



**THE
RESISTIBLE
RISE OF
ARTURO UI**

BY BERTOLT BRECHT

TRANSLATED BY STEPHEN SHARKEY

A GANGSTER SPECTACLE

RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS

EDUCATION RESOURCE PACK

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The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui – The Question is...Who will do it?

“Ui is a parable play, written with the aim of destroying a dangerous respect commonly felt for great killers...Plain everyday logic must never let itself be overawed once it goes strolling among the centuries; whatever applies to small situations must be made to apply to big ones too. The petty rogue whom the rulers permit to become a rogue on the grand scale can occupy a special position in roguery, but not in our attitude to history...If the collapse of Hitler’s enterprises is no evidence that he was a half-wit, neither is their scope any guarantee that he was a great man.”



Brecht on The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui, 1941

“The scenario that Brecht presents is recognisably possible at other times, past, present and future. He points to a time of recession: people are suffering increasing hardship in deteriorating circumstances. Crime is on the increase, unemployment soars, street violence erupts. An enemy is at work, the people are told; a scapegoat is sought and hounded, while the well-off, anxious to preserve their position, join in the hunt or merely look the other way.”

Jacque Penrose, Director for Bench Theatre Company, 1982

“The tragedy will be that few people, and fewer workers, will read these plays; although I hope that this review will send them in their thousands to bookshops to get copies They are a must for any worker’s bookshelf. But a greater tragedy will be that these plays are unlikely to be seen in performance – it is probably too much to expect that the West End will stage productions that are a clarion call to revolution. In any case they would be wasted in the West End; these plays should be in the working men’s clubs, in the occupations and on the picket lines, on the marches of the unemployed and with the fighters against racialism. For it is when they are performed that they are best able to relate to the struggles of today. They are splendidly subversive and there could be no finer tribute to a great Marxist playwright than to see them performed again – the question is who will do it?”

Bryan Rees, International Socialism 1977

**Who will do it?
Read on and find out...**

The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui

Cast and Creative Team

Arturo Ui	IAN BARTHOLOMEW
Barker /All Women	LEANNE BEST
Clark / Bowl /Defence	ROBIN KINGSLAND
Givola	NICK CAVALIERE
Flake / Ragg/ Dempsey	NICHOLAS KHAN
Roma	NICK MOSS
Butcher / Trader Two / Prosecution	SIÓN TUDOR OWEN
Giri	MIKE GOODENOUGH
Dogsborough Jnr /Mulberry / Fish / Inna / Trader Three	ELIOT GIURALAROCCA
Dogsborough / The Actor / Sheet / Judge / Ignatius/Dullfleet	WILLIAM HOYLAND
Translator	STEPHEN SHARKEY
Director	WALTER MEIERJOHANN
Set Designer	TI GREEN
Costume & Video Designer	LOUIS PRICE
Lighting Designer	MIKE GUNNING
Composer & Sound Designer	NIKOLAS KODJASASHIA
Movement Director	CAROLINA VALDES
Casting Director	LOUIS HAMMOND
Company Manager	PAUL SAWTELL
Stage Manager	SARAH LEWIS
DSM	ROXANNE VELLA
ASM	KATE FOSTER
Education Team	EMMA SMITH
	EMMA WRIGHT
	ALLIE SPENCER
	SARAH STEPHENSON



Translating *The Resistible Rise Of Arturo Ui*

by Stephen Sharkey

The script I've written for this production of *Arturo Ui* isn't strictly a translation. Or put it another way, it's not only that. It's a version for an English speaking audience, largely based on existing translations. Where I depart from these, where I vary, is in going further on occasion to create vivid, believable speech for American gangsters of the 1920s, and the people who have to deal with them. Scene by scene, line by line, my version tries to find the best English way of expressing Brecht's powerful language.

Where Brecht writes verse, so do I. Where he rhymes, so do I. I don't read German, but I do have some language skills (I read ancient Greek and Latin) so was able to follow the text using a dictionary, and unpick anything knotty. Our director Walter Meierjohann is of course German, and he has been incredibly helpful with the language, particularly in teaching me how direct Brecht can be, and at the same time how playful and ironic and sarcastic.

Artistic director Gemma Bodinetz thought I would be a good person to ask to write a version of *Arturo Ui* because in my work as a playwright I have a track record in working with versions of classic, epic stories. In addition, Liverpool Everyman and Playhouse had produced my play *The May Queen* in 2007, which is set in Liverpool during World War Two – in 1941 to be exact, the year Brecht wrote *Arturo Ui*. Both plays are violent and muscular and deal with the social and political realities of the day. But where *The May Queen* focuses on the domestic consequences of war, Brecht's play deals with the catastrophic inability of the German people to recognise the moral collapse of their society in the face of fascism.

Working on the play, our initial task was to examine its relevance and resonances for a Liverpool audience, and in earlier drafts I used Liverpoolian English, experimenting with locating the action in Chicago but keeping the language local. I also looked at the possibility of relocating the action to Liverpool, substituting place names, street names and so on.

Both approaches had their merits, and the possibilities were exciting. But in the end it became clear that the Chicago setting served the play best – Brecht's parable relies for its power partly on the mythical, the legendary status of the gangsters of American cinema of the 20s and 30s, films that Brecht devoured on his visits to London and New York. And the more I



Photograph: Stephen Vaughan

worked on the Chicago / New York gangster lingo, the street talk, the brutal rhythms of these men, the more it seemed absolutely the right choice. The work was thrilling, as the characters sprang to life, speaking like Jimmy Cagney or Edward G Robinson... and through the prism of Brecht's parable, acting like Goebbels, Goering, and Hitler. (Interesting to note, screen gangster specialist Al Pacino played Arturo Ui on Broadway in 2002.)

Bertolt Brecht's play is set in the Chicago of the 1920s, but beyond specifying locations such as "Bookmakers on 122nd St.", and "City Hall" the actual idioms and expressions used by the characters make few nods to the American setting. Director Walter Meierjohann tells me that, like all of Brecht's plays, *Arturo Ui* is written in a 'classical' German style, and is never changed or adapted to suit German regional language variations. In the English theatre, we're unused to treating writers with such reverence, Shakespeare excepted (and even he gets 'adapted', from time to time).

It's worth emphasising, this play was written in the spring of 1941. All its furious, mocking energy is a shout of defiance and disgust, directed at one man – Adolf Hitler – and also at ordinary people, and their failure to stop him. And while Brecht was typing, Hitler's air force was dropping firebombs on Liverpool.

Stephen Sharkey, September 2011



Photograph: Stephen Vaughan

Interview with Giles Croft, Artistic Director of Nottingham Playhouse

Why did Nottingham Playhouse choose to revive the Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui rather than any of Brecht's other texts?

This will be the third Brecht production that we have put on in the last six or seven years. The first one was *Mother Courage* and the second *Caucasian Chalk Circle*. *Arturo Ui* was the third choice because it felt like the right time to be doing it due to the current political situation; the growing right-wing feeling there is, and the extremist politics that exist is something worth exploring and this is a play that looks at those ideas and themes.

Also the breakdown in society; we are in the middle of quite a difficult time politically, that's exactly what *Arturo Ui* is about. The play is a curious pastiche of the thirties gangster genre. It was very directly related to the sort of things that were coming out of Hollywood at that time. It is also a pastiche of Shakespeare's *Richard III*, and the combining of these two elements to create a play about the rise of a fascist dictator was a really clever way of exploring very difficult themes. What Brecht did was create a very funny, frightening and accessible piece of theatre that by the end becomes rather shocking, despite all the entertainment that he creates along the way.

How does the play sit within the Playhouse season as a whole?

We have a policy of producing large, classic plays and *Arturo Ui* fits that bill. We are often looking for plays that have some sort of political resonance that connect to what is happening socially. The play was also chosen as it complements the other work this season. We have a new play about a Nottinghamshire cricketer, a comedy by Noel Coward and then a big political play in *Arturo Ui*. So what people will see is that we offer a set of experiences that they can come and have at the Playhouse. There is also a theme this season in that all the plays have a link with the 30s. *Arturo Ui* was written about what was happening in the 30s in Germany, *Private Lives* was first produced in 1930 and *The Ashes* takes a story that was occurred in 1932/3. So what we are presenting are contrasting views on the world at that time. All of the plays also say something about the world today. The plays also cover the theme of outsiders and not necessarily outsiders that we like. *Ui* is about Hitler the outsider, how he rises in power and what he does to achieve it. It is about how he uses society and manipulates people's unhappiness and despair to achieve his dark purposes. *Private Lives* and *The Ashes* also feature characters who are outsiders, using methods that some people see as extreme. They are all, to some degree, socially unacceptable.



What are the benefits of a co-production with Liverpool Playhouse?

We are very fortunate that we have a good relationship with Liverpool Playhouse; this is our third co-production with them following on from *The Price* and *Oedipus*. The advantages are that it allows us to do a play that we wouldn't be able to do on our own. (In the case of all the Brechts that we have done, they were all co-productions.) It allows us to have a larger company and to be more ambitious in the ways in which we stage them. If we were doing them on our own it would be quite hard to achieve. It also introduces new people into the mix, different artists that we otherwise wouldn't get the opportunity to work with; different views of how to make work, keeping us alive to new ideas.

Gemma Bodinetz **Artistic Director of Liverpool Everyman and Playhouse**

Back in 2007 we produced *The May Queen*, Stephen Sharkey's thrilling adaptation of Euripides' *Orestes* at the Everyman. It was clear to us that here was a Liverpool writer with a strikingly original voice but also one who was able to climb inside the mind and sensibilities of a theatrical giant. Brecht is of course one of the great dramatists of the 20th century and here at the Playhouse we have long wanted to produce one of his plays. We were very thrilled when Stephen agreed to take up our commission and set to work on the great man.

Our choice of *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* was founded on its theatrical exuberance and its contemporary resonance. The world right now seems especially unstable, riven with political unrest and terrifying thuggery and Brecht's 1941 satirical allegory on the rise of Hitler seemed horribly pertinent to us 70 years on.

There is of course a great argument for distracting theatre in difficult times but theatre can also be a great and cathartic commentator and we believe that the verve and ebullience of Brecht's masterpiece coupled with Stephen Sharkey's darkly, witty translation and Walter Meierjohann's visionary production would provide you with a stunning evening that was both entertaining and had bite.



Photograph: Stephanie de Leng

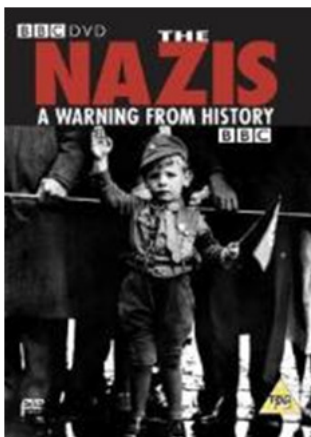


Walter Meierjohann Director on Brecht, Arturo Ui and its relevance to today's society

The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui is basically a parable about Hitler's rise to power in the 1920s and 30s. The character Arturo Ui is based both on Al Capone and Adolf Hitler. Brecht was fascinated with gangster movies especially after a visit to America in 1935. So in 1941 in Finnish exile, with an application for a visa to America underway, he thought with this piece he'd arrive in the States! He thought they were going to welcome him, and that he would stage it on Broadway; he wrote this piece as a commercial production to be done on his arrival. That's how naïve he was. He thought, "American theatre; I'm Bertolt Brecht, here I come" but it didn't work out at all. He was in the States for about eight years and he never really made it as a director. Basically, it was a very productive time for writing but not for staging.

Arturo Ui wasn't staged until much later actually, in the late 50s. It was done in Southern Germany as the first production and then half a year later at the Berliner Ensemble, but by then Brecht was already dead.

When the riots happened in August, in London, Nottingham and in Liverpool, I thought "this piece is almost too relevant at the moment! "I'm not saying this country is in a state where fascism is going to rise - hopefully not, and that's not what the riots were about but this sense of fear and thuggery on the streets, this is basically what the Nazis did in the



thirties when they attempted to get into power, to intimidate people; and so the sense of fear is very relevant. We've also heard about political corruption in this country, for example, two and a half years ago, the Politicians just taking what they could, and at the same time, we've also got the Murdoch investigations .

We were just watching a documentary, "The Nazis, a warning from history", and I think that in a way that's a headline for our piece, we could almost say *Arturo Ui* is a warning from history....



The nice thing in this piece, and I think often Brecht is misunderstood because people find it very hard and heavy, is that it's really telling shock and terror and horror through comedy...and we have to find that balance!

I want everyone to get an understanding that Brechtian characters, on one hand, are meant to be 3D and it's not about being scared of this big word...alienation effect...it is basically doing your research on the character and the great thing here is, historically, there's so much to actually gather. At the same, I think, what Brecht was very much about, is, in German the word is...*geistus*, I think it's the translation of gesture, so what he was very interested in is not so much the psychology of the character but much more of what that represented.

I think there's a big misunderstanding about Brecht, he did want to move people, but at the same Brecht was very clear that he just wanted to say "this is a piece of theatre" so the actors are playing these parts and then the next moment they can go back to being who they are. I think it's important that some scenes are very emotional and you really get 100% commitment but then to understand the next moment you can switch out of it.



I think Brecht was actually a big student of Shakespeare. If you go to the Globe it's really quite a Brechtian way of acting, it just means you see a little platform and that's meant to be the world and people, actors come on and tell you a story and it's not like Chekhov or deeply psychological but it's the fun of saying I'm an actor and I'm now playing Richard the Third.

It's exciting. A great play. It will be a lot of fun...and hard work! But I'm looking forward to it.



Ian Bartholomew on *Arturo Ui* and how it appeals to young people

I think Arturo Ui's a fantastic character; it's a fantastic part to play. It's dark, it's violent, it's funny. It's a great character to get your teeth into because there are so many facets to it. You're only limited by your own imagination.

The idea of making it a gangster movie, a gangster spectacle, is that it makes it much more understandable to a modern audience because of the language of film. It's also a new translation by Stephen Sharkey, which is fantastic. It's very muscular, it's very modern, and it's colloquial so that's a way of allowing a younger audience, or any sort of contemporary audience, in.



Brecht wrote it in 1941, not long after Hitler had risen to power. Historically, it's a very fantastically interesting time, exciting and dark time. It's called the Resistible Rise, I think, because Hitler's rise to power was so resistible. Had things been different, had he been a different person, had the times been different, had certain things happened at different points in his rise, it would never have happened.

Brecht's own take on it, the way he felt about it, was that it should be fast, funny, very comic, very adept but also should not ever forget that it's a horror story. What happens after the end of the play is truly, truly tragic. I've done a lot of clowning and that's another reason why I've wanted to do this part: it's an opportunity to experiment with that and put something underneath it which is much darker and much more frightening.

While it tells the story in a witty way, we've always got to remember that underneath it there is a very, very serious point to be made!



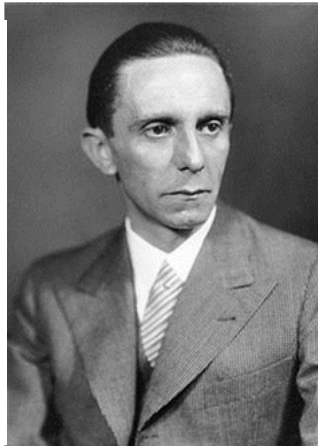
Photograph: Stephen Vaughan

Nick Cavaliere talks about how Givalo becomes Givola, how Brecht becomes Brechtian and how he thinks it going to be the best play he's ever done!

Givalo is one of Arturo Ui's right hand men and I've "Americanised" or "gangsterised" him so we call him Givola. John Givola.



Ui has Giri and Roma and Givola and they are ever-present. They back him up, support him, and do the dirty work, e.g. the murders, and the arson. Givola is third in command really. But he's quite a clever man because he sort of rises slightly. He manages to persuade Arturo to get rid of Roma. So it's just Givola and Giri; Giri is not taken seriously, so by the end of the play Givola is second in command.



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild_146-1968-101-20a_Joseph_Goebbels.jpg

Historically, he's based on Dr Joseph Goebbels, the German, and in exactly the same way he was sort of Hitler's henchman, he was his minister of propaganda and he managed to steer it so that he was the second in command. When Hitler died, he then became the Minister of Germany for one day, because of course he killed himself the next day.

Goebbels, physically is the opposite to me, he was very skinny and quite gaunt and had a club foot and a shorter leg than the other. He was very bitter because he was disabled. He wanted to be an artist, he wrote poetry, he wrote books and plays but none were published or performed because they weren't any good. And he didn't have much luck with women in the early stages of his manhood. It wasn't until he was in his 30s that he started to have more success with women and then he became a bit of a womanizer. You don't really get an essence of that with Givola in the play. On the surface of it, he could just be one of these 'gangster-thug' types. In my head I've been trying to kind of marry the two.

I think Brecht wants the actor to be able to play a role but for the audience to be able to see that it's an actor playing a role. So you must be able to tell a story, to do justice to the story and to the character, but it's the opposite to the Method. It's not all this feeling and emotion because then that clouds the image, the message...He doesn't want



the audience to get all cosy and sleepy; he wants them to be constantly asking questions.



So I'm thinking "Well how do you perform Brecht? How do you be true to what Brecht wanted, with this play specifically?" Because there are certain levels to this play, so I'm thinking "Well actually, I'm gonna side away from what Brecht wants and I'm gonna try to immerse myself so much into the character that people really believe in that character, but at the same time I'm going to be able to step out of it,

as an actor." Walter is very keen on the characters being the most important thing. Being able to believe in those characters but at the same time, not getting so wrapped up in them that all you're doing is emoting...He wants the truth, for the story to come through.

There's lots of things that make this play Brechtian. There's screens, there's video games but it's obviously set, costume-wise and set-wise, in the 1930s. So there's gonna be those kinds of alienation.

I'm really looking forward to playing Givola. I can see that he's going to provide a lot of challenges and a lot of fun at the same time, and if I get it right, I think it will be a character that will be remembered.



Photograph: Stephen Vaughan

Set Design

Ti Green is set designer for *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*. So what are the challenges for her in this set? Director, Walter Meierjohann, gives his thoughts.

I think what we were very keen on that it's an urban story, it's Chicago. Ti Green is designing it, Louis Price is doing costumes and also a bit of video, and then we have Nickola Kodjabashia doing music and Brecht always called all these three, set design, costume and music "the sister arts". They are all related, they will all help us to tell a story.



Dogsborough's country house

It's all concrete but it comes from the idea of an empty space, nothing is masked. The actors and the stage hands will bring in all the set elements like walls or a piece of a bar and the actors will be seen getting changed in the side wings.

Everything is going to be open and Ui and his gang will be constantly present, lurking, in the background.

Green has used multiple stage design, all basically giving the impression of where the characters are, but without any disillusion that this is a stage set and the audience are watching a play.



Givola's flower shop



The Illegal betting shop

We have contemporary elements of set (such as the ticker running across the top of the stage) juxtaposed with costumes from the period. So the costumes are all from the 1930s but elements in the set are really 'now' and contemporary. It's this constant mixture, like what Brecht was doing in a way as well. He was doing it with Chicago and Germany, we're doing with the past and the present.

WHAT IS ARTURO UI ABOUT?

"The play is not so much an attack on Hitler, but rather upon the complacency of the people who were able to resist him, but didn't."

Bertolt Brecht



PLOT SUMMARY

The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui is set in gangster America and follows the life of Arturi Ui as he gradually rises to power by bribing, corrupting and murdering those standing in his way. Although it is written as a parody of the rise of Adolf Hitler, the gangster references also point the audience towards Al Capone, and there are also references to the rise of Richard III.



PLOT SYNOPSIS (Illustrations by Louis Price)

1 Business District

Flake, Butcher, Mulberry and Clark, members of The Cauliflower Trust (an association of grocers) are bemoaning the depression and the state of the grocery trade in particular.

Their colleague, Sheet, is absent as he's going from bank to bank desperately trying to raise a loan to keep his dockyard business afloat.

The group have noticed the gangster Arturo Ui hanging around, and his right-hand man, Roma, has been advertising their protection racket suggesting grocers could be 'persuaded' to buy only Cauliflower Exchange stock .

The group feel they'd prefer to rely on the Salvation Army than go with Ui.



Mulberry



Butcher

Flake and Butcher reveal they have thought of asking for a loan from the City for some 'future' dock improvement works.

However, Dogsborough, (a business leader/ Mayor) has thrown the idea out, suspecting rightly that there was no real intention of building anything.

They need his flawless reputation behind them to give credence to their loan scheme.

The men are bitter about this because Dogsborough used to run the dockyard canteen and so made his living through them for 20 years. They have also 'bankrolled' his elections and therefore they feel he's being disloyal.

Butcher suggests they teach Dogsborough a lesson.

2 Vegetable Exchange

Sheet has been unsuccessful in securing a loan.

However, Flake has made him an offer: the Cauliflower Trust will buy the dockyard for \$20,000, half its value.

Sheet is horrified his friends are taking advantage of his financial situation.



Sheet

Flake



Arturo Ui passes, Sheet notices he gives Flake a significant look.

Flake remarks Ui is after business propositions but notes that his type are leprous, eating up towns first by a finger, following with arms and shoulders, it's a plague of extortion and murder.

Sheet feels this plague is contagious – drawing similarities between the mobsters and Flake.

However, he knows he will lose the shipyard, and his wife, and so surrenders it to Flake.

3 Dogsborough and Son's Restaurant

Dogsborough reiterates that he is absolutely set against the loan to Butcher and Flake.

Butcher says he wants to forget about the loan but in grateful recognition of 20 years' service at the docks and more recent service to the city, would like to offer Dogsborough the opportunity of the controlling stake in Sheet's stockyard for the bargain price of \$20,000.

Dogsborough questions the great deal he's being offered, but a mixture of flattery, lies and sheer temptation persuade him to accept.

Butcher and Flake remark that they'll benefit from his experience and he is now a cauliflower man like them.

They have conned him into accepting the unacceptable, Dogsborough is totally compromised.



Dogsborough

4 Bookmakers, 122nd Street

Ui is introspective and depressed, bemoaning recent lack of action and therefore relating press coverage.

Roma reminds him his team are all broke, have low morale and need some action.

Roma suggests burning and smashing some stores into submission to push the protection racket.



Arturo Ui

Ragg



Ui refuses; he needs protection from the law first, a deal with the police and a judge or two ‘in his pocket’.

Roma suggests pursuing rumours around the Cauliflower Trust, Dogsborough and a loan for phantom building work as opportunity for blackmail and/or ‘protection’ .

A reporter, Ragg, enters and stirs it up, teasing Ui about their inactivity. He compares them to the busy goings on at City Hall, and dramatizes Dogsborough’s apparent lading on the drama to highlight the ‘tragedy’ of the grocery trade and thus securing voting through this loan for the Cauliflower Trust. He also teases about Givola’s trying to get a job with Capone’s mob.

Then Giri turns up with Bowl, Sheet’s (ex) accountant from the shipyard.

Bowl is very bitter and explains that Dogsborough sacked him – Butcher having signed over 51% of the dockyard to him from the Cauliflower Trust.

Dogsborough then arranged a city loan to prevent the Trust from folding whilst secretly he was part of it.

The loans were for the Trust but went via the shipyard: Bowl signed for them.

Ui finally sees the corruption – and therefore a way in for him.

Giri insists Bowl will happily testify to all this and tells Bowl he’ll get “whatever’s coming to him”.



Bowl

5 Dogsborough’s House in the Country



Dogsborough Junior

Dogsborough, living in his country house with his son, realises he’s made a dreadful mistake – accepting this house at the time he was arguing the case for funding a concern that was secretly his, was deeply improper.

He maintains the loan was required to shore up the city vegetable trade, but realises the stock in the shipyard was to whet his appetite and he’s been sucked in.

Butcher telephones: the message is the City Council has voted to investigate and Butcher wants to see him.

Dogsborough is incredulous when Ui then turns up, saying Flake sent him – and immediately assumes the Cauliflower Trust is threatening him.

Ui and Roma resist all requests to leave and Ui claims he is misunderstood and asks Dogsborough to vouch for him with the police.

Ui then details the grocers need for protection and likewise the Cauliflower Trust – it is a veiled threat – he and his men will ensure that they need protection.

Dogsborough doesn't see any present threat to trade or any relevance to himself as he claims the Trust is no business of his, causing Ui to lose his patience and all pretence.

Ui threatens Dogsborough outright, he knows all his shady dealings and although Dogsborough declares he'd rather die than help with Ui's rackets, Ui promises he will be successful. And unless Dogsborough does prefer to die, he will have to be seen to support Ui and his plans.

6 City Hall

Butcher, Flake and Clark are nervous, hoping that Sheet will take the rap for the misappropriated loan.

They are waiting for Ui to return from putting pressure on Sheet to do time in prison in exchange for a cash reward later – and saving his marriage.

O'Casey reveals Sheet has been found dead in a downtown hotel room.

Dogsborough is visibly devastated.

Butcher is upset but the Cauliflower Trust seems to presume they are off the hook. Flake is straight on the offensive – this wrecks the enquiry?

O'Casey agrees his investigation is compromised but he will pursue many questions, particularly relating to establishing ownership of the shipyard.

The court awaits Dogsborough's legal representative and when Ui, a known gangster, presents himself, O'Casey is incredulous: this is a very public way to ally Dogsborough and Ui.

Dogsborough is totally undermined by Ui's blustering, colloquial – and funny – style of 'defence' and through the continual disruptive banter, familiarity and comments from the side-lines.



O'Casey

Ui declares the loan money was embezzled, that no works were undertaken and firmly puts the blame on the now conveniently silent Sheet.

O'Casey sees through it all, the shipyard did misappropriate the funds – but who owned/owns the shipyard? "Sheet knew..."

O'Casey asks Dogsborough directly if he is the owner but there is so much banter and interjection that he never actually answers.

O'Casey suggests Dogsborough had a vested interest and demands to prove it and bring forth a witness...then machine gun fire is heard.

Bowl, the witness, is now dead. Butcher and the Cauliflower Trust are now appalled – and determined to have no more do with Arturo Ui.

The Cauliflower Trust is in deeper than they'd ever planned; a little deception and embezzlement has escalated to the murder of both Sheet and Bowl – Ui has drawn them in.

7 Hotel Mammoth

Ui employs an actor to help with his pronunciation and speechmaking – he may want to branch out into politics.

Ui wants a commanding gait, wants to make an impression; he wants to walk, stand, sit and speak with gravitas, he wants the look the 'hoi polloi' expect their king to have.



8 The Docks

Vegetable traders are listening to Ui; Dogsborough is sitting next to him, looking sick and sickened. Clark is observing.

Ui is practising his new-found oratory skills, bemoaning the violence of the times and the vulnerability of the ordinary man against the inaction of the City Fathers/powers-that-be, as always, excellently fuelled by the comments from Givola and Roma from the side-lines.

He is appealing to the mild-mannered grocers to take up his offers of 'protection' from all the hoodlums running loose in the neighbourhood.

Clark (Cauliflower Trust) is ushered on and broadens Ui's argument by suggesting recent slack trade is due to wholesale price increases, due to the greed of packers, drivers and dockers – *half of whom are foreigners* – demanding wage increases. These agitators will also be taken to task by Mr Ui.

One trader, 'Cohen' remarks that if these workers are their customers – if their wages are cut, then they will certainly buy fewer groceries. Ui replies a worker is respectable but should he become part of a mob and strike – then he becomes a menace, and Ui will deal with him.

Dogsborough is wheeled on as a paragon of virtue and old-fashioned values – to his acute embarrassment.

Cohen and two other traders comment that their neighbourhoods are actually quiet, they don't feel threatened. Roma chillingly asks his name – 'Harry Cohen'; Roma whispers to Ui, beckons to Giri and Givola. Giri and henchman leave ominously.



Clark

Dock Daisy



Givola introduces Bowl's widow, actually Dockdaisy, in full mourning garb, who touchingly thanks Ui for saving her and her daughter from the streets. We see a real propaganda machine in motion!

Giri and henchmen walk through with petrol cans. The crowd is about to disperse, but one henchman, Jimmy, manages to keep them with a song allowing sirens to be heard by all.

Givola announces a fire at the docks.

Giri asks if a veg dealer by the name of Cohen is present...a suspicious blaze has started, gasoline cans have been found.

One trader points out Ui's mob ran through with gas cans minutes earlier; he instantly has a gun poked in his ribs.

Givola and Ui shout about the sick neighbourhood – and the need to be protected.



The Traders

9. Cicero

A woman staggers out of flaming truck screaming for help for her husband who's still in it; she's shouting Ui's name, that he is slaughtering them – and being tolerated.

10. The Warehouse Fire Trial

Part One

The Judge



A farcical scene, total mockery of justice.

The Prosecution and Judge are in league with Ui, as are many in the crowd.

Giri is aggressive in the extreme when anything is said that goes against their case.

Ui's gang have managed to dope and frame a 'down-n-out' called Fish for the warehouse fire. He stands, obviously drugged and is unable to speak. Giri claims he saw him carrying a gas can.

The Defence points out Giri's car was parked outside Dogsborough's restaurant for 4 hours prior to the fire, and that Mr Fish was dragged out of that same restaurant 20 minutes before the fire.

One minute Giri says he was in Chicago having a stroll, the next he claims to have been in Cicero all day. Yet his car was parked outside the restaurant...O'Casey notes these 'anomalies'.

There is laughter from the court, including the Judge – the trial is a sham.

Part Two

Cohen tells the defence that he saw Giri with gas cans that day, and that his warehouse was connected to shipyard offices giving Giri easy access.

Part Three

Cohen again on the witness stand – this time injured – head bandaged and with crutches.

He tells the prosecutor his eyesight is impaired and he does not recognise Giri.

He also claims his warehouse does not adjoin the shipyard.



Giri

Part Four

Dockdaisy, posing as bowl's widow, recites from memory, claiming to recognise Fish as the man she saw loitering with a tommy gun before her husband was shot dead.

The Henchmen



Part Five

Givola and Jimmy, the singing henchman, are under the prosecution's scrutiny.

Jimmy works for Givola in the florist business, they did have gasoline – florists use gasoline to kill greenfly apparently, and Jimmy was singing at the scene – and couldn't possibly carry gasoline cans at the same time.

Much laughter.

Part Six

The Judge, on behalf of the court, refutes press claims that it is 'under pressure from certain quarters'.

The defendant, Fish, is about to come round and the Defence is determined to hear him and demands water for Fish.

Amidst uproar from opposition, Fish denies arson and recognises Giri from Dogborough's restaurant.

The Doctor manages to hastily get a glass of water down Fish. Defence realises they will have drugged the water, his shouts to have the glass examined are wasted: Fish is doped again.

Part Seven

The Judge finds Fish guilty and sentences him to 15 years hard labour.

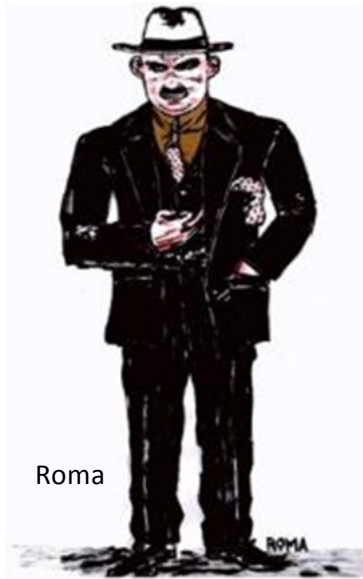


Fish

11 Dogsborough's Will

Dogsborough is seen writing his will and open confession of involvement.

Giri catches the young Dogsborough smuggling the will out – and intercepts him.



Roma

Givola is re-writing Dogsborough's will so that all trace of the confessional elements has been removed; Dogsborough's name will be unsullied – as will Ui and his gang.

Roma wants to know where real will is.

There's back-biting and in-fighting within the camp, insecurity over Dogsborough's will has emphasised this – all fear their part in murder and corruption could be revealed in it. There is inherent distrust.

Roma accuses Giri and Givola of schmoozing with the Cauliflower Trust and disrespecting some of their henchmen.

Givola retaliates, angry at Roma for being involved with the attacks on the grocery trucks, upsetting the Cauliflower Trust.

Roma pulls a gun, Givola wants Ui to side with one or the other and Ui snaps – he will not tolerate threats and demands absolute faith.

Givola swears allegiance, Roma tells him and Giri to leave.

Giri admires Roma's hat (Giri keeps and wears the hats of his murder victims).

Ui tells Roma of his plans for expansion, starting with a trial in Cicero.

Betty Dulfleet of Dulfleet Wholesale of Cicero is apparently keen to strike an alliance with the Cauliflower Trust – but not whilst Ui is connected with them. (Betty's husband, Ignatius, publishes Vegetable Weekly which is notably critical about Ui and his mob.)

Roma sees a plot: the Cauliflower Trust has had enough of their association with Ui.

Giri is close to Clark from the Trust and they are handling Dogsborough's will.

Roma suspects they are plotting to release the real will, naming Ui as the root of all Chicago's ills and allying Giri and Givola with the Trust – which be out of Ui's clutches.

The two then plan that Roma will dispatch Dogsborough and most likely Giri and Givola at the same time. Ui thanks Roma, obviously keen to divert the planned coup, and agrees he'll give the pep talk to Roma's crew before-hand.



Betty Dulfleet

Ui prepares the speech only to be interrupted by Clark and Giri with Betty Dullfleet who do indeed want to form an alliance between Cicero and the Cauliflower Trust – but insist on Roma being removed.

Ui is furious and refuses; Clark ushers Betty out and Giri says this means war against the Cauliflower Trust, the city, the police and the Press.

Arturo insists on loyalty – to Roma.



12 Garage at Night



Roma and a young associate, Inna wait for Arturo Ui – who is late.

Roma thinks Ui could be hesitating, so loyal is he to his troops, but doesn't doubt he'll come through – he's known him for 18 years.

Word comes that that cars have just left police HQ so the bullet-proof shutter is dropped.

Then word comes another cop car is passing and two more are waiting round the corner with lights off.

Roma thinks a trap is set for Ui and insists on lifting the shutter – only for Ui and Givola to enter from the other side of the door. The tables have been turned – Roma, Inna and their men are killed.

13 Givola's Flower Shop

Ignatius is unhappy with the alliance.

Betty is content that with Roma gone, all is alright – as long as there is no provocation (from her husband) she believes Ui will be fine.

Ignatius is pointing out that gone means 'rubbed out' or in real terms, 'murdered'; Betty says the men are merely acting by their own code of honour. The point being that Betty seems content with that code of honour –when it suits her purpose.

Rumours are rife that Ui is moving into Dogsborough's shoes, they must adapt.

Ui and Givola appear and the four walk around the florist in a parody of a scene from Goethe's Faust in a display of sugary niceties.

Givola



14 Dullfleet's Funeral

Dullfleet has been murdered. Clark and Butcher leave church, Butcher calls Ui's gang murderers and points out that Dullfleet kept his word but Givola says that's not enough, Dullfleet should have actively supported them.

Ui greets Betty, who is full of contempt. Ui reminds her that she will need his protection...over her dead body she says.

15 Night, a Hotel

Ui is sleeptalking, Roma has appears as a ghost in a scene that parallels Banquo's ghost in Macbeth. Ui is in a living hell.

16 Financial District

Traders have caved in to the protection racket; they hate murder, robbery and extortion, and in the same breath subservience and cowardice – and their lack of guns – that allows it. They are joined by the Ciceronians, who pray that one day Ui picks a fight with somebody who can overpower him.



Ui in his hotel room



Arturo Ui

Ui, Betty, Clark, Giri and Givola appear. Clark announces the alliance between Dullfleet of Cicero and the Cauliflower Trust is complete, meaning that Chicago will supply all Cicero's stock, ensuring prompt secure delivery...and wholesale price rises.

Ui gives a speech talking of Dogsborough begging him to save the Chicago vegetable trade and likewise Dullfleet of Cicero. Now the entire industry is under his watchful protection, he needs the people themselves to rubberstamp the deal – as there is to be no whiff of coercion or intimidation.

They are of course free not to vote. One man leaves. He is followed and a shot is heard. Everybody else proclaims their protector general. Other cities will follow.

The characters, events & venues, and what they represent

Dogsborough	Paul von Hindenburg
Arturo Ui	Adolf Hitler/Al Capone
Emanuele Giri	Hermann Göring
Roma	Ernst Röhm (SA Chief)
Givola	Joseph Goebbels
Ignatious Dullfleet	Engelbert Dollfuß (Chancellor of Austria)
Cauliflower Trust	Junkers, East German Landowners
Fish	Marinus van der Lubbe
The Gangsters	Fascists
Clark	Von Papen, member of The Cauliflower Trust
Vegetable sellers	The Bourgeoisie
Chicago	Germany
Cicero	Austria
The Warehouse Fire	The Reichstag Fire
Dock Improvement / Dockshilfeskandal	East Aid/ East Aid Scandal

For a complete comparison of events visit Bench Theatre Company's website:

<http://www.benchtheatre.org.uk/plays80s/arturoui.php>



The Reichstag Fire has also been compared by many to the Twin Towers attack. Can you think of any other events in this piece that have resonances of today's society?

Characters (Costume design by Louis Price)

Ian Bartholomew



Arturo Ui



Adolf Hitler



http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/10/Bundesarchiv_Bild_183_S33892_-_Adolf_Hitler_retouchiert.jpg

Adolf Hitler (20 April 1889 – 30 April 1945) was an Austrian-born German politician and the leader of the National Socialist German Workers Party (German: *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*, abbreviated NSDAP, commonly referred to as the Nazi Party).

Hitler is most commonly associated with the rise of fascism in Europe, World War II and the Holocaust.

In February 1920, the NSDAP published its first programme which became known as the "25 Points". In the programme the party refused to accept the terms of the Versailles Treaty and called for the reunification of all German people. To reinforce their ideas on nationalism, equal rights were only to be given to German citizens. "Foreigners" and "aliens" would be denied these rights. This was the beginning of the end!

Hitler was Chancellor of Germany from 1933 to 1945, and head of state (as *Führer und Reichskanzler*) from 1934 to 1945, having taken the title from Hindenburg.

In the final days of the war, during the Battle of Berlin in 1945, Hitler married his long-time mistress, Eva Braun. To avoid capture by the Red Army, the two committed suicide less than two days later on 30 April 1945 and their corpses were burned.

To find out more, follow these links:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/people/adolf_hitler

http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/adolf_hitler.htm

Information and photographs about the real people behind the characters has been edited from a range of sources including Wikipedia.

William Hoyland



Dogsborough Jnr



Paul von Hindenburg



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild_183-008886_Paul_von_Hindenburg.jpg

Paul Ludwig Hans Anton von Beneckendorff und von Hindenburg, known universally as **Paul von Hindenburg** (1847 – 1934) was a German field marshal who was the second President of Germany from 1925 to 1934.

Hindenburg enjoyed a long career in the Prussian Army, retiring in 1911. He was recalled at the outbreak of World War I, and first came to national attention, at the age of 66, as the victor at Tannenberg in 1914.

As Germany's Chief of the General Staff from 1916, he rose in the German public's esteem until Hindenburg came to eclipse the Kaiser himself.

Hindenburg retired again in 1919, but returned to public life one more time in 1925 to be elected as the second President of Germany.

Though 84 years old and in poor health, Hindenburg was persuaded to run for re-election in 1932, as he was considered the only candidate who could defeat Adolf Hitler.

Although he was opposing Hitler, the deteriorating political stability of the Weimar Republic let him play an important role in the Nazi Party's rise to power. He dissolved the parliament twice in 1932 and eventually appointed Hitler as Chancellor in January 1933.

Hindenburg was involved in the Osthilfekandal which involved giving government money to East Prussian Junkers in exchange for a country estate for himself. This discovery caused his fall from grace and allowed Hitler a chance to gain more power.

In February, he issued the Reichstag Fire Decree which suspended various civil liberties, and in March he signed the Enabling Act, in which the parliament gave Hitler's administration legislative powers. Hindenburg died the following year, after which Hitler declared the office of President vacant and, as "Führer und Reichskanzler", made himself head of state.

Mike Goodenough



Giri



Hermann Göring



<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/2/2c/Goring1932.jpg>

Hermann Wilhelm Göring, (1893 –1946) was a German politician, military leader, and a leading member of the Nazi Party.

He was a veteran of World War I as an ace fighter pilot.

In 1935, Göring was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the *Luftwaffe* (German: *Air Force*), a position he was to hold until the final days of World War II.

By mid-1940, Göring was at the peak of his power and influence.

Adolf Hitler had promoted him to the rank of *Reichsmarschall*, making Göring senior to all other *Wehrmacht* commanders.

In 1941, Hitler designated him as his successor and deputy in all his offices.

By 1942, with the German war effort stumbling on both fronts, Göring's standing with Hitler was very greatly reduced.

Göring largely withdrew from the military and political scene to enjoy the pleasures of life as a wealthy and powerful man.

After World War II, Göring was convicted of war crimes and crimes against humanity at the Nuremberg Trials. He was sentenced to death by hanging, but committed suicide by cyanide ingestion the night before he was due to be hanged.



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Defendants_in_the_dock_at_nuremberg_trials.jpg

The Nuremberg Trials 1945-6

Nick Page



Roma



Ernst Röhm



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernst_R%C3%B6hm#/media/File:Ernst_R%C3%B6hm.jpg

Ernst Julius Röhm, (1887 –1934) was a German officer in the Bavarian Army and later an early Nazi leader.

He was a co-founder of the 'Storm Battalion'; SA the Nazi Party militia and later was the SA commander.

In 1934, as part of the 'Night of the Long Knives', he was executed on Hitler's orders as a potential rival.

The Night of the Long Knives, sometimes called 'Operation Hummingbird' or in Germany the 'Röhm-Putsch', was a purge that took place in Nazi Germany between June 30 and July 2, 1934, when the Nazi regime carried out a series of political executions.

Leading figures of the 'left-wing' Strasserist faction of the Nazi Party were murdered, as were prominent conservative anti-Nazis (such as former Chancellor Kurt von Schleicher and Gustav Ritter von Kahr, who had suppressed Hitler's Beer Hall Putsch in 1923).

Many of those killed were members of the Sturmabteilung (SA), the paramilitary Brownshirts.

Adolf Hitler moved against the SA and its leader, Ernst Röhm, because he saw the independence of the SA and the penchant of its members for street violence as a direct threat to his newly gained political power.

He also wanted to conciliate leaders of the Reichswehr, the official German military who feared and despised the SA – in particular Röhm's ambition to absorb the Reichswehr into the SA under his own leadership. Finally, Hitler used the purge to attack or eliminate critics of his new regime, especially those loyal to Vice-Chancellor Franz von Papen, as well as to settle scores with old enemies.

Nick Cavaliere



Givola



Joseph Goebbels



http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/35/Bundesarchiv_Bild_146_10583_01-200_A_Joseph_Goebbels.jpg

Paul Joseph Goebbels (1897 –1945) was a German politician and Reich Minister of Propaganda in Nazi Germany from 1933 to 1945.

As one of Adolf Hitler's closest associates and most devout followers, he was known for his zealous oratory and anti-Semitism. He played a hand in the Kristallnacht attack on the German Jews, which many historians consider to be the beginning of the Final Solution, leading towards the Holocaust.

Goebbels rose to power in 1933 along with Hitler and the Nazi Party and he was appointed Propaganda Minister. One of his first acts was the burning of books rejected by the Nazis. He exerted totalitarian control over the media, arts and information in Germany.

During World War II, Goebbels increased his power and influence through shifting alliances with other Nazi leaders. By late 1943, the tide of the war was turning against the Axis powers, but this only spurred Goebbels to intensify the propaganda by urging the Germans to accept the idea of total war and mobilization. Goebbels remained with Hitler in Berlin to the end, just hours after Hitler's suicide, Goebbels and his wife, Magda, killed their six young children. Then, they both committed suicide as well.

Robin Kingsland



Clark



Von Papen



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernst_Bundesarchiv_Bild_183-50007_-_Frank_von_Papen_Goodlink

Chancellor and Hitler's Vice-Chancellor between 1933 and 1934

William Hoyland



Dullfleet



Engelbert Dollfuß



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

Dollfuss (in German: **Engelbert Dollfuß**, 1892-1934) was an Austrian Christian Social and Patriotic Front statesman. He became Federal Chancellor in 1932 in the midst of a crisis for the conservative government.

In early 1933, he shut down parliament, banned the Austrian Nazi party and assumed dictatorial powers. Suppressing the Socialist movement in February 1934, he cemented the rule of “austrofascism” through the authoritarian *First of May Constitution*.

Dollfuss was assassinated by Nazi agents in 1934. His regime was maintained through the Stresa Front until Adolf Hitler's invasion in 1938.

Eliot Giuralarocca



Fish



Marinus Van der Lubbe



<http://file.com.org/history/lubbe-marinus-van-der-191-1-1934>

Marinus (Rinus) van der Lubbe (1909 – 1934) was a Dutch council communist accused of, and controversially executed for, setting fire to the German Reichstag building on February 27, 1933.

He was posthumously pardoned in 2008.

Dockshilfeskandal → East Aid Scandal

Osthilfe (Eastern Aid) was a policy of the German Government of the Weimar Republic (1919-1933) to give financial support from Government funds to bankrupt estates in East Prussia.

The policy was implemented in 1929 -1930, in spite of the generally dire economic situation and the lack of government funds, because of the overwhelming need of the Government of the German Republic to retain the support of the influential Junker owners of these estates, although it was opposed by such important politicians as General and Chancellor of Germany Kurt von Schleicher.

This policy produced a major scandal in Germany in December 1932 and January 1933, the *Osthilfeskandal*.

A considerable number of Junkers were found out to have wasted the money on what was considered to be luxury items, such as cars and vacations.

The ensuing investigations into the scandal also implicated the President of the Republic, General Paul von Hindenburg. It came to the light that the Hindenburg family's highly indebted estate in East Prussia at Neudeck (owned by the president's brother) had been clandestinely bought in 1927 by a number of industrialists and given to the president as a gift, seemingly in exchange for political influence.



Some historians believe that the scandal was instrumental in weakening Hindenburg's position to the point where he caved in to industrialist pressure to appoint Adolf Hitler as chancellor at the end of January 1933.

After the donation of a further 5,000 acres (20 km²) to this property, and after the Nazis came to power, the matter ceased to command attention in the censored press of the Third Reich.



Introduction to Brecht and Epic Theatre by Allie Spencer

Bertolt Brecht 1898 – 1956

Born in Augsburg 1898, and growing up in a world dominated by War and the growth of fascism, Bertolt Brecht revolutionised theatre with his view that theatre should educate, not just entertain. Heavily influenced by Marxism, Piscator, and unhappy at the state of the world around him, Brecht sought to challenge his audiences through Epic, Didactic and Dialectical theatre. As one of the people on Hitler's "hit list" for writing material

that did not support the Nazi ethos, he had to flee Europe as the Nazis' power spread. He left Germany in 1933, arrived in America in 1941 and returned to Europe in 1947 after having to appear before the HUAC for his communist associations. In 1949 he founded his famous theatre company, the Berliner Ensemble in the German Democratic Republic, along with his wife Helene Weigel. Brecht died in 1956 having written over fifty plays and screen plays.

"I love him so much I will die of it" Brecht and Margarete Steffin

Margarete (Grete) Steffin is best known as collaborator and mistress of Bertolt Brecht. Margarete grew up in a working class home in Germany but was noted in school for her outstanding literary ability. However her father refused to let her continue her education so she left school at 14 and started work for a telephone company. Undeterred she continued lessons at evening classes. Her mother had an interest in theatre, particularly political theatre so this may have been an early influence that later led her towards agitprop theatre, the Fichte speaking chorus and the Red Revue and eventually Theater am Schiffbauerdamm.



In 1931 she joined the Marxist Workers School, took diction lessons from Helene Weigel and was introduced to Brecht. She started to work for Theater am Schiffbauerdamm, and began an intense relationship with Brecht that was going to last for the rest of her life. In 1932 she played the role of a servant in *Die Mutter* with Helene Weigel in the title role.

Devoted to Brecht she became one of his mistresses but also worked for the Brecht family collaborating on, and editing scripts. Scripts included *Galileo*, *The Good*

Person of Szechuan and *The Resistable Rise of Arturo Ui*. *Arturo Ui* was most likely the last one she collaborated on as it was written whilst she and the Brecht family were living in Finland awaiting visas to America. Unfortunately the tuberculosis that had been diagnosed in 1931 got the better of her and she died in 1941 whilst Brecht, Weigel and Ruth Berlau (Brecht's other mistress) moved to America.

Steffin wrote prose and poetry of her own although none of this was published during her lifetime. It is hard to identify exactly how much of Brecht's work Steffin was actually responsible for but at least she was credited for some of it, unlike Berlau who also wrote for Brecht but remained unappreciated.

Brecht struggled after the death of Steffin.

“My general is fallen
My soldier is fallen

My pupil has left
My teacher has left

My nurse is gone
My nursling is gone.”

Brecht in America

A bad beginning

“I saw Brecht. He was just as dirty and unshaven as ever, but somehow much nicer and rather pathetic...He wants to work with me badly, and the way he talks about it sounds very reasonable – but you know how long that lasts.” Kurt Weill writing to his wife Lotte Lenya from Hollywood, 1 October 1942 – letter at the Kurt Weill foundation in New York.

Having completed the writing of *The Resistable Rise of Arturo Ui* in Finland Brecht took it to America expecting it to be a hit. However, he did not settle well in America. He settled initially in 1941 in Southern California and found it very depressing. His financial struggle at this time may have had a lot to do with his discontent, as might the mourning for two close friends. Steffin had died of TB on their journey, and the other friend, Walter Benjamin, had committed suicide rather than being handed over to the Gestapo. Brecht had visited America in 1935 and proved himself unpopular shouting and swearing in rehearsals and terrorising directors and actors to the extent that he was thrown out of rehearsals. He was now back, 6 years later, a refugee with no where else to go. Existing on approximately \$120 a month Brecht and his family were living off gifts from friends and colleagues as he struggled to produce work for a country that did not recognise his genius. John Simon in his article *A Marxist amongst the capitalists* suggests that Brecht had few friends, and Eric Bentley in a letter to the New York Times in 2005 commented that no one "hung out" with Brecht,

although this did not stop him attracting women! He refused to work with many leading directors and often sabotaged his own productions and stopped many translations from reaching print.

Never a communist?

Brecht is well known for his Marxist and communist viewpoints. However when called to the The House Committee on Un-American Activities on 30 October 1947 he continually denied that he was a member of, or had ever been a member of the communist party. The vice chairman Karl Mundt thanked Brecht for cooperating and the chairman, J. Parnell Thomas, informed Brecht he was a “good example” to witnesses.

Brecht had to answer to many questions relating to his views on Marxism and communism. He informed the court that the views expressed within the plays related to fascism and the Nazi regime within Germany. During his investigation he answered questions whilst smoking a pipe. Whilst denying all allegations with the excuse that the translations were incorrect and causing entertainment within the courtroom, Brecht appeared to cause chaos within the hearing and HUAC eventually gave up. A transcript of the interrogation is available by clicking on the following link:

[http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Brecht_HUAC_hearing_\(1947-10-30\)_transcript](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Brecht_HUAC_hearing_(1947-10-30)_transcript)

The final questions were based around a poem entitled *Forward we're not forgotten*. “Did you write that Mr Brecht?” the HUAC Chief Investigator, Robert E Striping, asked, having read the translation of the poem. “No” replied Brecht “I wrote a German poem but that is very different from this.” This was followed by courtroom laughter!

Brecht left the courtroom, and also left America!

According to James K Lyon, whilst in America Brecht “suffered more financial deprivation, greater intellectual and emotional isolation, and more resounding failure and indifference toward his genius than he had known for years or would know again in his life time”.

He arrived penniless and left wealthy. He arrived “on the run” and left in a similar manner. He endured the death of two of his closest friends and the death of a son.

However, Brecht also wrote some of his most well known plays – *Mother Courage, the visions of Simone Machad, the Good Person of Seczhwan, Schweyk in the Second World War* as well as *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*. A genius in exile, Brecht left America in 1947 and never returned.

Brecht and his views on theatre

As with all theorists and directors Brecht's ideas evolved and expanded over time. The aim of this introduction is to familiarise you with Brecht's main theories.

Epic Theatre and Verfremdungseffekte

Brecht had two aims:

1. To present a story with social implications in such a way as to encourage the individuals in the audience to pursue those implications.
2. To present it as well, and as enjoyably, as possible.

Brecht believed that Theatre should be a place where audience could critically approach problems, look for solutions, and act upon their decisions. He believed that audience members should have a sense of social responsibility and also a sense of fun.

He believed that too often audience members would become so emotionally involved with the story or characters presented onstage that they would not be able to identify, analyse and search for solutions to the characters' dilemmas, and they would leave the theatre having missed the point of the piece.

So he devised ways of drawing the audience's attention to the fact they were watching a play. His main method was the use of Epic theatre and Verfremdungseffekte (loosely translated as The Alienation or Distancing Effect): Epic Theatre was a form of theatre that was episodic with each scene being a separate story, that could be told in any order, with a chorus or narrator interrupting and linking the scenes. The term Verfremdungseffekte, as with many of Brecht's techniques, developed over the years. However this term loosely covered Brecht's intention of distancing the audience from what they were watching on stage so that it was unfamiliar to them, and so they could critically watch and make a judgment rather than absorbing themselves in the plot.

So how did Brecht achieve his Distancing effect?

Brecht wanted each scene to be a story or statement within itself, a scene that would stand alone. His plays were made up of many such scenes, often with choruses, songs, poems or commentary in between. Brecht also liked to juxtapose scenes to cause the audience to think, and he would use comedy to emphasise the tragedy of the situation.

Influenced by film and the work of Charlie Chaplin he used signs and placards. The audience would be told what was about to happen in the scene so they could observe the scene critically as it was demonstrated before them. Brecht did not use elaborate scenery. His scenery was designed to look as if it would simply last for the performance – again this reminded the audience that they were watching a play.

Brecht also used choruses and songs to comment on the action. Everything was designed to make the audience think, comment and become more socially critical. Brecht wanted the audience to leave the theatre wanting to change things. For example, instead of leaving the theatre saying “What a sad story”, he wanted them to leave saying “The structure of society that caused the character to be in that situation was unfair. Things have got to change and we have to start the process!”

Actors were required to demonstrate characters rather than “becoming” them. They were to SHOW what the character did to help the audience make a judgment. That way they could also present an attitude to the character and the situation (Gestus) and keep at an emotional distance from the character. Brecht advised actors “The actor should refrain from living himself into the part prematurely in any way, and should go on functioning as long as possible as a reader (which does not mean a reader-aloud). An important step is memorising one’s first impressions...Before memorising the words he must memorise what he felt astounded at and where he felt impelled to contradict. For these are dynamic forces that he must preserve in creating his performance.” (*Brecht’s theory of theatrical performance*)

Dialectical theatre



Photography by Stephen Vaughan

Life is full of contradictions and choices. As Brecht’s work and ideas evolved, Brecht believed he was moving away from an epic theatre towards a dialectical theatre – a theatre revealing contradictions. As Elizabeth Wright comments in *Postmodern Brecht*, “It is human beings who produce contradictions and hence the world must be subject to criticism and change”.

Instead of ignoring contradictions, Brecht wanted the actor to expose the contradictions and choices that characters had to make within his plays.

For example Betty Dulfleet has been widowed by Ui’s gang and has told Ui they will be friends over her “cold, dead, rotting body” but in order to stay alive she now has to publicly support them (“I do encourage you to place your trust in Mr Ui, as I myself have done...”).

Brecht's use of music

Brecht believed that music made “poetic theatre” possible. At first Brecht wrote the music himself and was used as background to comedy, projections and battles, but soon had a value in its own right. Poetry was put to music by Brecht's guitar. It was often performed in Cabaret style. Songs were sung verse by verse during visible scene changes. The songs were without regular beats, stresses or bars. The rhythm was meant to follow that of the words – the metrics lay in the verse whose shape and sense were not to be distorted by being sung.

Brecht started to work alongside musicians and composers, and by 1928 in *Threepenny Opera* (music by Kurt Weill) there was a separation of music from other elements of entertainment:

1. Orchestra visible on stage
2. Change of lighting for the singing of songs
3. Orchestra lit up, titles and numbers of songs projected onto screen
4. Actors changed their positions before songs began



<https://www.indracks.com/index.php?file=article&id=3502>

Music involvement began to evolve as Brecht wrote more plays; the musical items were of a reflective and moralising nature, songs had a purpose to inform, and modern music was applied to songs (not traditional music). He wanted the music to stimulate thought and he wanted his songs to be gestic – communicating not only the meaning of the words but the attitude of the singer. He wanted his ballads to be socially critical, often with ironic references to conventional music.



The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui in rehearsal – Liverpool 2011

Photography by Stephen Vaughan

Production techniques for an objective theatre

by Neelands and Dobson

Examination of a political oppression

Empty space

Scenes introduced by placard or projection

Functional rather than decorative props

Set changes observed by audience

Lights used to show action, or time passing rather than create atmosphere

Lanterns and operators in view of audience

Music used to comment on or juxtapose action

Songs used to tell story

Each scene and song able to stand alone and deliver their own message

Scenes inform each other but do not grow from one another

Each scene and song displays human nature rather than character development

The actor as a storyteller

Re-examination of the familiar through rehearsal – use of past tense, speaking in third person, vocalising stage directions and swapping roles to evaluate characters helped distance actors from the emotions of the characters and continue to be surprised by the decisions their characters make

Duality of actor and character

Characters given titles and presented as representations

Presentational acting style; performers demonstrate rather than imitate

Narrative and circumstance as a priority over character

Address the audience

Interrogation that leads to sharpened observation

Examination of history of the past and present

Ensemble to deliver Gestus – the mimetic and gestural expression of the social relationships prevailing between people of a given period

(Theatre Directions, Neelands/Dobson, 2000)



Views from a student

Liam Hall is a second year student at Nottingham Trent University studying Performance Studies. What are his feelings about *Arturo Ui* and Brecht?

When I first studied Brecht using *Arturo Ui*, I hated it. It was different to what I knew, confusing and hard work. I hadn't seen any of his methods used in theatre before (although my knowledge of theatre back then was limited to pantomime and musicals). But as soon as I started to put the work in and stop being close minded, I discovered how fun and interesting it was.

The main challenge for me was to be aware that you are acting and making sure the audience is aware that you're acting too. That threw everything I had learnt previously out the window and, as I said earlier, was hard work. But I was really looking at it the wrong way. This was a chance to perform in a completely different way, to be able to break down the fourth wall, to make people think. It was a challenge, but a great stepping stone in my knowledge as an actor. One quote that always stuck with me from the *Caucasian Chalk Circle* was "It is our job to entertain. It is your job to draw conclusions". It supports Brecht's idea that the audience is more important than the actors, an idea that the actors are merely there to make you think. It is theatre for the mind, not the heart.

Arturo Ui is not subtle about what it represents. It uses signs in between scenes to remind the audience they are watching a play and what that play is about. Constantly trying to deliver a message, to keep the audience distanced so that they may think. They use a prologue so the audience know what is coming and are not overwhelmed by their emotions, not distracted by twists and surprise endings. Bertolt Brecht wants his audience focused on what the play is saying, in this case that Adolf Hitler and the NAZI party were voted into power and that we must never let anything like that happen again, that it should never have happened in the first place.

At this point you start to think it's all a bit depressing but I am in no way saying Brecht is depressing. I think his plays have some very witty, funny dialogue and he has a brilliant sense of humour, which no doubt will be very evident when his plays are performed, for example the scene where Arturo is coached by the "seen-better-days" actor. The interaction between Ui and this stereotype of actors is very funny, as well as Givola's boyish reactions. Another example is the way Dogsborough's son repeats nearly everything his father says, it is a small part of the scene but is very funny.

The thing with Brecht is even if you come away from learning about him and you still hate him, you won't forget him. And if theatre is something you want to do you will be thankful you didn't. Whether you are performing Brecht or not, his methods and even rehearsal techniques will aid you and the people around you massively. So make sure you keep your notes.

Liam Hall, September 2011

Emotion in Epic Theatre

Brecht is often seen as having wanted to prevent spectators from reacting emotionally to performances of his plays, and even as having tried to ban emotion from the stage. Yet we only need to look scene 9 of *Arturo Ui* to see that epic theatre does use emotion: a bloodstained woman staggers towards the audience and appeals desperately for help, before collapsing under the fire of a machine gun. The emotion of this scene serves Brecht's purpose. It cuts like a knife through the comedy, shocking the spectators, and it was designed to galvanize the audience of 1941 into standing up against Hitler. What Brecht opposed was emotion as an end in itself: performances that allowed spectators to wallow in the emotions of the characters on stage, leaving them drained of energy when the curtain fell.

Whilst Brecht's theatre aimed to encourage spectators to adopt a critical distance towards the action on stage, this critical distance was not designed to replace emotion. In epic theatre, critical distance and emotion can go hand in hand. Critical distance frees the audience to experience different emotions to the characters: to laugh when they cry and to cry when they laugh, or to feel frustrated and angry when characters fail to see that there is a way out of their suffering.

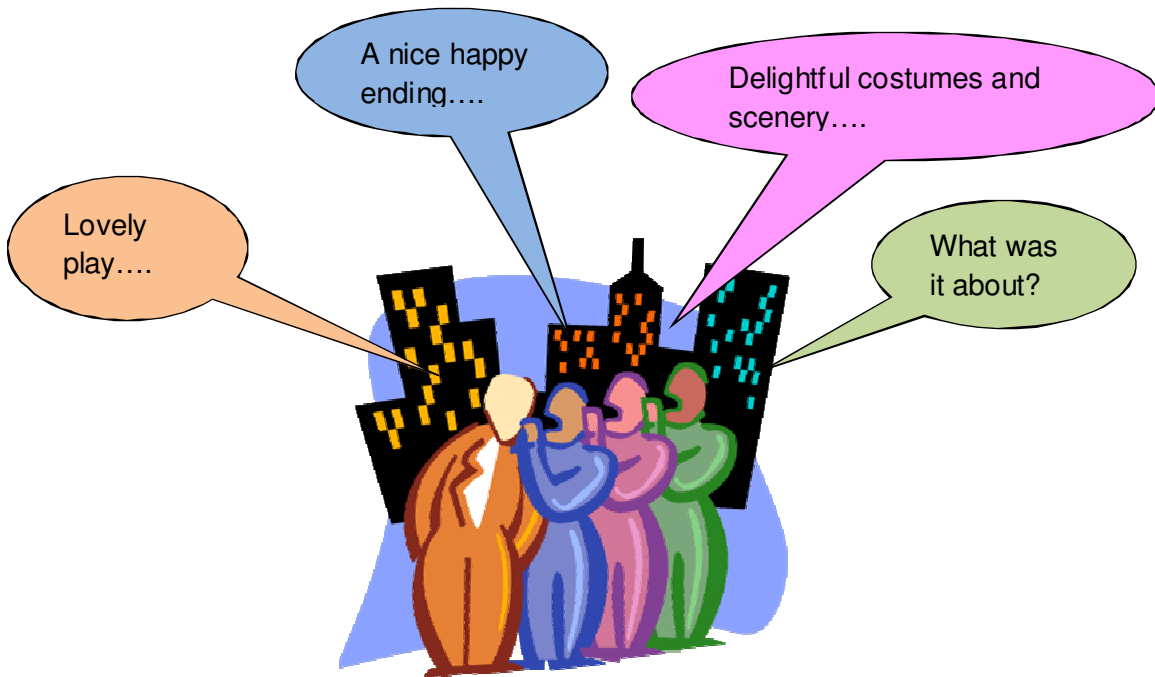
So why has Brecht been seen as an opponent of feeling in theatre? Some of the responsibility lies at his own door: when he published a table of contrasts between the old 'dramatic' and the new 'epic' theatre, he included a contrast between 'feeling' and 'reason', only later to remove it. It was all too easy for critics to overlook the footnote to the table, where Brecht explained that it presented only shifts of emphasis, not absolute contrasts. The misconception about Brecht's attitude towards emotion may also have owed something to prejudices against his far left-wing views. In his influential – but outdated – study of Brecht, Martin Esslin makes a point of arguing that communism 'rejected all sentiment and emotion' and thus offered Brecht a way of disciplining the irrational forces within him.

Particularly in English-speaking countries, however, it is the association of Brecht with the word 'alienation' that has led him to be seen as an opponent of emotion. 'Alienation' conveys the impression that he was attempting to repel his audiences and to place a barrier between them and the stage. It misrepresents Brecht's practice, and it misrepresents the original German term *Verfremdung*. A more accurate translation of *Verfremdung* is 'estrangement', a process that is designed to make spectators see familiar things and people from fresh perspectives, so that they can start to question them. By estranging the all-too familiar, apparently inevitable rise of Hitler in *Arturo Ui*, Brecht shows spectators how the Nazis' rise to power could have been stopped. The emotional force of scene 9 underlines the need for vigilance against fascism, both now and in the future.

Dr Laura Bradley, University of Edinburgh, September 2011

A Bluffer's guide to Bertolt Brecht! (1898 – 1956)

Theatre in the early Twentieth Century (before Brecht)



Enter Bertolt Brecht!

Theatre needs to change! I want to create a theatre for the people where people make decisions about what they see and act on it. I'm fed up with all this apathy!



But...

I go to the theatre to be entertained, not educated!

I like to see famous people!

Theatre where we have to think? I don't like the idea of that!

I want to be able to watch people starving on stage and then go out for a meal and enjoy myself!

Please don't make us think - we want to enjoy ourselves!

I want people to be entertained but I don't want them to get too emotionally involved with the characters or plot. I want them to remember that they are in a theatre watching a play and I want them to be forced to make decisions about what they see. If they are too emotionally involved with the characters they won't be able to do that. I need to distance them somehow.

Hmmm...Now how can I do this?



I'll use a narrator and projection to tell the audience what is going to happen.

Then they can watch and make decisions about WHY something happened instead of worrying what WILL happen.

I'll use epic theatre instead of dramatic theatre – so I'll montage events instead of using the traditional style of a narrative plot. Then the audience can see a process taking place but won't be distracted by wondering what will happen next!

I'll create a set that looks as if it has simply been made to last for a performance. I hope it doesn't fall down though...

I'll use lots of characters and get the actors to change on stage. Then the audience will remember that they are just watching actors telling a story.

I'll use songs and musicians to not only let the audience know what is going to happen, and to break the tension, but also to provide some necessary political comment. People have GOT to wake up to what's going on around them. Some of my songs might just do that....

I wonder if I'm wearing the right costume?



Now how can I get my political messages across?



Through narrators and songs

Through signs, placards and projected images. It worked for silent movies and Charlie Chaplin, it can work for me...



I'll create characters that have to make big decisions that people will have to agree or disagree with.

Like booty she took it for herself, like a thief she stole away (*Grusha takes the child in Caucasian Chalk Circle*)



Photograph from www.playgoers.co.uk

I'll use a didactic theatre (a teaching theatre) and put on plays with specific groups of people, e.g. Young Communists, school children, choirs. They can perform them and learn from them as well as teaching others. Brilliant!





At the end of the play I want people to leave the theatre wanting to change the world we live in. It's their responsibility to do something!

Hmm. It was only a play but it made me think!

I've seen things like this happen before. The world needs to change.....

I'd like to find out more about this....

What can I do about this issue?



Brecht's way of thinking revolutionised theatre and paved the way for a theatre style adopted by many theatre companies worldwide. But did he achieve his aim in creating a theatre for the people, a theatre where people would want to act upon what they had seen? What do YOU think?

Pause for thought!

Do you agree with Brecht's point of view? Should theatre exist to educate or should it purely entertain? Why?

What would you write a political play about? Why?

Brecht's plays include:

The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui

The Caucasian Chalk Circle

The Good Person of Szechwan

Fear and Misery of the Third Reich

The Threepenny Opera

Mother Courage and her Children

Exploring Brecht practically

The prologue

Taking the following section, from the prologue, explore as a director how you would include some of the techniques that have been discussed in the pack. Don't feel you have to use all of them – but try to include four of them to give yourself a flavour of Brecht's world:

Prologue

THE BARKER

Ladies and gents, we present to you today –
Hey! Pipe down wouldya, you guys at the back?
And young lady, if you wouldn't mind? Take off the hat? –
Our great historical gangster play!
Featuring, for the very first time! On these here boards! –
THE TRUTH!
About the docks, the city, and the construction fraud!
The resistible rise of one Arturo Ui
While we go through the worst crash in our
history!
And furthermore! We have for your instruction –
Dogsborough confesses to corruption!
The warehouse fire trial – what a number!
Dullfleet murdered! Justice in a coma!
See the Mob slice up their own Ernesto Roma!
Then, folks, the great finale of our show:
Gangsters storm the town of Cicero!

You'll see our actors use their art sublime
To play the giants of organised crime -
Gangsters living, gangsters dying,
Gangsters selling, gangsters buying!
Gangsters born and gangsters made
So let's begin our fascist parade!



Scenes 9 and 10a

The following two scenes are contrasting in style, content, energy and emotion. An interval comes between the two scenes. Why do you think this is?

Taking into consideration Dr Laura Bradley's comments on the use of emotion in the theatre, how would you direct these contrasting scenes?

Scene 9. *A street in Cicero.*

A woman staggers out of a truck, she's been badly injured by gun fire.

THE WOMAN

Help me! Please – ? Don't run away! Come back!
Somebody! Anybody – ?
My husband needs a – he's still in the truck –
My arm...Jesus Christ! it's smashed to pieces...
They're slaughtering us...
They can just shoot people in the street, now?
But I know who's done this – Ui! You monster!
You piece of shit – worse than shit –
And we all tolerate him!
Have we lost our minds?
Can't we do something?

Machine gun fire

Stop the bastard!

Help me! Someone... Please...

INTERVAL



Scene 10. The Warehouse Fire Trial.

JUDGE, DEFENCE, PROSECUTION.

GIRI, GIVOLA, DOCKDAISY, VEG DEALERS, FISH (the accused)

GIRI stands pointing at the defendant at the stand, a down-n-out by the name of FISH. The accused is heavily drugged, and has difficulty speaking.

GIRI

That's him! The lousy pyromaniac!
Shameless bastard - when I challenged him
In the street he was carryin' that gasoline can
Tight to his chest, like this - excuse me, Fish? -
Stand like a man while I'm accusing you!

FISH is pulled to his feet but has trouble staying upright

JUDGE

Pull yourself together, Mr Fish - this is a court of law!
Need I remind you of the seriousness of the charges laid against you?

FISH

Arlarlarl.

JUDGE

How did you come by that can of gasoline?

FISH

Arlarlarl.

The JUDGE beckons over a sinister-looking doctor, who examines FISH, while exchanging looks with GIRI

PROSECUTION

Your honour, the man is clearly simulating!

DEFENCE

The defence demands a second opinion!

JUDGE *smiling*

Denied.

DEFENCE

Mr Giri, how did you happen to be on the spot when this devastating fire – which would destroy twenty two buildings that same night – broke out in Cohen's warehouse?

GIRI

I was taking a stroll after dinner, sir. I find it aids the digestion.

Some of the UI gang think this is funny. GIRI laughs too.

DEFENCE

Are you aware of the fact, Mr.Giri, that the defendant Mr.Fish is an itinerant labourer, who had never once set foot in this city until the day before the conflagration?

GIRI

What? When?

DEFENCE

Is the license number of your car 163 678?

GIRI

It is.

DEFENCE

And was this car not parked outside Dogsborough's restaurant on 87th Street during the four hours immediately preceding the fire, and was Mr.Fish not dragged unconscious out of that same restaurant some twenty minutes before the fire took hold?

GIRI

How should I know? I was away the whole day, in Cicero, where I met fifty-two people, every one of them'll swear they saw me.

Laughter

DEFENCE

But in your previous statement to the court you said you were out walking – for your digestion – near Chicago docks.

GIRI

So I ate in Cicero and digested in Chicago. Problem?

This brings the house down. The judge laughs too.

Music. Brecht suggests "Chopin's Funeral March in dance rhythm".

Perform/plan your own Brechtian style theatre

Follow the link below to the election article which is a current day British political focus on power. If you were to tell this story in sections what placard titles would you choose?

“Election: Vote battle intensifies for final three days.” BBC News 3 May 2010

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/8657562.stm>

Have a go at scripting one the above scenes. Remember to use satire/ comedy to balance difficult issues and you might even like to try writing sections of it in iambic pentameter, as Brecht himself has done on occasion.

Click, what a picture...

Have a look at these photos from previous productions of *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*. Discuss which you think conveys the key message/style and meaning of the play most successfully in a single image. Create your own photo to accompany press material for the show. Can you highlight the Brecht's intentions any clearer?



Further research

In preparing this education pack we have come across a number of interesting articles on the internet. We hope you find them useful too.

On Hindenburg:

[http://www.coursework.info/AS and A Level/Drama/Plays/Dogsborough is a parallel of Hindenburg L131646.html](http://www.coursework.info/AS_and_A_Level/Drama/Plays/Dogsborough_is_a_parallel_of_Hindenburg_L131646.html)

On The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui:

Emma Smith visits the rehearsal room. You can see some of this interview by using the following link:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zZGZyTRrnlM&feature=player_embedded#!

<http://www.marxists.org/history/etol/newspape/isj/1977/no095/rees.htm>

[http://www.coursework.info/GCSE/History/Modern World History/Germany 1918-1939/Unit 1 Play The Resistible rise of Artu L131332.html](http://www.coursework.info/GCSE/History/Modern_World_History/Germany_1918-1939/Unit_1_Play_The_Resistible_rise_of_Artu_L131332.html)

<http://revolutionarydemocracy.org/rdv4n2/brecht.htm>

<http://www.culturenorthernireland.org/article/3067/lisa-may>

<http://www.leonardrossiter.com/ArturoUi.html>

Additional Books and articles used in the preparation of this pack

Bertolt Brecht and his ladies by Sayeed Ahmad

Published in New Age Xtra 23 Feb – 1 Mar 07

Makers of Modern theatre: an introduction by Robert Leach, Routledge 2004

Introduction to the Caucasian chalk Circle by John Willett and Ralph Manheim, Methuen 1988

The Reception of The Caucasian Chalk Circle in the United States by Siegfried Mews from "Brecht motherhood and justice" *The Fortunes of German Writers in America* edited by Wolfgang Ifer, James Hardin, Gunther Holst

University of South Carolina Press 1990

Bertolt Brecht in America by James K Lyon, Princeton University Press 1980

Raging Silence by Peter Byrne: a book review of Charles Marowitz's *Silent Partners* Swans Commentary, 14 July 2008

Postmodern Brecht – A Re- presentation by Elizabeth Wright, Routledge 1988

Brecht on Theatre, edited and translated by John Willett Methuen books 1964

Brecht's Theory of Theatrical Performance – Jan Needle and Peter Thompson, University of Chicago Press
1995 Encyclopaedia Britannica

Brecht in LA: a play by Rick Mitchell, Intellect books 2002

Wikipedia

A Marxist amongst the Capitalists John Simon New York Times 11 January 1981

Brecht for Beginners – Michael Thoss

Theatre dictionary <http://filmplus.org/thr/dic1.html>

HUAC hearing [http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Brecht HUAC hearing \(1947-10-30\) transcript](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Brecht_HUAC_hearing_(1947-10-30)_transcript)

Brecht and his ladies http://www.newagebd.com/2007/feb/23/feb23/xtra_also3.html

We hope you have found the Education Resource pack for *The Resistible Fall of Arturo Ui* helpful. If you have any comments or further questions please contact us:

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