

Act III — Vocal Score

**Bodas de Sangre**  
*(Blood Wedding)*

A tragedy in three acts (seven scenes)

**Music by**  
**David W. Maves**

Composed over a 10-year period from 1982 to 1992

Completely revised 2009

**Text by**  
**Federico García Lorca**

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BODAS DE SANGRE (BLOOD WEDDING) an opera  
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## PERSONAJES (*Characters*)

in order of appearance

La MADRE ( <i>Mother</i> )	Mezzo soprano
El NOVIO ( <i>Bridegroom</i> )	Tenor
La VECINA ( <i>Neighbor woman</i> )	Mezzo Soprano
La SUEGRA de Leonardo ( <i>Leonardo's Mother-in-law</i> )	Mezzo Soprano
LEONARDO	Baritone
La MUJER de Leonardo ( <i>Leonardo's Wife</i> )	Mezzo Soprano
La MUCHACHA ( <i>Servant Girl</i> )	Soprano
CRIADA ( <i>Servant woman</i> )	Soprano
El PADRE ( <i>Father – of the Bride</i> )	Bass
La NOVIA ( <i>Bride</i> )	Soprano
6 MUCHACHAS ( <i>Girls</i> )	(or Women's chorus)
2 MOZOS ( <i>Youths – one a Flamenco Singer</i> )	
3 LEÑADORES ( <i>Woodsmen</i> )	(or Men's Chorus)
LUNA ( <i>The Moon</i> ) reciting, non-singing part	Tenor or Countertenor
MENDIGA ( <i>Death as a beggar woman</i> )	Mezzo Soprano
NIÑA ( <i>young girl in trio with 2 Muchachas in act III</i> )	Soprano
CORO	Chorus

## INSTRUMENTATION

(Full Orchestra)

Piccolo

2 Flutes (Second Flute plays Piccolo briefly in Act III Scene 2)

2 Oboes

English Horn

2 Clarinets in B-flat

Bass Clarinet in B-flat

2 Bassoons

4 Horns in F

3 Trumpets in B-flat (one plays C Trumpet in the last scene in Act III)

3 Trombones (2 Tenor, one Bass)

Tuba

2 Harps

Timpani

4 Percussion players playing these instruments:

Tom toms, Suspended Cymbal, 2 Plate “Crash” Cymbals, Sizzle Cymbal, Xylophone, Marimba, Glockenspiel,  
Tam Tam, Triangle, Snare Drum, Bass Drum

Strings (In Act III there are 2 solo parts as a duet [Concertmaster &amp; Associate Concertmaster].)

2 (optional) on-stage Percussion parts in Act II Scene 1 (may be doubled or played by chorus members)

2 (optional) on-stage Flamenco Guitar parts during both scenes of Act II

## ACT III

		full score		vocal score
Scene 1	Leñadores I, II, III.....	1 .....		9
	Luna – Mendiga.....	15 .....		21
	Novio – Mozo.....	31 .....		32
	Leñadores return.....	58 .....		44
	Leonardo – Novia.....	62 .....		48
Scene 2	Muchachas I & II – Niña.....	125 .....		81
	Suegra – Mujer.....	135 .....		87
	Mendiga.....	142 .....		89
	Madre – Vecina.....	155 .....		95
	Novia.....	166 .....		100
	Chorus enters.....	201 .....		111
	Chorus sings.....	209 .....		116

## Synopsis

### Act I — Scene 1 (A)

The Mother talks to her son, the Bridegroom; she curses all knives (which killed her other son and her husband) as instruments of death. The son laughs, takes a knife and leaves.

### Scene 1 (B)

A Neighbor enters, gossips about pain, death, heat, and drops the fact that the Bride-to-be once dated Leonardo (son of the killer of the Mother's menfolk). The Neighbor calms the Mother's sudden anger and leaves.

### Act I — Scene 2

Leonardo's wife and her Mother sing a surrealistic, bloody ballad. Leonardo enters, lies about how hard he's ridden his horse and about where he's been. He leaves in a rage when questioned. The women return to their ballad, crying.

### Act I — Scene III

The two families meet and discuss the wedding. They leave. Remaining are the Bride and a Servant who are interrupted in their discussion of the wedding by the sounds of a departing horse — Leonardo's.

### Act II — Scene 1

The Bride (with a Servant) prepares for the wedding. Leonardo enters. They converse, obviously still very much in love. Leonardo is sent away. Others enter and a wedding song serves as a backdrop for greetings. All leave.

### Act II — Scene 2

General preparations for the party after the wedding. Later, in the midst of festivities, it is discovered that Leonardo and the Bride have ridden away on horseback. The men are divided in to two groups to hunt them down.

### Act III — Scene 1 (A)

A surrealistic scene with supernatural figures — the moon and Death (personified by a beggar woman), framed by the appearances of three Woodcutters.

### Scene 1 (B — Love Duet)

The lovers enter and speak of their love. The pursuers are heard; the lovers leave. Two death screams (Leonardo's and the Novio's [*Bridegroom's*]) are heard. Death appears as the curtain falls.

### Act III Scene 2

Three Girls have a surrealistic discussion of the tragedy, the Mother and some neighbors grieve. The disheveled Bride enters and confronts the Mother whose rage subsides as she speaks of the knife, the little knife which kills — enmeshed within the roots of a scream.

## PROGRAM NOTES

In 1966 my then wife Kay (a brilliant writer) presented me with a copy of Lorca's play *Bodas de Sangre*. I read it with my hair standing on end and decided that it must be set as an opera. I immediately went to the piano and composed a sketch (which subsequently became the musical basis for the entire opera), and then wrote to García Lorca's brother, who informed me that another composer who had already set the work had included in the contract a stipulation that no one else was to be given permission to use the text. Crushed, I used the musical idea in a 7-minute work for violin and piano for my brother Larry, and kind of; but not really, forgot about it. About 20 years later, while living in Madrid; I made the acquaintance of Leslie Stainton who was there gathering material for what was later to become the outstanding Lorca biography. She took me to the very places in Almaria where the real-life events (written up in the newspapers) occurred that were Federico's inspiration for his great play.

Here was the arroyo where the bridegroom caught up with the fleeing lovers, over there was where the two men killed each other with knives. Up the road a few miles was where the *Novia* (Bride) still lived, in a depressing arid adobe hovel in in the midst of a yard filled with sagebrush and decaying buildings. All this was surrounded by a crude fence made of deadwood. I was told that the poor woman, who was still alive; whose life had been ruined by that tragic day, and whose privacy had been totally destroyed forever by Lorca's use of her tragic story in his world-famous play, would come out and throw rocks at anyone who came near. I stayed away.

Leslie also took me to the Lorca *Huerte* (Compound) just outside of Madrid where I met two of Lorca's sisters. Stern forbidding humorless ladies dressed in black who reminded me of both the portrait of Whistler's Mother, and the unfortunate ladies in Lorca's play, *La Casa de Bernardo Alba*. I was by then on fire with the desire to attack the problem of text permission. There seemed no hope, Spaniards seemed insulted that a "gringo dog" would have the temerity to set a Spanish masterpiece.

Soon after that I came across a copy of *Bodas de Sangre* that had no copyright. Back in the U.S. I went through the Library of Congress copyright office card catalog (one could do that in those days) and saw that my 1936 (Lorca had been assassinated by Franco's supporters that year) copy preceded by many years any copyrights for that work in the U.S. The legal team at my publisher's office (MMB in St. Louis) agreed that that text was indeed in the public domain. So in 1982 I began a 10-year obsession with Lorca's great play. The entire 1,000 pages of score and orchestra parts was shipped to the publishers in 1992. Since then we've run the Duet (twice) a couple of entr'actes and Scene Two of Act One with piano. That's the performance history to date.

Later I received a letter from the Lawyer of the *HEREDEROS DE FEDERICO GARCÍA LORCA*. New legislation ensures that the Lorca heirs will control all of García Lorca's works until at least 2040. We have since worked out an amicable agreement (they get half of whatever the composer receives), and I can again work toward a performance.

