

Sydney Theatre Company in association with Riverside Theatres, Parramatta present



Teacher's Resource Kit

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Sydney Theatre Company

Sydney Theatre Company (STC) produces theatre of the highest standard that consistently illuminates, entertains and challenges. It is committed to the engagement between the imagination of its artists and its audiences, to the development of the art form of theatre, and to excellence in all its endeavours.

STC has been a major force in Australian drama since its establishment in 1978. It was created by the New South Wales Government, following the demise of the Old Tote Theatre Company. The original intention was to better utilise the Drama Theatre of the Sydney Opera House and the new Company comprised a small central administration staff, technical staff, workshop and rehearsal facilities. Richard Wherrett was appointed Artistic Director from 1979 to 1990.

The Wharf opened on 13 December, 1984 by Premier Neville Wran, which allowed all departments of the Company to be housed under one roof for the first time. The venue was to become the envy of the theatre world. From 1985, the Company could perform in two locations throughout the year, the Drama Theatre and The Wharf. From 1990 to 1999, Wayne Harrison served as Artistic Director. A third regular venue, Sydney Theatre, administered and operated by STC, opened in 2004.

The predominant financial commitment to STC is made by its audience. Of this audience, the Company's subscribers make a crucial commitment. The Company is also assisted annually by grants from the Federal Government through the Australia Council and the New South Wales Government through the Ministry for the Arts. STC also actively seeks sponsorship and donations from the corporate sector and from private individuals.

Under the leadership Artistic Director Robyn Nevin, STC's annual subscription season features up to 12 plays including: recent or new Australian works, interpretations of theatrical classics and contemporary foreign works. In addition STC regularly co-produces and tours productions throughout Australia, playing annually to audiences in excess of 300,000. STC actively fosters relationships and collaborations with international artists and companies. In 2006 STC began a new journey of artistic development with the inception of The Actors Company, the STC ensemble.

To access detailed information on Sydney Theatre Company, its history and productions please contact our Archivist Judith Seeff at jseeff@sydneytheatre.com.au

Sydney Theatre Company Education

Sydney Theatre Company is committed to education by programming original **productions** and **workshops** that enthuse and engage the next generation of theatre-goers. Within the education programme Sydney Theatre Company produces its own season of plays as well as collaborates with leading theatre-for-young-people companies across Australia.

Often a young person's first experience of theatre is facilitated by teachers. STC ensures access to all of its mainstage productions through the **schoolsdays** programme as well as produces and tours theatre specifically crafted to resonate with young people.

STC works to support educators in their Drama and English-teaching practices. Every year dynamic **workshops** are held by leading theatre practitioners to support curriculum content, detailed resources are provided for all productions and an extensive work-experience programme is available to students from across the state.

The annual Sydney Morning Herald and Sydney Theatre Company **Young Playwright's Award** continues to develop and encourage young writers. The winning students receive a cash prize and a two-day workshop with a professional director, dramaturg and cast – an invaluable opportunity and experience.

Sydney Theatre Company has an extensive **on-line resource** for teachers and students. Visit www.sydneytheatre.com.au/education.

We encourage teachers to subscribe to regular e-news to keep informed as well as access **heavily discounted** tickets and special offers/

For further information on STC Education programme, please contact the Education Manager Helen Hristofski at hristofski@sydneytheatre.com.au

Production Credits

Sydney Theatre Company in Association with Riverside Theatres, Parramatta present

Ruby Moon by **Matt Cameron**

Director	Andrew Upton
Designer	Jo Briscoe
Lighting Design	Chris Twyman
Sound Designer	Max Lyandvert

Performers	Jaime Mears Justin Smith
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Stage Manager	Nicole Robinson
Assistant Stage Manager	Liana Slussaref

On-line Resources

Sydney Theatre Company has built a new website dedicated to providing excellent resources for teachers and students. Visit sydneytheatre.com.au/education to access *Ruby Moon* resources which include:

- Costume Designs
- Set Box
- Production Images
- Video of recorded interviews
- Media Release
- Stage Manager's Rehearsal Diary
- Opportunities for student feedback through 'Your Say'

Artistic/Social/Political/Cultural Context

Cameron presents a contemporary Australian landscape of a tiny neighbourhood cul-de-sac, where an ice-cream van plays *Greensleeves*, which becomes a vast wasteland of ambiguity.

Exercise: Introduction to Contemporary Australian Theatre

BRAINSTORM: What experiences of Australian theatre have you had? Define what makes all these examples “Australian”. What would you define as Australian theatre?

Think about: images, characters, themes and issues, symbols and metaphors, language, setting and landscape, cultural and political context, comedy and irony, atmosphere, element of biography and Australian identity (Hint: If it was performed overseas how would other audiences identify it as Australian AND when performed here what do Australian audiences identify with on a variety of levels?).

Ruby sets of down cul-de-sac and never returns ...

SYLVIE: We had a child, Ray. And we lost her.

SCENE 7 pg 34

The notion of the missing child is part of the Australian psyche as eg. Beaumont children, Azaria Chamberlain, Picnic at Hanging Rock, and is presented as a recurring theme in the play. We are young nation, experiencing destruction and corruption of innocence. Cameron challenges the assumption that the street and the world we have created for ourselves is safe by cracking the ideal suburban image. We are led us to discover that the foundation of our existence - that our world is safe - seems no longer true. We are often described as fringe dwellers on edges of the island scared of what lies at the centre of the continent. Ray and Sylvie want the truth but don't want the truth....

Research and Discussion:

Conduct research/web search into Australia's missing children - newspaper articles / other texts / plays dealing with the issue e.g. Samantha Knight

Identify and discuss the fears, emotions and media hype that surrounds these stories and why “the missing child” has become such a fundamental part of Australian landscape and psyche.

What fairytales can you think of that explore the premise and concept of the missing or lost child? What ideas etc do these tales explore? What do they have in common? Why do you think this theme/premise is so popular and recurring? Why is it often a little girl?

- Alice in Wonderland
- Little Red Riding Hood
- Hansel and Gretel
- Wizard of Oz

How has Upton's production provided a translation of the fears and emotions addressed in Cameron's text?

Traditional and Contemporary Practices and Conventions

Notes from an Interview with Andrew Upton, Director of *Ruby Moon*, STC 2007

1. What is it about *Ruby Moon* that appealed to you and made you want to direct it?

Its theatricality first and foremost...it possesses an openness that is attractive and it's the opportunities it offers actors that I am interested in as a director. It's much more about Ray and Sylvie.... so charged, so sexy. It's an actor's piece, beautifully written. We're finding a lot more. I think it's going to be very different.

2. What can we expect from your interpretation of *Ruby Moon* for STC 2007? How different do you think it will be for those students who have explored it in the classroom?

A very different setting; the set is very different from what is described.... Many objects are not included. The designer and I thought, "Let's get rid of the props except those related to the characters". The imagery of the nursery, the dusty house is gone. The play is stripped bare; we've only kept the essentials. A Hills hoist is used to change scene... sound is huge.... drains [are important to the concept].

3. Do you see the play as uniquely Australian or does it have universal resonance?

It's a very Australian play with a strong suburban feel. I would imagine that it would play anywhere, as the central relationship between Ray and Sylvie at the core of the play is a true marriage.

The characters are kind of Australian...Dulcie **is** a kind of Patrick White character.

It would play out well in an American landscape. The "missing child" is a terrible basis for quite a funny play.

There are some answers. There is a clear answer in our production that a child existed. They have got to have had that child in that relationship.

4. Coming to this production as the director, how has your other theatre role as playwright influenced your relationship with the text?

It's a really good bit of writing. Cameron creates an imaginative world that is justified which is very difficult to sustain in writing.

I'm more Naturalistic than Cameron, particularly in dialogue. He's prepared to break theatrical form and integrate why he's drawn it into the meaning of the play. He provides the characters with a way of acting out their fantasies.

Every story has a moment where it can go to shit. Keeping the mystery alive that these neighbours could be truly neighbours rather than fantasies... working out how to jump over them - there are moments in nearly every script where you have to make a leap and the actors are required to justify certain actions without reason but they are not here. Cameron's writing made the play very attractive to direct.

5. What images and ideas in *Ruby Moon* have influenced your direction?

The melting ice cream cone...sound hugely...fairytale... this thing that's evolved. The kiss, the constant kiss, "Can I have a kiss?". The sexual relationship of marriage equals the spine of the play. We've pushed this through to characters they play. It's really sad. There is an interesting tension. There's great comedy, classical great comedy, double takes and slapstick, juxtaposed with realistic grief.

6. Cameron's play evokes the sense of an unknown threatening landscape. How have you used space and/or design to recreate this in the theatre?

They are playing this interior life at the end of a cul-de-sac. It's disconcerting, placing it in the cul-de-sac, placing it in a dangerous space; threatening in the shape of it, jagged and tooth-like with no way out. A strangely blank, threatening blackness in people, the world...like you're dreaming. It's claustrophobic; you can't get free of it...David Lynch-like. It's a hard-edged, *Godot*/Beckett aesthetic. There's a chest for the actors to play with.

7. There are specific production and design directions specified by Cameron in the script. Can you describe the design choices you have made and your relationship with your designer, Jo Briscoe?

We worked collaboratively. We started with dialogue, threw out props. We had meetings and discussion and decided to strip away everything. Wherever we want to put it, that's the core of where we started. The process goes in stages.

Very early on we got fixated on a cone melting into the pavement. The cone led to bitumen. Things grow... The play needs a designer.

8. What performance style or styles have you been exploring or uncovering with your actors in rehearsals?

The play seems to say the style required by each moment but it is firmly based in reality. For example with Sonny Jim...this is what this guy believes. It's the reality of a life. These people do this because that's how they see themselves.

When actors play each moment straight the impact is much stronger, it carries more weight. We have used tones from the archetypes but not the clowning or the torch song as directed in the script.

To keep the mystery alive, the neighbours must be played by the actors as if they are real people. The character's natures are Naturalistic with a back-story and a history. Emotions, conversations, decisions must be played as if people really do these things and have these behaviours.

9. Two actors play all the roles, what rehearsal techniques or exercises have you used to help the actors find their characters?

We are milking it as a practical exercise. No one is saying "stand there do this". We are not aiming for a final image. We've got a very practical edge so it doesn't get lost in the madness or become too stylised. There is a very practical aesthetic – we work out the mechanics of how a scene needs to run which opens up a set of choices and then we start to colour in and get shapes, textures... then it shifts.

10. Cameron's writing style is quiet poetic, what techniques have you used to make this live on stage?

How this works as dialogue, it's not realistic dialogue in a classic sense...there's a rhythm...it's connected. What we level of reality/fantasy are they connected to on each line? There are about seven realities and it starts to play as a piece of dramatic text.

11. What do you see is at the heart of *Ruby Moon*?

I would have said grief. Also I think it's a marriage, a relationship in stasis.

12. Do you have your own thoughts about / opinions on what happened to Ruby or do you simply surrender to the journey Ray and Sylvie are on?

We surrender because we are fascinated. This is terrible, something horrible has happened. They have no place in it...not knowing...if they could just find out if she is dead. She does exist. Everything that happens on stage has a reality.

Notes from Discussion with Designer, Jo Briscoe

I had already read the play before coming on board with this production and loved it. I was excited by design possibilities.

We started talking about images we thought we had...the imagery wasn't written. The image of abandonment is a tragic image. The design needs to have a demented edge. We were influenced by Cameron's introduction to living in the suburbs, you think you are safe, but they are not...that is inherent in suburbia.

We began with a list of all the images in the play on paper. It's a circular action...continually going through them. This equals the cul-de-sac. Once you get it it's very quick.

There are real props and they are part of the action. There is also the notion of dress up box...the concept of the neighbours as dolls. Cameron puts us into a place that is not part of our reality. Having the idea of the dress up toys/dolls/box led us to the doll's clothes out of scale with big buttons. Velcro is like some kind of doll. It won't be immediately evident that the scale is out, but it's apparent and gets more noticeable. The giant press-stud sells it.

The props are toys. Things that are part of the adult world, those things used by characters to medicate themselves are real e.g. medicine, pill bottle, as they are connected to the reality of their life compared to what they are acting out in their grief spiral. There needs to be a contrast. We are playing with scale, relative to each other; to normal...all of the clothes, houses, Hills Hoist...an adjunct of how things meet each other leads to contrast.

The characterisation in the script, the theatrical conceit of the actors playing the neighbours gives us license to do things that are nutty. The neighbours are artificial, a little like the "Stepford Wives" and very disconcerting. A slick plastic world that is artificial.

Dramatic Structure and Form

Exercise:

Divide class into groups and give each group a length of rope or string. Under a time limit, to increase energy and sense of competition, ask students to replicate/model the following dramatic structures on the floor. Discuss the results/decisions between each one.

- Naturalistic/Realism dramatic structure
- Absurd dramatic structure
- Episodic dramatic structure, fractured narrative

Ruby Moon is a fractured fairytale. The dramatic structure is cyclical and episodic. The audience witness Ruby's parents experience grief and replay investigations like a routine in an effort to numb this grief. In what began as a series of monologues in rehearsal, the audience travel with the Moons through the cul-de-sac as they re-interview all the neighbours. Each neighbour implicates the next therein propelling the narrative; consequently the plot becomes a journey of tension.

The play is episodic in that it is a series of short, somewhat self-contained scenes; each scene has its own narrative and complication. However, with each scene the tension builds and the action rises and thus; it is at the end of the play the audience see the deeper mystery and bigger idea of grief.

Cameron uses the play's structure and narrative style to allow the character of Ruby to have a "voice" but she does not exist on stage. The dramatic technique of language is manipulated so that she is spoken about but never speaks.

RUBY: [voice over] It begins like a fairytale ... suggests a journey, with recognisable characters, status relationships, fate and events but happy ending seems ambiguous.

Whilst each scene can be experienced as a self-contained dramatic moment, it is when they are viewed within the context of the whole play that our knowledge and understanding of the characters and the neighbourhood becomes more intriguing and engaging in its mystery and atmosphere.

The constant change in locations creates a distorted narrative; a world that is larger than life. Ray and Sylvie search different sides of the street and emotionally and intellectually they are disconnected and searching for different things and hear different things in what the characters say. When Ray and Sylvie return they do not share their discoveries with each other. They cannot resolve or reconcile, they are stuck but the audience can see they must move on in order to bury their grief.

DULCIE: You have to let it go. There is evil in this world, Raymond. Do you really want to be the shattered couple in number one for the rest of your lives?

The episodic structure enables time to jump between past and present, place to shift without changing set, rhythm to rise and fall without losing the underlying tension. It allows a wide range of characters as each episode can involve new characters without needing to introduce them thoroughly. Cameron's structure thus relies on audience to make connections between the scenes.

Each scene ends on a lingering image or idea. For example: Scene 1 - *DULCIE: [As the parrot] Aark, where's the pretty girl...?*; Scene 2 – *They form a family portrait behind the mannequin as they stare out*; Scene 3 – *The Ruby mannequin stands under street light with the moon hovering*; Scene 5 (original text) – *Blackout. The sound of Ruby singing her scales.*

Discussion Questions:

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE: The play runs strictly without interval.

1. Why?
2. How does the dramatic structure allow the characters to be played by TWO actors? How is it like a traditional fairy tale narrative? What is the impact in Upton's production?
3. How does Upton in his direction of *Ruby Moon*, sustain the tension of the journey between and during scenes when the nature of Cameron's text allows only a short and ambiguous exploration of each character?
4. How does Upton's use of the episodic structure place emphasis on the search and the journey for Ray and Sylvie rather than on the character of Ruby?
5. What dramatic choices does Cameron make to create this focus and how has Upton translated these for performance?

The Prologue

The play consists of a Prologue and Epilogue and 10 scenes. The Prologue's function is to introduce all the characters through the suspicious of Sylvie and Ray. The Prologue is a series of routines and rituals and sets up the repeated door knocking. Cameron manipulates the dramatic technique of learning about other characters through what characters say about them and then manufactures the position in which audience is placed. The audience is already positioned to judge the characters with suspicion based on the Moon's experiences and notions of their existence, as we move through the scenes.

RAY: (Sid) He was bothering the customers.

SYLVIE: (Sonny Jim) Walking that nasty dog of his...(Dawn's house) Bad things happen in houses like that.

RAY: They bring down the street.

SYLVIE: Such a pretty little street.

RAY: (The Wizard) I thought I saw him loitering in front of the school...

We don't know at this point, who is right or wrong, Ray or Sylvie. The paper package is the link from discussing past and memory and what they know, to present a new justification for re-run. The package becomes a dramatic device to propel the action and accusation. It allows audience to make connections between Sylvie's behaviour and Ray's question, "What happened today?"

Discussion Questions:

Why is it called Prologue and not Scene 1? What is its dramatic function? Where does it position the audience? From Ruby's opening statement how quickly do things begin to unravel in the Prologue? If appropriate, compare to the Prologue of *The 7 Stages of Grieving*.

Exercise:

Divide the prologue into beats to find shifts in mood and to map the breakdown of the Moons from sitcom perfect husband and wife to bitter, judgmental and righteous, dysfunctional couple. Look for rhythms in dialogue etc. Initially two students present the perfect couple in the arrival. Then students in pairs work on chosen sections to present the breakdown.

The Epilogue

The Epilogue begins with the uncomfortable image of Ray on the armchair, normally Sylvie's place, with a headless Ruby Doll and the disturbing soundscape of Ruby's creepy voice from opening of the play, "It begins as a fairytale but how does it end?" The image helps to suggest to audience that play is reaching its resolution, as the structure seems to have come full circle, with Absurdist-like qualities. Ray continues to appear to have taken Sylvie's place, telling the doorknocker to go away and repeating the routine of looking under the floor.

Sylvie appears dressed as Ruby, after a subtle prompt from Sylvie Ray seems to play along with the game. The audience is alienated, repositioned, as we are unsure if Ray is engaged by Sylvie or pretending. We are watching another performance within the performance.

Discussion Question:

Is this an extension of the whole play, part of the repeated routine or has the search, questioning finally driven them to this for the first time? Read Upton's discussion on the existence of Ruby. What is your conclusion?

Exercise:

Divide class into pairs and provide a short extract from the Epilogue for each pair to direct and perform. Half of the pairs should rehearse and perform the extract as 'a return to life as it was in the Prologue'. The other half are to make choices about blocking, acting style and use of space to suggest Ray and Sylvie have slipped into a much darker, nightmare-like place.

Present performances and conduct class debrief: Which directorial choice do you think is the most engaging way to end the play? Justify your thoughts with reasons and examples from the performances presented in the workshop.

Exercise: Directorial Interpretation & Stage Directions

Resources: Provide pairs with a section of the Prologue and Epilogue with stage directions. Provide other pairs with same section of script with all stage directions deleted.

Rehearse the scene you have been given, paying particular attention to decisions you have made about movement & stillness, gesture, focus & tension, pause & silence, use of props and acting style.

Reflection:

In your logbook, reflect on your workshop experience by answering the following question:

A director has a responsibility to obey the playwright's stage directions in order to bring the play to life and create dramatic meaning.

Evaluate the accuracy of this statement with reference to the performances of the Prologue and Epilogue you have seen in class.

Characters

Apart from the Moons, each character is given a name and a role, in Brechtian fashion. Cameron gives each a significant prop e.g. stones out of shoe, birdcage, gun, bottle of booze. These props become a theatrical and dramatic technique in forming part of the outer layer of the characters' identities. Each has their cross to bear e.g. Jimmy's limp isn't getting better.

Each character creates their own ending for Ruby, based on their experiences and understanding of the world and project this imagined ending onto the story. The audience then draws on their social and cultural context to answer what we believe has happened to Ruby.

Exercise:

Several of the characters have a routine that they "perform". Identify what these are. Choose one and discuss what the performance reveals about that character. What is the other character's reaction to the routine as the performance takes place? This is as important as the character itself in communicating to the audience what is real or not real as it can position us to view the character in a particular way.

In the STC production, how are we positioned by Upton to judge the characters of the neighbours?

Transformation and Transition

Exercise:

Resources: range of props (female characters) boas, medicine bottles, elastic bands, shawl, birdcage, dolls, wigs, (male characters) crutch, rifles, etc. Exploring the characters through transformation, each student needs 4 props.

Present the female characters through the chosen prop, a distinct voice and physicality, and way of moving. Teacher directs students to establish an "arena" and feeds various character key lines to the students who experiment with delivery and elements of drama to find ways of presenting the characters. Students should be encouraged to remove the prop in character, returning to neutral and then moving to the next character. Students should remain aware that an audience is watching at all times. Side-coach: For example, "You are the archetype – you are the "spinster", the femme fatale. Use your prop to help in your movement." Encourage the students to connect movement with breath and voice and the character's movement centre and stance.

Exercise: Character transformation

Imagine you have been cast by a director, as either Ray or Sylvie.

To assist with your character development, your director has instructed you to write a character biography for one of the neighbours into which you transform. As the actor required to present this character on stage, you must know and understand him/her intimately and be prepared to improvise various scenarios. For example:

- Sid and Veronica meet under the street lamp
- Dulcie stopping Carl outside the church
- Dawn meeting Sonny Jim on the way back from the post office with a package

Themes and Issues

- Knowledge
- Light vs dark
- Loss
- Guilt
- Fear of the unknown
- Innocence vs loss of innocence
- Grief
- Truth
- Powerlessness
- Suburban life and neighbourly behaviours
- Identity
- Parent/child relationships

Imagery

Exercise:

In pairs, list all the unsafe images referred to in one scene. Read these out to the class.

In groups, select 3 unsafe images to bring to life. Consider how you might use sound, movement, the performance space and/or interactions with the audience to create a particular environment or atmosphere.

How does Upton deal with these images in his production and to what effect on the audience?

The Night and the Nightmarish World

Discussion Questions:

Accessing the STC website at <http://www.sydneytheatre.com.au/education/index.asp> look at picture of model box and describe the design concept and, look and feel of the set. What is being communicated through the design and theatrical choices in Upton's production?

What lighting choices are evident in Upton's interpretation of the text? In particular, how has Upton brought to life the lines of dialogue about night and/or made you aware that the action is occurring at night? What is the thematic and metaphorical importance of this discovery? How does Upton interpret the solitary spotlight (streetlamp), in particular?

What audience response do these production and design elements provoke?

How does the use of pre-recorded soundscape to communicate ideas?

Exercise:

On a piece of blank A4 paper or in your logbook, draw a picture of the perfect/fairytale cul-de-sac street. Photocopy or repeat the drawing distorting the fairytale features through shapes, colours, lines and/or textures to create a creepy, nightmarish landscape.

The Window

SYLVIE: [*looking out*] Did you see him hiding out there before? (pg 3)

Discussion Questions:

Each character "looks out" – we assume it's a literal window but where do they look? Do they look into the audience or is there a prop window? What is the significance of this both literally and metaphorically? For example, Sylvie looks for safety and routine inside and is threatened by the night and the Wizard outside under the streetlight.

What is in the dark? Is the outside safer than what is being revealed or faced on the inside? How much is this the same as the characters' own external and internal worlds?

Why are all the characters directed to "look out"? What does this communicate dramatically about the fears, desires and needs of each character? What feelings about the world outside, beyond the window, are created for the audience to experience? Where are we positioned in relation to the action and our appreciation of what Cameron is trying to say about the Australian suburban landscape?

What choices does Upton make to allow us to appreciate his interpretation of Cameron's text?

Exercise:

In pairs, find five moments in which different characters “look out.” Stage each moment, making a choice of where “looking out” is staged and how the moment is blocked. What is the effect of this repeated image? What feelings were created for you as an audience? How successful were you in creating some of the messages Cameron is trying to say about the Australian suburban landscape?

The Mannequin

Exercise:

Block a scene using the mannequin making specific choices about how Ray and Sylvie touch the doll and/or interact with it to communicate any or all of the following feelings - a sense of tenderness, replacement, abuse or power play. What is Ray and Sylvie’s different relationships to mannequin, and what does this communicate to us about the play?

How does Upton’s production make dramatic use of the mannequin? Is it used to create tension/build distrust/disturb/haunt/evoke sympathy? How successfully is the mannequin used?

Sound

Discussion Questions:

Cameron uses different door knocks for each of his characters as part of his soundscape. How does this theatrical technique pre-empt the characters we are going to meet? What techniques does Upton use in his production to suggest we are entering into a new ‘place’? What effect did these have on your experience and appreciation of his production?

Performance Style (Absurd, Expressionist)

Exercise:

Consider the situation of parent storyteller and child audience. Study the scene from the stage direction, “*He slowly hangs it up.*” till “SYLVIE: Can I have the book?”.

Rehearse this scene; clearly showing the moment Ray and Sylvie adopt the roles of storyteller and child audience. You should exaggerate your voice and body, heighten your energy and choreograph the movement. Aim to make clear for your audience, the transition in and out of role and to highlight that Ray and Sylvie use this role-play to medicate their grief. Be aware of elements of drama: tension, pace and timing to control and build atmosphere.

Exercise:

This exercise first uses the conventions of the fairytale world to present a suburban, familiar, idyllic world; then requires students to manipulate these conventions to create cracks in world of the Moons.

Using a narrator retell the story of Ruby Moon in 8 to 10 lines. Present this to the class as a performance using techniques to make the world of Ruby picture-perfect. Heighten her innocence and the friendliness of those around her. One actor should be the narrator using direct address to communicate with the audience. One actor should be Ruby, two actors present all the other characters.

Repeat this scene using techniques that crack the idyllic surface to suggest a dark and ambiguous world. Position the audience to judge Ruby, her neighbours or her parents as suspicious. Consider how you could use character physicality, asides, stylised voice and movement and sound and space to achieve this.

Applying this workshop experience to the STC production:

Post-Performance Essay Question

Evaluate the impact of Upton's directorial choices on your appreciation and understanding of Cameron's text.

In your answer, you should refer to theatrical and dramatic techniques.