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Yerma

by Federico García Lorca directed by Juan Carlos Martel Bayod scenic space Frederic Amat

Hliure

Wlliure

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"I" lliure

Juan Carlos Martel Bayod, director of the Teatre Lliure, adapts the Federico García Lorca classic Yerma. Actress María Hervás stars in this rural tragedy about a woman who never manages to have a child but lives under the societal pressure of a place that makes it necessary for a married woman to be a mother. The staging also includes the prominent presence of the visual artist Frederic Amat (scenic space and costumes), the composer, musician and producer Raül Refree (original music) and the dancer Lali Ayguadé (movement consultant). The show, which premiered at the **Teatre Lliure of Barcelona on 18** November of this year, is now touring Spain after receiving accolades from critics and audiences alike.



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Synopsis

Yerma is the main character who lends her name to the title of one of Federico García Lorca's most acclaimed plays. It is a tragic poem in three acts that shows the internal conflict of a woman who wants to have a child but cannot. She experiences this frustration in a place that makes it necessary for a married woman to be a mother, whose main focus in life is her home and her children. And inside Yerma, the maternal instinct struggles against the imposed repression and obligation.

Social pressure on women is a recurring theme in Lorca's works, especially motherhood, physical appearances and fatalism. And it is present in these three pieces, which comprise the rural trilogy: *Blood Wedding* (1933), *Yerma* (1934) and *The House of Bernarda Alba* (1936). These three tragedies weave together myth, poetry and reality in three portraits of women who are both oppressed and liberated.



MORE INFO https://www.teatrelliure.com/en/yerma

TEASER

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dnKx1JpVI2s

TRAILER

https://youtu.be/1cfwjuztXIs



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In the director's words

To me, the lecture entitled *On Lullabies* that García Lorca delivered in 1928 is an explosion of a new interpretation of the tragic poem *Yerma*. It is impossible for me to imagine that all of his musical and folk knowledge was not used to compose this play, even during Lorca's beloved journeys with La Barraca around all the villages of Spain. I am certain that he composed that poem as a musical piece. With the rhythm of a heartbeat, *Yerma* is a paean to lullabies and a public song, the child to which it is sung. It is a song that announces and expresses the rawest reality, letting the drama of the world infiltrate into this preliminary interpretation of the history of Spain—as the poet noted—which leaves the mark of 'solo estás y solo vivirás' (you are alone, and you will live alone) imprinted on the skin.

Yerma is also a dream that is incapable of encompassing the paradox of life and death that is our existence. If representing means bringing back to the present, it is worth representing Yerma, now offering each of us the most generous resignification. Yerma is a dream—or perhaps more accurately, a nightmare—which it is impossible to escape from because the system itself prevents you from leaving while remaining intact. Perhaps only the death of any living project can solve the suffering of feeling unfulfilled, given that 'a dead person in Spain is more alive when dead than anywhere else in the world'. And whoever wants to take the leap from the dream will end up hurting their feet on the edge of a straight razor.

Yerma neither threatens nor frightens, but it does draw us into the middle of the scene, defenceless against the realities of a woman who exudes life through all her pores but only finds death.

Juan Carlos Martel Bayod



INTERVIEW

Talking with María Hervás

Is this your first Lorca? What attracts you to his plays the most, and specifically to *Yerma*?

I haven't been onstage in a year and a half, the longest time I've gone without doing theatre. After Jauría I needed to rest and take care of myself in order to be able to offer people something vividly alive again. That's why I decided that my next show would be a text that made me quiver in my bones. And Lorca came along, my first Lorca... and the strange sense of having done it my whole life. Now I no longer want to utter words that aren't his. Yerma is a paean to fertility in terms of 'existence'. Lorca says that the only thing that exists in life is the living and the dead, and Yerma emerges from this tension. My exercise will consist in being freer, in honouring the joy of being alive with even more commitment.

What is the character of Yerma like? What do you like about her? What have you learned?

Yerma is an open flower, but also a wound that can't close and is suppurating. She is the urgent cry to live, live, live! Yerma is fierce and incapable of adapting; she is stubborn, temperamental... she is a fighting bull. I admire this substance in her, because I am more ductile, more fluid... while I am also scared, of course! Desire is always frightening. I want to learn how to look my desire in the eye and not deny it, not sweep it under the rug. We've confused politeness with blocking our life drive. I have come to this show to unblock this inside me.

This is also your first time acting in Barcelona. In addition to the challenge of conquering a new audience, what is your challenge as a performer?

I have acted in Catalonia several times, but never in Barcelona, and I admit that it is a dream come true. I have always liked the city and its approach to culture, which is both responsible and daring. Living here has been a great experience. I don't really think about what 'Catalan audience' means, just as I am not trying to conquer an audience. My job is to communicate with HUMAN BEINGS, to ask questions for which I have no answer and together to seek a language that isn't hyper-rationalism but emotion, sensibility. It is essential that we tear down this prison of Cartesian thinking and value other types of wisdom.

What was the process of preparing for the play like?

I am still in the midst of it. I call myself a Lorcaholic because I cannot stop reading about him, about his figure, his laughter, his eyes, his hands...
I think I am in love with Federico, almost like someone who has a religion or a guru. In the rehearsals I try to swim through this infinite ocean which is his way of looking at the world in order to become infected with his fever, to become drunk in his passion. The Lorca library that Martel has made available to us helps. The company is the loveliest group of beings I have seen in a long time.

Everyone is full of ideology, of creative fervour, of the rage for beauty. I learn every day just by watching them.

Juan Carlos Martel is revolutionising the idiosyncrasy of the 'rehearsal room' with a kind of work that favours horizontality, transversal dialogue, REAL freedom of expression. I feel like I am a better human when I leave rehearsals.

What reflection on motherhood would you like audiences to leave with?

Oh my! If I could answer that I would not be doing *Yerma*! I do not believe in the artist who goes onstage to tell anyone what to think. I believe in the kind that is willing to roll in the mud and encourages the audience to join them there. Sometimes ideas can be dangerous prisons, especially when they're about a body that is not yours.

The press says...

'Everything fits perfectly in this adaptation of Lorca's tragic paean to female repression. The ideal, contained staging, whose panoptic view of the audience reinforces that Inquisition-like atmosphere in the intimate, elegant set by Frederic Amat; the musical production of Raül Refree, which draws from the actors' voices and the sounds produced live with objects to construct this oppressive lament of female essentialism; and a cast that shines, fully engaged with each other from beginning to end, to attend to the lacerations of a María Hervás who fully embodies that rebellious Yerma, who feels 'empty but filled with hatred'. (...) Hervás's premiere with Lorca confirms that she is one of the most committed, refreshing actors on today's scene. (...) Counter to the naïve bucolic rural world, (...) this Yerma at the Teatre Lliure proves why a text written 90 years ago is still a symbol against the chains of gender. (...) At a time when the essentialist and biological debate has enclosed feminism in a small world (...) the Lliure's production appears as a tragically liberating ballad. Like that "barren, barren but sure" that Hervás intones to the audience's relief despite what they have just witnessed onstage: a heartrending catharsis.'

Jacinto Antón - El País, 07/09/22



ENTIRE ARTICLE (in Spanish):

https://elpais.com/espana/catalunya/2022-11-15/yerma-en-un-territorio-de-ceniza-ellliure-afronta-su-primer-lorca-como-una-cancion-de-cuna-y-fiado-al-carisma-de-mariahervas.html

'In Yerma, utter honesty and the will to live coexist. In Yerma, there is no resignation but instead struggle, no acceptance but exigency, no renunciation but the rage with which she immolates herself in an act of revolutionary nihilism. (...) In María Hervás's Yerma (...), all these feelings, all these oppositions flow forcefully and strikingly to offer us a powerful, cathartic creation grounded in naturalism and the urge to live, very skilfully guided by its director, Juan Carlos Martel. (...) Martel's staging is very interesting and profoundly respectful of the original down to the tiniest detail, while rejecting the dramatics of other times and the littlest shred of the folkloric. The actors are extremely well directed, with clear diction and a climatic treatment of the sound space flooded with songs as if it were a long lullaby. It is essential to dip into Lorca every now and then.'

Santi Fondevila – *Ara*, 19/11/22



ENTIRE ARTICLE (in Catalan):

https://www.ara.cat/cultura/teatre/magnifica-yerma-maria-hervas-critica-teatre-lorca_1_4552128.html



'The Yerma directed by Juan Carlos Martel Bayod brings a novel look at the tragedy by the author from Granada. (...) María Hervás is an edgy Yerma who augments the trauma of her infertility with tonal inflexions that culminate in the guttural laceration of desperation. Her agitation reminded us of Nuria Espert's embodiments of Lorca characters ever since she starred in Víctor García's transgressive version in 1971. The cast acts well together, with Joan Amargós in the role of Juan, the husband who is more concerned with counting sheep and farming fields than depositing his seed in the wife whom he tries to confine to the home. Isabel Rocatti offers a standout performance as the talkative old woman whom Yerma asks for advice. (...) It is difficult to surprise audiences with such a well-known play, but Martel Bayod and Amat's Yerma is presented differently: his timeless mission does not betray the essence of García Lorca.'

Sergi Doria – *ABC*, 23/11/22



ENTIRE ARTICLE (in Spanish):

https://www.abc.es/cultura/teatros/yerma-esencia-lorquiana-visillos- 20221122184154-nt.html

'Run, don't walk, because this is one of those gems that is gone before you realise it. With music by Raül Refree, who aces it once again, at the helm of a cast is a María Hervás capable of grabbing your soul when she falls apart at the impossibility of becoming a mother. Hervás, who reminds us that she is the best actress since Núria Espert every time she gets onstage, and who oozes intelligence, and not only for the stage, has invented a new way of talking. She recites the text as if it were meant for her, as if she had spent time gestating phrases that Lorca would have written just for her, had he known her.'

Jordi Évole – La Vanguardia, 26/11/22



ENTIRE ARTICLE (in Spanish):

https://www.lavanguardia.com/opinion/20221126/8622466/yerma-maria-hervas-e-irene-montero.html

'María Hervás constructs an energetic Yerma with a magnetic gaze who projects the yearning for motherhood. She is also fragile: the inner wall she builds against the village gossip seems about to crack. Her bitterness is projected back to the last row, an empowered creature almost from the first minute, something that gets her closer to her emancipation.'

Manuel Pérez i Muñoz – *El Periódico*, 30/11/22



ENTIRE ARTICLE (in Spanish):

https://www.lavanguardia.com/opinion/20221126/8622466/yerma-maria-hervase-irene-montero.html



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Juan Carlos Martel Bayod director

Current director of the Fundació Teatre Lliure - Teatre Públic of Barcelona. He has directed around 30 shows, the most recent ones being *La malaltia* (Teatre Lliure, 2021), *Càsting Giuletta* (Festival Grec and Teatre Lliure, 2019), *Una Ilíada* (Festival Temporada Alta, 2018) and *Sis personatges: homenatge a Tomàs Giner* (Teatre Lliure, 2018). He is a member of the Lincoln Center Theatre Directors Lab of New York, and a co-founder and member of the executive committee of the Directors Lab Mediterranean. He has also served as the international artistic advisor for the Teatro della Pergola in Florence and has taught at the Scuola l'Oltrarno.

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BIOGRAPHY Frederic Amat

scenic space and costumes

He is a painter whose work challenges a single form of categorisation. His works have been displayed and published all over the world. His open conception of painting has led him to incorporate multiple artistic languages into his creative work. He has made sets for dance and theatre based on texts by García Lorca, Beckett, Juan Goytisolo, Koltès and Octavio Paz. He has also directed and designed the scenic spaces of the opera El Viatge a Simorgh by Sánchez Verdú and the oratories Oedipus Rex by Stravinsky and Cocteau and Maddalena ai piedi di Cristo by Caldara. One of his latest works was RRR, a dance piece created with La Veronal and Cabonsanroque. He has also illustrated several literary works, like One Thousand and One Nights and The Odyssey. In his interventions in architectural spaces, he has developed projects that combine painting, sculpture and ceramic, such as El mural de les olles, Villanurbs, Pluja de sang and Mur d'ulls. In this same plural sense, Amat has extended painting to the world of films, directing the films Viaje a la luna (script by Federico García Lorca, 1998), Foc al càntir (script by Joan Brossa, 2000), El Aullido (2009), Danse Noire (2006) and Deu Dits (2000 - 2004).

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BIOGRAPHY Raül Refree

original music and sound

He is one of the most acclaimed music producers in the country in the past decade. He has published with experimental artists like Lee Ranaldo from Sonic Youth, revisited the fados of Amália Rodrigues with Lina and worked with innovative artists like Rosalía and El Niño de Elche, thus inadvertently positioning himself at the vanguard of the movement called the 'new flamenco'. His talent has been sought by stars like Ricky Martin, while he continues to focus on discovering talented new artists and researching the most popular music all over the world. But Raül's musical life never stops. He is also a prominent composer and musician who has launched new albums under his most personal project, called Refree, along with acclaimed soundtracks of films and an extensive discography of projects that cannot be pigeonholed by genres. Raül only views music as a free exercise in creation and inquiry.



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BIOGRAPHY Javier Beltrán performer

In the theater, he has worked under the direction of Carlota Subirós (*El quadern daurat/Sol solet*), Alfredo Sanzol (*La ternura*), Nao Albet and Marcel Borrás (*Mammon*), Lluís Pasqual (*El caballero de Olmedo*), Jordi Casanovas (Port Arthur), David Selvas (*Don Joan/Vidas privades*), Lurdes Barba (*L'Hèroe*), Pau Carrió (*Enric V/ L'Hostalera*), Aleix Fauró (*Snorkel/Paisaje sin casas*), among others. He was part of the Kompanyia Lliure from Teatre Lliure (2014-2016). In the audiovisual sector, he has been part of the cast of series such as *Patria*, *El Inocente*, *La templanza* or *El día de mañana*. And in films like *Las leyes de la frontera* (2021) by Daniel Monzón, *Los renglones torcidos de Dios* (2022) by Oriol Paulo, *Modelo 77* (2022) by Alberto Rodríguez.

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BIOGRAPHY María Hervás performer

Madrid, 1987. She is a graduate of Advanced Studies in the Dramatic Arts from the Cristina Rota School and has studied classical and contemporary dance. She is currently in her third year of a degree in Philosophy from UNED. Over the years, she has combined a solid theatre career with extensive experience in audiovisuals. She has also developed her own projects as a writer, adapter and director. In theatre, she has worked under the orders of prominent directors like Juan Carlos Pérez de La Fuente and Miguel del Arco. Her performances in three plays with deep social repercussions particularly stand out: Confesiones a Alá (by Saphia Azzeddine, adapted and directed by Arturo Turón), Iphigenia en Vallecas (based on Iphigeniain Splott by Gary Owen, directed by Antonio C. Guijosa and adapted by María Hervás herself) and Jauría (Jordi Casanovas, directed by Miguel del Arco), which earned her prestigious acting awards like the Max, Actors' Union, Fotogramas, Ercilla, Miguel Mihura and four nominations for the Valle-Inclán Award. She is currently participating in the version of Yerma directed by Juan Carlos Martel Bayod, a play she will star in at the Teatre Lliure of Barcelona, which continues her extensive, renowned stage career. In audiovisuals, María Hervás has worked on more than 25 fiction projects, including feature films and television series.



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BIOGRAPHY David Menéndez performer

He is a graduate in performance from the Institut del Teatre of Barcelona. Standouts from his professional career include: Fuenteovejuna: breve tratado sobre lasovejas domésticas by Lope de Vega (original adaptation by Anna Maria Ricart and winner of the 2015 Max Award by the company Obskené), King Lear by W. Shakespeare (directed by Lluís Pasqual) and El future by Helena Tornero. In 2021, he was nominated for best actor in the Butaca Awards for L'olor eixordadora del blanc by Stefano Massini (directed by Moreno Bernardi). In 2013, his professional relationship with the director Moreno Bernardi was consolidated when he acted in Everything Seems without Limits (MBA5), La Nit and Radionit, both created based on La noche antes de los bosques by Bernard-Marie Koltès; and as an artist in residence in 2019 at Lo Spazio (artistic research and contemporary practices) in the research projects Traducción en formato acústico de la interpretación actoral (Translation in the Acoustic Format of Acting Performance) and Sistema de notación dramatúrgica (System of Dramaturgical Notation). The first piece he created premiered In 2018: *El percebeiro y otros* relatos sobre la filosofía del no me voy a caer. In television, he has appeared in series like Antidisturbios and Mira lo que has hecho (Movistar+) and Hache (Netflix). In cinema, he has worked on the films As Bestas by Rodrigo Sorogoven, Golem by Burning Percebes and Creatura by Elena Martín. In 2020 he created his own musical project BOYE, in which he composed the EP BOYE, te queremos, pero no eres nadie, produced by Arnau Vallvé



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BIOGRAPHY Bàrbara Mestranza

performer

Barcelona, 1990. She is a playwright, director, actress, dubber and singer. She studied Performance at the Escola Eòlia and the Institut del Teatre of Barcelona. She also studied Directing and Dramaturgy at the Escola Eòlia and has taken classes with MartaBuchaca and Alfredo Sanzol at the Obrador de la Sala Beckett. She has also studied singing. She was a member of the musical and theatrical trio The Mamzelles, with whom she released two records and toured around Spain, in addition to creating several different theatre shows. In theatre, she has created, directed and featured in shows like Pocahontas o la verdadera historia de una traviesa (winner of the 2017 Croquis Award from the Sala Beckett), La mujer más fea del mundo (with Ana Rujas as playwright), Richard III and They Don't about us (with Paula Ribó as playwright), and Mafia (as a member of The Mamzelles; DespertaLab grant award and 2018 Singlot Award). She had her solo directorial debuts with Orgia (Espai Lliure) and F.A.M.Y.L.I.A (Sala Atrium and La Seca). As a theatre actor, she has worked under directors Ivan Morales (Esmorza amb mi), Oriol Vila (Be mybaby) and Lluís Pascual (La casa de Bernarda Alba). In cinema, she has participated in the films Los inocentes by Escándalo Films and Donde caben dos by Paco Caballero. She has also acted in TV series like Mercado central and La pelu (TVE), Sin identidad and Amar es para siempre (Antena3) and Crackòvia (TV3).

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BIOGRAPHY Isabel Rocatti performer

Burjassot (Valencia), 1958. Actress and theatre director. She holds a bachelor's in Dramatic Arts from the Institut del Teatre of Barcelona and has furthered her training over the years with different classes with professionals like Carol Rosenfeld, Bob McAndrew, KonradZshiedrich, Carlos Alfaro and Augusto Boal, among others. She has also taught with acting entertainment groups and creativity workshops. As an actress, she has performed in numerous shows under directors like Ivan Morales, Calixto Bieito, Carmen Portaceli, Carlos Santos, Carlos Alfaro, Pau Carrió and Juan Carlos Martel Bayod. From 1983 to 1986, she was a member of Els Joglars. She has also directed pieces, many of them poetry and music recitals. In the cinema, she has worked on a dozen films, including Estiu 1993 by Clara Simó, Tres dies amb la família by Mar Coll and No me digas que te bese porque te besaré by David Espinosa. She has also had a fruitful television career, most notably her participation in the TV3 series Temps de silenci and Ventdelplà. She has received numerous awards for her performances, such as the Performing Arts Award of the government of Valencia in 2004, the Critics' Award, both as best actress for Una Alaska particular, and the Critics' Award and Butaca Award in 1998 for best actress for L'Altre, among others.



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BIOGRAPHY Yolanda Sey performer

Vic (Barcelona), 1991. She has a degree in Musical Theatre from the Eòlia Advanced Dramatic Arts School of Barcelona. She is a member of the band called The Sey Sisters. She has participated in many plays, including *The Salem Witches* by Arthur Miller (directed by Andrés Lima), *Los Juegos Florales de Canprosa* by Santiago Rusiñol (adapted and directed by Jordi Prat y Coll) and the musical *Little Shop of Horrors* by Roger Corman (directed by Àngel Llàcer). With this latter show, she won the 2019 Critics' Award for best actress in a musical. In the cinema, she starred in the film *La mujer ilegal*, which was nominated for best film in the 2022 Gaudí Awards, and she was a host of the TV3 programme on language issues TV3 *El Lenguado* and participated in the TV3 *Planta Baja* programme. She is a founding member of Tinta Negra, a collective of actors, actresses and creators from the African diaspora.

"I" Iliure



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Marta Ossó performer

She is a graduate in Literary Studies from the University of Barcelona and in Dramatic Arts from Eolia School. She worked with Raimund Hoghe in the show Young People, Old Voices (Mercatde les Flors, 2011); Un refugi indie, written and directed by Pau Miró (Sala Beckett, 2013); La Ola, written by Ignacio Garcia May and directed by Marc Montserrat (Teatre Lliure, 2013); La Rosa Tatuada, directed by Carlota Subirós (TNC, 2013); L'hort de les oliveres by Narcís Comadira, directed by Xavier Albertí (TNC, 2015); F.R.A.U., a seven-hour show directed by Albert Arribas (Festival de Temporada Alta, 2017); Blasted by Sarah Kane, directed by Alícia Gorina (TNC, 2018); El quadern daurat, directed by Carlota Subirós (Teatre Lliure, 2020); and Alguns dies d'ahir, directed by Ferran Utzet (Villarroel 2021), among others. Internationally, she has participated as an actress in the UTOPIAS project under the direction of Olivier Coloni and the playwright Anne-Sylvie Könnig, and as the assistant director in Wer hat Angst vor Hugo Wolf, directed by Herbert Fritsch, which premiered at the Schauspielhaus of Zurich. She has also worked on several short films in the German language. In audiovisuals, she co-starred in the film Alguns dies d'ahir directed by Kiko Ruiz Claverol (Focus, TV3) and participated in the series Sé quién eres (Telecinco) y Cites (TV3), both directed by Pau Freixas. She is currently a cast member of Com si fos ahir (TV3).

Credits

PERFORMERS

Javier Beltrán *Juan*María Hervás *Yerma*David Menéndez *Víctor*, *Male*Bàrbara Mestanza *Female*Isabel Rocatti *Old Woman*Yolanda Sey *Girl*Marta Ossó *María*

COSTUMES

Frederic Amat and Rosa Esteva

ORIGINAL MUSIC

Raúl Refree

SOUND

Roc Mateu and Raül Refree

LIGHTING

Maria Domènech

MOVEMENT CONSULTANT

Lali Ayguadé

CHARACTERISATION

Ignasi Ruiz

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Júlia Valdivielso

ASSISTANT SET DESIGNER

Roger Orra

ASSISTANT COSTUME DESIGNER

Maria Albadalejo

INTERN

Clara Cabutí (EDIDP - UPC)

SET BUILDER

Pascualin Estructures and Big Image

PUPPET MAKER

Martí Doy

MASK MAKER

Frederic Amat y Martí Doy

COSTUME PRODUCTION

Cortana and Goretti Puente

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Toni Rumbau

PRODUCTION

Teatre Lliure

Practical information

LENGTH

1 h 30'

LANGUAGE

Spanish

RECOMMENDED AGE

Age 15 and older

TOUR

Open contracting 23/24 (Spain and international)

"Il lliure

Press room

To download all the informative materials (press packs, press releases, videos, photos) or gain access to the reference materials (reproduction lists, etc.)



www.teatrelliure.com/es/ sala-de-premsa-yerma

PRES CONTACT

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