

Dulce et decorum est by wilfred owen

[Literature](#), [Poem](#)



The stimulus for this piece was the poem Dulce et Decorum Est by Wilfred Owen. It is about the 2nd world war and what happened during gas attacks. It explains that the saying is a lie and why. It describes the terrible conditions that the soldiers are in. The poem then goes on to describe one man's death from gas attack and finally gives Wilfred Owen's opinion on "The old lie: Dulce et Decorum Est Pro Patria Mori" This means "it is a sweet and appropriate thing to die for your country. In our act of this poem, we used mime instead of dialogue to tell the story of the poem.

This had a lot of impact on the audience because it made them concentrate more on the visualisation, of our faces and the act, rather than concentrating on the dialogue. As a performer, I found it harder to do this scene than other scenes that had been improvised with dialogue. This is because I had to use my facial expressions and my characteristics to show the meaning of my part and the poem. Because we had no script or dialogue to work with, it made the cast and I concentrate more on the way we express the feelings involved to the audience.

This made the action more significant because there was no speech. It was a lot harder to communicate the story without using dialogue because again we had to use the power of our face and body language to make the audience interpret the scene. In the scene, the narration helped communicate because it gave us a hint of where we were in the play if we went wrong and it described the actual poem to the audience making them become a little more in depth with the play.

When I was over the dead body, I made the sign of the cross over it to show my remorse and that I hope the dead went to heaven. This made the audience feel the same way. In our scene we did not use a tableau, but had we done this, it would've had greater impact on the audience. This is because they can have a look at the whole scene without it moving and can make the audience concentrate more on the feelings of the characters. I or any of the other actors in our scene used a symbol. This is mainly because none of us had a symbol of death or war with us, or sadness and remorse.

Had we managed to lay our hands on such a symbol we would have used it to make the audience feel the remorse and the pain of what the soldiers went through. We used a minimal amount of props in our play. We used one tie as a blindfold to show that he was blind. We also used sticks to show that these were the only things that kept us standing. This was to show that we were drained of energy and needed food, and that people were injured because they had limps. We used 2 different tempos in our scene and experimented in where to use them.

We found that using the slow motion tempo in the first verse helped the audience get a real understanding of the feelings, pain and distraught ness that the soldiers were going through. Because it was slow motion, the audience were able to tell that they were very slow in moving and could tell what was wrong because they could see the body language and facial expressions much clearer. This brought significance because everything was slowed. This made the audience concentrate and brought them more into depth with the play itself.

In the second verse everything became faster. This is in contrast to the actual poem. Words and phrases such as " GAS GAS Quick! " and " floundering" make the process that is happening in this verse very fast moving, as if in a panic, which it is. It was necessary for us to be sensitive whilst exploring physicality in order to produce thoughtful work. If we had gone too far with the physicality the piece would have looked comical, so we had to explore different degrees of physicality.

For example, if the cast became too involved with the physicality of a knock kneed person they would have walked really stupidly which would make the audience laugh. This is not what we would have wanted to do because this is a piece that tries to make the audience cry. I had to adapt to the physicality of my character coughing like a hag. To show this I held my hand over my mouth very frequently and tried to make my cough sound very deep and croaky. This was to show that I was kind of gasping for fresh air.

This communicated to the audience that I was not well and that the air was poisonous around me. To enhance the scene we could have used a slow weary piece of music in the 1st verse as it was slow and in the 2nd verse used a fast free flowing panicky music piece. If we had used costumes and special effects we could have used soldiers outfits that had been torn, shredded and emulsified in dirt, blood and mud. We could have used special effects such as cuts and injured/broken limbs. They would actually physically show pain in the characters.