

THE HOUSE OF BERNARDA ALBA

ADAPTED BY PATRICIA CORNELIUS AFTER FEDERICO GARCÍA LORCA



Education Mini-Pack

25 MAY – 7 JULY

Arts Centre Melbourne, Fairfax Studio

About the Play

With their mining-mogul father dead, the Alba household is in mourning. Angela has inherited a fortune and is engaged to the local heartthrob but, as tensions rise and tempers flare between her sisters, the future seems wildly uncertain.

About the Playwright

Patricia Cornelius is a founding member of Melbourne Workers' Theatre. She is a multi-award winning playwright, screenwriter and novelist. Her most recent play, *In the Club* premiered at the Adelaide Arts Festival this year. *Big Heart* was presented at Theatre Works last year. Her play, *SHIT*, was part of the 2017 Sydney Festival and Darwin Festival following its 2015 Melbourne premiere as part of MTC's Neon Season and its 2016 remount at fortyfivedownstairs. Over her career Patricia has written over thirty plays and they include: *Savages*, *Do Not Go Gentle*, *The Gap (What goes down in Vegas)*, *The Call*, *Love*, *Fever*, *Boy Overboard*, *Slut* and *Who's Afraid of the Working Class?* (Co-written with Bovell, Tsiolkas, Reeves and Vela). Patricia co-wrote the feature film adaptation *Blessed* and is currently developing a feature film with director Catriona McKenzie.

Federico García Lorca is best known for his three brilliant tragedies (*Blood Wedding*, *Yerma* and *Alba*), wrought from the raw material of Roman Catholicism and lyric Latin poetry, rural Spanish folklore and women's yearning, rage and insight. A poet and a visual artist, Lorca chronicled a Spain in transformation. He is perhaps most famous outside Spain (where his work was banned for years) for dying absurdly young, executed by firing squad fighting the fascists in 1936. His body has never been found.



Turn the page for activities, and discussions.

Cast

Marti Candy Bowers

Angela Peta Brady

Penelope Julie Forsyth

Magda Bessie Holland

Maria Sue Jones

Bernadette Melita Jurisic

Adele Emily Milledge

Production

Director Leticia Cáceres

Set & Costume Designer Marg Horwell

Lighting Designer Rachel Burke

Composer Irine Vela

Sound Designer Jethro Woodward

Assistant Director Cassandra Fumi

Fight Choreographer Lyndall Grant

Directorial Secondment Sara Biglariasfsha

Sound Secondment Hoang Thao Van

Stage Manager Jess Keepence

Assistant Stage Manager Brittany Coombs

Genre

Australian drama / Reimagined classic

Running Time

Appx. 1hr 45min without interval

Attendance Information

Contains coarse language, sexual references and mature themes. For detailed information, please visit www.mtc.com.au/production-content-guide

Before the show



Read 'About the Play' overleaf, then watch the trailer for *The House of Bernarda Alba* at [youtube.com/melbtheatreco](https://www.youtube.com/melbtheatreco). Make a list of predictions about what you might see on stage.



Download the show programme at [mtc.com.au/backstage](https://www.mtc.com.au/backstage) and read 'Inside Alba's House', where MTC Literary Director Chris Mead discusses the intersection of Lorca, Cornelius and Cáceres' work. After reading the article, make a list of some themes you expect to be explored in the production.



In this production of *The House of Bernarda Alba*, the playwright has recontextualised the play from the villages of 1930s Spain to modern-day rural Western Australia. Discuss this choice, and what might remain unchanged, particularly in regards sexism. Students should be prepared to witness these characters endure harsh circumstances.

Discuss the quote on the advertising material for the production: 'Where there's a Will, there's a family.' What clues does this give you about the characters and/or plot?

Post-show Activities



Choose one character and create a mood board to demonstrate your own design concept. Think about Marg Horwell's costume designs and how they communicated character. Annotate your mood board to explain your creative choices regarding colour, fabric, accessories etc.



Hear more from the director and cast of *The House of Bernarda Alba* at [mtc.com.au/backstage](https://www.mtc.com.au/backstage). Choose one character and write your own epilogue for the play from their perspective as a monologue.



Discuss these lines from Act Three, Scene Fourteen:

BERNADETTE: Don't be too inquisitive. You'll find out things that you don't want to know ... You're happy enough.

ANGELA: I wanted to be happy.

BERNADETTE: I think you're happy. You're just not used to it. You're happy. Happy enough.

What has happened to Angela at this point? What does Bernadette mean by 'happy enough'? What does each character want?

Discuss the play's final moments. What happened to Adele?

Discuss Marg Horwell's set design, which includes air conditioners and bug zappers. Discuss how the world of this play made you feel. Can you identify any symbolism in the design? Discuss how the set changed during the performance. How did Rachel Burke's lighting design and Jethro Woodward's sound design enhance the production?

Melbourne Theatre Company acknowledges the Yalukit Willam Peoples of the Boon Wurrung, the Traditional Owners of the land on which Southbank Theatre and MTC HQ stand, and we pay our respects to Melbourne's First Peoples, to their ancestors past and present, and to our shared future.



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MTC Education

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