



Drama and theatre

Blood Wedding (Federico García Lorca/Marina Carr)

Introduction/Background

- Tragedy - Lorca wrote it just before Spanish Civil War.
- This version is by Irish playwright Marina Carr.
- Relocated to a rural Irish context with some Spanish remnants.
- Variety of speech forms: verse, song, prose, Hiberno-English and more formal style.
- Archetypal characters and allegorical meaning.
- Narrative arc: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and denouement.
- Acts 1 and 2 are more naturalistic. Act 3 is supernatural and allegorical.
- Humans interact with allegorical character of death (The Weaver).
- Frequent use of metaphor and symbolism (e.g. Horse).

Key Characters

Bride: Isolated, frustrated, young (22), trapped, bound by duty, self-aware, passionate, brave, defiant, restless, rebellious, rude, strong, wilful, reckless, fatalistic, cannot help her attraction to Leonardo.

Mother: protective, domineering, controlling, traditional, single-minded, vengeful, cruel, unempathetic, bitter, lonely, grieving, heartless, xenophobic, prejudiced.

Son/Groom: simple, honest, hard-working, traditional, works on the land, finds Bride beautiful, polite, respectful, becomes violent, vengeful, driven and reckless, obeys his mother, unempathetic.

Leonardo: wild, reckless, impulsive, angry, bitter, rejected, attractive, violent, frustrated, lies to wife, proud of heritage, not materialistic, passionate, vengeful, cannot help his attraction and connection to the Bride. Only named character.

Bride's Father: widower, patriarchal, cold, isolated, materialistic, unempathetic, proud, traditional, cruel, landowner, despises dead wife, controls his daughter's life.

Leonardo's Wife: frustrated, unhappy, rejected, lonely, pregnant, materialistic, cousin to Bride, vengeful.

Housekeeper: observant, opinionated, direct, sees Bride doesn't love Groom, traditional, talks about the sex in marriage, runs the house and wedding party.

Weaver: old woman, death, weaver of fate, enters characters' homes and lives, tired of human capacity to kill, dances with and talks to humans, attends wedding.

Woodcutters: commentators; Greek chorus function; create tension, highlight the blood feud, see the world as bleak, reference Lorca, discuss death's inevitability.

Moon: oversees and 'illuminates' the action; sings, comments on the characters and their fates, creates supernatural world, like dreams and thoughts at times.

Context

- Lorca's play, Madrid, 1933: stylised, symbolist.
- Marina Carr's version Young Vic Theatre, 2019.
- Carr's version has:
- In-the-round staging, wooden floor; preshow blood spot.
- Moveable level/platform to redefine space.
- Naturalistic costumes.
- Minimal, fluid space with simple furniture and props.
- Use of flying device for Leonardo riding a horse.
- Cold/warm lighting contrast naturalistic/allegorical moments.
- Use of song and music.

Acting

- Underpinned by **research** and off-text work to establish status, social class, motivation, intent, super objective, relationships, backstory, character arc.
- Use live theatre performances to inspire you and influence your acting ideas. Consider: **What** happened, **how**, **why**, **what did I like**, how could I **adapt** the idea?
- Experiment and **explore practically**. Focus on ensuring your performance decisions communicate your intentions and chosen style. Make sure you can clearly explain **what** you are doing, **how** you are doing it and **why**.

Vocal skills

- Communicate meaning via tone, volume, tempo, pause, pitch, intonation, musicality and accent.
- Also consider vocal sounds: breath, sigh, cry, sing, hum, chant, whisper, hesitation and stutter.
- Consider vocal skills for more stylised approaches.

Physical skills

- Communicate meaning through posture, gait, body language, facial expression and gesture.
- Also consider tempo, rhythm, pace, energy, dynamics, direction, weight, speed and flow.
- Consider physical skills for more stylised approaches, e.g. dance sequences, physical theatre and stylised naturalism, such as unison, canon, repetition, motif, slow motion and exaggeration.

Interaction

- Communicate meaning through character positioning, spatial relationships, proxemics, vocal choices, physical choices. Driven by motivation and reaction.
- Needs to effectively communicate the relationship between characters.
- Between two or more characters, also with audience or even interaction with the space/set.

Themes, motifs and symbols

- Human nature, violence and vengeance.
- The past, tradition and society.
- Control-possession, ownership, land and liberation.
- Love, passion and unhappiness.
- Forces beyond human control.

Motifs and symbols:

- Horses, knives, flowers/orange blossom, blood, bull, embroidery and weaving, water.

Directing

- Will your *Blood Wedding* be a faithful interpretation or a reinterpretation?
- What staging and style are you using?
- How are you interpreting the text? What do you want to say through your production?
- Which themes will your work emphasise?
- How do you imagine the characters and their relationships?
- How will you direct your actors to communicate relationships and motivation?
- How will you use character positioning and proxemics to communicate meaning?
- How can you link to contemporary context to make the play relevant?
- What rehearsal techniques might you use with your actors, how and why?

Design

Are you creating a faithful interpretation or a reinterpretation? Use live theatre to inspire/influence your ideas. How will actors interact with the design elements? **Decisions must be consistent with your chosen style.**

Set and props – location, setting, period, themes, atmosphere, symbols

Stage type and style, layout of space, size of space, entrances and exits, colours, materials, textures, shapes, symbols, levels, projection surfaces; floor, backdrop/cyclorama; furniture and props (style, size, colour, material, condition, location, use) suspending above the stage.

Costume, Hair, Make-up – status, age, context, personality, circumstances, location

Garment: colour, size, condition, texture, material, time period. Hair: style, colour, condition, accessories. Masks/make-up: face, body, special effects.

Lighting – mood, atmosphere, location, time of day, emphasis, emotion

Naturalistic or non-naturalistic; colour; intensity; angle; positioning; type of lantern; birdie; special; practical; wash; gel, gobo; moving head; strobe; torches; phones.

Sound – location, atmosphere, emotion, tension, pace, amplification

Music; atmospheric; ambient; special effect; diegetic; non-diegetic; volume; fade; layering; soundscape; microphones; reverb; echo; delay; effects and treatment; speaker positioning.