



Zeal Theatre and Sydney Theatre Company present



BURNT

**Written and Directed by
Tom Lycos and Stefo Nantsou**

Teacher's Resource Kit – PDHPE

Written and compiled by Frida Hristofski

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Sydney Theatre Company

Sydney Theatre Company, as the premier theatre company in Australia, has been a major force in Australian drama since its establishment in 1978. It was created by the New South Wales Government, following the demise of the Old Tote Theatre Company. The company presents an annual twelve-play program at its home base The Wharf, on Sydney's harbour at Walsh Bay, the nearby Sydney Theatre, which STC also manages, and as the resident theatre company of the Sydney Opera House. Current Artistic Directors, Cate Blanchett and Andrew Upton joined the Company at the beginning of 2008.

STC actively fosters relationships and collaborations with international artists and companies. Renowned directors Michael Blakemore, Max Stafford-Clark, Howard Davies, Declan Donnellan and Philip Seymour Hoffman have worked with STC in recent years and in 2009 Liv Ullman and Steven Soderbergh will direct for the Company. STC has presented productions by Complicite, Cheek by Jowl, Out-of-Joint and the National Theatre of Great Britain. In 2001 STC performed at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York with its production of *The White Devil*, returned in 2006 with its production of *Hedda Gabler* and will return again in 2009 with its production of *A Streetcar Named Desire* which will also tour to Washington.

STC has launched and fostered the theatre careers of many of Australia's internationally renowned artists including Mel Gibson, Judy Davis, Hugo Weaving, Miranda Otto, Geoffrey Rush, Toni Collette, Rose Byrne and Cate Blanchett.

In 2006 STC launched its first acting ensemble, The Actors Company, which, over three years, has performed an extraordinary range of repertoire including award-winning productions of *Mother Courage & Her Children*, *The Season at Sarsaparilla*, *The Lost Echo*, *Gallipoli* and *The Wars of the Roses*. In 2009 STC introduced its new ensemble of theatre-makers The Residents who will perform right across the full range of the Company's activities including Main Stage, Next Stage and STC Ed productions.

To access detailed information on Sydney Theatre Company, its history and productions please contact our Archivist Judith Seeff at jseeff@sydneytheatre.com.au

STC Ed

Since 1987 Sydney Theatre Company has presented productions and workshops for school audiences. Sydney Theatre Company is committed to education by programming original **productions** and **workshops** that enthuse and engage the next generation of theatre-goers. Within the STC Ed programme we produce a season of plays as well as collaborate with leading theatre-for-young-people companies across Australia.

Often a young person's first experience of theatre is facilitated by teachers. STC ensures access to all of its Main Stage productions through the **schoolsdays** programme as well as producing and touring theatre specifically crafted to resonate with young people.

It's vital that students engage with work of the highest quality. Art can expand your view of the world and encourage innovative, engaged thinking and compassion.

Sydney Theatre Company has an extensive **on-line resource** for teachers and students. Visit www.sydneytheatre.com.au/education.

We encourage teachers to subscribe to regular e-news to keep informed as well as access **heavily discounted** tickets and special offers.

For further information on STC Ed, please contact the Education Coordinator Toni Murphy at education@sydneytheatre.com.au

BURNT

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Venue: Richard Wherrett Studio, Sydney Theatre (22 Hickson Rd)

Suitability: Years 9-12

Running Time 100 minutes plus post-performance Q&A

There will be no interval.

We respectfully ask that you discuss theatre etiquette with your students prior to coming to the performance.

Running Late?

Please contact Sydney Theatre Company's main switch on 9250 1700 and a message will be passed to Front of House.

Booking Queries

Please contact the STC Ed Booking line on 02 9250 1778 or education@sydneytheatre.com.au

General Education Queries

Please contact Toni Murphy, Education Coordinator on 02 9250 1795 or education@sydneytheatre.com.au

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BURNT

Written and Directed by Tom Lycos and Stefo Nantsou

Drought is different to a fire or flood. Drought is slow, painful and seemingly endless. Death is all around you.

Australia has always experienced droughts. Some, such as the Federation Drought of 1901 - are more infamous than others. In 2002 - 2003 a long severe drought, some described as 'the worst on record', savaged the country. Politicians lamented the cost to the national economy would be \$2 billion.

But what are the costs to towns, families and individuals? Why do they stay? How do you cope with immense stress and keep a sense of humour?

Researched and developed with regional young people and communities, *Burnt*, explores our relationship with the land and how drought affects us no matter where we live.

Co-produced with STC Associate Company Zeal Theatre, *Burnt* explores feelings of being out of control, uncertainty about the future and deep despair. This superb new production, theatrically told with minimal sets and props, live music, comedy and outstanding physicality will be a powerful and touching experience. From the STC website

Cast: Tom Lycos, Stefo Nantsou, Lindy Sardelic

Characters

ACTOR 1: Suzie Petro 42 year old farmer
 Casey Petro Suzie's daughter, yr 10 student
 Thandie Mickelton Casey's best friend
 Laura Wilson 55 yr old farmer
 Valerie Purine 60 yr old bitter ex shop owner
 Wendy Snodgrass 88 yr old pensioner
 Fran Whipple 35 yr old hairdresser
 Amber Weekes yr 3 student
 Carol Sattler Hotel barmaid
 Debbie Dallas local policewoman
 Miss Pierce School Principal

ACTOR 2: Kyle Petro Casey's twin brother
 Toby Satan 2 yr old child from hell
 Stewart Capeland Hardware store owner
 Bronwyn Bowtell CWA member
 Miriana Godolfis Check-out girl
 Father Spanial The Priest
 Cameron McKenzie Casey's friend yr 10
 Warren Bluff 52 yr old Real Estate Agent
 Doug Watkins 45 yr old farmer
 Alex Daley yr 3 student
 Weazel Logan 72 yr old retired farmer
 Bill Chang general store owner

ACTOR 3: George Petro 45 yr old farmer
Colin Kalm little munchkins child care worker
Shankar Singh New farmer
Alfie Shrapnel Old farmer
Maggie Collingwood CWA member
Miles Woodcock Men's wear manager
Graham Landfill 75 yr old Rotarian
Oscar Parker Kyle's friend yr 10
Mr O'Daniels Science Teacher
Charlie Selman an Auctioneer

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Stage: 5	
Strand 1: Self and Relationships	
Outcome:	
5.1 A student analyses how they can support their own and others' sense of self.	
Students learn about:	Students learn to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The interdependence between a sense of self and health and wellbeing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ how a sense of self can impact on health and wellbeing ○ how personal health can impact on one's sense of self • Supporting yourself <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ identifying 'put downs' reframing negative thoughts & statements & positive thinking ○ effective stress management ○ appropriate expression of needs and feelings • Supporting others <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ valuing difference & diversity business sector & other structures ○ recognising & challenging inequities supporting the welfare and interests of others, ○ supporting others to find their own solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the relationship between school, leisure, work and employment, and a sense of self • Analyse a variety of problem situations to determine the degree to which responsibility is personal, shared or owned by someone else • Explain how thoughts can affect feelings and behaviour and practise strategies to manage unhelpful and unrealistic ways of thinking • Examine the role & impact of stress on health & rehearse a range of positive management strategies, eg yoga, relaxation, physical activity, listening to music • Analyse a variety of problem situations to determine the degree to which responsibility is personal, shared or owned by someone else • Examine the role of community service, in supporting the welfare and interests of others
Outcome:	
5.2 A student evaluates their capacity to reflect on and respond positively to challenges.	
Students learn about:	Students learn to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges and opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ during adolescence challenges ○ in future life transitions ○ responding to challenges ○ planning for a positive future ○ work, employment & unemployment ○ balancing commitments • Strengthening resiliency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ characteristics of resiliency ○ skills that enhance resilience, eg problem solving ○ self-monitoring ○ maintaining a realistic perspective ○ attitudes to change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse previous & predict future life challenges and identify opportunities for personal growth. • Formulate a safety plan to meet the particular needs of a challenging situation, listing choices & consequences & making a decision about the best choice • Explore the social & cultural influences on the way people think about life challenges • Identify & practise the skills required to apply for work, eg application letter, locating & evaluating job advertisements • Examine case studies of people who have overcome adversity, including Aboriginal & other Indigenous people, & identify their characteristics and qualities
Outcome:	
5.3 A student analyses factors that contribute to positive, inclusive and satisfying relationships.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing equal and respectful relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Empathy ○ Decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore how the appropriate use of personal power can contribute to positive relationships

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Problem solving • Affirming diversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Empathy and understanding ○ Respect and trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify personal values & challenge negative community values & images relating to diversity
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Strand 4: Individual and Community	
Outcome 5.7 A student analyses influences on health decision-making and develops strategies to promote health and safe behaviours.	
<p>Students learn about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • empowering individuals & communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – individual action – community action – developing personal skills, eg advocacy – developing supportive environments • 	<p>Students learn to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify inequities that exist in the local community & propose actions to address them, eg homelessness • identify a key issue for individual or group action. Raise awareness & gather support for the issue using ICT skills including a mailmerge.

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Learning Experience

Act One: Unhinged

In Act 1 we meet the Petro family, in particular Susie Petros, Casey's mother.

1. In small groups, identify the current life challenges and explore the social and cultural influences in Susie's life.
 - Reflect on a Suzie's situation. Propose the personal characteristics and skills that would help Suzie to deal with coping and changing this situation.
2. In pairs, choose someone who has overcome adversity and identify the characteristics and qualities that make this person resilient. Does Suzie possess any of these characteristics or qualities?
3. Suzie is looking for work and has asked you to help her identify and practise the skills she requires to apply for work, eg application letter, locating and evaluating job advertisements.

Act 2: Respect

In Act 2, we get to know Kyle, Casey's brother.

1. Kyle and Casey are twins but very different. Identify the differences between the two of them under the following headings: physical, social and emotional health.
2. Investigate the changing nature of Kyle's sense of self and how it is different in various social contexts, eg home, school, with friends
3. Analyse the problem situations Kyle experiences in this Act to determine the degree to which responsibility is personal, shared or owned by someone else
4. Discuss the reasons why Kyle takes negative risks? (i.e drinking, break and enter, etc).
 - Outline the factors influencing Kyle's risk taking?
 - As a twin, explain why Casey does not take risks like Kyle? Discuss the influence of gender on risk behaviour?
 - Outline the outcomes of Kyle's risk behaviour.
 - Describe strategies to help Kyle minimise harm in his life when he is feeling depressed.
5. The Act ends with George asking Kyle why he doesn't show some respect?
Re:read the scenes in Appendix A and explain what George means by addressing the following:
 - empathy and understanding
 - respect and trust

Act 3 Silence

In Act 3 we get to know George a little better.

1. Explain how George's thoughts affect his feelings and behaviour.
2. Propose strategies to manage George's unhelpful and unrealistic ways of thinking.
3. Rehearse a range of positive management strategies that might be suitable for George (e.g. listening to music, physical activity, relaxation, deep breathing).
4. Analyse George's situation to determine the degree to which responsibility is personal, shared or owned by someone else.

5. In the final scene between George and Suzie in the kitchen, George expresses how he is feeling using negative self-talk.

'Great grandad bought this place back in 1898. Now I'm such a useless bastard, I gotta sell it. Cant support mi wife and kids, not like mi Dad and those before him...even Grandma kept it goin when Pop fought in the war. "There's no place in life for failure," that's what my Dad used to say.'

Rewrite the scene using appropriate expression of needs and feelings that are more constructive.

6. Identify and examine the role of the community services available to regional families in drought areas.

Act 4: Burnt

The Act opens with Casey leaving to go Sydney with her school mates.

1. The parents are concerned about their children's safety while in Sydney. The school has asked you to formulate a safety plan to ensure all students make good choices while away.

- Identify the possible challenging situations that may occur while the students are in Sydney.
- List the choices and consequences and
- Make a decision about the best choice

2. Explore the social and cultural influences on the way Suzie and George think about the challenges they are facing when they visit the priest and real estate agent.

3. The Petros decide to keep their farm. Propose and evaluate strategies that take into account influences on health decision- making, and support people to behave in healthy and safe ways.

4. Identify inequities that exist in the Petros' local community & propose actions to address them.

5. Identify a key issue for one of the main characters or group (e.g. students, farmers). Write a letter to raise awareness & gather support for the issue using ICT skills including a mailmerge.

APPENDIX A

BURNT ACT TWO: Respect - Scenes 4-7

Scene 4: TRASHING THE ENGLISH/HISTORY STAFFROOM

TWENTY FIVE MINUTES LATER, KYLE BREAKS INTO THE ENGLISH-HISTORY FACULTY STAFFROOM AND STARTS TRASHING THE PLACE. HE THEN GATHERS SOME PAPERS IN A PILE AND STARTS A FIRE.

A TORCH SHINES ON HIS FACE. HE LOOKS UP AND FREEZES. IT'S SENIOR CONSTABLE DEBBIE DALLAS.

DALLAS Hello....is that Casey? Is your mother or father home Casey? It's Senior Constable Dallas from the police station in town....could I speak with your,....thanks.

PAUSE

Hello, George...it's Debbie Dallas here, um, sorry to ring you at this hour, figured I'd make the call first before I made the trek out there...arh....I've got your son down here at the station....no, he's fine, he's had a bit too much to drink by the look of him, by his appearance...arh, I caught him at the school, the high school, he was involved in a break and enter situation, and arh, as well as completely trashing the English-History staffroom, he seemed, arh, a little intent on burning the place down if I hadn't've shown up when I did.

PAUSE.

I'm gonna have to charge him with the break-in and the malicious damage... if you could come down to the station to pick him up...or I could come and drop him off at yours,... whatever's easiest for you,....

PAUSE. THE SCENE STARTS TO SHIFT IN SLOW MOTION

No, he was on his own by the look of him...he's not saying very much as you'd expect...not a big talker your lad....coulda been worse,...a lot worse of course.

SMALL PAUSE.

I don't know what he was thinking.

Scene 5: HOME WAR

THE LIGHTS COME UP AT THE PETRO HOUSE SOME TWO HOURS LATER, GEORGE HAVING PICKED KYLE UP AND BROUGHT HIM HOME WHERE HE STANDS IN THE LOUNGEROOM, HIS PARENTS STANDING LOOKING AT HIM IN DISGUST AND DISBELIEF.

SUZIE What were you thinking?

PAUSE.

You were gonna burn the whole school down? What, because you failed a...
...an essay or something? Because you failed an exam? You want to be expelled? You'll get at least a temporary...what do they call it...expulsion.

KYLE STANDS SILENT AND BROODING.

Eh? Tell us. We have a right to know Kyle.

PAUSE. SUZIE LOOKS AT GEORGE WHO IS TOO DISGUSTED TO TALK.

So, now you're charged, you have to appear in the Children's Court, I suppose we have to arrange legal aid or a solicitor...not to mention the cost of the damages....Jesus Christ Kyle, aren't things bad enough!

PAUSE.

You're grounded. Forget the excursion, forget the formal, forget the after party, forget touch footy. Forget your pocket money. School and home, school and home, that's it.

KYLE Well that'll save yas some money, wont it.

GEORGE LOSES IT AND COMES OVER TO HIT KYLE WHO HITS BACK. THIS IS A VERY UGLY EXCHANGE WHICH SHOCKS EVERYONE.

SUZIE Stop it. Stop it....

SUZIE EVENTUALLY GETS IN THE WAY OF THE TWO FIGHTING AND SHE COPS AN ELBOW IN THE MOUTH WHICH MAKES BOTH MEN STOP AND STARE AT HER. GEORGE MOVES TOWARDS HER, BUT SHE HOLDS HER ARM UP IN THE AIR AS IF MEANING 'DON'T COME NEAR ME'.

KYLE RUNS OFF.

SUZIE Kyle!

PAUSE.

George.

BLACKOUT

Scene 6: THE TORCH

LATE AT NIGHT. THE BACK PADDOCK OF THE PROPERTY. GEORGE IS LOOKING FOR KYLE WITH A TORCH.

GEORGE Come on Kyle. You cant stay out here all night. Where are ya? Kyle?

HE EVENTUALLY SHINES THE TORCH ON KYLE WHO IS HUDDLED UP IN THE CORNER OF THE PROPERTY AROUND SOME OLD RUSTED MACHINERY.

KYLE IS CRYING HARD AND HIDES HIS FACE FROM THE TORCHLIGHT. GEORGE COMES OVER TOWARDS HIM AND KYLE FLINCHES AWAY FROM HIM, CURLING UP FURTHER IN A TIGHTER BALL. GEORGE SITS AWAY FROM HIM. HE CALMS DOWN.

LONG PAUSE.

GEORGE We copped ya Mum a beauty in the face. It'll look like I've been beating her. We're both in the poo now. You'll be getting' done for malicious damage in the Childrens Court and I'll be next door getting done for domestic violence. Everyone in town'll see us both standing out the front of the courthouses. Steptoe & Son. Constable Dallas'll drive us to gaol, both of us in the back of the Paddy Wagon...drop you off at Cowra, take me to Goulburn. I hate Goulburn. At least it pisses down rain there.

Scene 7: MISS PIERCE

THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL MISS PIERCE IS MEETING WITH GEORGE AND KYLE IN HER OFFICE.

MRS PIERCE Look, I understand this is out of character for you Kyle, you are normally a quiet lad, but he has been absent from a number of classes this term. I'll take it under advisement your thoughts on Mr O'Daniels and I will have a word with him, but that's no excuse for such an extreme act of vandalism is it? You are so lucky that no great damage was done to the premises and you'd do well to light a candle for Constable Dallas the next time you go to church because she has literally saved your skin. Ten more minutes would have seen you in much deeper trouble and you'd now be hanging over an abyss from which I could not save you.

Now...I wont be pressing any charges. I believe in the power of redemption. Of course you wont be allowed to go on the excursion next week. You'll be suspended from school for twenty days starting today and after that you'll be on thin ice if you want to complete your course requirements for your School Certificate. One more transgression and I can assure you you'll get the Wrath of Karn coming down on you. Is that understood Kyle?

KYLE NODS HIS HEAD.

It's a pity your wife couldn't come down to the school Mr Petro...I understand things are a little tough at home recently with the property...arh...,the way things are...nobody's finding it easy these days are they.

GEORGE No. Thanks for....arh, this'll certainly be a one-off thing....and arh....yeah, like you say....

THE 'MEETING' WITH MISS PIERCE IS OVER AND SHE USHERS THEM TO THE DOOR.

MRS PIERCE Alright. Think about your future Kyle.

KYLE NODS HIS HEAD AS THEY ARE LED OUT INTO THE FOYER OF THE SCHOOL. MISS PIERCE EXITS. THEY STAND IN THE FOYER SILENTLY. GEORGE LOOKS AT KYLE, KYLE LOOKING AROUND SEEING IF HE SEES ANYONE HE KNOWS. GEORGE SEES A PHOTO ON THE WALL.

GEORGE You seen this photo?

KYLE BEGRUDGINGLY LOOKS AT IT.

That's me there. With the beard and the mullet. I was ruck/full forward.

GEORGE LOOKS AT THE TROPHIES.

And we won that Cup there. Regional Champions. Thrashed Jindagil by 8 goals. Lost the State final to...arh...some school in Albury...Scotch College or something.

KYLE **UNIMPRESSED WITH THIS TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE** Losers.

GEORGE You in any of these photos?

KYLE Na.

GEORGE Why don't you show some respect?

KYLE What for?

KYLE WALKS AWAY. GEORGE STANDS LOOKING AT THE PHOTOS.

MUSIC STARTS.

END ACT TWO.