

Blood brothers

Literature



Blood Brothers is a story of a pair of twins who are separated at birth. They are brought up in totally different ways and this is shown through the characters register, body language and reactions to each other. Their story is told by various methods such as the use of an interventionist narrator & soliloquy in the form of songs by the characters. The themes of the play were very obvious, such as class, innocence, superstition & family love. These themes were developed by movement, speech and mime.

For example the theme of superstition was developed from the start when Mrs Lyons put the new shoes on the table and Mrs Johnstone reminded her about the saying " New shoes on the table are bad luck". It was then later developed by Mrs Lyons by her saying " Come on or the bogey man will get you". This makes the theme of superstition more effective because the script makes more than one reference to it. Also this theme backs up the theme of innocence with the children because Edward believed it and so this also helped the theme develop. Another big theme in the play was class.

This was clearly shown from the start because of Mrs Johnstone working for Mrs Lyons. Then when the boys grew up and were seven, it was shown by the clothes they were wearing and the way in which they spoke (register). Then once they were old and at secondary school it was shown by the fact that Edward was going to a private school and Mickey to a local state school. Once they were much older it was shown by the fact that that Edward went to university and became a local councillor and Mickey went to work in a factory and eventually went to prison.

This was in my opinion the main theme of the play and so is why it was so well developed and there were so many references to it. The actors made the performance as brilliant as it was. They used a lot of characterisation and their interpretation of the character they were playing made the play much more interesting. The way in which Mickey & Edward used register to show their class and status helped because it showed a real divide between them however it was not physical. They had a very difficult task to get the accent and correct mind set of the character especially when they were playing a younger age.

The interventionist's narrator role was to tell the story of the play and to add thought into the audience's mind and to really make them think about what is happening. He is trying to play the two mothers off against each other and try to make the audience decide between them. His job was also to add things to the play, for example add props, costumes or to speak about the characters. He appears to be watching the whole story, that's why he is always seen on stage somewhere looking onto the performance and making decision about the characters and their actions.

He is a very effective dramatic tool to make the performance really hard hitting and to make the audience look further into the performance than what they would otherwise. Dramatic effects that were used in the play were things like Action Before Narration. This was used at the start of the play, it had to the two bodies on stage covered over. This was very effective because it showed that the play would end in tragedy, however it did not give too much away about the story. Other techniques used were soliloquy's,

which were used in the form of the songs, and symbolism. Symbolism was used in several ways, physical and spiritual.

An example of spiritual symbolism is the fact that Mrs Johnstone always refers to Marilyn Monroe as her idol. An example of physical symbolism is the locket that Mrs Johnstone gives to Edward as he moves away with a picture of him as a baby but she tells Edward that it is her and Mickey and he does not know that it is actually him. This backs up the theme of innocence and is also an example of dramatic irony. The songs in the play acted as a way in which the character could express their true feelings. They could, in the song say what they thought, felt and wanted without other characters knowing.

They added another layer to the performance without making it a musical. The songs enhanced the production because they made it much more interesting as opposed to normal soliloquy which does not involve singing and music. The lighting in the play was very effective. For example the lighting at the beginning of the play (action before narration) was effective, the red patches on the wire curtain with the white light shining through the curtain. This I felt was very effective and showed that something tragic was happening. Other lighting effects were when spotlights were used for when the interventionist narrator was speaking.

The stage lights dimmed and a bright white spot light was used on the narrator. The set was also very interesting. There were two distinct areas of the stage, the upper class house was on stage left and the lower class house was on stage right. This was very useful and helps in the understanding, so that it

did not get too confusing. Another good point was the way in which the set was as if it was the street and so you can see the doors of the street and so the director used this to his advantage and it was a very effective way to show the divide as he showed the interior of the upper class house which was a great contrast.

I felt it was also good that the interior of the upper class house moved on and off the stage when needed. The costumes used in the play were very effective. When Mickey was young he wore hand me down, old clothes. However when he grey up he would wear fashionable clothes however they were not designer or particularly posh unlike Edwards, who wore overcoats and smart clothes. All these things helped the play make more sense and also made it more enjoyable to watch.