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Registered Charity No. HS503872R

The House of Bernarda Alba

by Federico Garcia Lorca

Translated by Gwynne Edwards

Directed by Amy Dutton

Wednesday 17th to Saturday 20th June 2009





Leeds Arts Centre is a prestigious amateur theatre group which was founded in 1945. We are a friendly society, working together to maintain the high standards for which our productions are known. We produce four plays each year at the Carriageworks, as well as organising workshops to help members to develop their acting, directing and production skills.

We offer opportunities to all who are interested in becoming involved with any aspect of drama, including acting, directing, stage management, props, designing, costumes, lighting, sound, publicity and front of house.

New members are always welcome

If you are interested in acting, directing, designing or making scenery or costumes, helping backstage with stage management or props, or lending a hand with publicity, then why not speak to one of our members front of house this evening, or in the theatre bar after the show?

You can also write, with contact telephone number, for further information to:

The Secretary, Leeds Arts Centre
c/o The Carriageworks
Millennium Square, Leeds LS2 3AD
or e-mail us at: publicity@leedsartscentre.org.uk

To find out more about the activities and forthcoming productions of the Leeds Arts Centre visit our website at:

www.leedsartscentre.org.uk



Cast
(in order of appearance)

Servant	Miranda Foxtton
Poncia	Dawn Wilkinson
Beggar woman	Maria Kwater
Girl	Sofia Kostoula
Mourners	Jill Canham
	Shirley Broadbent
	Rachel Robinson
	Pauline Ashworth
	Maria Kwater
	Sofia Kostoula
Bernarda	Rachel Vernelle
Angustias	Jo Groves
Amelia	Sarah Williams
Magdalena	Fiona Wilson
Martirio	Catherine Land
Adela	Pip Tibbetts
Maria Josefa	Pauline Ashworth
Prudencia	Shirley Broadbent

The Running time of this production is approximately one and a half hours; there will be one interval of fifteen minutes during which the bar will be open.



Federico Garcia Lorca and The House of Bernarda Alba

As a young man, Lorca studied philosophy and law at the University of Granada, but soon abandoned his legal studies for literature, art, and the theatre. In 1918, he published a book of prose inspired by a trip he had taken to Castile, and in 1919, he transferred to the University of Madrid where he organised theatrical performances and continued to read his poems in public. During this period, Lorca became associated with a group of artists who would become known as Generación del 27, including the painter Salvadore Dalí, the filmmaker Luis Bunuel, and the poet Rafael Alberti.

Lorca's first theatrical production, *The Butterfly's Evil Spell* (1920), opened at the Eslava Theater in Madrid. Although the show closed after only one night, it gave Lorca his first taste of theatrical fame. He published his first book of poems in 1921, and seven years later, his book of poetry *Romancero Gitano* or *The Gypsy Ballads* made him famous throughout Spain and he became known as the 'Gypsy poet'.

In 1929 he moved to New York to study English at Columbia University where he came into contact with amateur theatre groups and professional repertory companies. The trip also inspired a book of poetry, *Poet in New York*, which was published posthumously.

Lorca returned to Spain in 1931 and formed his own theatre company. Composed mostly of students, "La Barraca" toured the countryside giving free performances of the Spanish classics, including the works of Lope de Vega, Pedro Calderón de la Barca and Miguel de Cervantes. The company also produced the three "rural tragedies" on which Lorca's theatrical reputation rests.

The first of these tragedies, *Blood Wedding* (1933), was based on a newspaper account of a bride who ran off with her lover on her wedding night. Intended to be part of a "trilogy of the Spanish earth", *Blood Wedding* restored tragic poetry to the Spanish stage. *Yerma* (1934), also part of the Spanish earth trilogy, is the story of a woman who longs for motherhood, but whose husband is incapable of giving her a child.



Although dramatically sound, *Yerma* was not as well received as *Blood Wedding*, primarily because it was criticised by conservatives as an attack on traditional Spanish values. Lorca's third tragedy was *The House of Bernarda Alba* with the role of Bernarda written for the great tragic actress Margarita Xirgu. Although the play was never performed during Lorca's lifetime, it is considered by many to be his masterpiece.

Lorca was an early casualty of the Spanish Civil War. Considered dangerous by Franco's Nationalists on 19 August 1936 he was taken to a field, along with a schoolmaster and two bullfighters, shot, and thrown into an unmarked grave. He had finished the first draft of *The House of Bernarda Alba* two months earlier.

Lorca's writings were outlawed and burned in Granada's Plaza del Carmen. Even his name was forbidden. The young poet quickly became a martyr, an international symbol of the politically oppressed, but his plays were not revived until the 1940s in America and bans on his work in Spain remained in place until as late as 1971. Today, Lorca is considered the greatest Spanish poet and dramatist of the 20th Century

The House of Bemarda Alba finally had its stage premiere nearly a decade after Lorca's death. The play was produced in Buenos Aries in 1945 and was published in Argentina in the same year. Given the repression of artistic expression in Spain during Franco's regime, it was not until 1964 that Lorca's last play was finally produced in his native country, at Madrid's Goya Theatre.

Although the setting is specific to the values and customs of a rural Spanish people, the play's appeal is universal. Not surprisingly, given when it was written, the play focuses heavily on the costs of repressing freedom and the tyranny of those with power over others.

Amy Dutton
Director



Production Team

Director	Amy Dutton
Production Manager	Steve Fryatt
Stage Manager	Emily Holloway
Asst. Stage Manager and Set Design	Hannah Gradwell
Set Construction	Hannah Gradwell, Pete Sandles and LAC Members
Properties	Martin Cusworth
Assisted by	Denise Davies
Costumes	Kathryn Armitage and LAC Members
Assisted by	Chaz Elliott and Peter Waddicor
Lighting	Jim Marshall
Sound recording	Nicola Johnson
Sound operation	Robin Thornton
Prompt	Laurie Tozcek
Front of House Mgr.	

The programme for this production was produced with the kind assistance of

Lewis Francis Blackburn
————— solicitors —————

14-16 Paradise Square Sheffield S1 2DE
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c/o The Carriageworks
Millennium Square, Leeds LS2 3AD
or e-mail us at: publicity@leedsartscentre.org.uk

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Millennium Square, Leeds LS2 3AD
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**FORTHCOMING PRODUCTIONS
AT THE CARRIAGEWORKS**

Wed 14th to Sat 17th October 2009

Double Bill

A Resounding Tinkle

by N.F. Simpson
directed by Zoë Freedman
and

The Dumb Waiter

by Harold Pinter
directed by Maria Kwater

January/February 2010

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead

By Tom Stoppard
directed by Pip Tibbetts

April 2010

The Dresser

by Ronald Harwood
directed by Rich Francis

June 2010

The Deep Blue Sea

by Terrence Rattigan
directed by David Lancaster

The next Leeds Civic Arts Guild production at the Carriageworks

Appomattox

By Philip Glass

Presented by Leeds Youth opera

Wednesday 8th - Saturday 11th July 2009 @ 7.30pm