

Martin mcdonagh's 'the lieutenant of inishmore' on the stage essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The characters of 'The Lieutenant of Inishmore' are first and foremost not intended to be portrayed in a realistic manner as convincing psychologically well rounded individuals. They are however presented in a three dimensional manner although they generally have one overriding drive in the play which motivates everything they say and do. They are so entrenched in this driving force that they are incapable of change and no matter what situations arise during the play their inner action never changes.

Workshop Tasks:

Scene 1, page 6 (From, Donny: He isn't my fecking cat at all..... to Davey: Oh Jesus Christ, Donny! Not your Padraic in the INLA

Two Actors, Realistic Character Portrayals

Play the scene extract as realistically as you can. Underplay the characterisation & as you say the lines try to give them weight & depth.

Two Actors, Farcical Approach

Play the scene as though the main driver behind each of these characters is to keep Padraic happy and avoid problems. When they discover the implications of the dead cat their reactions build into a crescendo which should be matched by your playing of the scene physically & vocally.

Scene 6, Page 35 (From, Padraic: Tell me the fecking message now, ya bitcheen! end of page Mairead: Not ever?

Two Actors, Realistic Character Portrayals

Play the scene extract as realistically as you can. Underplay the characterisation & as you say the lines try to give them weight & depth.

Two Actors, Farcical Approach

Play the scene as though the main driver behind each of the characters is for Padraic to get information from Mairead about his beloved cat & for Mairead to convince Padraic that she is ruthless enough to join the INLA. Build the scene slowly into a crescendo which should be matched by your playing of the scene physically & vocally. Try to follow the stage directions closely & show the characters' building frustration as each of them is driven by their strong driving goal.

List the driving force/inner action of each character in the play. Look at the character at the beginning of the play & when the audience last meet this character. Has the driving force/inner action been changed by events & situations in the play? In groups consider individual characters in this light.

Write a paragraph which begins with the following topic sentence.

An actor approaching the presentation of character's from McDonagh's 'Lieutenant of Inishmore' cannot rely on a psychological realistic approach to character creation.

Explain what this means.....

Then give an example from your workshopping of scenes from the play to illustrate the points you make.

Exercise 2: Do you find the characters in 'The Lieutenant of Inishmore' realistic, or merely functional to the plot, or a mixture of both? Justify your reasons using workshop examples of scenes that you participated in or observed others enacting.

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SCENE TRANSITIONS & STAGING CONSIDERATIONS

To maintain the dramatic tension of the play, the scene transitions need to be quite smooth and maintain the pace of the action.

Consider how the same set might be used throughout the play with only minor adjustments being made to suggest the different settings to the audience. Create a set that would suit the first of the following scenes & explain how you would change the set to suit the following scene if you were staging a production on an open or thrust stage with no curtain closing between scenes. Envisage staging that would suggest the locations required without major changes to the script. Explain to the class how these transitions could work.

Scene 1 to 2

Scene 2 to 3

Scene 3 to 4 etc

How important do you think it is to keep the audience involved with the stage action without breaks between scenes or an interval? Explain why?

How could the first and final scene be staged to show that the action in the play had come full circle with little/nothing being achieved?

Workshop, Scene Transitions

Groups are to be assigned the end of one scene/beginning of another & will discuss how best an audience should be taken from the action of one scene to the action of the next scene. Use stage directions & give a walk through

reading of the transition explaining how it could best be staged so as to maintain dramatic tension for the audience.

Elements of Production & 'The Lieutenant of Inishmore'

Consider the following production elements as required for each scene:

Sound/ Lighting / Props

In groups students are to divide the play so that these key elements are considered, lists made of what the specifics should be for each scene of the play with regard to these elements.

Costume: Is this an important production element to consider. Decide on a directorial concept/vision for a school production of the play using student actors. How would you envisage costumes for the characters to follow that vision. Would the costume need to change for particular actors during the course of the play. Dividing the characters up between groups in the class consider costume requirements for the central characters, with each group considering what would be required for an actor playing one of the characters. List their costume requirements throughout the play & explain this to the class.