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**UVA DRAMA TO PRESENT FEDERICO GARCIA LORCA'S *BLOOD WEDDING***  
**David Dalton To Direct Melia Bensussen Adaptation of Langston Hughes Translation**  
**Opening February 23 at Culbreth Theatre**

**CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA** – February 8, 2017 – ‘Til death do they part? The University of Virginia’s Drama Department will continue its 2016-2017 season with *Blood Wedding*, Federico Garcia Lorca’s tragic and poetic tale of love, vengeance, and societal expectations. Featuring a translation by Langston Hughes and adapted by Melia Bensussen, the play was inspired by a true story of betrayal and vengeance Lorca came across in a newspaper then imbued with his gorgeous, melodic language and sweeping, surrealistic touch.

*Blood Wedding*, directed by David Dalton, will be presented in the Culbreth Theatre from February 23-25; February 28 and March 1 & 2 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$14.00 for adults, \$12.00 for UVA faculty, staff and UVA Alumni Association members, and \$8.00 for students. They are currently available online at [www.artsboxoffice.virginia.edu](http://www.artsboxoffice.virginia.edu), by calling 434-924-3376, or in-person from noon until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday at the UVA Arts Box Office, located in the lobby of the Drama building. Full-time UVA students may receive one free ticket if reserved at least 24 hours in advance of their desired show date.

*Blood Wedding* is a story of yearning and of vengeance set in the Spanish countryside in the early-to-mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century that illustrates what happens when lovers follow their hearts...and when they don’t. When a bride runs off with her life’s true love, the families and townspeople take sides to set off on a hunt for the couple that has tragic consequences for all.

Despite its setting and history, Dalton has found that the play’s themes remain contemporary to both his student cast members and to audiences. “I am really trying to focus on how the play relates to young people,” he said. “We are trying to make it a more contemporary take on the story while still setting it in the context Lorca intended.” The addition of Langston Hughes to the artistic mix added another element of relevance, Dalton said. “There was something about this translation and the fact that it is by Langston Hughes that made me think there might be a significant American connection here.”

One of the key themes, Dalton said, surrounds the life-altering choices all of us, but particularly young people, make. “The relationship at the center of the play has a sense of inevitability to it. They talk about how they feel helpless about their choices, that they are something that cannot be avoided.”

Another theme that felt particularly relevant to Dalton in today’s America is how violence affects the lives of young people. “The play starts with the boy’s mother talking about how evil knives and guns are, how much she has lost to them and how they have the potential to cut short the lives of young men. I

saw the potential for lots of parallels to social movements that are concerned with those issues in our world today.”

Dalton and his cast are also going beyond the actions of the play to capture the sense of community that is at the center of Lorca’s story and writing. “You have this whole community of people and they are all counting on this wedding to help the whole area transcend the circumstances that have beset it,” he said. “There is a sense of hope and the sense of potential for rebirth – potential that is ultimately destroyed by the blood that is spilled.”

Finally, Dalton added, in the midst of the tragic story lies the poetry for which Lorca, and Hughes, are so well known. “This is a great opportunity for students to learn about the poetic nature of the theatre, and what it can express visually and in connection with the poetry of these two remarkable writers”

Free parking for all UVA Drama performances is available at the Culbreth Road Parking Garage, conveniently located alongside the theaters.

To access a photo of the production, visit <https://virginia.box.com/s/5kmkzounxup54ysmyyi38uh4qsch7bz5>

For more information on the production, visit [www.virginia.edu/drama](http://www.virginia.edu/drama).

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