

studio180theatre

SEASON 2018/19

THE NETHER

Written by Jennifer Haley

Directed by Peter Pasyk

Presented by Coal Mine and Studio 180 Theatre

1454 Danforth Ave, Toronto ON M4J 1N4

October 7 – November 4, 2018

Weekday Matinées **October 17 & 24 1:30PM**

\$18/Student (Complimentary Teacher Tickets)

At Studio 180 Theatre we have a fifteen-year history of introducing audiences to provocative plays that tackle sensitive and potentially explosive social issues. In keeping with this tradition, we are excited to be producing the Toronto premiere of The Nether – a play that addresses disturbing and taboo subject matter head-on. We recommend The Nether for mature groups of senior high school students, and we want to provide you with adequate details to help you make an informed decision about whether or not this theatrical experience is a good fit for your class.

Part crime drama, part science fiction, *The Nether* prompts important conversations about technology, virtual reality and the impact of the internet. Jennifer Haley's 2013 drama imagines a dystopian future in which social and professional activities have migrated predominantly online, environmental degradation has alienated us from the natural world, and human beings are increasingly disconnected from one another.

This sets the stage for the character 'Sims' to create an online environment that recreates the sights, sounds, smells and feelings of an innocent time gone by. However, this virtual 'Hideaway' conceals some very dark secrets. Not only does it offer the experience of tending a garden or sipping a fine cognac – it provides a virtual opportunity for people to have sex with and murder children. In *The Nether*, an investigative team led by a rookie detective must navigate the physical and moral space between the 'real world' and virtual reality, as she interrogates Sims and attempts to bring him down.

This riveting 90-minute thriller is sure to provoke big questions about our selves and our society, including: what are the social ramifications of environmental devastation? Is there a universal need for human connection? How do we conduct ourselves differently in our real-life and online relationships? Does the internet expand or restrict our privacy and freedom? And ultimately, can and should there be such a thing as a *life outside of consequence*?

The Nether will be an exciting and engaging play for senior high school students with curriculum connections to Drama, English, Media Studies, Communications and Technology, Law, and Social Science.

There is some very strong language in the play and the content is mature, featuring potentially triggering topics such as child sexual abuse, pedophilia and suicide. These topics are addressed by inference and through dialogue only. No sexual contact, sexual or physical violence is depicted on stage and there is no nudity.

