an important part in the success of the performance.**

## **A FEW REMINDERS...**

### **audience etiquette**

#### **BE PROMPT**

Give your students plenty of time to arrive, find their seats, and get situated. Have them visit the restrooms before the show begins.

#### **RESPECT OTHERS**

Please remind your students that their behavior and responses affect the quality of the performance and the enjoyment of the production for the entire audience. Live theatre means the actors and the audience are in the same room, and just as the audience can see and hear the performers, the performers can see and hear the audience. Please ask your students to avoid disturbing those around them. Please no talking or unnecessary or disruptive movement during the performance. Also, please remind students that cellphones should be switched off completely. No texting or tweeting, please. When students give their full attention to the action on the stage, they will be rewarded with the best performance possible.

#### **GOOD NOISE, BAD NOISE**

Instead of instructing students to remain totally silent, please discuss the difference between appropriate responses (laughter, applause, participation when requested) and inappropriate noise (talking, cell phones, etc).

#### **STAY WITH US**

Please do not leave or allow students to leave during the performance except in absolute emergencies. Again, reminding them to use the restrooms before the performance will help eliminate unnecessary disruption.



Dear Educator,

Live theatre is a place for people to gather and experience the joys, triumphs, and sorrows life has to offer.

The Syracuse Stage education department is committed to providing the tools to make learning in and through the arts possible to address varied learning styles and to make connections to curricula and life itself. It is our goal in the education department to maximize the theatre experience for our education partners with experiential learning and in-depth arts programming. Thank you for your interest and support.

Sincerely,

Lauren Unbekant  
Director of Educational Outreach

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## 2017/2018 EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH SPONSORS

Syracuse Stage is committed to providing students with rich theatre experiences that explore and examine what it is to be human. Research shows that children who participate in or are exposed to the arts show higher academic achievement, stronger self-esteem, and improved ability to plan and work toward a future goal.

Many students in our community have their first taste of live theatre through Syracuse Stage's outreach programs. Last season more than 15,500 students from across New York State attended or participated in the Bank of America Children's Tour, artsEmerging, the Young Playwrights Festival, Backstory, Young Adult Council, and our Student Matinee Program.

We gratefully acknowledge the corporations and foundations who support our commitment to in-depth arts education for our community.



The John Ben Snow  
Foundation, Inc.



# ABOUT THE NOVEL'S AUTHOR

# ALEXANDRE DUMAS

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The author of *The Three Musketeers* was born Dumas Davy de la Pailleterie, July 24, 1802, in Villers-Cotterêts, France. His grandfather was Marquis Alexandre Antoine Davy de la Pailleterie and his grandmother, Marie-Cessette Dumas, was a Haitian slave. The author's father, Thomas-Alexandre, who change his surname to his mother's Dumas, was an important general during the Napoleonic Wars who fell out with the leader and was never paid what he was owed, leaving him and his family in poverty. He died when Alexandre was four years old.

The young Alexandre Dumas left school early and, blessed with fine handwriting, became a notary. In 1822, he moved to Paris and worked for Louis-Philippe, Duke of Orleans, who eventually became king. In Paris, his literary life blossomed. Writing in the Romantic style, he penned essays, novels, and plays. His little known collaboration with Auguste Maque, who provided plot outlines and character sketches for many of the novels, produced his string of popular books, including *The Three Musketeers*, which was first published in serial form in 1844. This was Dumas's first novel about the Gascon D'Artagnan, followed by *Twenty Years After*, and *The Vicomte of Bragelonne: Ten Years After*, which contained the story "The Man in the Iron Mask." 1844 also saw *The Corsican Brothers*, and *The Count of Monte Cristo*. Overall, Dumas, Maque (who never receive authorship credit), and other collaborators produced a voluminous literary output.

Dumas lived such a lavish lifestyle that he was often in debt, sometimes leaving France to escape his creditors. Compounding the problem was his complicated love life. Although he was married, he had at least forty mistresses.

The author of *The Three Musketeers* and *The Count of Monte Cristo* is often referred to as Alexandre Dumas, père (father), because his son, also named Alexandre Dumas wrote the popular novel and play *The Lady of the Camelias*, often called *Camille*, which has inspired several films and Verdi's opera, *La Traviata*. The younger is called Dumas, fils (son). Alexandre Dumas, père died on Dec 5, 1870. In 2008, his unfinished manuscript, *The Last Cavalier* was published.



Catherine Bush lives in Abingdon, Virginia where she is the playwright-in-residence for Barter Theatre, The State Theatre of Virginia. In addition to her plays produced at Barter Theatre (*The Other Side of the Mountain*, *The Quiltmaker*, *Comin' Up A Storm*, *Wooden Snowflakes*, *The Controversial Rescue of Fatty the Pig*, *Where Trouble Sleeps*, etc.), Catherine's work has been seen throughout the country. An award-winning production of *Tradin' Paint* was celebrated in Atlanta in the spring of 2009, and her musical *I'll Never Be Hungry Again* continues to be produced nationally. Her other plays include *The Frankenstein Summer* (Red Light Theatre District, NYC), *The Executioner's Sons*, (Echo Theatre, TX), and *Just A Kiss* (New Theatre, FL), which was a finalist for the 2007 Steinberg Award presented by the American Theatre Critics Association. Her plays for young audiences have been commissioned and produced by the Barter Players, and several have toured to schools across the southeast United States.

# Characters

**D'Artagnan**— a young man yearning to be a musketeer. He is from Gascony, in southwest France.

## **The Three Musketeers**

**Athos**—A cynical man who has been scarred by a disastrous failed marriage.

**Porthos**—A vain dandy and womanizer.

**Aramis**—Although handy with the sword and as quick a wit as his friends, he aspires to take holy orders and become a priest.

**Cardinal Richelieu**—The second most powerful man in France, he is a politician first, a churchman second.

**Rocheport**—Richelieu's spy, he is an excellent swordsman. He wears a patch over one eye.

**Milady (Madame de Winter)** — also a spy and Rocheport's lover, the beautiful Englishwoman "with hair the color of burnished copper" holds many secrets and is very dangerous.

**Constance Bonacieux**— the young queen's maid whom D'Artagnan loves. Note: In this adaptation, she is M. Bonacieux's daughter. In the novel, she is his very young wife.

**Monsieur Bonacieux**— her father, the keeper of the inn where D'Artagnan stays.

**Monsieur de Treville**—Captain of the Musketeers. He, like D'Artagnan, is from Gascony, and was a childhood friend of D'Artagnan's father.

**Lord Buckingham**— the English Prime minister in love with Anne of Austria.

**Louis XIII**—the king of France.

**Anne of Austria** — Louis' wife, the queen of France.

**Planchet**— Treville's servant. In the novel, he serves D'Artagnan.



**Kitty**—Milady's maid and Planchet's lover.

**Braddock**—Buckingham's butler.

**Mystery Woman**—Athos' wife.

**Abbess**—the head of the Carmelite convent at Bethune.

# SYNOPSIS

It's 1628 in France. Determined to become one of the King's Musketeers, young D'Artagnan arrives in Paris from Gascony. His letter of introduction is stolen by the evil Rochefort, a spy for Cardinal Richelieu. Nevertheless, after winning the confidence of the captain and the musketeers Athos, Portos, and Aramis, D'Artagnan is appointed to the king's guard and enters the dangerous world of international intrigue. He falls in love with young Constance Bonacieux, the queen's maid. Constance tells D'Artagnan that the queen has gifted a diamond necklace, that was originally a gift from the king, to her English lover Lord Buckingham. D'Artagnan and the musketeers must retrieve it before a ball that the Cardinal Richelieu has planned where she will be expected to wear it. D'Artagnan and the musketeers escape the machination of Cardinal Richelieu and the evil Rochefort and find that the most dangerous player in the dangerous game is the beautiful and mysterious Milady de Winter.

*Aside from Willy Wonka, how many works of literature have given their name to a candy bar? Just The Three Musketeers! Those rascals with the rallying cry of "All for one and one for all" inspired the Three Musketeers bar by Mars. Originally made in three segmented flavors: chocolate, strawberry, and vanilla, even after those flavors were dropped in favor of what we have today, it was advertised as the biggest candy bar you could get, big enough to share with friends. Now it has shrunk, but retains the name.*

*However, everything about Alexandre Dumas' novel, The Three Musketeers, is still big. There are big characters, big adventures, and big entertainment. So big that it has inspired countless plays, movies, even cartoons.*





# From page to stage

Dumas himself wrote three plays based on the novel and provided the libretto for an opera version. Several musicals have been produced. Since Dumas' work is in the public domain, there have been many stage adaptations.

Catherine Bush's adaptation makes use of cinematic devices including flashbacks, to give us background and establish characters. In addition, like several other adapters, she has made the action somewhat more family friendly. For example, in the novel, Constance, D'Artagnan's love, is the wife of Bonacieux rather than his daughter. Furthermore, in Dumas' works, D'Artagnan actually does spend a night in the dark with Milady rather than a few minutes.

*The Three Musketeers* has been adapted or parodied in at least 200 films, starting with a short French silent in 1903. In fact, there were at least six versions made before the sound era. Among the notable adaptations are several terrifically entertaining films, including the following, most, of course, called *The Three Musketeers*:

1921 American silent starring Douglas Fairbanks

1921 *Les Trois Mousquetaires*, a French version, remade as a talkie with the same cast in 1931

1933 Macot Studios film starring John Wayne. Its action was contemporized and transferred to the French Foreign Legion

1939 A comedic version starring the Ritz Brothers and Don Ameche

1948 A lavish M-G-M spectacle with Gene Kelly as D'Artagnan.

1968 a French double feature

1973 *The Three Musketeers* and *The Four Musketeers*, two films directed by Richard Lester. Starring Michael York, Richard Chamberlin, Fay Dunaway, Rachel Welch, and Charlton Heston as Richelieu, these are the gold standard of the English language versions



PHOTO:  
Image from 1921 silent film *The Three Musketeers*

1993 From Disney, with Charlie Sheen, Kiefer Sutherland, and Tim Curry as Richelieu.

2011 3D version.

Animated versions have featured Tom and Jerry, Mickey, Donald and Goofy, and Barbie.

# Who were the Musketeers?

Named after the primitive pistols they carried, the musketeers were the king's escorts in peacetime. Formed in 1622, they acted as a kind of secret service. The group was really a training step towards becoming the most important officers in the army. Nominally, they were led by the king himself. Ironically, because of the novels of Alexandre Dumas, père, their adventures in subsequent fiction, plays, and films often featured elaborate swordplay rather than gunfire. Those works of popular entertainment are often called swashbucklers, a word derived from "swash," an archaic term meaning to swagger with a drawn sword and "buckler," which means a small-shield gripped in the fist.

Swashbucklers were a mainstay of adventure fiction during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These novels introduced characters and references that stay with us today. The *Star Wars* franchise is a descendant of these rousing tales. The following novels and stories have been filmed many times, and their characters have become part of the culture:

*The Count of Monte Cristo* by Alexandre Dumas, père (1844)

*The Corsican Brothers* by Alexandre Dumas, père (1844)



*"The Man in the Iron Mask"* by Alexandre Dumas, père (1847)

*The Prisoner of Zenda* by Anthony Hope (1894)

*Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson (1883)

*The Scarlet Pimpernel* by Baroness Orczy (1905)

*The Sea Hawk* by Rafael Sabatini (1915)

*Scaramouche* by Rafael Sabatini (1921)

*Captain Blood* by Rafael Sabatini (1922)

## France in the early 17th century

At the time *The Three Musketeers* takes place, France was in the final stages of a catastrophic religious war. After long and bloody civil strife, the king's father, Henry IV, who had converted to Catholicism when he took the throne, granted freedom of religion to the Huguenots, the French Protestants, with the Edict of Nantes. Henry was assassinated in 1610, and Louis was made king at the age of nine. Huguenot power was centered in the prosperous town of La Rochelle. Cardinal Richelieu saw the town as a source of rebellion against the monarchy itself. Charles I, the protestant king of England, sent Lord Buckingham to intercede for the Huguenots, but in 1627, Louis and his musketeers laid siege to the town and ended rebellion in La Rochelle. In his novel, Dumas places the three musketeers and D'Artagnan in that battle.



# How Close is *The Three Musketeers* to history?

Although *The Three Musketeers* is in the main a work of historical fiction, many of the characters in *The Three Musketeers* are based on real people.



The hero, D'Artagnan was a real person. Charles De Batz-Castelmore d'Artagnan was a young Gascon who got his position by connections to the commander of the guard Treville. Dumas and Maque discovered him in the biography *Memoires de Mounsieur d'Artagnan* by Gatien de Courtlis de Sandras. However, the real D'Artagnan arrived in Paris not in 1626, but at the age of seventeen in 1640. He served Louis XIV, rather than Louis XIII, and was a captain of the musketeers under Cardinal Mazarin, Richelieu's successor. After a distinguished career, he died in battle in a war against the Netherlands. There is a statue of him in his Gascony hometown of Auch.

The musketeer Athos was really Armand de Sillegue d'Athos d'Autevielle. He was a cousin of Treville, who really was the captain of the guards. He died in 1643, probably of injuries incurred in a duel.

Porthos whose real name was Isaac de Portau, was a member of the king's guards, then a musketeer along with D'Artagnan. He lived to be ninety-five, dying in 1712.

Aramis is based on Henri d'Aramitz, who was also related to Treville and owes his appointment to the musketeers to him.

The Duke of Buckingham's real name was George Villiers and he did admit to a "passion" for Queen Anne of Austria, who was married to Louis XIII. Louis did not trust him, barring him from entering France for diplomatic negotiations to resolve the situation with the Huguenots. As in the novel, a man named John Felton assassinated Buckingham. One of the duke's descendants built Buckingham Palace, the London home of the royal family.

Queen Anne of Austria, Louis' queen, ironically had never been to Austria. Her mother was Austrian, but her father was King Philip III of Spain. At the time of *The Three Musketeers*, she would have been twenty-four years old. Did she have an affair with Buckingham? The evidence suggests that she was at least flirtatious with him. The story of the queen's diamonds that forms the plot of *The Three Musketeers* had been recorded before Dumas' novel, but seems to be apocryphal.

Cardinal Richelieu was an enormously important figure in the centralization and stabilization of the French state. Working to consolidate power under the monarchy, he clashed with the nobles and was unpopular with the public. He was also an important patron of the arts. His home, Palais Richelieu, later called the Palais Royal, was the site of an important French theater. He also created the French Academy to safeguard the French language and culture and set the rules of neoclassicism for the stage. He was not the enemy of the king portrayed in *The Three Musketeers*, but rather a cunning politician who often placed the state before the Church.



The model for Milady de Winter appears in Courtlis de Sandras biography of D'Artagnan as a lady-in-waiting to the queen with whom D'Artagnan had an affair. She was not the spy and assassin that Dumas and Maque created in the novel.

# Questions FOR Discussion

The rallying cry of the Musketeers is “All for one and one for all!” How do you interpret this? Is this a good philosophy?

Milady de Winter has been branded. What does this mean? What does it say about crime and punishment at the time the story takes place?

How are the three musketeers different from each other? How are those differences portrayed onstage? Which one is D’Artagnan most like? Which one will he become most like as he grows older?

*The Three Musketeers* is a historical novel, which means that Alexandre Dumas used real historical events as the setting for his story. What historical periods and events would you use as the setting for a novel? Why?

*Star Wars* has been identified as a modern swashbuckler. What other contemporary films, books, and television pieces fall into this category?

What do the revelations about Lady de Winter tell us about Athos?

What do people do for love in *The Three Musketeers*? Identify people who are in love in the play. For whom is that love real?



# Projects

Read one of the swashbucklers you've identified and adapt a scene into a play script with dialogue and action.

D'Artagnan arrives in Paris as a very young man who is unsophisticated and innocent. Write three passages of his diary, one for each stage of his education into the ways of Paris, politics, and adventure. Consider the people he meets and the situations in which he finds himself.

Imagine that Lady de Winter would be allowed to have a trial. Create a scene from that trial. How would she testify about herself? What would Athos testify? What would her lawyer say about her in a summary? What would the prosecutor say?

# elements of drama

## PLOT

What is the story line? What happened before the play started? What do the characters want? What do they do to achieve their goals? What do they stand to gain/lose?

## THEME

What ideas are wrestled with in the play? What questions does the play pose? Does it present an opinion?

## CHARACTER

Who are the people in the story? What are their relationships? Why do they do what they do? How does age/status/etc. affect them?

## LANGUAGE

What do the characters say? How do they say it? When do they say it?

## MUSIC

How do music and sound help to tell the story?

## SPECTACLE

How do the elements come together to create the whole performance?

*Other Elements: Conflict/Resolution, Action, Improvisation, Non-verbal communication, Staging, Humor, Realism and other styles, Metaphor, Language, Tone, Pattern & Repetition, Emotion, Point of view.*

Any piece of theatre comprises multiple art forms. As you explore this production with your students, examine the use of:

## WRITING

## VISUAL ART/DESIGN

## MUSIC/SOUND

## DANCE/MOVEMENT

## ACTIVITY

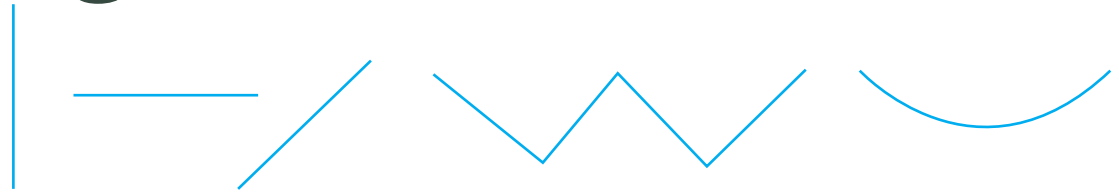
At its core, drama is about characters working toward goals and overcoming obstacles. Ask students to use their bodies and voices to create characters who are: very old, very young, very strong, very weak, very tired, very energetic, very cold, very warm. Have their characters interact with others. Give them an objective to fulfill despite environmental obstacles. Later, recap by asking how these obstacles affected their characters and the pursuit of their objectives.

## INQUIRY

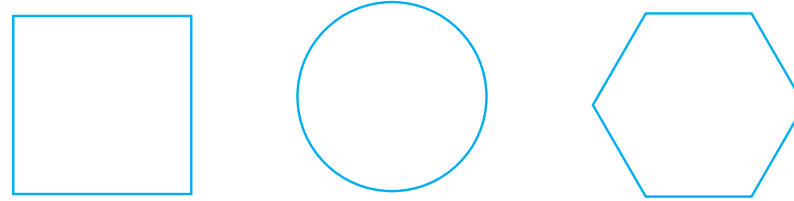
How are each of these art forms used in this production? Why are they used? How do they help to tell the story?

# elements of design

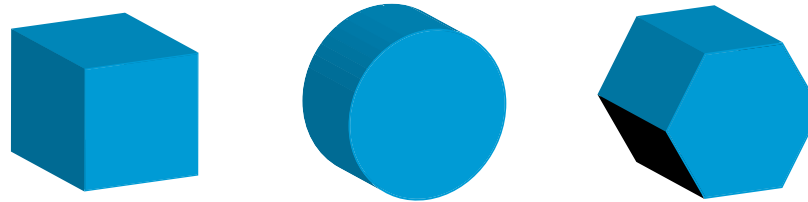
**LINE** can have length, width, texture, direction, and curve. There are five basic varieties: vertical, horizontal, diagonal, curved, and zig-zag.



**SHAPE** is two-dimensional and encloses space. It can be geometric (e.g. squares and circles), man-made, or free-form.



**FORM** is three-dimensional. It encloses space and fills space. It can be geometric (e.g. cubes and cylinders), man-made, or free-form.



**COLOR** has three basic properties:

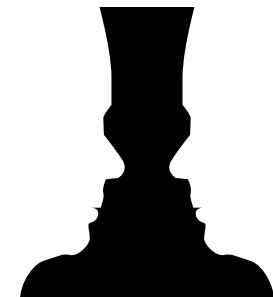
**HUE** is the name of the color (e.g. red, blue, green), **INTENSITY** is the strength of the color (bright or dull), **VALUE** is the range of lightness to darkness.



**TEXTURE** refers to the “feel” of an object’s surface. It can be smooth, rough, soft, etc. Textures may be **ACTUAL** (able to be felt) or **IMPLIED** (suggested visually through the artist’s technique).



**SPACE** is defined and determined by shapes and forms. Positive space is enclosed by shapes and forms, while negative space exists around them.



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A retrospective look at The Three Musketeers onscreen:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3SIMENrY1A> .

# 17/18 SEASON

## THE THREE MUSKETEERS

ADAPTED FROM THE NOVEL BY ALEXANDRE DUMAS | BY CATHERINE BUSH | DIRECTED BY ROBERT HUPP  
CO-PRODUCED WITH THE SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF DRAMA  
**SEPTEMBER 20 – OCTOBER 8**

## THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME

BY SIMON STEPHENS | ADAPTED FROM THE NOVEL BY MARK HADDON  
DIRECTED BY RISA BRAININ  
CO-PRODUCED WITH INDIANA REPERTORY THEATRE  
**OCTOBER 25 – NOVEMBER 12**

## THE WIZARD OF OZ

BY L. FRANK BAUM | WITH MUSIC AND LYRICS FROM THE MGM MOTION PICTURE SCORE BY HAROLD ARLEN AND E.Y. HARBURG WITH BACKGROUND MUSIC BY HERBERT STOTHART | BOOK ADAPTATION BY JOHN KANE FROM THE MOTION PICTURE SCREENPLAY | DIRECTED BY DONNA DRAKE  
CHOREOGRAPHY BY 2 RING CIRCUS  
MUSICAL DIRECTION BY BRIAN CIMMET  
CO-PRODUCED WITH THE SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF DRAMA  
**NOVEMBER 29 – JANUARY 7**

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**SYRACUSESTAGE.ORG**

## NEXT TO NORMAL

MUSIC BY TOM KITT | BOOK AND LYRICS BY BRIAN YORKEY | DIRECTED BY ROBERT HUPP | CHOREOGRAPHY BY ANTHONY SALATINO | MUSICAL DIRECTION BY BRIAN CIMMET  
**JANUARY 24 – FEBRUARY 11**

## A RAISIN IN THE SUN

BY LORRAINE HANSBERRY | DIRECTED BY TIMOTHY DOUGLAS | CO-PRODUCED WITH INDIANA REPERTORY THEATRE  
**FEBRUARY 21 – MARCH 11**

## NEW FOR 17/18 COLD READ: A FESTIVAL OF HOT NEW PLAYS

**APRIL 5 – 8**

## THE MAGIC PLAY

BY ANDREW HINDERAKER | DIRECTED BY HELENA KAYS | CO-PRODUCED WITH THE ACTORS THEATRE OF LOUISVILLE & PORTLAND CENTER STAGE  
**APRIL 25 – MAY 13**

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