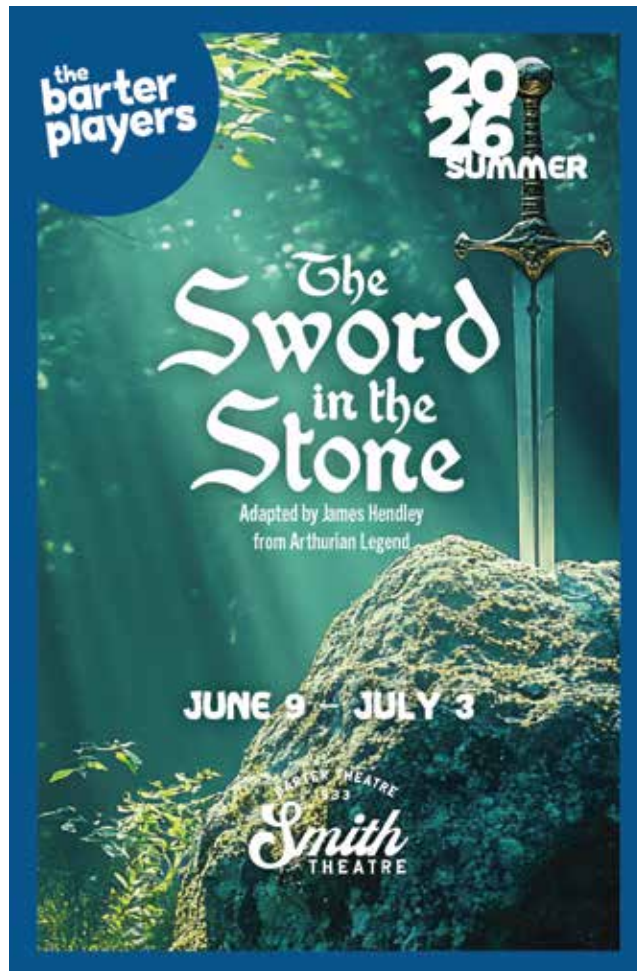


the
barter
players



Social Narrative for

The Sword in the Stone
Adapted from Arthurian Legend
by James Hendley

Barter's Smith Theatre
Summer 2026



I'm going to see a play called *The Sword in the Stone* at Barter's Smith Theatre! This play is about a young boy named Arthur who is mentored by the wizard Merlin. Merlin takes him on adventures to prepare to pull the legendary sword in the stone to become King of England.



Seeing a play is like seeing a movie. The play will be performed by people right in front of me on stage. They are called actors, and the people they are playing are called characters.



Once arriving at the theatre, I will go into the lobby where I will get my tickets. If I am early, I can wait in the lobby or lounge. Other people will also be waiting for the show to begin.



Next, I'll enter the theatre and choose a seat for the show. I'll sit in a seat and wait for the show to start. Other people will be doing the same thing. We will all wait together for the performance to begin.



Just before the performance begins, some of the actors will come out to talk about things we use in the play that help us tell the story, like props, costumes, lights, and sound.



If at any point during the show I have a question or want to leave, I will ask for help quietly. There will be ushers who can help me, too. An usher is someone in a white shirt who works at the theatre.



If anything ever gets too loud I can put on my ear protection or cover my ears with my hands.



I'll know the performance is about to begin when the lights dim around me and someone on stage makes an announcement. After the announcement, the lights will change again and I'll know the play is about to start.



England is without a King. Merlin the Wizard tells us about the legend of the Sword in the Stone, and that the person to pull out the sword will be the next King of England.



Arthur is Kay's squire. Kay is a Knight in training, and Arthur accidentally ruins Kay's family sword. Arthur promises to get Kay a new sword, even if he has to brave the Wilds.



After King Uther's death, a vast, destructive forest sprang up called The Wilds. The Wilds are known to be dangerous and make things disappear. The Wilds are also where the sword in the stone is located.



Arthur has to go into the Wilds to find Kay a new sword. In the Wilds, he saves the Questing Beast from being captured by a knight. The Questing Beast is grateful and helps direct Arthur to the Heart of the Wilds.



In the Heart of the Wilds, Arthur comes across the sword in the stone. Merlin meets Arthur at the stone and takes him to his cottage. He shows Arthur that he is a wizard and has magic capabilities, but magic has been banned from England.



Merlin decides to become Arthur's mentor and teaches him the Code of Honor. The Code of Honor is a set of principles to live by that knights and kings follow. Arthur agrees to be Merlin's student.



Back at Sir Ector's castle, Arthur shares with Ector that Merlin is a wizard. Ector believes that magic caused the conflict and threatens to banish Merlin. Merlin offers to help Ector find a sword for his son, Kay.



Arthur joins Merlin to find Kay a new sword. Merlin first teaches Arthur the three rules to the Code of Honor. He then uses magic to bring them to see Duke Pellam.



Duke Pellam is injured from his own sword. Years ago, Pellam wanted to be King, and made a greedy decision to drain the sacred lake to get gold and riches.



The lady of the lake, Nimue, stabbed his leg and put a curse on Pellam. *It is important to remember no one is actually getting hurt, and the actors are pretending. This is true of every fight in the play.* Pellam suffers from the injury and it will not heal until he can break the curse.



Nimue took the sword from Pellam and put it in the bottom of the lake. The sword holds the answer to the curse, and Arthur and Merlin agree to get the sword back for Pellam.



Merlin and Arthur must go underwater to Nimue's palace. There, she says that Arthur must go get the sword at the bottom of the lake alone. Arthur is scared, but Merlin reminds him of the code of honor, "Feel the fear but face it still."



Arthur must fight a statue that is guarding the sword. When Arthur gets the sword, it is too heavy for him. Nimue says it is a condition of the curse, and only one with the strength to bear the troubles of a nation can lift the sword.



Arthur is able to lift the sword! Arthur has the heart of service required of a King. They bring it back to Pellam, where he needs to break it open. The curse is lifted, but now they must find a different sword for Kay.



The Green Knight is one of the greatest knights in history, and Kay must beat his challenge to get his sword. Kay failed the challenge because he told a lie about his achievements. Now they must return without a sword.



Word of Merlin using magic has returned to Ector. The village is angry and Ector banishes Merlin. Arthur begs Merlin not to leave, but now it is up to Arthur to help Kay find a sword. Arthur must go to the Sword in the Stone.



Meanwhile, the tournament to become the next King of England has arrived. Kay still doesn't have a sword to compete. Arthur has gone back to the heart of the wilds to find the stone.



Merlin told Arthur the last rule of the Code of Honor, "Help one person, and you help the world", Arthur repeats this as he's lifting the sword. He must help Kay win the tournament.



Arthur is able to pull the sword from the stone!



Arthur returns to give the sword to Kay. The challenge is to defeat the Questing Beast. Because Kay is Arthur's family, the Beast refuses to fight. Kay decides to forfeit the tournament because he does not want to kill the innocent Questing Beast.



Arthur discovers the sword that he brought for Kay is the one from the legend. Because he was able to pull the sword, he is now king of England.



Ector apologizes for banishing Merlin and being afraid of magic. Merlin is now welcome back, and Ector proclaims Arthur is now King.



Athur's first act as King is to make Kay a knight, a huge honor!



Merlin, Ector, Kay, the Questing Beast, and the entire country support Arthur becoming King. He has fulfilled the legend and claimed the throne.

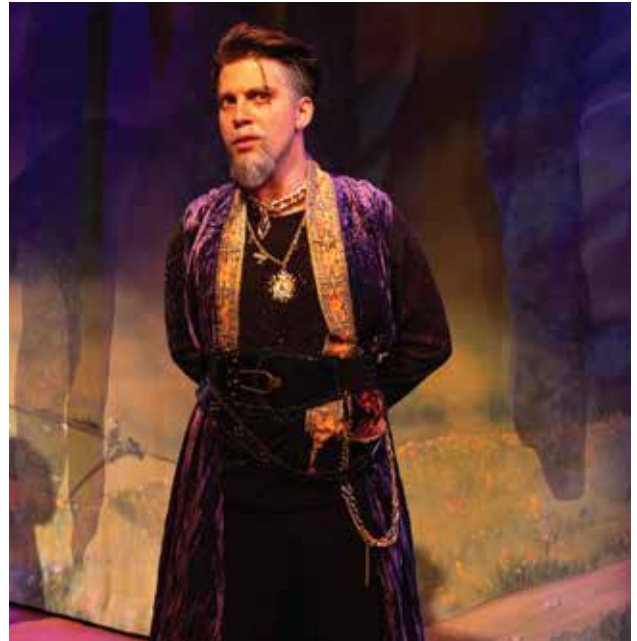
CHARACTERS in *The Sword in the Stone*

Here are the names and photos of the characters you'll see in *The Sword in the Stone*!

ARTHUR



MERLIN



KAY



ECTOR



PELLAM



NIMUE



QUESTING BEAST



BERTILAK



KNIGHT



STATUE



KING UTHUR



VILLAGERS



MAGIC

