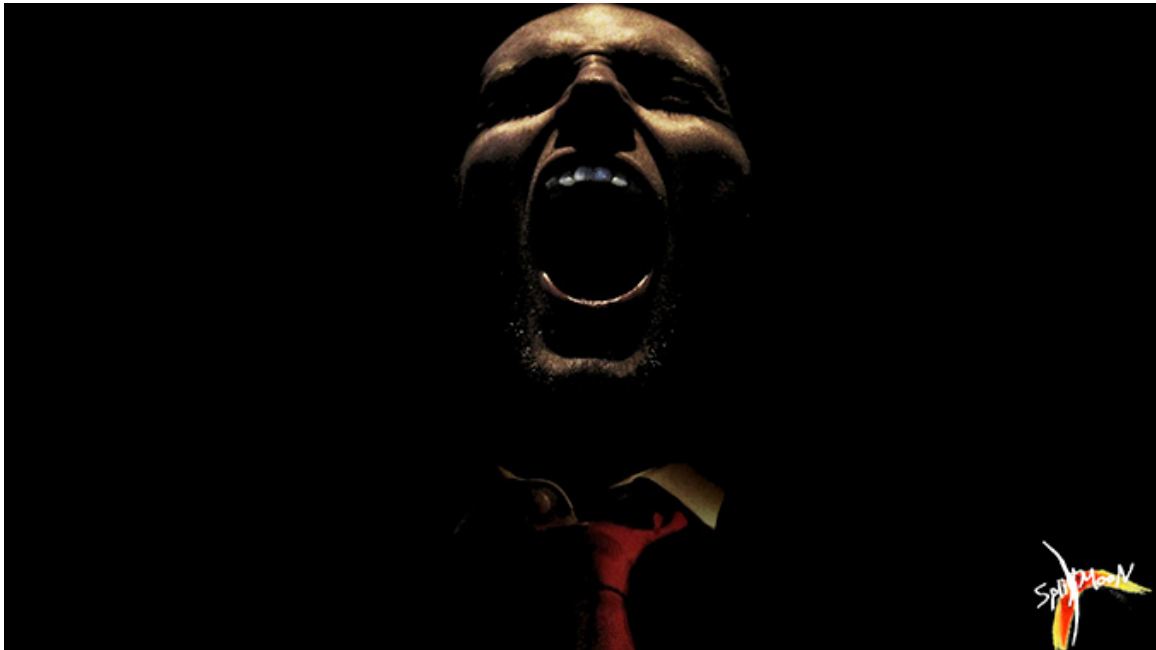


IN THE JUNGLE OF CITIES

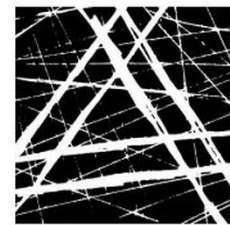
By Bertolt Brecht

Educational Resource Pack



"Consider the ways of this planet"

"The end is not the goal"



arcola
theatre

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Educational Resource Pack written by Jack Stigner
With thanks to Caroline Staunton and Peter Sturm

Using this Resource: Information and Exercises

SplitMoon aim to provide students and teachers with a variety of ways to engage and respond to the performances they create, stimulating creativity, discussion, understanding and ultimately inspiration for creating performances.

The '**In the Jungle of Cities**' resource pack specifically includes relevant information to enhance the understanding of the play, and, responses from company members to share the process and concept of the SplitMoon production. The pack includes exercises that require no knowledge of the play ranging to more detailed character and scene explorations, which aim to develop understanding of specific areas of the play.

This pack is aimed at GCSE, AS and A level students to support Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies exam specification requirements.

For Students this pack will provide:

- Information on the play
- Insight into the production
- Clear step by step methods for responding and reviewing the production
- Engaging exercises to develop your practical understanding of Brechtian rehearsal processes, terminology and technique

For Teachers this pack will provide:

- A clear structured approach to the text in a performance context
- Theatre terminology and language
- Transferable exercises and activities, specific to the practitioner Brecht
- Information on both the text and the production
- Opportunities to respond to the play in classroom and workshop environments
- Activities and exercises that provide options for students reviewing the performance and for students studying the text
- Exercises providing staging ideas and techniques for students to apply to their own devised or text into performance work

Bertolt Brecht's 'In The Jungle of Cities'

Play information

First written and performed in Munich in 1923 as 'Im Dickicht' (In The Thicket), 'In The Jungle of Cities' is one of Brecht's earliest works. As the title suggests, the play deals with the conflict that occurs between the 'natural' and 'mechanical' aspects of the human condition. Brecht drew from real life events and crime fiction to create a drama that exists amongst the poverty, power and racial tensions of an emerging capitalist city.

Plot Synopsis

Scene 1: George Garga, a book clerk in the city of Chicago, is offered money in exchange for his opinion from a Malaysian lumber dealer, Shlink. After the arrival of Garga's girlfriend, Jane, drunk and in the company of a pimp, Baboon, Garga refuses to sell his opinion, loses his job, casts off his cloths and runs away.

Scene 2: weeks later Garga arrives at Shlink's Lumberyard. Finding his sister Mary already there, Garga agrees to join Shlink's 'battle'. Shlink gives Garga a suit and then transfers his building and Lumber business over to Garga, offering his complete servitude. Garga instantly accepts and deliberately performs a crooked deal fixing the books. Garga then offers the building to a Salvation Army Officer in exchange for spitting in his face. Shlink spits in his face and Garga hands him the deeds with a gun. Garga accuses his sister of being a whore.

Scene 3: In the Garga family home, Manky, a sailor, discusses Garga's problems with Garga's parents. They all discuss Mary's supposed prostitution. Garga leaves for the South. Shlink arrives and asks for board and lodging from the Gargas, who profess to have nothing and explain their poverty, but agree seeing as they now have one less person.

Scene 4: In a brothel Baboon explains that Schlink has been looking for Garga, checking passengers bound for Tahiti. Both Mary and Jane are also in the brothel; Mary is being courted by Schlink. Mary is still a virgin and Shlink, failing to make love with her, describes his 'sickness' from his past. Shlink leaves, returning to the harbor to look for Garga.

Scene 5: A month later in the same hotel, Garga is discovered drunk in one of the rooms. Garga learns that Shlink has been supporting his family in his absence. Shlink claims to have missed Garga, they discuss their battle and

Marie and Shlink's relationship. Mary leaves with Manky. Garga learns that Jane is being kept by Baboon. Garga asks Shlink about the money from the crooked lumber deal he made. Shlink gives him the money.

Scene 6: Mary and Shlink are in the woods, Shlink declares his love, Mary has shared herself with Manky but claims to love Shlink. Manky, is also in the woods, talking to himself searching for Mary. Marie accepts money from Shlink and accepts that she has become a whore.

Scene 7: In the Garga's home there is new furniture, bought with the crooked deal money; Garga and Mary have just married. Shlink arrives and gives Garga a letter about the crooked lumber deal from the justice department. Shlink explains that the sheriff doesn't care who takes the sentence. With the option to turn Shlink over to the sheriff, Garga accepts responsibility for the deal. With the family's fortune in ruins Garga's mother leaves. Garga writes a letter implicating Shlink as a rapist, planning to post it to the authorities at the end of his three-year sentence.

Scene 8: Three years later Shlink, a successful businessman again, turns down an application from Mary, applying for a secretarial position. A man enters and provides Shlink with information pertaining to the incriminating letter that has just been received by the Police. He pays the man a thousand dollars and exits quickly.

Scene 9: In a bar opposite the prison a mob are forming to lynch Shlink. Garga enters the bar; Jane lies about forgetting his release day. Garga shows the plight of his family to his old boss, Mary, still working as a prostitute is also in the bar. The Salvation Army Officer shoots himself but doesn't die. The lumberyard is torched. Garga believes he has finished the fight with Shlink without having to see him. Shlink enters the bar and asks Garga to leave with him. Garga points out the ruin caused to his family but still leaves with Shlink.

Scene 10: In a deserted tent Garga congratulates Shlink on being a good fighter, they have been alone together for three weeks. Shlink gives Garga the ledger for the Lumber business, which he has restored and tells Garga he loves him. Garga spurns him. Garga declares the end of the fight and says he is leaving for New York. He leaves, Mary arrives as the mob approaches. Shlink dies.

Scene 11: At the burnt Lumber yard Garga sells the business to Manky for six thousand dollars as long as he looks after Mary. Garga says goodbye to his family, happy to be alone and with plans to go to New York.

Metaphysics:

*“I’m unversed in metaphysics.
I understand no laws,
I have no moral sense, I’m a brute”*

The play begins with a businessman getting a book clerk fired from his job who then, in the very next scene, offers the same man his whole business, home and fortune - for nothing.

This is ever so strange! Why would someone wage a war of hate and part with their livelihood, giving it to their enemy of all people? It doesn’t make any sense!

Throughout the play both protagonist and antagonist refer to ‘Metaphysics’:

In Scene 5:

GARGA You’re withdrawing into my corner. You’re staging a metaphysical fight, but leaving a slaughterhouse behind you.

And later, In Scene 10:

SHLINK Then you understand that we’re comrades, comrades in a metaphysical conflict!

The ‘Metaphysical fight’ is exactly what Brecht stages for us, which for us to understand we must first understand what is meant by metaphysics.

Metaphysics is an area of philosophy concerned with explaining the fundamental nature of being and the world that encompasses us.

Meta: Above/Aside/Beyond

Physics: Law/Nature/Processes

Metaphysics attempts to clarify the fundamental notions by which people understand the world, e.g., what is existence? Why there is cause and effect? And whether possibility can be quantified or even exists.

Metaphysics often focuses on the duality of two opposing parts, or points, and their dichotomous relationship, such as Good and Evil, which lies at the root of John Milton's Epic metaphysical poem, ‘Paradise Lost’.

The Central metaphysical questions that Brecht asks 'in The Jungle of Cities' are similarly opposed parts, points or positions:

Mind / Matter

The play opens with Garga surrounded by books; symbols of thought, thinking and ideas. He quotes Rimbaud, a French poet, and refuses to sell his opinions, therefore indicating his perceived value of (his) thought(s). Shlink on the other hand is a character that deals in matter; lumber and money, The play continues to the tune of both characters soliloquising their ideas, whilst, simultaneously, exchanging all manner of material possessions. The conflict begins as the first scene ends with the significant action of Garga, removing his clothes and running away, only for Shlink to then purchase them for ten dollars.

Necessity / Possibility

The abject poverty of many of the characters in the play is a feature of Brecht's Chicago. Food and shelter are referenced as the essential 'needs' that drive the characters to action. There are Characters who also ask 'what if' and make decisions based on a belief in an alternative existence. Garga sees his dismissal in scene one as a '*freedom*', a point of potential, or possibility even. His desire for freedom is criticised by Shlink in Scene seven, as he reminds Garga that his freedom comes at the expense of other's needs, the family breadwinner is champion to the home: "*Your family would like to know if they mean anything to you. If you won't hold them, they'll fall.*"

Determinism / Free Will

From the first scene Garga struggles with a seemingly irrepressible battle, all of Shlink's companions appear and descend on him with his girlfriend as though the moment had been planned or pre ordained by his nemesis. Throughout the play Garga frequently tries to flee the conflict and yet ultimately finds himself throwing metaphorical blows in the close company of his adversary right to the end. Brecht presents us with a play that argues that there is no way to avoid the argument. Garga states in sc 3: "*we're none of us free. It starts in the morning with coffee ...and when you grow up and want to do something, they pay you, brainwash you, label you, and sell you...you're not even free to fail*". In relation to free will, in Scene 2, Mary says to Shlink: "*But you can go in all four directions, while others only have one. A man has many possibilities, hasn't he?*"

Identity / change

For Brecht, the human being is alterable and able to alter. Is a man therefore defined by his thoughts or his actions? And If his thinking changes does his being therefore change? Garga's character at the end of the play states, "*The chaos has been spent. That was the best time.*" acknowledging the process, and arguably the value of the '*mistake*' of the battle he claimed was being waged on him in the first scene. Yet, despite having instigated change, Schlink remains inscrutably resolute and 'fixed' on his intentions throughout the play.

In the preface to the Play Brecht writes to the audience stating that:

“You are witnessing an inexplicable wrestling match...concentrate your interest on the showdown”

Roland Barthes, a twentieth century philosopher, in his essay ‘The World of Wrestling’ states the following:

“In the ring Wrestlers remain gods because they are for a few moments, the key which opens Nature, the pure gesture which separates Good from Evil.”

“Wrestling is above all a quantitative sequence of compensations (an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth). This explains why sudden changes of circumstances have in the eyes of wrestling habitués a sort of moral beauty: ... the greater the contrast between the success of a move and the reversal of fortune, the nearer the good luck of a contestant to his downfall, the more satisfying the dramatic mime is felt to be.”

The conflict *is* the drama for Brecht’s characters, suggesting that there is a lot to be learnt and gained through the chaos of adversity. As Barthes describes the staged plight of two competing wrestlers as a ‘dramatic mime’, we can begin to understand the need for opposition in Brecht’s play.

Here the adversaries are assigned the opposing actions and stances each character embodies throughout the play, demonstrating the overwhelming obviousness of the contrasting roles that Brecht has pitched together in battle:

GARGA	SHLINK
Harried & Erratic	Inscrutable & Calm
Man of Ideas	Man of Force
Mind	Matter
Possibility	Necessity
Eyes	Teeth
Idealist	Materialist
Hate	Love
Poverty	Wealth
Body	Soul

Do you agree with the stances attributed to each character based on your experience of the play? Do any of these positions alter throughout the play for either of the characters?

Chicago: Myth, Symbol and Allegory

*“He’s been k.o.’d without a fight, just like that.
The city of Chicago has thrown the towel in for him.”*

Chicago. A primary inspiration for the play was a real life Chicago murder in 1912, but there are other reasons for Brecht choosing to locate his play there. By placing the action of the story in some far away location, writing in German for a predominantly German audience, Brecht distances his audience from the events, literally, creating an initial estrangement from the action. This technique has been used before, *“In fair Verona, where we lay our scene”* and since - *“In a galaxy far, far away...”*

America was, in 1923, also an exotic and relatively new country; a nation, which championed capitalism, whose styles and trends were greatly influencing the subculture of Brecht’s Germany, the Weimar republic, in the Roaring Twenties.

What was Chicago to Brecht?

Brecht’s Chicago is a city of crime, poverty, business deals and capitalist gains. It is the image of a city as Brecht had imagined it having never been there. Influenced by crime literature, Brecht uses his poetic license to elaborate aspects of this new emerging city, highlighting business and trade as a mechanical heartbeat that overshadows and worsens the loneliness and yearning for human contact, as found ‘In The Jungle of Cities’.

In this manner, Brecht has mythologised Chicago as a location to house his fable, significantly as a symbol of all (capitalist) cities, much in the same way that Gotham does in the Batman comics. The characters in the city make Brecht’s Chicago the arena for contrasting political views, cultural backgrounds, alternate ambitions and class differentiation. In Chicago the arguments are set out overtly, forcing the enquiry into the economics of business deals, racial tensions, immigration, wealth and poverty.

Brecht has ‘The fight between two men in the great city of Chicago’, here he is using the immense size of a city, a macrocosmic device, to focus on just two men as the object of enquiry, implying that these could be any men in any city.

Brecht uses Chicago as the location for others of his plays, including ‘the Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui’. Chicago’s history of organised crime and ‘Gangsters’ represent an instantaneous picture of the power of money leading to potential for corruption and moral strain, thus providing Brecht with a

platform for all shades of human enquiry under the full spectrum of alternate social pressures.

Cities are still referred to as Jungles, in the context of their concrete urban environment, or, with reference to the 'wild' behaviour that exists within, as in the 1982 hip-hop track, 'The Message' by Grand Master Flash. Note how the rap refers to locations, pressures and feelings that echo those 'In The Jungle of Cities' (The full lyrics to this song can be found at the end of the education pack)

"Like a Jungle sometimes, it makes me wonder how I keep on going under."

Shlink's character frequently refers to his teeth suggesting the 'Dog eat dog' environment of the metropolis of Chicago. The fight is Shlink's way of communicating and demonstrates his capacity for suffering as something base and wild, as one might find in nature, testing the educated sensitivities of his adversary:

SHLINK *Don't expect words from my mouth. I've only teeth in it.*

SHLINK *Is it so good to bare your teeth?*

GARGA *If they're good teeth.*

Other animalistic properties describe the actions and attitudes of characters throughout the play, some significantly referencing skin. Again, both characters are opposed as Shlink has grown layers '*it gets thicker and thicker*' to the point where he claims there to be no substance left, whilst Garga metaphorically sheds his, alluding to a snake like metamorphosis.

Significantly the battle ends in one of the few scenes set outside of the city. This scene takes place outside, where characters make discoveries about themselves, or to put it more plainly, learn about their 'nature'. The characters come to terms with their position in relation to the juxtaposing realities of instinct versus education, being free yet civilised - born of the jungle and living in a city.

SHLINK *The forest! That's where mankind comes from. Hairy, with apes' jaws, good animals who knew how to live. Everything was so easy. They simply tore each other apart.*

SplitMoon's Production of 'In The Jungle of Cities'

Founded in 2001 sparked by a longing to transcend the ordinary and to find a space for imagination to break free. SplitMoon Theatre performs non-naturalistic drama with an international focus. Working with large casts and live music in a site-responsive way. With an emphasis on the skill of the actor and the magic of language we offer a vivid theatrical experience. A journey into the sweet realm of what is considered wrong. SplitMoon believes theatre is a healing space where important issues can be examined & explored in a safe environment. This is the core of theatre something the ancient Greeks understood so well when they created their tragedies.

Peter Sturm, Director, on staging the play for the Arcola Theatre:

"The Arcola main space is a wonderful location in which to perform this play and bring it alive to contemporary audiences. The aim will be to use as much of the space as possible, so audiences may see it afresh.

"Each space has its demands, working in a site-specific or site –responsive way – there are hundreds of different perspectives – as many perspectives as audience members, they each have an individual view. So one cannot set one view or perspective that you'd like them to see.

"Rehearsals mainly focused on groupings, situations, relationships, movement. Our production does not have a set-design as such, the site-specific venue of the Arcola is the set, so there will be no set building. It will be about developing a feeling for the different spaces within the space.

"What are the roots of site-specific theatre? It is surely the early cave paintings, whereby theatrical & dramatic events were painted on the walls to animate the caves, working with the shadows from flames.

"The idea is to look at what we can use that is there already opposed to creating things. Adapting to the space rather than manipulate it. In a way these are two very different views of the world – those who manipulate the world & those who work with it.

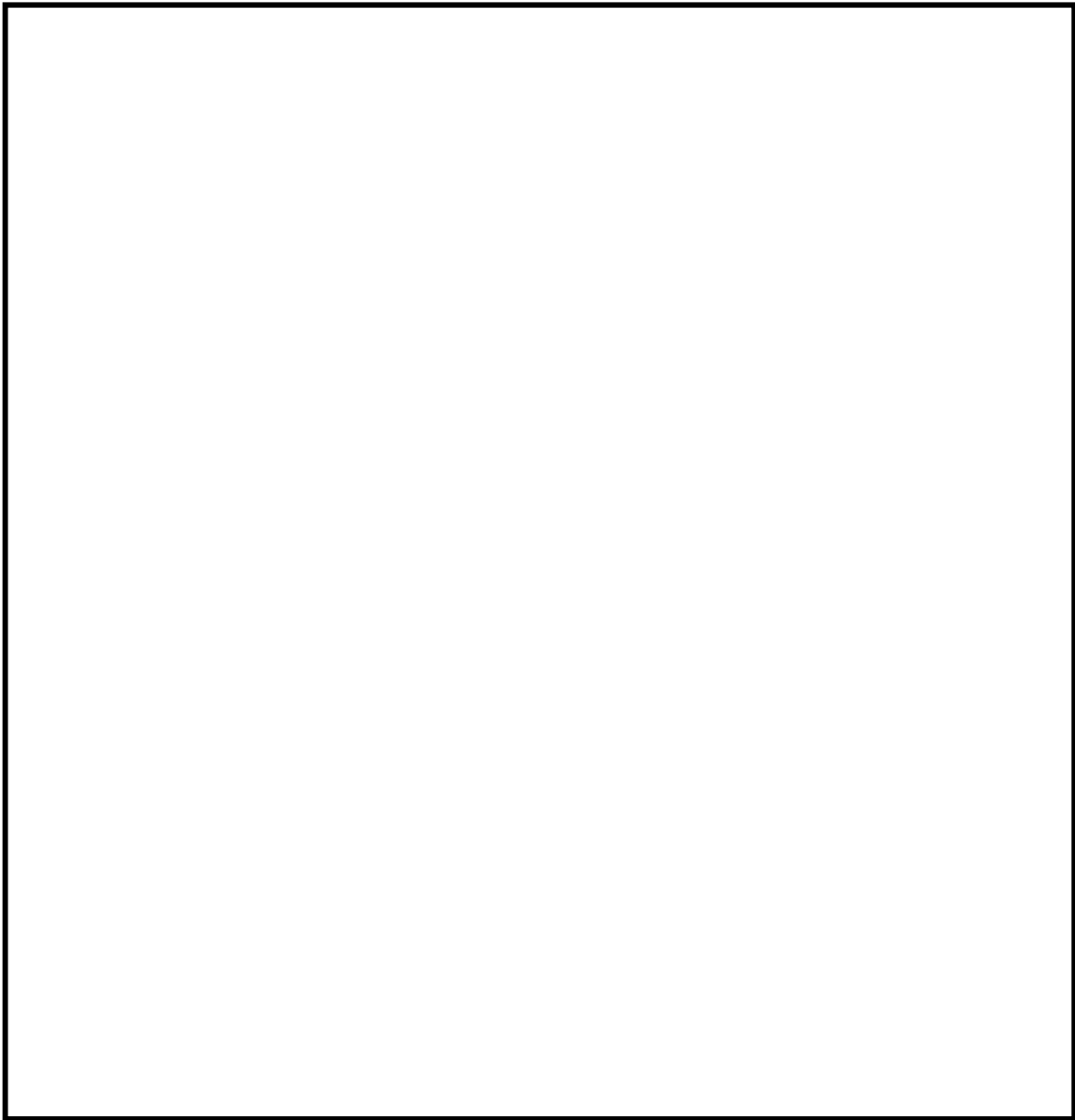
"We do not wish to present the play as a period piece set in 1912 which places the potent issues in the play at a distance but rather locate it in a timeless mythical metropolis."

Notating: The Production

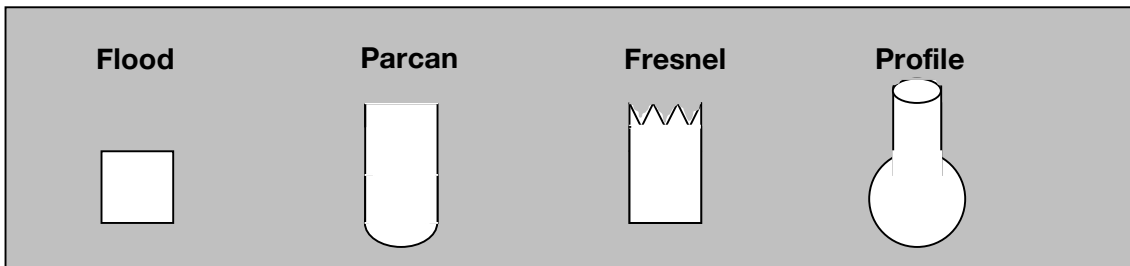
List the key information, imagery, and words used in any promotional material you have seen prior to the production – what is the tone, colour, shape of this information, what does it tell you about the piece that you are about to see?

How did you enter the auditorium? Were there any significant features of this experience that welcomed you into the ‘World of the Play’ or the performance, if not, then what strikes you about the theatre/venue/auditorium itself? List ten adjectives to describe the venue and refer to them after you have seen the performance – see if they hold any relation to the piece you have just seen.

In the box overleaf, draw a quick diagram of the stage space as you see it before the production has begun. Importantly mark any significant set, costume and props that have been preset in the space. Annotate your diagram to indicate the colours, textures, tones and styles of each item. Do each of the elements look new or old, expensive or cheap, period or modern, cohesive or clashing, chaotic or ordered?



If you have time try and indicate the lights you can see in the space. If you can work out which light is which, use a quick symbol like those in the diagram below to indicate their position and angle in the space.



Is there any Sound or Video playing in the space?

How many actors are there in the company? (you can usually work this out from the programme)

Use this next space to quickly jot any notes down on during the performance – but watch the performance! These are just to remind you for later, sketch, draw, note, mark in anyway that helps *you* remember but spend as little time possible looking away from the stage.

Things to consider during the production:

- What were the key moments for you?
- How did one actor/actress use her voice to enhance a key moment?
- How did one actor/actress use his face to convey their character?
- How did the ensemble use the space significantly during a key moment?
- How did the performers communicate with the audience?
- What overriding themes did you draw from this particular production?
- To what extent was costume used to symbolise the themes of the play?
- How were the scenes structured and what effect did this have on your overall experience of the play?
- How was live and recorded sound used and to what extent did this reflect the content of the play?
- When were lights used to significantly alter the space? Describe them and the effect they had for you as an audience member.
- Were any props or pieces of set used in inventive or unusual ways? How did this alter your perception of the action?
- How did the performers present the text? Did this alter at any moments? Note their uses of language and changes in voice.

After the production, re-read the twelve thinking points and jot down any more initial responses.

Responding To the Production

Did you empathise with any of the characters? Who and Why?

Did you sympathise with any of the character? Who and why?

Did you side with one of the two protagonists? Who and Why?

If there was a message, or, something to be learnt from the play, what was it?

List five ways this production was successful in conveying this message, be specific, and include theatre medium, key moments and characterisation.

Practical Workshop On the Production

Exercise 1. PRODUCTION [groups of 4 +]

- Perform a 3 minute reduced version of the play

Why did you leave certain characters/key moments out? Are they less important in any way?

Why did you select these moments? What makes them important to you now/today in the 21st century?

- Perform it as an opera

Which characters become the chorus?

Who has the love story?

Where is the death scene?

Exercise 2: CHARACTER [Groups of 2]

- Tell the story of Garga and Shlink in pairs using only the words 'yes' and 'no', use the scene synopsis to help

'Yes' can mean 'No' & 'No' can mean 'Yes', where is this true to the characters' interaction with one another?

'Yes' can be a command as well as acceptance or agreement.
'No' can be both submissive and aggressive.

Exercise 3: DESIGN [Groups of 5 +]

- Pick a key moment from the production and rehearse and perform the moment exactly as it happened in the performance.
- Add a running narrative, describing the drama medium (use of technical and design aspects) Like a DVD commentary. Stop, pause, rewind, fast-forward the scene if necessary.

- Have a member of another group improvise as the director, explaining ‘Why’ they made these design decisions and their effect on an audience.

Exercise 4: PRACTITIONER [Groups of 3+]

This play is not part of the Brecht cannon so the traditional 'Brecht Toolkit' doesn't apply. The play is like a dream or a hallucinatory vision. How do you feel Brecht would have responded to this production based on what you know about him as a practitioner?

- Recreate any moments of:
 - a) Gestic action
 - b) Spass
 - c) Alienation, or distancing

If you didn't think the production included examples of these Epic Theatre techniques, re-direct moments where you think their inclusion would have aided the production in being an example of ‘Theatre for Social Change’



JEFFERY KISSOON as SHLINK and JOSEPH ARKLEY as GARGA

“A metaphorical boxing match between an older man - a capitalist, & a younger man - an idealist”

Exercises

Exploring the Play

Exercise 5: Wrestling introductions [groups 3+ requires text]

- Introduce the characters of Garga and Shlink as though they are WWF wrestlers on TV. Have the actors enter and face one another in the performance space whilst a compare introduces them.

What are the given circumstances at the start of the play?
Select facts from the information in the text such as physical attributes, age, race, possessions, family, friends, clothing, and sexuality.

- If each character was entering to a song, what song selection would be the most a) appropriate or b) inappropriate? Try these in your performance and note the difference it makes on the audience's attitude towards each character.
- Repeat the exercises for the two characters at two other points in the play, one from the middle and one from the end. Note the differences.

Exercise 6: [groups 2 requires text]

If each scene was a round of a boxing match which character wins each one and why?

- Create a role on the wall outline for each of the two characters. List the facts/attributes of each character on the outside. List the characters thoughts and feelings on the inside of the outline.
- In a different colour draw a target on the body outline, placing six targets in an appropriately symbolic position in relation to the name of the target:

E.g.

The target for intelligence = head,

The target for family = heart

The target for morals =

The target for skills =

The target for mobility =

The target for masculinity =

Despite being referred to as a brutal match, no blows are thrown between the two characters.

- Choose a scene/round and whenever a 'punch lands' through a score/gain or insult delivered/received from either character, continue performing the scene showing physically where this blow was felt in relation to the placement of the corresponding target on your outline.

Exercise 7: Each man's assets have a value [groups of 3 + requires text and a pack of playing cards]

- Ascribe a playing card of the appropriate suit and value to each of the assets e.g.

Hearts = family

Diamonds = money

Clubs = Friends

Spades = Possessions

Lumber yard = 10 of Spades

Marie = J Hearts

Salvation Army officer = 2

Clubs

40 bucks (sc1) = 3 Diamonds

- Decide on the value of each characters assets and work through the scenes seeing which change hands and which, if any, burn and end up in neither hand. Discuss your reasoning.
- Perform a selected scene, facing one another, with the other characters lining up in between holding their 'value' card. Physicalise the loss, gain and exchange for each character.

Exercise 8: The gambit [Groups 4 + requires text]

In chess a Gambit is piece sacrificed for the benefit of a better position.

- Indicate the scenes and instances when this takes place in the play.
- Play the scene and mark the moment using a strange making or alienating strategies. You could for instance, freeze the action, or break into song for thirty seconds and return to the scene and carry on as normal.
- In what ways could you highlight this key moment using design elements? Try doing it with
 - a) Costume
 - b) Set
 - c) Lighting

As an Epic Theatre practitioner Brecht encouraged distancing, 'making the strange familiar and familiar strange'.

- Handing your business to your enemy whilst under no pressure or threat would commonly be regarded as a rather 'strange' act. How would you make this action 'familiar' in performance?

Exercise 9: [Groups 6 + requires the text]

The use of a chorus is a common feature of epic theatre, they help narrate the action, often forcing the audience to disengage from the protagonists emotions, fragmenting the action into episodes that ask the spectator to view from the outside.

- In Scene five identify which of the characters you would use as a chorus.
- Stage the scene so that the chorus are clearly separate to the action, acting as observers and narrators.

- Try now using direct audience address, a) with just the chorus, b) with just the protagonists, c) with both. Note the different effect it has for an audience.
- Now exaggerate the chorus 'body' have them behave in a way that differentiates them from the other characters in the screen. Have them talk over, respond, react to the characters? When members of the chorus have to interact with Garga or Shlink, how do they 'step out' of the chorus and return, how do they remain separate?
- Imagining all the characters other than Garga and Shlink are part of a cartoon, workshop ways in which this manifests in this scene, use comedy, slapstick, sound effects, exaggerated characterisations. What does it add to the scene? How can it help the narrative? What impact does it have on the main metaphysical battle between Garga and Shlink?

Exercise 10:

- If you were restricted to the use of one type of prop in your production what would you select to:
 - a) Best describe the narrative
 - b) Best symbolise the metaphysical battle
 - c) Best present 'the argument'
- Select and explore the use of one prop in selected scenes. Where can its use create comedy in tragic moments? When can its use bring poignancy in lighter moments?

Writing a Critical Review Of the Production

Using your notes, diagrams, sketches, text and any other production material (poster or Programme/ other reviews even) to help write your review.

Start with The Facts:

Who? Where? When? What? By? Written By? When? Where?

Describe the opening/start/first interaction as the **first key moment**, invite your reader into the space with your descriptions of the design aspects and help them understand and appreciate the world of the show.

Place yourself in the review, what made this production distinctive for **you**, how did **you** respond to the production initially, did you have any expectations and how were these confirmed or shattered.

For the body of your review pick **three more key moments**, so that again this is what excited/shocked/changed you personally during the production. In order to cleverly cover a broad range of theatre terminology and cover all the elements of theatre, try describing each key moment with a specific focus/context/lens.

Moment One: use of design aspects and how the designer enhanced this moment

Moment Two: use of performers, the space, the ensemble – how direction influenced the piece.

Moment Three: Use of voice, facial expression language, communication – how the actors contributed to the success of this moment.

To conclude, cover any aspects that for you didn't work and explain why and what you might choose to do instead.

Pick the one moment, character, quote or design element **that epitomizes the tone, or overall feel of the production** and describe your summarising response through, or with reference to, this symbol of your thoughts about the production.

Gestus, Spass & Alienation

Gestus is performance technique developed by Brecht. By combining a physical action, gesture or motif with 'an attitude', or, 'gist', a single political, social or cultural situation, or truth, is expressed through the action.

Gestus is the gist or essence of a character or scene and is mainly determined by the social position and history of the characters. The audience see the characters from the outside in.

A *gestic* action often reveals the motivations that underpin a character's motives and choice of actions within the narrative of the play. It carries the sense of a characters situation throughout the narrative, before, during and after the world of the play, irrespective of time. A character's *gestus* could be regarded as their 'epic' narration, indicative of their choices and behaviour, implicitly or explicitly highlighting specific aspects of that character in relation to their social function.

The use of set, props, and other design elements can also be *Gestic* If they, explicitly or implicitly highlight a social or political situation that is true for all characters in the world of the play.

Spass is a performance technique that encourages 'social criticism through fun', *Spass* is the German word for fun. A modern and common cultural example of the use of *Spass* could be satirical comedy where one might see grotesque stereotype being used to encourage an audience to laugh and condemn characters simultaneously.

Speaking to an audience through humour, or fun, quickly builds rapport increasing the speed with which information is received and shared. Brecht claimed '*A theatre without laughter is a theatre to be laughed at...We laugh when they weep and weep when they laugh*'.

Alienation, or the *VERFREMSDUNGSEFFEKT*, which loosely translates from German as 'distancing effect' is a primary feature of Epic theatre.

It asks Actors to demonstrate their character, '*perform in inverted commas*' rather than embody them. It asks performers to show the REASON rather than the EMOTION of the action on stage.

For the audience, *alienation* and *alienating* theatrical devices encourage the spectator to form a critical view of the Right and Wrong actions exhibited onstage. To do this an epic performance would frequently '*break the forth wall*' to remind the audience that they are sitting in a theatre. Some techniques you might come across or have used are; direct audience address, the use of song, narration, exaggerated and *gestic* action.

Making the strange familiar and the familiar strange is a useful phrase to refer to when creating alienating moments for an epic theatre production.

Additional Questions:

What is the Split Moon production Location/setting and why have they chosen this in relation to today's audience?

What are the Key themes that the company are drawing from and presenting in performance?

What social and cultural contexts from 1923 have informed the Split Moon production in 2013?

What Historical and Political circumstances surrounding the play's creation have had a significant impact on the director's vision/concept?

To what extent does the style of the Split Moon production support of juxtapose the content of the play?

What are Split Moon aiming to convey through the characters of the key protagonists Garga, and Shlink, and how has the company used language to do so?

What features of Epic theatre have you seen featured in Split Moon's production?

The Message (1982)

Grand Master Flash

MARTIN/SHAPIRO/NESLER

It's like a jungle sometimes it makes me wonder

How I keep from going under

It's like a jungle sometimes it makes me wonder

How I keep from going under

Broken glass everywhere

People pissing on the stairs, you know they just don't
care

I can't take the smell, I can't take the noise

Got no money to move out, I guess I got no choice

Rats in the front room, roaches in the back

Junkies in the alley with the baseball bat

I tried to get away, but I couldn't get far

Cause a man with a tow-truck repossessed my car

Don't push me cause I'm close to the edge

I'm trying not to lose my head, ah huh-huh-huh

It's like a jungle sometimes it makes me wonder

How I keep from going under

It's like a jungle sometimes it makes me wonder

How I keep from going under

Standing on the front stoop, hangin' out the window

Watching all the cars go by, roaring as the breezes

blow

Crazy lady livin' in a bag

Eating out of garbage pails, used to be a fag-hag

Said she danced the tango, skipped the light fandango

The Zircon Princess seemed to lost her senses

Down at the peepshow, watching all the creeps

So she can tell the stories to the girls back home

She went to the city and got social security

She had to get a pimp, she couldn't make it on her own

doing bad on my mother's TV

She says: "You watch it too much, it's just not healthy!"

"All My Children" in the daytime, "Dallas" at night

Can't even see the game or the Sugar Ray fight

The bill collectors they ring my phone

And scare my wife when I'm not home

Got a bum education, double-digit inflation

I can't take the train to the job, there's a strike at the
station

Neon King Kong standin' on my back

Can't stop to turn around, broke my sacrophiliac

A mid-ranged migraine, cancered membrane

Sometimes I think I'm going insane, I swear I might

hijack a plane

My son said: "Daddy I don't wanna go to school

Cause the teacher's a jerk!", he must think I'm a fool

And all the kids smoke reefer, I think it'd be cheaper

If I just got a job, learned to be a street sweeper

I'll dance to the beat, shuffle my feet

Wear a shirt and tie and run with the creeps

Cause it's all about money, ain't a damn thing funny

You got to have a con in this land of milk and honey

They pushed that girl in front of the train

Took her to the doctor, sewed her arm on again

Stabbed that man right in his heart

Gave him a transplant for a brand new start

I can't walk through the park, cause it's crazy after dark

Keep my hand on my gun, cause they got me on the

run

I feel like a outlaw, broke my last glass jar

Hear them say: "You want some more livin' on a

seesaw?"

A child is born with no state of mind

Blind to the ways of mankind

God is smiling on you but he's frowning too

Because only God knows what you'll go through

You'll grow in the ghetto, living second rate

And your eyes will sing a song of deep hate

The places you're playin', where you stay

Looks like one great big alley way

You'll admire all the number book takers

Thugs, pimps, pushers and the big money makers

Driving big cars, spending twenties and tens

And you wanna grow up to be just like them, huh,

Smugglers, scrambles, burglars, gamblers

Pickpockets, peddlers even panhandlers

You say: "I'm cool, I'm no fool!"

But then you wind up dropping out of high school

Now you're unemployed, all non-void

Walking 'round like you're Pretty Boy Floyd

Turned stickup kid, look what you've done did

Got sent up for a eight year bid

Now your manhood is took and you're a may tag

Spend the next two years as a undercover fag

Being used and abused to serve like hell

Till one day you was found hung dead in a cell

It was plain to see that your life was lost

You was cold and your body swung back and forth

But now your eyes sing the sad, sad song

Of how you lived so fast and died so young

Don't push me 'cause I'm close to the edge

I'm trying not to lose my head

It's like a jungle sometimes it makes me wonder how I

keep from going under

It's like a jungle sometimes it makes me wonder how I

keep from going under

	Freeze
Yo Mell, you see that girl there?	Don't nobody move or nothin'
Yo, that sounded like Cowboy man	Y'all know what this is (What's happend?)
Cool	Get 'em up, get 'em up (What?)
Yo, what's up Money?	Oh man, we're (Right in there) Grandmaster Flash and
Yo, where's Cooly an Raheim?	the Furious Five
They is downstairs cooling out	What is that, a gang?
So what's up for tonight y'all?	No
We could go down to Phoenix	Shut up
We could go check out "Junebug" man	I don't wanna hear your mouth
Hey yo, you know that girl Betty?	Shut up
Yeah man	Officer, officer, what is the problem?
Come on, come all man	You the problem
Not like it	Hey, you ain't gotta push me man
That's what I heard man	Get in the car, get in the car
What's this happening, what's this?	Get in the god...
What's goin' on?	I said, "Get

Cast and Crew

“IN THE JUNGLE OF CITIES”

Cast

Jeffery Kissoon	Shlink
Joseph Arkley	George Garga
Joseph Adelakun	Compere, Preacher, Reporter, Waiter (saxophone)
Mia Austen	Jane Larry, Salvation Army
Rebecca Brewer	Mary Garga (sister to George)
Alex Britton	Skinny, Manky, Pugnosed Man
Stephen O’Toole	Maynes, John Garga, Salvation Army (guitar)
Helen Sheals	Mae Garga, Salvation Army, Bar Woman
Jurgen Schwarz	Worm
Michael Walters	Baboon

Director	Peter Sturm
Designer	Nicolai Hart Hansen
Lighting Designer	Howard Hudson
Sound Designer	Mike Furness
Costume Supervisor	Natasha Mackmurdie