STUDY GUIDE PLAYHOUS

<u>ACCES</u>

MYSTERIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES

WORLD PREMIERE GIL CATES THEATER AT THE GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE JUNE 11 – JULY 14, 2019

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Amy Levinson, Rachel Weigardt-Egel, Brian Dunning, Wendell Pascual, Patrick Brown, Joannarae Ibañez, Brian Allman, Ellen Catania and Jessica Brusilow Rollins.

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Jennifer Zakkai This publication is to be used for educational purposes only.

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MYSTERIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES

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SECTION 1 ABOUT THIS PRODUCTION



WRITTEN BY

Michael Mitnick INSPIRED BY THE NEW YORKER ARTICLE BY **David Grann** DIRECTED BY Matt Shakman SET DESIGNER **Brett J. Banakis** COSTUME DESIGNER E.B. Brooks LIGHTING DESIGNER **Elizabeth Harper ORIGINAL MUSIC & SOUND DESIGN BY Jonathan Snipes PROJECTION DESIGNERS** Kaitlyn Pietras & Jason H. Thompson **ILLUSION DESIGNERS** Francis Menotti & David Kwong DRAMATURG **Amy Levinson** PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER **Brooke Baldwin** ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER **Lizzie Thompson** CASTING DIRECTOR **Phyllis Schuringa, CSA**



Hugo Armstrong as The American and others



Leo Marks as Smith and others



John Bobek as Chester and others



Ramiz Monsef as Watson and others



Alan Tudyk as Richard Lancelyn Green/ Sherlock Holmes



Austin Durant as Conan Doyle and others



Helen Sadler as Touie and others

ABOUT THIS PRODUCTION

SYNOPSIS

Based on a true story, *Mysterious Circumstances* explores the death of writer Richard Lancelyn Green, a highly regarded expert on author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and his creation, legendary investigator Sherlock Holmes. The story occurs in real and imagined realms as Green seeks a box of papers upon which his biography of Conan Doyle depends, Conan Doyle considers a radical change in his work, and Holmes and his partner Dr. James Watson are impacted by Green's demise. Along the way, troubling questions arise about how Green died. The play's search for a resolution illuminates the experience — and consequences — of being obsessed with literary subjects and their authors.

TIME/SETTING: Based on true events that occurred in 1894 and 2004.

This play was commissioned as part of the Geffen Playhouse's New Play Development Program thanks to the generosity of The Harold & Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust.

Recipient of the Edgerton Foundation New Play Award. Major support for this world premiere production provided by the Edgerton Foundation New Play Production Fund.

ARTISTIC BIOGRAPHIES



MICHAEL MITNICK (Playwright)

Michael Mitnick's plays include *Sex Lives of Our Parents* directed by Davis McCallum (Second Stage Theater), *The Siegel* directed by Casey Stangl (South Coast Repertory), *Ed, Downloaded* directed by Sam Buntrock (Denver Center for the Performing Arts) and *Spacebar: A Broadway Play by Kyle Sugarman* directed by Maggie Burrows (The Wild Project). He cowrote the musical *Fly by Night* directed by Carolyn Cantor (Drama Desk-nominated for Best Musical, Playwrights Horizons). His songs have been sung at Lincoln Center, The Guggenheim, Joe's Pub, 54 Below and on HBO. Films include *The Giver* directed by Alfonso Gomez-Rejon. Upcoming: *Scotland, PA* at Roundabout Theatre Company this fall. M.F.A. in Playwriting from The Yale School of Drama. He was born and raised in Pittsburgh.



DAVID GRANN (Author of The New Yorker article "Mysterious Circumstances")

David Grann is a #1 New York Times bestselling author and a staff writer at The New Yorker magazine. He is the author of The Lost City of Z and a National Book Award finalist for Killers of the Flower Moon, both of which were chosen as one of the best books of their respective years by The New York Times, The Washington Post, and other publications. He is also the author of The Devil and Sherlock Holmes: Tales of Murder, Madness, and Obsession and Old Man and the Gun: And Other Tales of True Crime. Several of his stories, including The Lost City of Z and Old Man and the Gun, have been adapted into major motion pictures. And his work has garnered several honors for outstanding nonfiction, including a George Polk Award, an Edgar Award, and a Spur Award.



MATT SHAKMAN (Director)

Matt Shakman has directed three acclaimed productions for the Geffen Playhouse: the West Coast premiere of David Lindsay-Abaire's *Good People*, the world premiere of Jeffrey Hatcher's new adaptation of *Wait Until Dark* and Joshua Harmon's *Bad Jews*. Matt founded and was the artistic director of the Black Dahlia Theatre in Los Angeles, which was named "one of a dozen young American companies you need to know" by American Theatre magazine and "Best Small Theatre" by Los Angeles magazine. Matt is also well-regarded for his achievements in television and film. He is a director & producer for FX's *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia* and has directed episodes of *Game of Thrones* (DGA nomination), *Mad Men, Fargo, Good Wife* and *Succession*. He recently helmed the pilot episode for Hulu's *The Great* starring Elle Fanning and Nicholas Hoult, airing in 2020.

SECTION 2 THEMES & TOPICS

CHARACTERS & THE AUTHORS & FANS WHO LOVE THEM

VICTORIAN ERA

David Grann, author of "Mysterious Circumstances," the New Yorker article upon which the play is based, notes the influence of the era in which Conan Doyle wrote: "When Homes made his debut...he was considered not just a character but a paragon of the Victorian faith in all things scientific. He entered public consciousness around the same time as the development of the modern police force, at a moment when medicine was finally threatening to eradicate common diseases and industrialization offered to curtail mass power."

LIFE IMITATES FICTION

Interestingly, Conan Doyle's fiction ended up having a beneficial real-life application: having not only created but absorbed Holmes's methods in crime investigation, Conan Doyle proved the innocence of George Edalji, whose father was Parsi, and who had been jailed for injuring livestock in a rural English community. Not only did Conan Doyle's advocacy push back against the racial prejudice that had fueled the case against the young man, it also played a part in setting up the first British Court of Appeals.



Though centered on the real-life death of Richard Lancelyn Green (1953-2004), an expert on world-famous fictional detective Sherlock Holmes and his renowned creator Sir Arthor Conan Doyle (1859-1930), *Mysterious Circumstances* is in many ways about the unique relationships between authors and their subjects and the magical hold characters can have on readers. In fiction, an author often envisions a main character with a quest. To bring the character's personality and journey to life, the author considers every detail of their history and present, and through this exploration builds a relationship with them. Readers then connect with the person the writer has created — each in their own special way. The more popular the figure, especially one like Sherlock Holmes who appears in a series of works, the more readers may feel like the creation is a real presence in their lives.

Conan Doyle and Holmes: Author Conan Doyle's relationship with Sherlock Holmes began in 1887, when his novel *A Study in Scarlet* appeared. Up until then, the Scotland-born author had published a few stories, while in medical school to become an ophthalmologist. Conan Doyle based Holmes on his professor Dr. Joseph Bell, who specialized in making diagnoses through intense observations of his patients' appearance, movements, and clothing, as well as the symptoms of diseases and injuries — the very methods that Sherlock Holmes uses to solve crimes so brilliantly. Conan Doyle also endowed Holmes with distinctive traits: he dabbles in cocaine when bored; eats little while solving a case; plays the violin well; is very untidy; refuses to indulge in emotions; and does not trust women. While the first two Sherlock Holmes novels attracted little notice, the next two short stories published in *The Strand Magazine* became hugely popular. Doyle gave up practicing medicine and completed 22 more short stories over the course of six years. Each story is told through the narration of Dr. James Watson, who became a housemate at 221B Baker Street in London and helps Holmes with his investigations.

Just before his tales of Sherlock Holmes took off, Conan Doyle published a historical novel, a genre he considered superior to detective fiction, and likely to bring him a higher level of professional acclaim. Tired of being distracted from pursuing his

THEMES & TOPICS

SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETIES

In 1934, enthusiasts of Sherlock Holmes founded fan clubs the Sherlock Holmes Society (in London) and the Baker Street Irregulars (in New York) - through which they could gather, share their thoughts, and engage in activities. According to Wikipedia: "Both are still active, although the Sherlock Holmes Society was dissolved in 1937 and revived in 1951. The London society is one of many worldwide who arrange visits to the scenes of Holmes adventures, such as the Reichenbach Falls in the Swiss Alps. The two societies founded in 1934 were followed by many more, first in the U.S. (where they are known as "scion societies"-offshoots-of the Baker Street Irregulars) and then in England and Denmark. There are at least 250 societies worldwide, including Australia, Canada. India. and Japan (whose society has 80,000 members). Fans tend to be called 'Holmesians' in Britain and 'Sherlockians' in the United States." In Mysterious Circumstances, the investigation of Richard Lancelyn Green's death is complicated by the conflicts among members of different societies.

SOURCES

tinyurl.com/DoyleEncyclopedia www.arthurconandoyle.com tinyurl.com/BritLibraryACD

Grann, David. "Mysterious Circumstances." *The New Yorker*, 5 Dec 2004.

PHOTO CREDIT Pixabay/PD

POINT

DISCUSSION

dream because of Holmes's popularity, Conan Doyle famously killed him off in "The Final Problem" (1893), in which Holmes and arch-criminal Professor Moriarty fall to their deaths at Reichenbach Falls in Switzerland. While the public was outraged he "murdered" his character, Conan Doyle spent the next eight years writing historical fiction and non-fiction. He reunited with his famous character in 1901, when he published *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, a novel in which Holmes appears before his death. In 1903, when a publisher offered a large amount of money, he resurrected Holmes in "The Adventure of the Empty House," by having him claim to Watson he fabricated his death to outwit his adversaries. Conan Doyle went on to write 32 more Sherlock Holmes short stories and one novel over the next 24 years.

Green and Conan Doyle: As with fiction writers and their creations, biographers of people who have existed can also develop complex relationships with their subjects, while they research and construct their lives. In Green's case, he found Arthur Conan Doyle through his love of Sherlock Holmes, and, in the end, his devotion to upholding Conan Doyle's integrity as an author, as well as his own, may have led to his destruction.

As a 13-year-old boy, Green was so obsessed with Sherlock Holmes, he built a replica of the detective's Victorian living quarters in the attic of his family's home. According to David Grann, author of the *New Yorker* article about his puzzling death, Green was "intensely shy, with a ferociously logical mind and a precise memory...His rigorous mind had found its match in Holmes and his 'science of deduction,' which could wrest an astonishing solution from a single, seemingly unremarkable clue." As the youngest member to ever join the Sherlock Holmes Society of London — one of two main societies organized by fans of Holmes that continue to this day— Green participated in "the Great Game," which considers Sherlock Holmes a real person, Watson the author of his stories, and Conan Doyle, Watson's literary agent, and seeks to address inconsistencies in the tales, using Holmes's methods.

After graduating from Oxford in 1975, Green decided to delve more seriously into scholarship by writing a detailed biography of Conan Doyle that would present facts about his life and also illuminate his inner life. Seeking to live up to Holmes's stringent methods of working with "data," not just anecdotes, Green searched for a "trove of letters, diaries, and manuscripts" that had vanished after Conan Doyle's death in 1930. In the 1980s, after Green had become a respected expert on both the author and his character, he became close to Conan Doyle's daughter Jean and was stunned to discover she possessed the box of rare materials he'd been searching for. While helping her secure them, he glimpsed but was not allowed to read them. Green waited patiently for the papers to be donated to the British Library after Jean's death in 1997 in order to access them as a scholar. After he heard they were to be sold, he protested vigorously, with the support of various society members.

In *Mysterious Circumstances*, a myriad of connections — among Green and his colleagues; between Green and Conan Doyle's daughter Jean; among members of different Holmes societies, and between Holmes and Watson — are not only evoked but entwined, as playwright Michael Mitnick invites the audience to consider how Green died, through the intersections of true events and characters that are so vivid and loved they become real.

Have you ever felt invested in a character in books, films, or a television series? If so, why? If not, why not?

THEMES & TOPICS MURDER MYSTERIES — IN FICTION & IN LIFE

DEDUCTION VS. INDUCTION

While Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes experts refer to his crime-solving methodology as "deduction," he may, in fact, primarily use "induction." Both are ways to reason. When we make a deduction, we have a premise in mind for which we find evidence that proves it. When we make an induction, specific evidence leads us to make conclusions about events we have not witnessed ourselves.

ENDURING POPULARITY

As David Grann has pointed out in his New Yorker article, "Holmes's stringent devotion to his scientific method has propelled him into worldwide fame through over 250 films. 600 radio shows, and 25 television shows." When TV and film have set the stories in different eras. Holmes's essence has remained. In her review of a Mr. Holmes, Nathalie Atkinson observes, "Even plucked from his gas-lit Victorian milieu, stripped of his familiar costume, of his chronicler Dr. Watson and even of his memories. the strength of Arthur Conan Doyle's supremely rational creation is that he is still always recognizably Sherlock Holmes. In the present-day London of BBC's Sherlock, he is a twitchy, verbose savant with poor social skills; in the New York of CBS's *Elementary*, he is a brownstone-dwelling, tattooed hipster fresh out of rehab; and in the postwar Sussex of Mr. Holmes. he is an erstwhile celebrity in his dotage (The Globe and Mail, 2015).



Detective Fiction: While the characters and settings in them may be quite different, fictional murder mysteries often unfold in formulaic ways. A victim is killed early on and little attention is paid to the human cost. They are either not well known or are so disreputable there could be any number of suspects. Actions, objects, and forensic evidence, such as fluids, stains, and fibers, serve as clues that are seeded throughout the story. Motivations are explored and certain characters are cast as "red herrings" — possible suspects that divert the readers' attention. A brilliant investigator puts all the clues together so skillfully and reads suspects so perceptively, they figure out who committed the crime, and why. Given the inevitable uncertainties of life, that a puzzle has been solved and justice has been served can feel deeply satisfying and reassuring. This may explain why detective fiction is second only to romance as a popular genre and sells millions of books each year.

History of Detective Fiction: Some of the elements fans of detective fiction take for granted emerged only decades before Conan Doyle became the "father" of this genre. Until the early 1800s, police forces as we know them did not exist and victims had to hire "trackers" to find criminals and exact justice. Advocates for crime prevention lobbied for the development of the metropolitan police force, believing that the threat of arrest by professionals would be a deterrent. The role of detectives emerged in the 1840s, with the need for a special section that focused on solving crimes. According to Michael Sims, author of *Arthur and Sherlock: Conan Doyle and the Creation of Holmes*, detectives had "a growing reputation as heroic figures who acquired power over criminals through detailed knowledge of them." Several detectives who wrote memoirs and fiction writers who contributed to the growth

THEMES & TOPICS

THE PROBLEM OF THOR BRIDGE

Cited as a possible source of inspiration for Richard Lancelyn Green's death, this Holmes tale is about a suicide that is staged as a homicide to implicate a hated rival.

SOURCES

Sims, Michael. *Arthur and Sherlock: Conan Doyle and the Creation of Holmes*. New York: Bloomsbury USA, 2017.

tinyurl.com/BritishLibSH

www.pbs.org/program/ sherlock-changed-world/

tinyurl.com/2017-Stats-FBI

tinyurl.com/Deduct-InductReasoning

PHOTO CREDIT Pixabay/PD

of the genre influenced Conan Doyle. Edgar Allan Poe is credited with being the first writer to make a detective the main character and to establish the "intellectual crime-fighter as hero." Émile Gaboriau's detailed plots "helped create the police procedural" and showed that a detective "needs to be a kind of scientist." Sims notes that in Sherlock "Arthur had merged the characters he met in real life and in fiction, embodied his own reckless bravery and burgeoning passion for justice, and married a Romantic vision of science to the myth of the heroic adventurer."

Impacts on Genre and Real-Life Criminal Investigations: Conan Doyle is considered responsible for innovations that became "major conventions in the genre," including the investigator having a less astute friend by their side who asks questions and opposing an "arch criminal" as smart and skilled as they are. The methods Conan Doyle devised for Sherlock Holmes influenced the genre as well as the field of forensic science: "From blood to ballistics, from fingerprints to footprints, Holmes was 120 years ahead of his time, protecting crime scenes from contamination, looking for minute traces of evidence and searching for what the eye couldn't see (PBS – *How Sherlock Changed the World*, 2016)."

Real-Life Crime: Where detective fiction usually provides a form of "literary escape," as David Grann noted about Sherlock Holmes stories, murders that occur in real life are radically different in impact and outcomes. Such events are traumatic for family, friends, community members, and, sometimes, the police officers assigned to cases. According to the FBI, roughly half of homicide victims in America know their slayer. Murders can also result from random, inexplicable acts of violence by strangers. In many cases, as with *Mysterious Circumstances*, there is not enough evidence to determine what actually happened, let alone arrest and convict a suspect. Available facts and ambiguous circumstances often only lead to inferences, which for some can become strong beliefs about what might have occurred.

In *Mysterious Circumstances*, playwright Michael Mitnik turns a macabre real-life event into a gripping mystery that follows some, but not all, of the conventions of detective fiction. Green is a victim who fears his life is in danger — his associates report that when Green mounted an effort to stop the sale of Conan Doyle's papers, he grew agitated, and there are several moments when Green fears he is being followed. There is a potential adversary: "the American," an unnamed CIA employee and Holmes fan with whom Green had collaborated, and who had interfered with Jean's trust in Green. Citing different bits of evidence at the crime scene, Green's colleagues are split on exactly who is responsible for his death — and in the end, who did it remains a true mystery.

DISCUSSION POINT

Are you a fan of detective fiction? If so, what do you find most appealing about this genre? Is there a particular detective you follow? Why? If not a fan, why not?

THEMES & TOPICS

THE POWER & MYSTERY OF ILLUSIONS

SOURCES

tinyurl.com/magic-illusion tinyurl.com/BBCLikeMagic

PHOTO CREDIT Pixabay/PD



Theater is an art form that depends on illusions created by sets, props, lighting, projections, sound, and actions to establish different places, time changes, and sequences of events. Audiences suspend their perceptions of reality enough to believe a few chairs constitute a fully furnished home, or a pool of light is the next step in a character's journey, or when characters gaze out across the darkened orchestra, they are actually watching a storm move in. In instances like these, the production elements and actors' behavior provide suggestions that audience members fill out with their visual knowledge, imaginations, and sense of logic.

In the art of illusion known as magic, visual feats, usually involving objects or bodies, defy logic. Whether a magician teleports a card from the middle of a deck to inside a glass bottle, or a live elephant disappears from a large stage in the flash of a dropped cloth, or an assistant levitates off the ground without visible support, audiences delight in not knowing how these feats occur and in the senses of mystery and wonder that result.

Creating illusions takes much practice and the techniques and equipment that underlie them are preserved through a strict code of silence among magicians. In the United States, well-known magicians have included escape artist Harry Houdini, whose celebrity in the early 1900s helped popularize the craft, and Doug Henning, who is credited with drawing adults back to enjoying magic in the 1970s, after it had fallen out of favor and was considered children's entertainment. More recently, Siegfried and Roy and David Copperfield have dazzled audiences in Las Vegas, while artists like Pen and Teller have focused on smaller-scale, intellectually stimulating acts.

In *Mysterious Circumstances*, theatrical illusions as well as magical events both deepen and reflect the sense of mystery surrounding what happened to Richard Lancelyn Green.

OBJECTS & THE STORIES THEY TELL

Taking *Mysterious Circumstances* as a source of inspiration, in which a box full of important papers leads Green, and the audience, on a journey, identify an object that is significant to you.

Draw a detailed sketch of the object, as well as features of any settings or people associated with it, in the space above. Describe the object, using vivid, sensory details, and where it came from.

Imagine a story in which you are in pursuit of this object. Why must you have it? What will you do to get it? Where will you go? Whom will you meet? What obstacles will get in your way? Will others be in pursuit of it, or help you? Will you find it or will the object elude you? How will success or failure feel?

Share your adventure with a partner.

SECTION 3 PERSONNEL PROFILE

AN INTERVIEW WITH PATRICK BROWN

What is your title and how long have you worked at the Geffen? My title is Director of Marketing, and I've worked at the Geffen Playhouse for 7 months.

What are your primary responsibilities?

My primary responsibility is to get people in the seats of the Geffen Playhouse to experience the incredible theater we offer. As a marketing director, I work with a team that distills the essence of what a show is about to entice people to come see it. I oversee advertising through print ads, social media, radio campaigns, and websites to ensure we generate strong ticket sales. Another main part of my job is to look at the big picture of how our theater is represented in our city, and to craft how people think about the Geffen Playhouse, through the design, photography and even the words we use to describe our theater and our shows. This boils down to what we call our "brand identity," and is what sets us apart from all the other theaters not just in our city, but across the country.

What do you believe draws audiences into attending theater? More specifically, what steps do you take to support the success of different kinds of plays?

Celebrities! Just kidding (kind of). Although it's great to work at a theater that attracts actors like Idina Menzel (*Frozen, Wicked*) and Nikolaj Coster-Waldau (*Game of Thrones*), audiences ultimately attend theater because it's a live, visceral experience they can't get from staying home on the couch and watching Netflix.

There's always a different marketing strategy depending on what type of play is on stage. For example, for a more "cerebral" play like *The Niceties* this spring, we targeted our ads to people who listen to NPR. Whereas when we have a play like *Mysterious Circumstances* which may appeal to a more true-crime loving crowd, we target people who listen to crime podcasts and watch mystery shows on PBS. Each show campaign is different.

What is distinctive about Geffen productions?

Geffen Playhouse productions are always original. We don't bring in shows that travel around the country like *Dear Evan Hansen* or *The Lion King*, so they're always hand-built for our stage and often times completely new and never seen before.



How did you get into marketing? What led to assuming your position at the Geffen?

I started out as a music major in college, but really hated practicing piano and knew I was never going to cut it as a professional musician. I still wanted to have a career in music and theatre, so I took an administrative job at the Ford Amphitheater in 2001. After that, I worked at Walt Disney Concert Hall and found that I had a passion for marketing, which led to various position changes over the next 15 years until I became a marketing director there. Last year the Geffen Playhouse came knocking on my door and the rest was history!

What do you find most challenging about your work?

Multi-tasking is the most challenging aspect of my job. With two shows happening in the theater at the same time, while two more are on the way, combined with building a new website, season planning, and managing a crew of marketing staff, it can get a little crazy. The key is to be VERY organized, make lists, and plan well in advance.

What do you enjoy most about it?

I enjoy a theater full of people, excited to see a show. There's nothing better than seeing your hard work pay off when the theater is hopping, and the buzz is palpable. Theater is meant to be enjoyed as a group, and when I can make that group as big (and happy) as possible, that's the most enjoyable part of my job.

SECTION 4 AUDIENCE ETIQUETTE

Going to the theater is a unique experience, and we all need to be mindful of "audience etiquette," or how to behave at the theater.

The Audience's Role: The audience plays an essential role during the performance of a play. Without an audience, the actors are only rehearsing. Audience members' concentrated silence and responses, such as laughing and applauding, provide energy to the actors as they bring their performance to life.

Behaviors to Avoid: Since the actors can hear the audience so clearly, it is important not to engage in behaviors that might disturb or distract them—and fellow audience members.

These actions include:

- Talking
- Texting
- Allowing cell phones to ring
- Taking photographs or video
- Getting up to leave before intermission or the end of the show (unless it is a true emergency)
- Eating or drinking
- Unwrapping candy or cough drops.

Use of Social Media: We appreciate you sharing your Geffen Playhouse experience via social media, but ask that you **do not do so inside the theater,** where the use of electronic devices is prohibited.

We recommend that you post your status **in the lobby after the performance**, and invite you to tag @GeffenPlayhouse and use #GeffenPlayhouse to share your experience and continue the conversation with us online.

Audience Awareness Activity: Before going to the Geffen Playhouse for the first time, compare and contrast the experience of seeing a live play with:

- going to the movies
- attending a live sporting event
- watching television.

DISCUSSION POINT

If you were onstage performing in a play, how would you want the audience to behave?

POST-SHOW DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Depending on the time available and your group members' interests, guide them to respond to questions selected from those suggested below. Encourage everyone to participate, while having respect for differing opinions. Individuals can share their thoughts with a partner or in a small group. Ask for several volunteers to share their groups' answers with the larger group.

- Overall, how did you feel while watching *Mysterious Circumstances*? Engrossed? Distanced? Entertained? Bored? Conflicted? Moved? Inspired? What made you feel this way?
- At which points were you most engaged in the story? Why? At which points were you least engaged? Why? (Provide evidence from the production.)
- What did you learn about author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, his character Sherlock Holmes, and the societies created by fans of Sherlock Holmes?
- To what extent did you identify with Richard Lancelyn Green's obsession with an author and his character?
- After seeing the play, how do you believe Green died? Why?
- What did you appreciate most about the performances by the actors?
- What was "magical" about this production? How did the illusions serve the story?
- How did the set, costumes, props, lighting, and projections contribute to the sense of mystery in the show?
- Would you recommend this production of *Mysterious Circumstances* to other theatergoers? Why, or why not?

RESOURCES

READ the article about Richard Lancelyn Green by David Grann in the *New Yorker* magazine, upon which the play *Mysterious Circumstances* is based at **tinyurl.com/GrannNewYorker**.

CONSULT the British Library (at **https://www.bl.uk**), which ended up receiving many of Arthur Conan Doyle's papers and those of Richard Lancelyn Green. Informative articles on Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes are available at **tinyurl.com/BritLibraryACD** and **tinyurl.com/BritishLibSH**.

LEARN about Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in the documentary *The Man Who Murdered Sherlock Holmes* at **tinyurl.com/ConanDoyleDocu**.

VIEW an episode of the British TV series featuring Sherlock Holmes— "The Problem of Thor Bridge" — that has parallels to the story of Richard Lancelyn Green's death, at **tinyurl.com/YouTubeThorBridge**.

VISIT, via video, a replica of the quarters in which Sherlock Holmes and Dr. James Watson lived, at the Sherlock Holmes Museum in London at **tinyurl.com/BakerStreetReplica**.

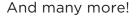
TAKE A QUIZ that tests your knowledge of Sherlock Holmes trivia at **tinyurl.com/SHTriviaQuiz**.

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