

Proscenium's 75th Anniversary

George Woollands and Margaret Rendle founded Proscenium in 1924. The company's first production was the now little-known *The Tide*, by Basil McDonald Hastings. Since then the company has performed nearly two hundred and fifty plays, using Harrow as a base since 1945. In this time Proscenium has built up a strong reputation for performing challenging plays (both classic and contemporary) to a high standard. Our 75th anniversary in 1999 has been marked with a number of events, including publication of a commemorative brochure, and a summer party for current and past members, and a gala dinner will take place at the end of the year. As we enter the new Millennium, we look forward to our next quarter of a century!

Our Next Production The Caretaker

By Harold Pinter

Described by many as one of the greatest of post war British plays *The Caretaker* turns a cluttered London attic and its inhabitants into a microcosm of the wider world, with its battles for dominance, power and territory. At times cruel and brutal, the play is also brilliantly funny, meticulously pinning down the way people actually talk, the hesitations, the evasions, the obsessive tricks of speech.

"What can we call so subtle, suggestive and fascinating piece but a classic?"

The Times

At the Travellers Studio, Harrow Arts Centre, January 26-29 2000

For further details contact

Proscenium Box Office 0181.422.0400

In accordance with the requirements of the Council:

"Persons shall not be permitted to sit or stand in any of the gangways intersecting the seating, or to sit in any of the other gangways."

PROSCENIUM

Blood Wedding

By Federico Garcia Lorca

in a version by Ted Hughes

November 3–6, 1999

Travellers Studio, Harrow Arts Centre

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Blood Wedding

By Federico Garcia Lorca in a version by Ted Hughes

The Mother	Anne Gerrard
The Bridegroom	Charles Anthony
The Neighbour	Jeanne Hawkes
The Wife	Angie Sutherland
The Mother-in-law	Evelyn Moutrie
Leonardo	Michael Williams
The Maid	Clare Wooster
The Servant	Crystal Anthony
The Father	David Watkins
The Bride	Isabelle Cartwright
The Moon	Samantha Vaid
Death as the Beggar Woman	Jeanne Hawkes
Youths	Russell Clarke, Paul Davis
Woodcutters	Paul Davis, Colin Hickman, Sam Thornton
Young Girls	Rachel Barnett, Samantha Vaid, Clare Wooster
Directed by	Susi Thornton
Set Designed by	Michael Williams
Set Created by	Alan Glover and Michael Williams
Lighting Designed by	Neil Baker
Stage Manager	Peter Wilton
Original Music and Music Arrangement	Duncan Sykes and Vincent Eavis
Sound Engineer	Alan Taff
Prompt	June Watkins
Sound Operation by	Michael Kilroy
Lighting Operation by	Philip McClusker
Costumes	Evelyn Moutrie
Masks and Accessories	Jenny Glover

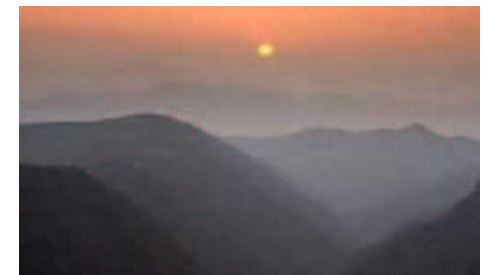
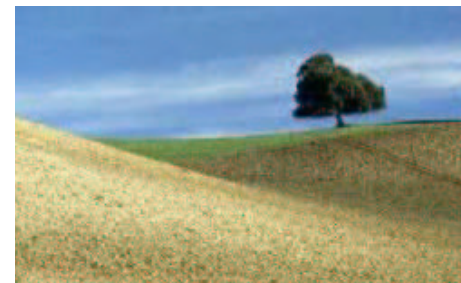
There will be one interval of fifteen minutes

Lorca on Theatre

“...a school of laughter and lamentation, an open tribunal where the people can introduce old and mistaken mores as evidence and can use living examples to explain eternal norms of the heart...The theatre is an extremely useful instrument for the edification of a country, and the barometer that measures the greatness or decline. A sensitive theatre, well oriented in all its branches, from tragedy to vaudeville, can alter a people’s sensibility in just a few years, while a decadent theatre where hooves have taken the place of wings can cheapen and lull to sleep an entire nation.” (1935)

“...Theatre [is] poetry that rises from the book and becomes human enough to talk and shout, weep and despair...” (1936)

“...Well wrought, free prose can soar to expressive heights, freeing us from the confinement and rigidity of metre. Let us welcome verse at moments when the excitement and disposition of the theme demand it, only then. You can see that, in *Blood Wedding* verse does not appear with any intensity or at any length until the wedding scene. Then, with the scene in the forest and in the last scene in the work, it takes complete command of the stage.”



Note from the Director

I am fascinated by the symbolic writing in *Blood Wedding*. I have worked with the actors to explore and share this intense language with you. They will take you on a journey in prose and poetry, which is both familiar and strange.

I like the way Lorca gives us different facets of his archetypal characters. We have enjoyed creating the interplay between them, and portraying their inner lives. They have cried out to us the pain of Life, Fate and Death.

For me the play is full of fire and passion, and we share this with you through word, song, music, movement and dance. Each scene follows Lorca's suggested colour symbolism. I hope you will experience with us the heat, the darkness and the mystery of Lorca's amazing play

Susi Thornton

A Shooting in Almeria

In 1932 Lorca read the account of a mysterious assassination which appeared in the *Heraldo de Madrid*, his favourite newspaper. The shooting happened before a wedding, near the Andalusian town of Nijar, in the province of Almeria. The report stated that the dead man, "Curro" Montes Canadas, was a former lover of the bride and had stolen the lady the night before the wedding. For this, he had been shot by the groom's outraged brother...

...The theme of lost love, of the love that could or should have been, but which is blighted, is fundamental to Lorca's work, and reflects his own early experience. In the Nijar tragedy, the poet found a powerful symbol for that experience and in *Blood Wedding* gave its expression full rein. Leonardo and the Bride, like their real life counterparts, have had a passionate adolescent love, which has lasted for three years, a love frustrated by economic considerations and almost forgotten by their neighbours. Nature had "made" the two for each other, but society frustrates her design. Tragedy is inevitable...

Peter Dineen, National Theatre - Blood Wedding programme, 1992

Lorca and Life

...Make-believe, disguises and masks charmed Federico the boy, for even then he had begun to transform the world of fiction into a living reality and to identify all of reality with a fantastic dream. Later he was to see life as a sort of dramatic game, a great world stage that, though it did not lack a distant religious background, included a vaster world of mysteries and passion. It is rare that this dualism of art and life has been so integrated in a fashion so simple, so spontaneous and at the same time so profound...for Federico the most important thing was life, with all its drama and confusion...art was a consequence of his life...

Francisco Lorca (Brother of Federico)

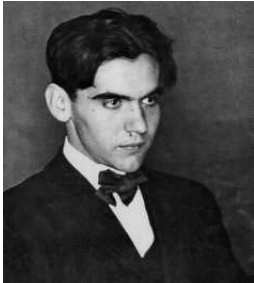
Andalusia

[There is a view that] in the plays and poetry which have an Andalusian background, Lorca attempted not to express the here-and-now of this vast and fascinating region but its ancient, often tragic, and eternal spirit...The review by Fernandez-Almagro of the Madrid premiere of *Blood Wedding* points in the same direction: "What impressed me most in *Blood Wedding* is precisely that: the spirit which drives the entire piece, a breath which comes from a great distance and a great depth. The spirit of a primitive people...which does not refer to the Andalusians of the East or West, the mountains of the coast, but to the Andalusians in their deepest psychological and historical projection. To those who were and continue to be: Arabs, Greeks, Romans, children of who knows which classical myths: the sun and the moon."

...This was, moreover, something of which Lorca was always aware, in particular of powerful links between Ancient Greece and Andalusia, which, for him, manifested themselves in the tragic spirit of the latter...Lorca was an ardent advocate of a theatre which, in the manner of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, was uncompromising in its exposure of terrible truths and powerful passions. Greek tragedy has at its heart human characters overwhelmed by forces greater than themselves, which they can neither control nor understand. It was a world which, for Lorca, still existed in rural Andalusia, with its deep-rooted beliefs in the forces of the supernatural and the irrational, and the powerlessness of individuals in relation to them.

Gwynne Edwards, Methuen commentary

Federico Garcia Lorca, 1898-1936



Federico Garcia Lorca



“It was in Fuente Vacqueros I first saw the light of day. In all the vega of Granada, there is no other village so attractive, so prosperous, and with such capacity for feeling as this one. In this town I will be earth and flowers...Its streets, its people its customs and its wickedness will be the storehouse where my childhood ideas nest and melt in the fire of my puberty. The town is enclosed with black poplar trees, laughing palaces for the birds, and with alder trees and brambles which in summer give sweet fruits that are dangerous to pick.

As one approaches the town there is a strong smell of fennel and wild celery which grow in the ditches, kissing the water. In summer there is a smell of straw that at night, with the moon, the stars and the rose bushes in bloom, form a divine scent that makes one think of the spirit that formed it. In those nights, girls sigh, thinking of the eyes which will be the light of life. In those nights, men feel even more intensely the bleeding bass string of the guitar..”

Lorca



Lorca – Chronology

- 1898 **Born 5th June, Fuente Vacqueros, Grenada. Eldest of four – father a wealthy farmer and landowner.**
- 1917 **Begins to write poetry, prose, and short plays.**
- 1919 **First play written *The Butterfly's Evil Spell*. Meets Luis Bunuel.**
- 1922 **Organises with Manuel de Falla a Festival of *Cante Jondon* (Deep Songs)**
- 1923 **Embarks on his friendship with Salvador Dali**
- 1927 **Great critical acclaim for performance of play “Mariana Pineda”. Exhibits 24 of his drawings. Publishes “Songs”, second volume of poetry.**
- 1929 **Sent to New York after visiting Paris, London and Oxford.**
- 1932 **Works on *Blood Wedding*.**
- 1933 **March 8th – premiere of *Blood Wedding* – Lorca’s first box office success.**
- 1934 **29th December – premiere of *Yerma*, another huge success. Lorca targeted by the right wing, seen as an enemy of the Church.**
- 1936 **Lorca begins work on *House of Bernarda Alba*, published posthumously.**
July - Spanish Civil War begins. August 16th, Lorca taken by fascists; following two-day detention in Viznar, taken to Alfacar and executed August 18th 1936, aged 38; nearby is a spring called *Ainadamar* by the Moors – the Fountain of Tears.

*My heart rests by the cool fountain,
Fill it with your threads,
Spider of oblivion,
To it the water of the fountain sang its song,
My awaked heart sang its loves.
Spider of silence, weave your mystery,
The water of the fountain listened darkly,
Spider of silence, weave your mystery,
My heart tumbles into the cool fountain,
White hands, far away, halt the waters,
And the water takes it away, singing with joy,
White hands, far away, nothing remains but the water.*