

Drama 2019 v1.1

IA3 high-level annotated sample response

Transcript of video: Performance

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Lear

A reimagining the tragedy of Shakespeare's King Lear.

Lear — female, a matriarch, corporate magnate

Goneril — male, son

Regan — male, son

Cordelia — female, daughter

Setting: sun-drenched terrace overlooking the ocean, suggestive of a private island. The setting will be sleek and white indicating Lear's wealth and control.

4 X ACTORS present as direct address.

Each repetition of 'cuckoo' line becomes increasingly strange

Actor # 1	Empires are built at the cost of others.
ALL	The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long / That it's had it head bit off by it young ... Cuckoo
Actor #2	Empires won by conquest fall by revolt from within
ALL	The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long / That it's had it head bit off by it young ... Cuckoo
Actor #3	The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long / That it's had it head bit off by it young ... Cuckoo
Actor #4	Greed and trust do not mix The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long / That it's had it head bit off by it young ... Cuckoo
Actor 1 & 2	All great empires die from within The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long / That it's had it head bit off by it young ... Cuckoo
Actor 3 & 4	The great green death infects and poisons from within
ALL	The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long / That it's had it head bit

off by it young ... Cuckoo

ACTORS transition into their roles as LEAR and her three children (CORDELIA, REGAN & GONERIL). A movement sequence employing ritualised movement of greeting, air kissing, compliments, selfies and subversive looks as they circulate around the terrace. The social dance echoes the grand chain of a barn dance.

LEAR enters and watches.

Contrast is created through the contrary actions of CORDELIA who commences the dance, but is clearly out of time and place in the crowd.

LEAR moves down stairs, CORDELIA removes herself to assist LEAR walk down stairs. She attempts to re-enter the dance but is either blocked, does not know the correct actions of the ritual or cannot find her place. She is torn between the dance and remaining attentive to LEAR.

Upon noticing LEAR the dance continues, but all eyes are on LEAR.

LEAR stands upstage centre in an elevated position. She taps on a champagne glass and all freeze and turn like soldiers to face LEAR, except Cordelia who is already facing LEAR.

LEAR addresses the crowd.

SCENE I. Lear's Fortress

LEAR We shall express our darker purpose.
 Give me the map there. Know that we have divided
 In three our kingdom: and 'tis our fast intent
 To shake all cares and business from our age;
 Conferring them on younger strengths, while we
 Unburthen'd crawl toward death.
 And here are to be answer'd. Tell me, my sons--
 Since now we will divest us both of rule,
 Interest of territory, cares of state,--
 Which of you shall we say doth love us most?
 That we our largest bounty may extend
 Where nature doth with merit challenge. Goneril,
 Our eldest-born, speak first.

Goneril steps forward out of line

GONERIL I love you more than words can wield the matter;
 Dearer than eye-sight, space, and liberty;
 Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare;

No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honour;
As much as child e'er loved, or mother found;
A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable;
Beyond all manner of so much I love you.

Cordelia's demeanour and posture changes as she delivers her aside

CORDELIA [Aside] What shall Cordelia do?
Love, and be silent.

Lear steps down to the apron of the stage, focusing on the horizon.

LEAR Of all these bounds, even from this line to this,
With shadowy forests and with champains rich'd,
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,
We make thee lady: to thine and Albany's issue
Be this perpetual. What says our second son,
Speak.

Lear keeps her gaze as she addresses Regan.

Regan moves forward to meet her mother.

REGAN Sir, I am made
Of the self-same metal that my brother is,
And prize me at his worth. In my true heart
I find he names my very deed of love;
Only he comes too short: that I profess
Myself an enemy to all other joys,
Which the most precious square of sense possesses;
And find I am alone felicitate
In your dear highness' love.

Lear returns her elevated space without favour or eye contact with any child.

CORDELIA [Aside] Then poor Cordelia!
And yet not so; since, I am sure, my love's
More richer than my tongue.

Lear directs her words at Cordelia

LEAR To thee and thine hereditary ever
Remain this ample third of our kingdom;
No less in space, validity, and pleasure,
Than that conferr'd on Goneril. Now, our joy,
Although the last, not least; to whose young love

The vines of France and milk of Burgundy
Strive to be interest'd; what can you say to draw
A third more opulent than your brothers? Speak.

CORDELIA Nothing.

Lear puzzled

LEAR Nothing!

CORDELIA Nothing.

Anger grows in Lear

LEAR Nothing will come of nothing: speak again.

CORDELIA Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave
My heart into my mouth: I love your majesty
According to my bond; nor more nor less.

Imploring tone from Lear, but she does not move to meet her daughter.

LEAR How, how, Cordelia! mend your speech a little,
Lest it may mar your fortunes.

CORDELIA Good my lord,
You have begot me, bred me, loved me: I
Return those duties back as are right fit,
Obey you, love you, and most honour you.
Sure, I shall never marry like my brothers,
To love my mother all.

LEAR But goes thy heart with this?

CORDELIA Ay.

LEAR So young, and so untender?

CORDELIA So young, and true.

A movement sequence of the three children caring for Lear. They comb her hair, place slippers on her feet, massage her hands ... all the while Regan and Goneril clear her pockets of money and search through her phone.

Cordelia remains attentive, but Lear is led away from her.

By the end Cordelia stands isolated

LEAR Let it be so; thy truth, then, be thy dower:

For, by the sacred radiance of the sun,
The mysteries of Hecate, and the night;
By all the operation of the orbs
From whom we do exist, and cease to be;
Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
Propinquity and property of blood,
And as a stranger to my heart and me
Hold thee, from this, for ever. The barbarous Scythian,
Or he that makes his generation messes
To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom
Be as well neighbour'd, pitied, and relieved,
As thou my sometime son.

Direct address

REGAN & GONERIL If our mother carry authority with
such dispositions as she bears, this last
surrender of her will but offend us.
We must do something, and i' the heat.

LEAR, CORDEL, REGAN and GONERIL transition out of role and present as direct address.

ACTOR # 1 The powerful but aging Lear is ready to
abdicate her kingship, stand down
from the throne and divide her
kingdom equally among her children.

ACTOR #2 However, Cordelia is Lear's most
favoured child

ACTOR #3 Lear will give the largest part of the
kingdom with the most water wells to
the child who loves her most.

ACTOR #4 After Goneril and Regan flattered their
mother and received their share;
Cordelia refused to falsely profess her
love and is exiled to France.

ALL The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo
so long / That it's had it head bit off by
it young ... Cuckoo

Strangeness returns when 'cuckoo' is spoken.