

Elise Pannemann

Dramaturgical Research

Dracula Production History

Our production of Dracula was adapted by William McNulty in 2008. Though The first production of Dracula was written by the Irish actor and playwright Hamilton Deane in 1924. It was then revised by the American writer John L. Balderston in 1927. It was the first authorized adaptation of Bram Stoker's 1897 novel Dracula. The John L. Balderstone and Hamilton Deane is the adaptation that most modern audiences drew from. This is the version that made the horrifying monster from the Bram Stoker novel and made him alluring, dashing, and mysterious. Stoker's story is so scary to a Victorian era reader because it tells the story of morally good and upstanding people being corrupted and tormented by a physical embodiment of evil (as well as the death of the old world represented by the "mysterious East" to make way for the "light" brought forth by the industrial revolution). The 1924 – 1927 stage productions draws on these themes of Stoker's novel, but leans more into the seductive nature of the Count. This production was written during the "Roaring 20s", when the economy was booming and in a post-World War I women had more freedom. It is quite possible to read the Deane/Balderstone adaption as a cautionary tale over giving into too much temptation. An even earlier adaptation of Stoker's Dracula (though not officially) is the 1922 silent film Nosferatu. Using German Expressionism, which uses shadows and angles to evoke feeling rather than logic, this is meant to give the viewer (if we are strictly talking about film) a sense of a subjective perspective. In our production, William McNulty stated in the production notes that the Count Dracula is NOT a sexy figure like he is often portrayed. A man (monster) that prays on the blood of young women is not "sexy". Leaning into our more modern sensibility of being aware of a women's autonomy and how what Dracula does to the women in the play robs them of that, especially by wiping their memory.

Original Production

Date: September 21 – October 31, 2007

Location: Louisville, Kentucky

Theater Company: Actors Theatre of Louisville Bingham Theatre

Critical & Audience Reception: According to Arts-Louisville.com THEATRE REVIEW BY KATE BARRY: FIFTH THIRD BANK'S "DRACULA", William McNulty's original 2007 production felt fresh and new despite it being one of multiple adaptations of Bram Stoker's "Dracula". Barry writes that she was sufficiently spooked during this production of "Dracula". She praises actor Calvin Smith and his portrayal of the Demon form of Dracula. Barry was startled by the way he cornered Mina in the prologue, tumbling around and jumping around.

Other Relevant Notes: McNulty made his adaptation to be played with seriousness. Yes, other productions have used camp elements, and there are a few instances of humor within the play, but this production is meant to be played straight. The play is the most terrifying when played seriously.

- o <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jCb3cP76v4k>

2nd Notable Production

Date: October 3 - October 27, 2019

Location: Dallas, Texas

Theater Company: Theatre Three

Critical & Audience Reception: "Christie Vela directed this production with a nod to the welcome trend in diversity casting. She cast Count Dracula with a female actor. The Count, in obvious female attire, is generally referred to as male. But there was no question about this actor being female and, as a result, we can see that gender is not immune to becoming the cause of horror. But gender was a pre-thought on this night, an interesting fact. The actor was seen submerged in the character's actions with no thought about who was playing them. Van Helsing, the vampire-hunting scientist, was also cast as female. These actors' gender seemed natural. In both cases, casting opened this story to subtle changes not found in other versions", (http://thecolumnonline.com/review/10-10-2019_DRACULA/).

Style Notes: This story is told through the viewpoint of Mina (Lucy in our production). Writer Michael Federico wrote his version of Dracula in response to the lack of female action within the original and most adaptations of the Bram Stoker tale. Making her transformation representative of her awakening agency.

Other Relevant Notes: The costuming (and theme overall) conveyed a sense of the historical Victorian era, but with a more gothic (Stoker-esk). Minor fake bool, the violence is portrayed with stunt choreography.

3rd Notable Production

Date: August 5, 1924

Location: Darby, England

Theater Company: Grand Theater

Critical & Audience Reception: The public received the first production of Bram Stoker's novel brought to life with excitement. Describing the production as thrilling, chilling, and full of breathtaking excitements.

Style Notes: Stoker's Count Dracula is old, unattractive and bestial, with pointed ears, hairy palms, and putrid breath. Deane revised the character into a suave aristocrat, who dresses formally and displays the polite manners expected in a Victorian drawing room.

Other Relevant Notes: It was this version of Dacula that gave the titled character the long flowing cape with the high collar that is usually associated with the character nowadays.

Dracula Contextual Research

The World of the Playwright

William McNulty was able to acquire the copyrights to his adaptation of Dracula in 2008. However, the first production of William McNulty's version of Dracula was put up on its feet on September 21 - October 31, 2007. It was performed at the Actors Theater of Louisville Bingham Theater in Louisville, Kentucky. In 2007 – 2008, George W Bush, the. This was the theater that McNulty has been an actor/director since 1976, where he was given an opportunity to recreate John L. Balderston and Hamilton Deane. McNulty once said in an interview with the blog Charleston Stage that growing up, he was a fan of the fairytales from the Brothers Grimm (*Grimm's Fairy Tales*). He then gradually moved onto *Tales from the Crypt Magazine* (an American horror comic that was an anthology series and published by EC Comics). Eventually moving onto Stephen King novels, naturally. This is what gave William McNulty the idea to create "the Monster". Most productions of Dracula make the character of Dracula a dashing antagonist and add a LITTLE bit of creep-factor, but they all miss out on that classic monster movie horror element that makes characters like Dracula so intriguing.

The World of the Play

Time Period

The play take place in the early 1800s Victorian era in England. This was a period in time where inventing, exploration, and new discoveries were being made post Industrial revolution. During this moment in time Great Britain expanded its Kingdome to become the most powerful, largest and most wealthy empire in history. About ¼ of the world's population lived under the rule of Queen Elizabeth. Indigenous people were frequently treated unfairly by the conquering British. It was a very rigid society

(especially for women) who could not own land, hold political or authorities' positions (unless you were Queen Victoria), and even the clothing was restrictive.

Geographical

Placing the novel in England after spending time in Transylvania is to place our main characters back into the cradle of society. Transylvania is in the East; it would be viewed as a “primitive” and other-worldly. In the novel Harker longs for the comfort of England, and to get away from the midlevel Romania. The location of the Purley Sanatorium on the Westside of England within McNulty’s play is for convince in set transitions.

Social Classes

The character of Dracula is a Count. A count, “theoretically the ruler of a county; known as an **Earl** in modern Britain,” (<https://nobility-royalty.com/id84.htm>). By making the main villain of our story a member of the nobility is for him to hold even more power over our protagonists; more so than even his supernatural powers. In the Victorian ear and long before that, titles were very important, there is something very scary about a super human who must drink blood to thrive, ALSO holds such a high position in European nobility.

Mythology

Legends of vampires have existed long before Bram Stoker wrote his famous novel, though it was Stoker who had made the vampire “mainstream”. One of the old legends of vampires, “predates back to roughly 4000 B.C.E. and came from the ancient Sumer civilization. The Sumerians is the first civilization to receive our attention as the first and oldest myth of a vampire-like being that is the Ekimmu,” (<https://hellhorror.com/vampires/vampire-mythology/>). Though Ekimmus are never outright referred to as vampires, their descriptions make them out to be corps-like creatures that roam the earth

unable to rest, and in constant search of new victims. Though Dracula's name has thought to have come from Vlad the Impaler of the house of Dracula. However, it was Emily Gerard's book "The Land Beyond the Forest" that truly inspired Stoker to write Dracula, since it was the first time he heard of the Nosferatu (what they call vampires in Romania).

Politics

Victorian England was under a monarchy with Queen Victoria as ruler, as well as parliament. The two houses in the Bicameral legislature consist of The House of Lords and The House of Commons. "The said houses would meet separately and passed a bill as law by majority votes. However, for the bill to passed, it was necessary that both the houses accept to it", (<http://victorian-era.org/victorian-era-politics1.html>). As for Romania, in the 1878 Treaty of Berlin was signed. In doing so Romania was officially recognized as an independent state. The era between 1878 and 1914 period was one of stability and progress for Romania.

Historical Events

The world was changing very rapidly in England when the novel Dracula was written. 1888—Unsolved London murders of East End women by "Jack the Ripper", 1896—Marconi patented wireless telegraphy, in the same year, 1896—Marconi patented wireless telegraphy. That is why the far European east of Romania would seem like the distant past, and have a mysterious nature about it.

Useful Links

- <https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/dracula/setting/>
- <https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/discover/history/general-history/victorian-facts/#:~:text=%2015%20facts%20about%20the%20Victorians%21%20%201,typewriter%2C%20bicycle%20and%20moving%20film%20totally...%20More%20>

- <https://nobility-royalty.com/id84.htm>
- <https://hellhorror.com/vampires/vampire-mythology/>
- <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/learn/story-of-england/victorian/power-and-politics/>
- <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-46032480>
- <http://victorian-era.org/victorian-era-politics1.html>

Dracula Text Glossary

- 1.) Promontory (pro-mon-tory) - a point of high land that juts out into a large body of water; a headland.
- 2.) Bedlam (bed-lem) - an institution for the care of mentally ill people.
- 3.) Dykes - an embankment for controlling or holding back the waters of the sea or a river.
- 4.) Erudition (eir-u-dition) - the quality of having or showing great knowledge or learning; scholarship.
- 5.) Zoophagy (zoh-of-uh-gy) - to feed on living things.

(Below is a link to a video on how to pronounce it).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2aQgUvduioc>

- 6.) The Carpathians - The Carpathian Mountains or Carpathians are a range of mountains forming an arc throughout Central and Eastern Europe. Roughly 1,500 km long, it is the third-longest European mountain range.
- 7.) "The Bells of Hell" which is sung by Renfield in Act II - was a traditional marching song that can be dated back to WWI.
- 8.) Milieu (mill-u) - a person's social environment. Derived from old French from, *mi*, meaning "middle," and *lieu*, meaning "place."
- 9.) The incantation spoken by Van Helsing in Act II is known as an ancient Enochian conjuration for combating evil demons which is found in *The Goetia, The Lesser Key of Solomon the King*, by Alister Crowley.
- 10.) Translation of the Enochian conjuration.

- “Oel. Amema ilasa!” = “I curse thee!”
- “Do oaipe lehevohe!” = “In the name of Jehovah!”
- “Christeos lukifitas od tofajilo pire peripesol amema ilasa, pujo ialaperigi dasa apila od pujo mire adapehaheta!” = “Let the light and all the Holy Ones of Heaven curse thee unto the burning flame that liveth forever, and unto the torment unspeakable!”
- “Od do oainu od emetajisa, dasa oali do vaunala faorejita faboanau, tarianu do mire notahoa toltoregi salaberotza” ... = “And thy name and seal, which I have put in this dwelling of poison shall be in torment among creatures of Sulphur ...”
- “Od jirasrobe, olupiret do pereje caosajo, do oaipe lehevohe od vaunala do oainudau” ...= “and bitter sting, burning in fire of earth, in the name of Jehovah exalted in Power in these three names ...”
- “Telragrammation, Anaphexeton, od Primeumation!” = “Telragrammation, Anaphexeton, and Primeumation!” (refers to the ineffable name of God, and is used to reference the four-letter name of the creator: YHWH.)

11.) Pronunciation of the Enochian conjuration.

- Oel (oil)
- Amema (sounds like it looks)
- Ilasa (sounds like it looks)
- Do (doe)
- Oaipe (oa-i-pee)
- Lehevohe (lev-oy)
- Christeos (chris-te-os)
- Lukifitas (luk-if-ie-tas)

- Tofajilo (to-fag-ilo)
- Pire (pee-ray)
- Peripesol (pery-pesol)
- Pujo (pu-yo)
- lalaperigi (ie-la-aper-igi)
- Dasa (sounds like how it looks)
- Apila (a-pi-la)
- Od (ode)
- Mire (me-ray)
- Adapehaheta (ad-a-peh-ta)
- Oainu (oh-ine-u)
- Emetajisa (e-mit-a-jesa)
- Oali (o-a-lee)
- Vanuala (va-u-nala)
- Faorejita (fay-or-jita)
- Faboanau (fab-o-anew)
- Tarianu (tar-l-anew)
- Notahoa (note-a-oh-a)
- Toltoregi (tol-tor-egie)
- Salaberotza (sala-bor-ot-za)
- Jirasrobe (ji-ra-sroby)
- Olpiret (ol-pi-reta)
- Pereje (per-rya)
- Caosajo (ca-o-sigh-o)

- Oainudau (o-ine-u-da-u)
- Telragrammation (sounds like it looks)
- Anaphexeton (anna-fex-ton)
- Primeumation (pre-me-u-mation)