

**BUTTERFLY**

NARRATIVE OUTLINE

Images, Dialogue, Movements, Music.

by

Sandra Hughes

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sandraleehughes@gmail.com

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## THE PLACE

Granada Province, Spain  
Butterfly's Imagination

## THE TIME

1909 - 1936

## THE CHARACTERS

Young Butterfly

Young Francisco - Butterfly's Younger Brother

Adult Federic

3 Mime/Puppeteer/Dancer/Actor/Mask Performers

To portray: The Servants, Dolores, Yerma, The Bride, Bernarda,  
Butterfly's Male Lover and Others

Singer

Guitarist

## THE SET

A TABLE

PERHAPS A LARGE UPSTAGE SCREEN WHERE IMAGES OF VARIOUS PLACES  
(AND PERHAPS SUPER TITLES OF SPANISH ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS) ARE  
PROJECTED.

## SCENE 1

Music - haunting, powerful and intimate - evokes Spain. Granada, Andalusia. The music builds and resolves. Its tones continue to resonate . . .

Lights up. Center stage.

A table draped in black. Upon it an object covered in black cloth. On either side of the table 2 PUPPETEER/MIMES dressed and veiled in black.

In fluid ritual-like movements the MPs uncover the object on the table. It's a large, brilliant red child's savings bank.

YOUNG BUTTERFLY enters. He wears an ornate half mask. He stands solemnly behind the table.

FRANCISCO, Butterfly's younger brother, stands at the side of the table with a half mask in his hands.

Butterfly nods to Francisco. Francisco raises the mask to his face. One of the MPs ties it onto Francisco's face.

The other MP hands Francisco a large hammer.

Both PMs move around the table. Their rhythmic movements are military in style (facist) as they maneuver their imaginary machine guns.

The PMs exit.

Francisco walks to Butterfly. In a high ritual style he offers the hammer to Butterfly. Butterfly takes the hammer.

Francisco returns to the side of the table.

Butterfly holds the hammer in his two hands and raises it above his head. He smashes the savings bank. Coins fall onto the table.

BLACK OUT.

SCENE 2

SOUNDS of FLAMENCO PALMAS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOW THE SOUND OF THE BANK SHATTERING.

LIGHTS UP DOWN LEFT.

A FLAMENCO DANCER is revealed. A percussive dance ensues full of encouragement from Butterfly.

The Dancer stops suddenly (breathing, nostrils visibly flaring.) The support needed for Butterfly has been provided by the energy of the dance.

LIGHTS SLOWLY FADE

SCENE 3

LIGHTS UP CENTER STAGE

The MPs enter. They wrap the broken bank in the black table cloth and remove it. There is another black cloth on the table beneath the first one.

One of the MPs returns with a large blank sign. The MP slowly rotates the sign to reveal the back side of the sign. We see the words: THE NORTH STAR.

SONG - THE NORTH STAR. Prophetic, soothing - *Follow the North Star. The North Star holds your future.*

During the song the second MP enters with a second blank sign. The sign is slowly rotated. The words on it say: TOY STORE

The MPs exit.

The SONG CONTINUES

The Two Boys enter excitedly. MPs follow. They carry an object draped in black.

The MPs ceremonially place the object on the table. One of them uncovers it.

It's a TOY THEATRE. The Boys move closer. They are awe-struck. The MPs exit.

THE SONG CONCLUDES. The music continues to resonate.

LIGHTS FADE

#### SCENE 4

Francisco's adult voice is heard.

#### ADULT FRANCISCO

No plays came with this toy theatre. So my brother had to make them up.

LIGHTS DOWN RIGHT come up as the Brothers move towards it.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC - Sounds of Granada.

#### FRANCISCO

In the meantime our servant Dolores told us stories about our city, Granada.

DOLORES - portrayed by an MP - appears DOWN RIGHT. She is dressed in curtains and towels to look like a Moor.

The 2 other MPs survey Dolores. One of them drapes a scarf across her outstretched arm.

Butterfly enters the light. He ties the scarf around Dolores' waist.

Dolores gravely recites and half-invents "The Alcazar of Pearls" in Spanish. The Boys and the MPs listen.

The SOUND of Dolores' voice fades - although she continues to move her lips and gesture as a SONG - THE ALCAZAR OF PEARLS emerges in English.

The Story and the Song create an atmosphere of longing. The MPs exit - slowly.

#### SCENE 6

Dolores claps her hands rhythmically.

The Boys are enraptured.

Dolores throws off the curtains and towels. The Brothers catch them and cast them aside.

The Brothers join Dolores in doing palmas.

Dolores' feet begin to sound the rhythmic patterns - the duende that moves souls and blood.

Dolores dances Butterfly's destiny.

#### FRANCISCO

My brother was held in an unbreakable spell. Our Butterfly had begun to transform the world of fiction into a living reality and to identify all of reality with a fantastic dream.

SONG - LULLABY

#### SCENE 7

LIGHTS TRANSITION from DOWNSTAGE RIGHT TO CENTER

Young Butterfly is drawn towards the light. He climbs onto the table, covers himself with the black cloth and falls asleep.

The LULLABY becomes intense.

In low light a MARIONETTE version of Young Butterfly appears on the table. Butterfly shifts uneasily in his sleep.

The Marionette perches itself on the edge of the table and watches.

Two MPs enter in military mode. They wear masks. Between them they hold Adult Butterfly.

The MPs push Adult Butterfly to his knees. They blindfold him. They raise their imaginary guns and point them at Adult Butterfly. They freeze.

The Marionette flies into the air. Young Butterfly jumps to his feet on the table. The MPs and Adult Butterfly disappear.

The LULLABY RESOLVES.

Young Butterfly screams and falls to his knees.

Dolores appears. She takes Young Butterfly in her arms. She comforts him.

FADE TO BLACK.

#### SCENE 8

Silence.

Adult Butterfly sits at the table. The marionette sits on the table. He writes. The only sound is his pen/pencil moving along the paper.

#### ADULT FRANCISCO

The interweaving of my brother's life and work, this erasing of the limits between life and fiction, is equally real in the theatre.

Adult Butterfly continues to write.

#### ADULT FRANCISCO

And I can say equally real between the playwright and his characters.

Adult Butterfly rises from the table. He walks to the front of it and sits on the table. An idea occurs to him. He lifts himself up and launches himself onto the floor.

Butterfly speaks in Spanish- - transforming himself into a Maid in a rich house, a little old Convent Lady and finally a Villager from Alpujarra.

He returns to the table, sits and writes furiously. He throws down the pen, rises, does palmas and dances around the table. He jumps onto the table and continues to dance.

The light changes to cool blue. Three FEMALE FIGURES from Lorca's three tragedies - YERMA, THE BRIDE, BERNARDA - emerge from the darkness. They freeze.

MUSIC

#### SCENE 10

DANCE DRAMA WITH THE THREE WOMEN from FEDERICO's THREE TRAGEDIES.

#### SCENE 11

Silence. The lights dim. Sounds of rustling fabric.

Adult Butterfly is withdrawn. He sits on top of the table. He picks up his pen and paper and writes.

Adult Butterfly crosses out what he writes. He does this again and again. He enters a frenzy of frustration. Butterfly throws down the pen and paper.

He throws himself on his back on the table. He breathes heavily. His body writhes.

In the center of the stage in front of the table a pool of red fabric moves. (via 2 of the MPs) It undulates and writhes in sympathy with Butterfly's anguished body, soul and spirit.

Butterfly sits up.

He sees the head of a Spanish Bull emerge from the red fabric.

The Bull Head rises. An upright figure appears dressed in flowing red fabric. The fabric moves and becomes a red sea full of undulating waves.

Butterfly melts off the table. He dances around the bull - sensual, sexual and powerful.

The red fabric stops moving. It disappears.

We now see a man with a bull's head. The Bull-Man is muscular, sinewy and orgiastic.

Butterfly enters a trance dance of freedom. He dances with the Bull-Man.

The dance reaches a crescendo. The music and the movement stop - suddenly. Federico cries out!

2 MPs remove the bull mask from the male figure. The face of a handsome Man is revealed.

Butterfly and the Man embrace as though they are saving each other from drowning.

BLACK OUT

## SCENE 12

Butterfly and 16<sup>th</sup> century playwright, LOPE DE RUEDA, the "Grandfather" of Spain's modern theater, sit at the table. They drink whatever two Spanish men drink when they relax and enjoy each other's company.

De Rueda's WIFE MARIANA, Actress and Maid of the Duke of Medinaceli, dressed up like a man (a trait of the character of comedians or actors of the time), serves the two Men.

Butterfly unintentionally offends De Rueda.

De Rueda and his wife leave in a huff!

## SCENE 13

Butterfly's traveling theater troupe arrives in a village. 3 of the actors are on stage as the audience - a gypsy, woman and man of color. All are suffering from extreme poverty.

The actual audience is engaged as the audience from the village.

Laughter and tears mount. The performance culminates in a standing ovation from the 3 Actor/Villagers on stage.

## SCENE14

Adult Butterfly appears on stage.

Lights up on Young Butterfly.

Young Butterfly plays war with his puppets.

Adult Butterfly is attacked and carried off by government forces.

Young Butterfly sits with his puppets and SINGS a REPRISE of the NORTH STAR SONG.

## SCENE 15

Young Butterfly wanders onto the stage. He is lost.

A fog rises.

The GHOST of DICTATOR FRANCISCO FRANCO emerges from the fog.

To keep his spirits up, Young Butterfly hums the North Star song.

Franco hears the song and pursues Young Butterfly.

AS Franco is about to grab the Young Butterfly, the Adult Butterfly appears.

Adult Butterfly comes between them.

Sounds of rhythmic flamenco shoes.

The Dancers appear.

They surround Franco and Adult Butterfly.

The combination of Dancers, Dictator and Adult Poet Butterfly move in unison from one side of the stage to the other.

Franco pulls a pistol.

ALL freeze.

ADULT BUTTERFLY - VOICE OVER

"Heed only the call that arises within from three strong voices: the voice of death, with all its foreboding, the voice of love and the voice of art."

Franco fires the gun.

Adult Butterfly falls.

BLACK OUT

LIGHTS COME UP SLOWLY

Young Butterfly sits alone with his puppets in the fog as it disappears. He sings the North Star song.

SOUNDS of Flamenco feet off stage as the . . .

LIGHTS SLOWLY FADE.