



AIM: To introduce the themes and structure of the performance text.

Nyuntu Ngali is a tale based on dangerous or forbidden love. This is a common concept in theatre and performance, as it provides both the motivator (love) and the conflict (obstacles). Think of the many plays or films that explore what people will sacrifice or risk for love, the ways love changes a person's behaviour or perspective, and the lengths people go to in pursuit of love.

View comparative footage of performance works based on the idea of dangerous love.



The Highwayman by Alfred Noyes - student animated version

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j4nbs9HbeAo&feature=related>

Royal Shakespeare Company's adaptation of *Noughts and Crosses* by Malorie Blackman



Background information about the story

<http://www.meettheauthor.co.uk/bookbites/1225.html>



Video clips and stills images from the RSC production

http://www.rsc.org.uk/explore/workspace/noughtsandcrosses_3204.htm



West Side Story, book by Arthur Laurents, music by Leonard Bernstein, lyrics by Stephen Sondheim.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4oxfOncYiag&feature=related>

Read over the opening speech in *Nyuntu Ngali*.



The Figure: Ha, see these...? Tears. I,

Can still cry. I,

Remember crying,

The feeling of,

Salt water, brimming,

A trickle, down cheek,

Little hairs, tickling, I,

Felt, alive for a moment... thought,

Perhaps I could hear, music...?

But... music is for the living, not the lonely long forgotten.

...

But still... hear that?

Two families - **Walytja**, alike in **pulka mulapa** - dignity...

Two children... running,

By her **Tjina** - footfall... fifteen, he - fourteen,

Afraid, hungry, bleeding,

A death marked **mukuringanyi** - love... why?

Nyuntu Ngali, Scott Rankin, **Scene One – Just Do It.**

Discuss:

1. How does this introduction set up the audience's expectations of what is to follow?
2. What images are created in your mind?



Develop the opening text into your own performance using one voice, two voices, three voices.

Add stylised movement.

Add echoes.

Add choral voices.

Add fabric.

Add neutral masks.

Brainstorm and **improvise** other ways you could stage this introduction to *Nyuntu Ngali*.

Devise a completely different theatrical opening to this play.



Read over the prologue to Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.



CHORUS:

Two households, both alike in dignity,
In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life;
Whose misadventur'd piteous overthrows
Do with their death bury their parents' strife.
The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love,
And the continuance of their parents' rage,
Which, but their children's end, nought could remove,
Is now the two hours' traffick of our stage;
The which if you with patient ears attend,
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

Romeo and Juliet, William Shakespeare, **Prologue**.

Discuss:

1. What are the similarities and differences between these opening speeches?



Baz Luhrmann's film of *Romeo & Juliet* made use of the Chorus as a newsreader to establish the place and setting.



Consider other roles that the Chorus could embody.

Perform or **rewrite** the prologue using a different character for the Chorus.



Find another section of dialogue in *Nyuntu Ngali* with echoes of *Romeo and Juliet*.

ROMEO: Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear

That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops—

JULIET: O, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon,

That monthly changes in her circled orb,

Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

Romeo and Juliet, William Shakespeare, **Scene Two – Capulet’s Orchard**.



EVA: Do you love me? **Mukuringanyi...** Say it.

ROAM: By the **pira**/

PETROL: The moon/

ROAM: I swear, but not now, we/ ☒ ☒

EVA: But the pira comes and goes/

Nyuntu Ngali, Scott Rankin, **Scene Two – Labour**.

Discuss:

1. Why has Scott Rankin written dialogue that reflects *Romeo and Juliet*?
2. What images does this create in the audience’s mind, particularly about the relationship between Roam and Eva?

Play either the scene between Roam and Eva or the one between Romeo and Juliet.

Add two additional actors performing the inner voices of the characters, and play the scenes with four actors.



Discuss:

1. What do the inner voices reveal about the true feelings of the characters?

Add two more actors to become the movement section of the characters.

Allow the movement actors to free-form in tune with the inner voices.



Discuss:

1. What images are now being created on stage?
2. How was this different to the original performance of two actors playing Roam and Eva/Romeo and Juliet?