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November 10, 2006

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## **Production of Classic Spanish Play Features Costumes by Students**

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Illinois Wesleyan University's School of Theatre Arts will perform an English translation of Federico García Lorca's most famous play, *Blood Wedding* Nov. 14-18 at 8 p.m. and Nov. 19 at 2 p.m. in the McPherson Theatre, 2 Ames Plaza East, in Bloomington.

Sandra Lindberg, associate professor of theatre arts, will direct nearly 50 cast and crew members in the representation of Lorca's tragedy.

*Blood Wedding*, set in rural Spain in the 1930s, is based on a brief newspaper account of a bride who, on her wedding day, left her fiancé to elope with a former lover. The unnamed heroine of the play accepts a marriage proposal from a man whose family is in a feud with the family of her previous suitor, Leonardo. Although Leonardo is now married to the bride's cousin, he and the bride are still in love. Shortly after the wedding, Leonardo and the bride attempt to escape together and are pursued by the betrayed groom.

Lorca, now one of the most translated Spanish authors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, was murdered in 1936 by a political organization under the Spanish Franco regime, which placed a general ban on his work until 1953. This production of *Blood Wedding* uses an English translation by prolific American writer Langston Hughes.

Other shows scheduled for the 2006-07 McPherson Theatre season include Susan Glaspell's Pulitzer-Prize winning *Alison's House* (Jan. 30-31, Feb. 1-4) and IWU's 2007 Dance Concert (April 10-15).

Tickets for *Blood Wedding* are now available at the McPherson Theatre Box Office. The cost for the general public is \$6 for performances on November 14, 15, 16 and 19, and \$8 on Nov. 17 and 18. All performances are \$1 for students with a valid IWU ID. For more information or to order tickets, call the box office at (309) 556-3232.

### **Theatre Students Construct Costumes for Production**

In order to bring the flamenco-inspired vision of costume designer and associate

professor of theatre arts Marcia McDonald to life, the 12 students in IWU's Costume Construction course will create approximately one-third of the production's costumes from scratch, custom-fitting them to the actors who will wear them for the play.

According to Jeanne Oost, the course instructor and costume shop supervisor, in the semesters when the Costume Construction course is offered, participating students typically create costumes for a production as part of their grade.

Anton Chekhov's *Three Sisters*, performed in November of 2004, was the last IWU production to feature costumes patterned, sewn, fitted and altered by students. However, for that production six students shared the work of creating only three costumes. This year, the students will create a total of ten costumes, "a large, time-consuming undertaking," according to Taylor Kuzniar, a senior Theatre Arts and English double major. While each student has his or her own project, not every project entails an entire costume. Most of the students will independently complete a dress, however, a few of them will construct one aspect, such as a corset or cape, of a more complex costume.

Each student has less than one month to take his or her project to take from start to finish. The process begins with creating a pattern on brown paper and using it to sew a version of the costume out of inexpensive muslin. This mock-up is used to do preliminary fittings and make adjustments to the pattern. Constructing the final costume involves bringing together multiple layers of silks, lace, metallic fabrics, velvet, ruffles and sequins to reproduce the elegance and ornamentation of southern Spanish wedding attire.

Working from a strict set of measurements, which include wrist and forearm circumferences in addition to the typical waist and inseam measurements, the students will create costumes to precisely fit and flatter each actor, modifying both size and style over the course of a number of fittings. After the show is over, the costumes will be absorbed into the department's cache of costumes, where they will be altered for use in future productions.

**Cast Members:** Peter Gray (Boy), Katy Benjamin (Mother), Elsa Richardson (Neighbor), Stephanie Grady (Mother-In-Law), Jessica Tidd (Wife), Nolan Kennedy (Leonardo), Julie Allen (Child), Sara Gorsky (Servant), Rob Carroll (Father), Amber Robinson (Girl), Lindsay Vrab (First Maiden), Sylvi Re (Second Maiden), Diane Teng (Third Maiden/Moon), Eric Hamilton (First Youth), Steve Gonabe (Second Youth), Mike Yarnell (Third Youth/First Woodcutter), Kyle Blair (Second Woodcutter), Andy Junk (Third Woodcutter), Megan Henderson (Death)

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and Tom Duncan (Understudy for Boy).

**Crew Members:** Sandra Lindberg (Director), Bryohna Parham (Music Director), Bernadette Brennen (Scenic Designer), Marcia McDonald (Costume Designer), Hallie Zieselman (Lighting Designer), Brian Kowalski (Sound Designer), Sarah Campbell (Choreographer), Loren Jones (Fight Choreographer), Katie King (Stage Manager), Reagan Ward (Assistant Stage Manager), Andrea De Avila (Assistant Stage Manager), Catherine B. Smith (Assistant Director), Dane White (Assistant Scenic Designer), Pamela Wilcox (Assistant Costume Designer), Laura Woodley (Assistant Costume Designer), Rachel Kerner (Hair and Makeup Designer), Eric Knight (Assistant Lighting Designer), Armie Thompson (Technical Director), Nick Simon (Assistant Technical Director), Dan Andruss (Property Master), Peter Gray (Dramaturg), Cecilia Sanchez (Spanish Dance Consultant), Sarah Bordson (Publicity Coordinator), J.P. Latchaw (House Manager) and Amanda Hentsch (Wardrobe Head).

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