

MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL

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MEDEA

SASHA WALTZ
& GUESTS



EDUCATION RESOURCE PACK
WRITTEN AND COMPILED
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FOREWORD

Artists of all disciplines have used the Medea story in their works, using the universal and increasingly well-known themes in innovative ways. Euripides' play is the best-known version and one of the first to explore, in a sympathetic manner, the true motivation behind Medea's actions.

The story of Medea contains two of the most psychologically difficult subjects for audiences and readers: murder and family. It also manages to combine the two in a ghoulishly efficient manner – filicide. Medea's husband, Jason, has left her to marry a more socially acceptable bride – the daughter of Creon, king of Corinth. Medea is already an outsider in this new land, and cannot return to her own. Creon, threatened by her presence, banishes her. Bargaining for one more day, Medea confronts her husband, poisons his new bride and her father the king, and kills her own children so that they do not have to endure the retribution for her actions. The story of a mother killing her own children to save them from a worse fate is one that resonates throughout history, in fact and legend. One of the most notable examples from modern times is the murder-suicide of the Goebbels family to "protect" them from the invading Soviet army in 1945.

The Sasha Waltz & Guests production of *Medea* is based on Euripides' original story, as well as the play *Despoiled Shore Medea-material Landscape with Argonauts* by Heiner Müller, and the opera *Medeamaterial* (itself using Müller's text) by Pascal Dusapin. Luigi Cherubini's opera *Medée* was originally considered when devising the work, which was first performed in 2007. Sasha Waltz is from Berlin, a city regarded as having a rich artistic tradition, and she has come to be closely associated with the dance form known as *tanztheater*. Pina Bausch (1940-2009) has long been seen as the foremost authority on this form. However, it has been said that although *tanztheater* is "best known through Pina Bausch's work, [it is] now gaining another talented exponent in Sasha Waltz." (Nadine Meisner, *Independent*, 2003). *Medea* will be featured at the 2009 Melbourne Festival along with *Körper*, a Sasha Waltz production from 2000. *Körper* is an exploration of the human body on a number of innovative levels.

Contemporary dance is one of the more exciting modern art forms. With its ability to easily synthesise all the performing arts, it offers an ideal opportunity for creative artists to devise groundbreaking, captivating, and often provocative works. Many students at the senior secondary level are drawn to contemporary dance, and the first four activities in this Education Resource Pack contain lesson ideas that are drawn directly from Waltz's *Medea* and *Körper*. Other activities cover the subject areas of Drama, English, Music, Art, as well as Interpersonal Development. Teachers are encouraged to view the video material contained in the Appendices and should investigate obtaining a copy of a CD of the Dusapin opera *Medeamaterial* (Harmonia Mundi, ASIN B000068PGX), as well as *Medée* by Cherubini (Nuova Era, ASIN B0015XQKF0; EMI Classics, ASIN B000069V7R).

It is unnecessary for students to complete all the activities in this Education Pack in order to gain an understanding and appreciation of the performance. Teachers should choose from the activities and decide what is appropriate for their students and teaching circumstances. Teachers and students can complete the activities in this Education Pack prior to seeing the performance, although many exercises are ideal as follow up activities.

DAVID PERRY
Education Pack Writer

CURRICULUM LINKS

The VELS Standards (Level 6) were consulted in the preparation of this Education Resource Pack. Some of the connections are outlined below.

PHYSICAL, PERSONAL AND SOCIAL LEARNING – INTERPERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Students are engaged in activities that enable them to:

- develop greater awareness of complex social conventions, including those related to family; and
- describe how local and global values and beliefs, including traditional beliefs and the mass media, determine their own and others' social relationships.

THE ARTS – INCLUDING ART, DANCE, DRAMA, MUSIC AND MEDIA

Students are engaged in activities that enable them to:

- analyse, interpret, compare and evaluate the stylistic, technical, expressive and aesthetic features of *Medea* in terms of the way dance and music are used in its presentation;
- describe and discuss ways that their own dance and drama creations communicate and challenge ideas and meaning;
- comment on the impact that art works, forms and practices inspired by the *Medea* story have on other art works and on society in general; and
- apply decision making skills to find the most effective way to implement ideas, and to design, create and make arts works devised from a range of stimuli, including techniques and ideas used in *Medea*.

ENGLISH

Students are engaged in activities that enable them to:

- compare ideas, build on others' ideas, provide and justify other points of view, and reach conclusions that take account of aspects of issues contained in *Medea*; and
- explain how *Medea* and audience responses to it are shaped by the time, place and cultural setting in which it was created and presented.

ACTIVITY 1

ROLLING A CIRCLE

We (the dancers) usually start from nothing! I mean we have the concept, I explain the concept and have certain physical ideas, I have a musical structure, or a very clear set, as I often start with a spatial idea and then we try to develop all the physical qualities, so that they will acquire meaning.

SASHA WALTZ

<http://highvoltagepress.blogspot.com/2007/02/sasha-waltz-interview.html>

The productions of Sasha Waltz & Guests are at the cutting edge of modern dance. Her use of choreography, structure and staging is highly original, artistic and strikingly effective. However, many of the movements themselves are quite conventional and deceptively simple. These movements can be recreated in the classroom to create a Sasha Waltz-inspired production or simply to teach dance or movement from a new perspective.

The dance activities can be undertaken individually or as part of a series to create a larger work. They can be undertaken by most year levels, including with primary students.

PREPARATION

All dance and movement activities should begin with an appropriate warm up and flexibility exercises.

You will need:

- For some tasks, appropriate dance or sport clothing should be used; bare feet or dance shoes are preferable.
- Video material of Sasha Waltz productions (see Appendix A). Senior classes, particularly those who will be undertaking further studies of Waltz's work, should have had some exposure to these. Teachers should also be familiar with this material.
- A dance space that is open and safe: remind students of expectations of safety during these activities.
- Accompanying music (optional) which should be slow and soothing in quality. A suggested list is given at Appendix A.

OBJECTIVE

To provide Dance students with a "palette" of movements and creative processes that they can draw on for their own dance creations.

... P.T.O

ACTIVITY 1

ROLLING A CIRCLE continued ...

ACTIVITY

(for older students)

Ensure that appropriate clothing is worn for this activity. Prepare the space in advance and make sure the edges are clearly marked.

1. Teacher describes the following scene to students, either verbally, written, using symbols, or showing video material:

The opening of “Medea” has the dance ensemble lying down in a long line, hands joined to feet, rolling across the stage in slow motion and eventually forming a circle. Dancers then slowly unlink and make other movements or form individual characters, some of whom start to interact with each other.

2. Students lie on the floor in scattered positions with plenty of space between them and other students, although bodies are all pointed in the same direction (eg West-East, North-South). Arms should be outstretched above the head, legs straight with toes pointed. The body stays in this pose and they will be rolling like logs across the floor.
3. Practise rolling very slowly all in the same direction across the floor. Start by rolling at a speed that is comfortable and then work at rolling more and more slowly. When they reach the edge of the space, they should stand and walk around the other students to start again at the other side. Students will gradually become aware of the different muscles required to control the speed when they roll.
4. Keep the activity continuing. Students are gradually put into groups of two or three when they show they can complete the rolls well. Groups are linked by having one student hold onto the feet of another, creating a line. The student at the head of the line keeps their hands outstretched. Ensure that all members of the group roll at the same speed. Some students may have difficulty with the roll and should continue practising by themselves until they feel confident.
5. Accompanying music can be added if desired. If students are tired by the rolling, allow them to rest until they feel strong enough to rejoin the activity. Groups should continue their rolls across the floor following the same format as above, and linked together to create longer lines as they become more confident.
6. Teacher stops the activity to allow students to rest and discuss:
 - What are the sensations you encounter as you roll? Do you need to close your eyes to stop any dizziness, for example?
 - What muscles did you need to use to control the roll and keep it as slow as possible?
 - Is it difficult for everyone to keep the same speed: did your group come up with any “tricks”?
 - How can the class do the same movement in one long line?
 - Could we get the line to make a shape like a circle, as in Medea?
7. When ready, all members of the class are linked together and teacher supervises the roll across the floor, with music if desired. The movement should be stopped immediately if any student is in danger of being hurt.
8. Repeat the movement, this time with the objective of creating a circle.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

When students feel confident with this activity, it can be extended by:

- coming up with further movements, such as rolling in and out to increase and decrease the size of the circle;
- students “unlinking” and slowly standing to face the inside of the circle. They can do this simultaneously or at random intervals, move into character posture, interact with others, and so on;
- after “unlinking”, dancers then “re-link” and complete the whole movement in reverse, finishing as a line at the edge of the space.

ACTIVITY 2 REPETITION

This activity can be undertaken individually or as a follow-up to Activity 1.

PREPARATION

As for Activity 1

ACTIVITY

(for older students)

1. Teacher describes the following to students, either verbally, written, using symbols, or showing video material:

In many scenes in “Medea”, each ensemble member has a repeated pattern of movements. Because each dancer has a different pattern, it gives the impression of randomness. After a number of repetitions, some dancers start to copy the pattern of another, and so they start dancing in groups of two or three. After a while, the whole group is dancing the pattern in unison.

2. Warmup:

Students scattered around the space. One student (or the teacher) starts a repeated pattern of simple movements or a single movement. Other students to copy. The pattern or single movement should not be very energetic!

At will, a different student starts a different, contrasting movement which is copied by the others as above.

Allow each student to have a turn if they wish.

Students should focus on maintaining the pattern for a significant period of time (don't change too quickly), copying the pattern without looking directly at the creator of the pattern and remaining silent: there should be no verbal directions during the activity.



ACTIVITY 2 REPETITION CONTINUED ...

3. Creating a pattern:

Teacher explains that the movements they will create should be executed without locomotor movement (ie on the spot).

Students are given one minute to use one or both elbows to create a simple movement: allow them to imagine that their elbows are the only parts of their body that can move. The rest of their body can follow the path created by the movement of their elbows if desired. For example: their joined elbows and forearms may move horizontally across the front of their body; one elbow may trace circles at the side of the body; their elbow may “poke holes” in the air!

Each student demonstrates their movement to the class. Teacher should try to ensure everyone’s movement is different from the others, if possible.

Using the same format, students create a new movement, this time using one or both knees and demonstrate this to the class.

Students walk silently around the space to music played by teacher. When music stops, they stop walking and turn to face the person nearest them. Without talking, they demonstrate each of their two movements, taking turns to mirror their partner. Make sure that all movement is continuous.

When music starts, they resume walking around the space. Repeat above step when music stops.

On the third stop, pairs are instructed to use their four movements to create a continuous, repeated pattern. Pairs are given ten minutes to practise this.

Each pair to demonstrate their “pair dance” to class. Class to discuss and choose one pattern that every class member will learn as a “unison dance”.

4. Putting it together:

Each student chooses one of their own original movements to dance as a repeated pattern. On teacher cue (music, for example) everyone executes their own pattern together. Students are reminded that everyone’s pattern need not start and finish at the same time, and does not necessarily need to match the rhythm of the music in any way.

Following the same format as above, practise “pair dances” and then the “unison dance”.

After discussion, class decides the cues for each of the three sections of the whole work: 1. individual movement; 2. “pair dance”; 3. “unison dance”.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

The activity can be extended by completing all three steps in reverse, therefore finishing with the individual movement. Students may also discuss how to enter and exit the performance space.

ACTIVITY 3 TANGLING

This is a shorter activity that can be undertaken individually or can be easily combined with Activity 1, Activity 2, or both.

PREPARATION

As for Activity 1

ACTIVITY

(for older students)

1. Teacher describes the following to students, either verbally, written, using symbols, or showing video material:

The ensemble dancers are used in many ways in “Medea”. Because Medea is recounting and remembering past events in her life during the first part of the work, their role is to represent these events in a number of different ways, either as people or as objects.

2. Teacher explains that students will be portraying the idea of closing in, trapping and smothering. Students are grouped into sixes, facing each other in circles, arms length apart.
3. Each student to put out one of their hands, either left or right, and reach out to one of the other members of the circle – they could be standing next to them or across the circle. Grab the hand of that person.
4. Do the same with the other hand – be sure to twist carefully to avoid injury.
5. The circle should now be in a tangle. Each group will move slowly as they find a way of “continuing” the tangle and closing in until they are as twisted as physically possible. Do not let go of hands!
6. Hold this pose for a few seconds, then find a way to slowly “untangle” this pattern, still without letting go of hands. Students should finish holding hands in a neat circle, all facing the centre.
7. Groups should practise these two opposing actions, still very slowly, a few more times until they feel confident.
8. Groups extend the activity so that they start from different points in the space and slowly come together as a circle before completing their movement. After “untangling”, they separate and return to their starting points in the space.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Teacher discusses activity with students:

- How can we extend this to one large circle as a class?
- What could the whole movement be describing? How could we turn it into a more dramatic scene (eg one actor becomes the victim who is being closed in upon and “murdered” by the mob)?
- How could we link this to Activities 1 and 2?

ACTIVITY 4 KÖRPER

A man recites a long, involving story about a picnic with a girl he fancies. Each time the narrative mentions part of the body, he points to part of himself, but never a part that corresponds. What begins as comedy turns unsettling as you begin to doubt the true positioning of eye, ear or elbow. At which point I sensed the entire auditorium secretly, bizarrely, running through a checklist of their own body parts. How does it feel to meet a girl with four arms – three on the right side, one on the left[?]
JENNY GILBERT, THE INDEPENDENT 2003.

A simple yet clever device used in the Sasha Waltz and Guests production *Körper* (“Bodies”) is when the dancers start describing facts about their own body parts to the audience but point to a different body part as they do so. As Gilbert describes, this can be “unsettling” for the audience. Students can recreate this technique in dance classes, offering the potential to add an abstract, dramatic quality to their compositions and give them a new perspective on creative work.

PREPARATION

WARNING: The work “*Körper*” contains nudity and therefore many video excerpts of this work are likely to as well. Teachers should ensure that any video material is checked thoroughly in advance and presented appropriately for an educational context. Teachers will need to be familiar with the video in Appendix A in order to effectively teach this activity, regardless of whether they decide to show it to their students or not.

You will need:

- *Körper* video excerpt from Appendix A (optional for showing to students – contains nudity)
- Writing materials
- Other preparation as for Activities 1 to 3
- Sample monologues from *Körper* (Appendix A)

OBJECTIVE

Through a simple juxtaposition of movement and text, students of dance are able to explore more abstract concepts when devising dance works.

ACTIVITY

1. Teacher explains the theme of the Sasha Waltz work *Körper* and describes the use of monologues as an important part of the work.
2. Students are to choose three parts of their own body and write a short explanatory monologue (3 to 4 sentences) about each. The text can be, for example:
 - something they like or don’t like about their body (eg “My legs are too short”)
 - something generic about the human body (eg “My arm bends at the elbow”)
 - telling a story about that body part (eg an old injury or an operation)

STUDENTS SHOULD NOT FEEL COMPELLED TO SAY ANYTHING PERSONAL IF THEY DO NOT WISH.

3. When completed, some students may wish to read their monologues aloud to the class.
4. Teacher now directs students to create three simple movements to accompany each of the three body parts in the monologue. For example:

TEXT: “Sometimes my nose gets blocked and I get sinus pain.”
ACTION: (grabs the bridge of the nose in a painful, pinching fashion)

ACTIVITY 4

KÖRPER continued ...

5. When ready, students all stand in a circle and one by one demonstrate their monologue and corresponding movement to the class.
6. Still in a circle, teacher then goes to each student individually and pairs them with another student across the circle.
7. When all students are in pairs, teacher gives the next direction:

In your pairs, you now have six monologues and six corresponding movements. Your next step is to completely mix up the movements and monologues. For example, a monologue about your ear could be put together with a movement of your ankle.

8. Students have the option of swapping theirs with their partner's movements or swapping within their own. However, they must decide which of their pair will recite the monologue and which will execute the movements – this will be done simultaneously, as for the first step.
9. If students are having difficulty understanding the activity, the teacher may wish to show the *Körper* video excerpt from Appendix A for inspiration. Pairs rehearse and polish their presentation, then show it to the class.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

- How difficult was it to do the body part movement while you were hearing a description about another body part?
- How did this exercise make you feel about the human body in general? Did it change any perspectives?
- Read the quote at item 5 in Appendix A: Sasha Waltz tells us that there is no right or wrong opinion about her intentions. What is your belief about her intentions for this particular part of *Körper*?

ACTIVITY 5

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Punishment and the criminal justice system are among the most-discussed topics in the media today. From law-making bodies to philosophers, almost everyone has a perspective on the benefits of different approaches to administering justice. Models proposed range from the familiar, such as jail terms, fines, and community service, to the contentious and extreme solutions of corporal and capital punishment, to the modern trials of Restorative Justice (see Appendix B).

Murder is generally held to be the worst possible crime, and many say it deserves the “ultimate punishment”, which can vary from place to place. In most fictional stories and legends, a murderer generally receives retribution from some source, as a way of satisfying the conscience of the reader or listener. In *Medea*, however, the murderer could be said to be “getting away with it”.

But is this really the case? Is this an appropriate way to describe the fate of the character of Medea?

PREPARATION

Students should be familiar with the story of *Medea*, either through reading the play, viewing the theatrical version, or reading the summary at Appendix G. The teacher should research Restorative Justice principles and techniques, and preferably should have used similar techniques in the classroom (for example, Circle Time) before this activity.

ACTIVITY

1. Teacher leads class discussion on whether or not Medea should be punished for her crimes at the end of the play, using the format provided in Appendix B, written on butcher’s paper or similar. Suggested arguments are written into the table.
2. When both sides of the argument have been discussed, divide the class in half - one half “For” and the other “Against”. Within each half, small groups are formed and allocated one argument each from the table; for example “The children were innocent ...”. Each argument should have a counter-argument.
3. Each group is to work on a 2 to 3 minute speech based on their argument, which will form part of a debate.
4. Speeches are then compiled and presented as a debate. Students may wish to add dramatic embellishments to the presentation, including (for example):
 - Medea is dragged into the “courtroom” in chains;
 - the “bodies” of her many victims are presented as exhibits;
 - the debate is conducted in Ancient Greek costume.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- Would punishment actually help in this case?
- Has Medea already been punished enough, through her exile, betrayal, and loss of her family?
- Is this a classic case of murder, or should it be seen more as a “sacrifice”?
- How could you prevent a similar case occurring today? Consider the real-life modern murder cases that parallel the Medea story (explore the links at Appendix B for example).

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Teacher explains the concepts and practice of Restorative Justice to the class. With the rest of the class seated in a circle, two students at a time are brought to the middle and invited to play the roles of Medea and one other character (Jason, one of her children, Creon, Glauce, Medea’s father or brother – characters may ‘speak from the dead’). Using Restorative Justice principles (with the teacher as mediator), each character is encouraged to express honestly how Medea’s actions have impacted upon them, with Medea given the chance to explain herself publicly. A process of reconciliation should be proposed in each case (ratified by the circle of students) to make amends between the parties.

QUESTION FOR REFLECTION

- Under what circumstances, or in relation to what types of crime, do you believe it is appropriate to apply Restorative Justice? Why?

ACTIVITY 6 MEDEA-TION

*By the avengers that in Hades reign
It never shall be said that I have left
My children for my foes to trample on*

Euripides, *Medea*

In other words, Medea's decision was the lesser of two evils, and one that was made in the most extreme of circumstances: "I'll brace me to the deed". What might have been achieved if Jason and Medea had been able to discuss their differences on an equal footing and save so much bloodshed? Mediation and other forms of alternative dispute resolution encourage participants to do just that.

PREPARATION

The same preparation conditions apply to this activity as for Activity 5, and this can also be used as a companion activity. Teacher should be familiar with mediation techniques (refer Appendix B) to assist the two characters to sort out their differences.

ACTIVITY

1. Class members are seated in a circle, including the teacher.
2. Teacher explains that each class member will have the opportunity to play either Medea or Jason, at the moment in which Jason explains that he will be leaving her to marry Glauce. However, instead of having the story continue as expected, they will be "pressing the pause button". The teacher as mediator will try to help them find a way to sort through their differences.
3. As each subsequent pair of students takes their turn, teacher asks them to consider a different aspect of the back story; for example:
 - Medea murdered her own brother and therefore is an outcast in her own land;
 - she feels betrayed;
 - she is a descendant of the gods and therefore not subject to the same human laws;
 - Jason has not stopped loving her, but he is also in a compromised situation, as he is a prince and subject to the political games of royalty.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- Do you think that conciliatory problem solving measures such as mediation would be an effective model for all situations of conflict?
- What would happen to the dramatic effect if *Medea* had ended up without the bloodshed and conflict?

ACTIVITY 7 FRIEZE!

The frieze comes to life, as the dancers embodying the relief, the stone, begins to move. A fantastic moment in the visualisation of dead history, the becoming-conscious of an archaic unconscious.

Christiane Peitz, 2007, quoted in www.signandsight.com

One of the most fascinating scenes in Sasha Waltz's *Medea* uses dancers/actors to portray a *frieze*, or *relief*, of the *Medea* story, which appears as if carved in marble. After some time, the actors begin to move, excruciatingly slowly, so that the audience may be almost unsure at first if they are in fact moving or if it is an illusion!

Many ancient and traditional cultures have used pictures and *friezes* to tell historical and religious legends and stories. Examples include Egyptian reliefs on the walls of their tombs, the Bayeux Tapestry which describes the Battle of Hastings, and friezes from ancient Greek architecture, such as those on the Parthenon. It was this last image that was used to great effect in Sasha Waltz's *Medea*.

Drama activities such as Family Portrait and variations of freezing or statue games can be used in Drama, English and Theatre Studies classes to help students understand the plot and the role of each character in plays or novels.

PREPARATION

This activity should be undertaken after students have studied the class text, whether play or novel, in some detail. They should have a good knowledge of all characters and of the plot.

You will need:

- an open space;
- possibly props or even costumes will be required.

OBJECTIVE

Through creative analysis and discussion, stimulated by drama activities, students should have a clearer understanding of the characters' roles in the class text.

ACTIVITY

1. Students seated in a circle. Teacher allocates a particular character from the class text to each student.
2. Each student in turn is asked "What can you tell me about your character?" in order to revise knowledge of the text.
3. Warm up activities. These can include:
 - Mind reading: One student walks around the circle and stops when indicated by the teacher. This student stands behind the nearest seated student and is to reveal what his / her character thinks about that person's character. The character standing takes the seat of the other person, who now has to walk around the circle until stopped by the teacher. The steps are repeated again.
 - Mime: One student is placed in the centre of the circle and asked to mime, as their character, a scene from the text. The rest of the class has to guess the scene.
4. All class members should now be aware of which character is being portrayed by which student. Students now ambulate in slow motion around the space and congregate in character groups from the text, which will be of varying sizes. All freeze on teacher cue.
5. Groups are given two minutes to create a "portrait" of a scene that involves all group members, for example the assassination scene from *Julius Caesar*, the opening scene from *King Lear* with Lear confronting his daughters, and so on. All students should be able to freeze and hold in position for some time.
6. Each group to demonstrate, with the rest of class guessing the scene.
7. Teacher-led discussion: how could you portray the next five to ten seconds of your scene? What happens next?
8. After discussion, groups are given five minutes to create a mime of the next five to ten seconds, but in "super-slow-motion".

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Each group begins with a frozen "portrait", then "unfreezes" to portray their super-slow motion scene, then freeze again in their new position.
 - All groups assembled in a line to create a "living frieze".
 - The final performance could be filmed with costume and props, or added to the beginning of the play if part of a Theatre Studies class.
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ACTIVITY 8

PAINT ME MEDEA

In 1838 Delacroix exhibited “Medea about to Kill Her Children”, which created a sensation at the Salon ... the painting depicts Medea clutching her children, dagger drawn to slay them in vengeance for her abandonment by Jason. The three nude figures form an animated pyramid, bathed in a raking light which penetrates the grotto in which Medea has hidden. extracted from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eugene_Delacroix

Medea is a story that artists of all disciplines, including the fine arts, have drawn upon for inspiration over the centuries. Many students benefit from analysing artworks based on the text they are studying, as it adds an extra dimension to the work.

PREPARATION

Students should have studied and be closely familiar with the *Medea* story.

You will need:

- Large printed copies (preferably in colour and on quality paper) of the *Medea* portraits in Appendix C
- Artist painting/drawing materials including art paper.
- Wooden artist mannequins

ACTIVITY

1. Teacher presents each *Medea* portrait, one by one, to the class.
2. Class discusses the artistic portrayal of the portrait, and suggests which scene or moment from the story it represents.
3. As each portrait is presented, students discuss and decide which order, in terms of chronology, they should be placed. Portraits are propped against the white board or similar visible position.
4. Teacher then explains the activity: students are to create their own original portrait of *Medea*, selecting a specific scene or moment from the play. Once they have selected a scene, they sketch *Medea*'s face and body as they imagine it at that moment. They can use the artist mannequins if they wish to create a more realistic image, or can attempt to draw an abstract form. It is important to remember that artistic “talent” is not being tested in this activity, and teachers should reassure students that they can work within their abilities.
5. To augment their portrait, students can add other characters to the scene, either in a realistic or abstract context. The *Sandys* portrait in Appendix C can be used as a model.
6. Student artworks are arranged in chronological order as a “classroom gallery”

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

- How are the paintings and sculptures from history different or similar from each other?
- What explanations can be given for the differences over differing time periods?

ACTIVITY 9 CURRENT AFFAIR

“Mothers who neglect, mistreat, or murder their own offspring. Unthinkable. Yet undeniably it does happen. But is it possible to tell these stories without indulging in lurid sensationalism?”

Christiane Peitz, 2007, quoted in www.signandsight.com

Today’s TV and internet news media is notorious for its dramatic and sensationalising devices (including judicious editing) that serve to manipulate the viewer. It is likely that a “modern-day Medea” would be treated unsympathetically by many news and current affairs programs. Students will create their own “what-if” scenario using this now-familiar format, to assist both in understanding the text and in gaining a greater insight into the popular media.

PREPARATION

Students should have studied and be closely familiar with the Medea story. This is a suitable activity for “rounding off” a unit of study on this text. It is also assumed that students will be familiar with the popular “current affairs” TV shows.

You will need:

- Video camera(s)
- Editing software
- Costume
- Printouts of modern case studies of filicide
- Video samples of current affairs stories (see Appendix D)

ACTIVITY

1. Teacher leads discussion on modern parallels to the Medea story:

- Can you recall a story (or stories) in the media about a parent killing their own children?
- Were any of those killings were reported as being motivated by jealousy or fear?
- How did the media treat the parent? Did they sympathise or “demonise”?
- How do you feel about such crimes, now that you understand the story of Medea and what she had to endure?
- What would a current affairs story on a “modern day Medea” look like?

2. After discussion, teacher outlines the activity:

Students are grouped in 4s or 5s, and are allocated a particular scene from the Medea story, such as the poisoned wedding dress causing Glauce’s death.

Each group has to create a “modern day” version of their scene, for which they will write a script and film it as a “current affairs” program. Students may be shown video samples from Appendix D as stimulus for ideas.

For example:

- Is there a program host?
- Are there scenes of Medea leaving the courtroom with her head covered? Or running from the cameras?
- Are there blurry photos of the family members who were slain?

3. Group members work together to create their script, exchanging ideas and allocating character roles. Groups should alternate rehearsing and filming their scenes, and if some groups wish to collaborate (eg sharing the same actors, helping with staging tricky scenes) this can be allowed.

4. It should be possible to link the resulting clips together to create a “documentary” on their modern-day Medea. Students may wish to upload this to a video-sharing site on the internet.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

Although this activity can be humorous and satirical, and therefore a lot of fun, students should not lose sight of the fact that the journalistic techniques and ways of representing their subject in these programs can be hurtful. Students can learn a lot from reflecting on what they know about Medea’s story, compared to what they would see in a stereotypical representation in the popular media.

- Do you think your scene was fair in its representation of Medea’s story?
- What are some of the techniques that media outlets typically use in these programs?
- What do you understand by the term “sensationalise”?

ACTIVITY 10 MONOLOGUES – HEINER MÜLLER

Today is payday Jason Today your Medea

Is collecting on your debt

If only you all could laugh now Death is a gift

From my hands are you supposed to receive it

I have behind me totally broken off

What they call a homeland now behind us my land of exile

Heiner Müller, *Despoiled Shore Medea-material Landscape with Argonauts*, translated Dennis Redmond, 2002.

As a dramatist, Heiner Müller's influence on modern German literature has been compared with that of Bertolt Brecht. His works are dense, poetic, and deliberately open to varying interpretations. The text upon which Sasha Waltz's production and Pascal Dusapin's opera *Medeamaterial* are based is an excerpt from the second section of Müller's play *Despoiled Shore Medea-material Landscape with Argonauts*. This "play" is more a series of poetic monologue fragments that at times evoke T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, and comprises three parts. The middle section, *Medea-material*, has three characters: Medea, Jason, and the Nurse, with Medea taking the overwhelming majority of the lines. It can be seen from the quote above that Müller's poetry is powerfully evocative and descriptive, and can be used as a model for students to create their own narratives/monologues for a character from the play.

PREPARATION

An understanding of the text and the playwright is recommended for teachers. Details are provided at Appendix E. It is expected that students already have a solid understanding of Euripides' *Medea*.

You will need:

- Writing materials
- Open space
- Print out of "Greek Chorus" definition in Appendix E



HEINER MÜLLER

ACTIVITY 10

MONOLOGUES – HEINER MÜLLER continued ...

ACTIVITY

1. Students are to work in small groups of two or three. Each group is to choose an “on-stage” actor, and the other actors will be reciting their lines from “off-stage”.
2. Groups are to choose one character from *Medea* that is not Medea herself. For example:
 - Her father
 - Her brother
 - Her husband, Jason
 - Her nurse
 - Jason’s new bride, Glauce
 - One of her children

The “on-stage” actor will take on this chosen role as a non-speaking acting role. The rest of the group will speak the character’s voice. (Note: characters who die in the play can still be “speaking from the grave”.)

3. Groups discuss their character’s direct involvement in the action of the play, and list these in point form, chronologically (eg Medea’s brother is only involved up until the moment he is killed and his remains scattered). Students leave space to write in under each of these points.
4. Groups then discuss what their character would be thinking and feeling during each of these points, and write a short monologue in the voice of their character under each one. These combined monologues now form a basic “script”, which is recited by the “off-stage” actors.
5. Class combines again and meets as a circle. The “on-stage” actor from each group takes turns in “presenting” (no words) their script to the class, while the remainder of their group reciting the text in chorus.
6. Teacher now introduces the next step: groups are now required to extend their chosen character’s monologue to cover the whole play. That is, the character comments from their own point of view, as if they were a Greek chorus observing the action of the play in which they are not directly involved. If necessary, teachers can provide printed information about Greek chorus from Appendix E.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- Did any of the monologues give you a greater insight into the thoughts and/or emotional state of the character?
- How did writing in the style of a Greek chorus effect the emotional intensity of the monologue?

ACTIVITY 11

PASCAL DUSAPIN'S MEDEAMATERIAL – CHORAL EXPLORATION

To be witness to things, means to first be aware of them. – Pascal Dusapin

Pascal Dusapin (born 1955) has been called “the most important French composer of these times.” His 1991 *Medeamaterial* opera was based on Müller’s *Despoiled Shore Medea-material Landscape with Argonauts*. For this opera production, it was reworked with sparse orchestration of solo soprano, string chamber orchestra and keyboards, along with a chamber choir.

PREPARATION

Students should be confident singers and be able to hold their part against another.

You will need:

- Recording of Dusapin’s *Medeamaterial* (details in Foreword)
- Scores from Appendix F

ACTIVITY

1. Teacher plays the track *Herrin ich* of Pascal Dusapin’s *Medeamaterial* to illustrate how choral singing can be used for effect.
2. Teacher should explain the plot at that point in the story. Teacher asks:
 - How does the composer use musical elements (pitch, volume, texture etc.) to create effect?
 - Why do you think the composer used a chamber choir for this work?
3. Teacher explains the concept of dissonance in music by demonstrating the different consonant and dissonant chords on piano (see Appendix F).
4. Class sings through exercise 1 in Appendix F in order to feel the consonance of the chord.
5. Class then works through exercise 2 in Appendix F very carefully – it may take a few tries before students are able to hold their note against the other different notes.
6. Once students are singing confidently, they may try to achieve overtones if the acoustics of the space are suitable.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- What feelings did the dissonant chord create for you?
- What difficulties did you find with singing it?
- Do you think your singing sounded similar to the choir in *Medeamaterial*?

ACTIVITY 12

DUSAPIN VERSUS CHERUBINI

Originally this project, put on in collaboration with the Akademie für Alte Musik and the Vocalconsort Berlin, planned to use Luigi Cherubini's late 18th-century opera, based on Classical sources. But the Berlin choreographer then decided in favour of Pascal Dusapin's 1991 "Medea" opera, based on Müller's text. An evening consisting entirely of new music: a novelty for the early music ensemble.

Christiane Peitz, 2007, quoted in www.signandsight.com

Sasha Waltz's dance works often use sparse or even no music: possibly this is why she is drawn to Baroque and Classical composers such as Purcell (*Dido and Aeneas*) and Cherubini. The latter's *Medée* opera was originally considered for use with her production of *Medea*, but she changed her mind in favour of Dusapin's contemporary opera, which has stylistic similarities to Baroque and Classical works. Comparing the two works provides a good opportunity for a lesson in music analysis.

OBJECTIVE

To learn about the stylistic differences between the music of the Classical and contemporary periods.

PREPARATION

Students should be familiar with the *Medea* story (see link at Appendix G)

You will need:

- CDs of Dusapin's *Medeamaterial* and Cherubini's *Medée* (see Foreword)
- Printed information regarding Pascal Dusapin and Luigi Cherubini (see Appendix F)

ACTIVITY

Teacher explains to students that they will be hearing music based on *Medea*. Without any further explanation, teacher plays track *Weib was für eine Stimme* from Dusapin's *Medeamaterial*. Listening questions:

- What do you think is happening in this scene?
- How does the music portray the emotion and action?

Students to now listen carefully to the whole track and list all instruments they can hear (including voice). These are listed on board. Reflection questions:

- How is the voice used in this composition? (*ie in soloist/choral formation*)
- Which of these instruments would not have existed 200 years ago? (*answer: none*)
- Considering this, what type of sound do you think the composer is trying to achieve?

Teacher explains that the opera was written in 1991, and explains how the music came to be chosen over the Cherubini opera (see Appendix F). Teacher plays the track *Je cede a ta voix consolante* from the Cherubini opera. Reflection questions:

- Why would Waltz choose a more modern work for her production?
- Why might Dusapin have chosen to write in the style he did?

Teacher distributes printed information on Dusapin and Cherubini. Through discussion, class to complete comparison table in Appendix F.

APPENDIX LIST

P 22	APPENDIX A	DANCE ACTIVITIES
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APPENDIX A DANCE ACTIVITIES

1. WEBSITES FOR DANCE VIDEOS OF SASHA WALTZ CHOREOGRAPHY

DIDO AND AENEAS

www.youtube.com/watch?v=z2SGb0x7Jqw

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ONubU9kv6mE&feature=related

NOBODY

www.youtube.com/watch?v=YppQxZyH5_k&feature=related

ZWEILAND

www.youtube.com/watch?v=bVDfTpwsvw8&feature=related

KÖRPER

(warning – contains nudity)

Mini-documentary showing excerpts of many of Waltz' works (including Körper) – in French but very comprehensive. Also shows rehearsals and workshopping of ideas:

<http://video.filestube.com/video,b41f9ba5e9725cb303e9.html>

2. SUITABLE BACKGROUND MUSIC FOR ACTIVITIES 1 – 3

- “Dido’s Lament” from *Dido and Aeneas* (Purcell)
- The “Gymnopedies” (Satie)
- *Air on a G string* (J. S. Bach)
- “Meditations” from *Thaïs*.

3. SAMPLE MONOLOGUES FROM SASHA WALTZ & GUESTS: KÖRPER

First thing in the morning I open my two eyes. Most of the time I find myself lying on my back. I stretch one arm, the second arm and I shake my legs.

After I go to the kitchen and make myself espresso. I open my mouth and I feel how the espresso goes down my throat. Then, with my fingers, I roll myself cigarettes. Sometimes my fingers are shaking. Maybe it’s because I smoke too much.

I am 1.84 metres, my weight is 21 kilograms and a half and inside my whole body I have 12 litres of water. I have a head, a small mouth and two big brown eyes.

4. ARTICLE ON SASHA WALTZ: JENNY GILBERT THE INDEPENDENT 15 JUNE 2003

www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/theatre-dance/reviews/sacha-waltz-barbican-london-brsankai-juko-sadlers-wells-london-540906.html

5. QUOTE FROM SCOTLAND ON SUNDAY 20 AUGUST 2000

What we the audience choose to read into her work ... is entirely up to us. “I can never say: I want you to think this. Every opinion is right. That is the power and richness of dance.”

Extracted from: www.sashawaltz.de/a03.php?w=&ID=5&t=4&spr=en

APPENDIX B

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

1. RESTORATIVE JUSTICE INFORMATION

extracted from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Restorative_justice

Restorative Justice is a theory of justice that focuses on crime and wrongdoing as acted against the individual or community rather than the state. In restorative justice processes, the person who has harmed takes responsibility for their actions and the person who has been harmed may take a central role in the process, in many instances receiving an apology and reparation directly or indirectly from the person who has caused them harm.

See also:

Truth and Reconciliation Commission, South Africa: www.doj.gov.za/trc/

Eugenia Zorbas Reconciliation in Post-Genocide Rwanda (2004) 1 AJLS 29-52
www.africalawinstitute.org/ajls/vol1/no1/zorbas.pdf

Lyn Graybill and Kimberly Lanegran Truth, Justice and Reconciliation in Africa: Issues and Cases (2004) 8:1 African Studies Quarterly www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v8/v8i1a1.pdf

Final Report of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation in East Timor (CAVR):
www.etan.org/news/2006/cavr.htm

2. RETRIBUTIVE JUSTICE INFORMATION

extracted from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Retributive_justice

Retributive justice is a theory of justice that considers that punishment, if proportionate, is a morally acceptable response to crime, with an eye to the satisfaction and psychological benefits it can bestow to the aggrieved party, its intimates and society.

3. MEDIATION

Mediation is a form of dispute resolution which aims to assist two (or more) disputants in reaching an agreement. The parties themselves determine the conditions of any settlements reached, rather than accepting a decision imposed by a third party.

Review the materials at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mediation> for further information and mediation strategies.

4. GOOGLE SEARCH: “MOTHERS WHO KILL THEIR OWN CHILDREN”

www.google.com.au/search?hl=en&q=mothers+who+killed+their+own+children&meta=&aq=1&oq=mothers+who+kill

APPENDIX B

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT continued ...

5. DEBATE TABLE

TOPIC: THAT MEDEA SHOULD BE GIVEN FURTHER RETRIBUTIVE JUSTICE, OR PUNISHMENT, FOR HER CRIMES.	
FOR	AGAINST
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• eg. Her children were innocent and did not deserve to die	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• eg. Was an act of desperation - she showed grief and sadness for her actions even before committing them

APPENDIX C MEDEA ARTWORKS

1. COLLECTION OF MEDEA ARTWORKS

<http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Medea>

2. SANDYS VERSION OF MEDEA WITH IMAGES FROM OTHER POINTS OF THE PLAY IN THE BACKGROUND

<http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Medea-Sandys.jpg>

APPENDIX D CURRENT AFFAIR

EXAMPLE CLIPS FROM *TODAY TONIGHT*, AUSTRALIAN “CURRENT AFFAIRS” PROGRAM

Flouride:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=rRVYXLBqHV4

Narconon/Scientology:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=BKQ3_4cCYGI

Graffiti Vandals:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=XyRah9AGMWA

APPENDIX E HEINER MÜLLER

1. ONLINE RESOURCES ABOUT HEINER MÜLLER

www.heinermueller.de/en/index.php

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heiner_M%C3%BCller

www.litencyc.com/php/speople.php?rec=true&UID=5429

2. RESOURCES TO DESPOILED SHORE MEDEA-MATERIAL LANDSCAPE WITH ARGONAUTS:

Program notes to production of *Medeamaterial* by City Garage Theatre in 2000: www.citygarage.org/mueller.html

Notes to production of *Medea Material* by Mini Teater 2003-05:

www.mini-teater.si/client.en/index.php?ID=58&table=articles

Heiner Müller *Despoiled Shore Medea-Material Landscape with Argonauts*, translated into English by Dennis Redmond, 2002 (Sasha Waltz's production uses the middle section, "Medea-material"). Warning: contains profanity:

www.efn.org/~dredmond/despoiled.pdf

Peter A Campbell *Medea as Material: Heiner Müller, Myth, and Text in Modern Drama* 51:1 (Spring 2008, University of Toronto Press), pp. 84-103.

3. INFORMATION ABOUT GREEK CHORUS

http://ancienthistory.about.com/od/greekliterature/a/GreekTheater_4.htm

APPENDIX F

DUSAPIN AND CHERUBINI

SCORE

Exercise 1

Do do do Do re mi Mi fa so

1. Whole group sings A B C - pauses indicated by conductor. Make sure all singers are confident.
2. First group now sings A B B and remaining students sing A B C.
3. First group sings A B B as before; second group sings ABC and third group sings A A A.

Exercise 2

Do re re mi mi fa fa so so la la ti ti do do

1. Whole group sings this phrase. Make sure all singers are confident.

A

Do re re re re re re re re

B

Do re re mi mi mi mi mi mi mi

C

Do re re mi mi fa fa fa fa fa fa etc...

2. Whole group now sings through phrases A, B, C etc (up to "ti") one at a time to become familiar with the concept.
3. One group allocated phrase A whilst the rest sing phrase B.
4. First group sings phrase A again, a new group sings phrase B, and the rest sing phrase C.
5. Continue in this manner until the whole class is singing phrases A to G simultaneously.

EXAMPLE OF CONSONANT CHORD

EXAMPLE OF DISSONANT CHORD

APPENDIX F

DUSAPIN AND CHERUBINI continued ...

ARTICLE DETAILING DECISION TO USE THE DUSAPIN SCORE FOR MEDEA IN PLACE OF THE CHERUBINI

www.signandsight.com/features/1377.html

TABLE

	Modern composers (like Dusapin)	Baroque / Classical composers (like Cherubini)
Opportunities for musical training (eg universities, conservatoria)		
Instruments available		
Musical styles available		

INFORMATION AND LINKS ON PASCAL DUSAPIN

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pascal_Dusapin

(see bottom of Wikipedia entry for further links)

INFORMATION AND LINKS ON LUIGI CHERUBINI

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luigi_Cherubini

(see bottom of Wikipedia entry for further links)

APPENDIX G

SUMMARY OF THE STORY OF MEDEA

SUMMARY OF THE MEDEA STORY

www.theatrehistory.com/ancient/bates018.html