

A-LEVEL DRAMA AND THEATRE

Example candidate answers

7262

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Command words

Discuss – present key points

Explain – set out purposes or reasons

Justify – support a case with evidence

Outline – set out main characteristics

Analyse – separate information into components and identify their characteristics

Evaluate – judge from available evidence

Section A: Drama through the ages

Example 1

Antigone – Sophocles

01 As a director **or** designer, discuss the production methods you would employ in order to create tension in **at least two** sections of the play.

You must make specific reference to the social, cultural and/or historical context of *Antigone* in your answer.

Example response

I am answering this question from the perspective of a director. When this play was first performed, the audience knew the outcome of the tragedy as Sophocles was re-working a well-known Greek fable.¹ Nevertheless, for the fifth century BC audience, tension was created by Sophocles' dramatic methods as he re-told the story. For my twenty-first century audience, I aim to create tension through my staging ideas and my direction of my cast; these are the production methods that I would employ.²

The first section I will be writing about is the opening of the play and then I will consider the section near the end, where Eurydice enters the stage for her first and only appearance.

In the Prologue, Antigone asks Ismene to come outside the palace gates to tell her she has decided to bury their brother, Polynices, who Creon saw as a traitor to the city, having led an army against Thebes. Antigone is incensed by the fact that Creon has decreed Polynices' body should lie unburied, and 'unwept'.³ Creon's edict offends the expectations of the gods in relation to decent burial.

As Antigone and Ismene talk about the dilemma – to obey the laws of the gods or to obey the new ruler, their uncle, Creon – their contrasting views on the burial create tension on stage.⁴

I would direct Ismene to appear timid by speaking more quietly than Antigone. Ismene represents a conventional Greek woman.⁵

Antigone is defiant and dominating; she speaks impetuously. As it was the tradition for woman in the family to perform the burial rites of dead family members, Antigone is defiant as she feels it is her duty to bury Polynices, in spite of Creon's decree. She⁶ is following her heart rather than her head. Ismene is horrified by Antigone's plan and by the idea of going against Creon; she understands and accepts her position as a Greek woman who would be seen as less important than the men. She knows that there will be severe punishment for rebelling; her reluctance causes Antigone to flare up, creating tension for the audience.⁷

As the two sisters enter, I would direct Antigone and Ismene to cross from CSL to DCS with the palace gates behind them. The stage would be dark initially and, as both sisters wear hooded cloaks over their chitons, the shadowy figures would create tension for the audience immediately.⁸

Comments

1. Some knowledge of context.

2. Focus on the question.

3. Useful context.

4. Focus on tension – but not direction.

5. In what way?

6. Knowledge of cultural context.

7. There is understanding here but this is descriptive and is not offering direction.

8. Apt.

Comments

9. A clear picture of the sisters.

10. Could be more persuasive.

11. Fair point.

12. Some detail here.

13. Link to tension, here?

14. Apt.

15. Useful direction.

Antigone would be in the lead walking with a straight posture, confidently pulling at Ismene's hand, while Ismene lingers behind, looking over her shoulder; she is clearly nervous and this anxiety should spread to the audience. Ismene would have wide eyes in fear, looking around her nervously, with hesitant steps as she knows they don't want to be heard as Antigone is taking her outside in secret. She will have a nervous expression.⁹

On 'I've heard nothing since our two brothers killed each other' I would have Ismene pause before 'killed each other' as her voice catches in sadness. She would deliver the line with a shaky voice, stuttering on 'nothing' and glance away on 'killed each other' to show her anguish; the mention of killing creates tension for the audience.¹⁰ She would then take Antigone's hand to show the close relationship between them, as her sister is all that is left of her family.

When Antigone explains she has called her outside to speak to her alone I would direct Ismene to be more concerned and timid. On 'What is it? You frighten me, Antigone' she would whisper it and glance around in panic, standing close to Antigone and would then take her hand again. She would have a worried tone and a concerned expression; the audience would feel the tension that accompanies her fear.¹¹

On Antigone's explanation, spoken with clear contempt for Creon, 'But he has forbidden anyone to bury or weep for Polynices' I would have her deliver the line with disbelief and a disgusted tone. Ismene would react with a more emotional approach by clasping her chest in disbelief with a facial expression of anguish; her eyes wide and mouth slightly open. She would look around confused and shake her head to show her shock at Creon's decree, helping to raise the tension.¹²

On Antigone's line, 'Are you prepared to join me?' I would have Antigone turn directly to Ismene, looking her straight in the eyes and take both her hands. She would say the line with passion, showing her determination to bury Polynices.¹³ Ismene, by contrast, looks nervous, and bites her lip. She would look down, showing that she is reflecting on what Antigone proposes to do. On 'You frighten me again' she would have a low volume to show her objection to her sister's decision.

On, 'You are out of your mind, Antigone; Creon is law' when Antigone confirms she will bury her brother and go against the edict, I would have Ismene perform this line with a sudden louder volume as she stares, staggering in disbelief. She would deliver the line with a panicked tone, at a fast pace in her shock and disapproval. This more over-exaggerated approach to the news creates tension for the audience.¹⁴

On 'We shall die if we go against the decision of the ruler. We are helpless women', I would have Antigone begin to walk away to stage left with a sigh as she realises Ismene is not going to agree with her decision but she is still defiant. On 'We are ... women' I would have Ismene quickly run and grasp her arm to stop her with an expression of fear looking helpless and frantic, building the tension for the audience.¹⁵

Comments

16. Some sense of how to create tension here.

17. Some good detail.

18. Fine.

19. A good choice for the second section.

20. Apt.

21. Apt.

22. An abrupt end but the direction is secure.

Antigone would raise one eyebrow as if scornful of Ismene's weakness. Ismene's tone is pleading as she tries to convince Antigone what they risk if they dare to disobey Creon.

Near the end of the prologue, Antigone is quite ruthless with her sister, spitting out the line 'If that's all you have to say then you are my enemy'. I would have Antigone glare at Ismene, pointing accusingly and speaking in a venomous tone. I want the audience to be full of anticipation – will Ismene finally agree to the task?¹⁶

Ismene takes a step back as if physically slapped in the face by Antigone's harsh tone. Antigone then strides off-stage, her head back and arms swinging. I would direct Ismene to reach out towards the exit with her arm outstretched as she first calls, then drops her voice to a whisper, as she assures her sister, 'you are truly dear to the ones who love you', letting her arm drop, hopelessly before rushing out after Antigone with a quick glance behind her as she exits. The audience still desperate to know if she will change her mind.¹⁷

In my second section, the entrance of Eurydice, the audience have already been on a fraught journey following Antigone's arrest and condemnation to death.

Euridyce will be middle-aged, slim with dark hair and dark skin; she will have a regal bearing. I will have her wearing a white chiton with jewelled clasps to show her status.

I want Eurydice's entrance to be very dramatic;¹⁸ the audience had just heard from the Messenger that Haemon is dead and so the appearance of the Queen, Haemon's mother, at the top of a flight of steps leading to the palace doors brings a wave of anticipation and tension about what her reaction will be to the news.¹⁹

To heighten the tension, I will have Eurydice speak urgently, 'I caught the sound of your words/as I was leaving' will be spoken at a fast pace, but out of breath to show her nervousness. This will make the audience empathise with her as they know what she is about to hear and the tension is almost unbearable. I would direct her to deliver 'Tell me the news again ... I can bear the worst' standing upright and firm with determination but with a pleading tone to show she is desperate for news.²⁰

At first, I would have the Messenger look away from her. As there is a tense silence from the Messenger and Chorus, showing that something bad has happened I will have Eurydice prompt the Messenger by saying the second, 'Tell me', more quietly and with tears in her eyes.²¹

As the Messenger delivers the horrid truth about the deaths of Haemon and Antigone, I would direct Eurydice to maintain a rigid posture; she is too self-controlled to allow anybody to see her crumple. But when the Messenger delivers the final blow, referring to Creon's 'lack of judgement' I will have her turn on her heels and swiftly exit into the palace leaving the audience on the edge of their seats unsure of what will happen next.²²

Word Count: 1,461

Quotations: 14

Commentary

The student is focused on the task of creating tension and two sections have been selected. The answer takes a while to focus on specific directorial ideas although there is evident understanding of the situations presented and their potential for creating tension. There are some very clear impressions of the unfolding action created here. Sometimes 'tension' is implicit rather than explicitly created through direction.

AO3

The student's response is assured and perceptive and the directorial ideas are very creative. There is evident understanding of the processes, practices and techniques involved in interpreting and performing theatre.

The student offers a unified creative overview and several strategies have the potential to be highly effective in creating tension. Textual support is discriminating and entirely appropriate.

There is considered reference to the context of the play and to some of the cultural mores of the times when the play was written and set.

A detailed and often compelling response which addresses a good range of the Indicative Content for this question.

Band: Band 5

Example 2

Comments

Antigone – Sophocles

02 As a performer, discuss how you would perform the role of Ismene in **two** sections of the play in order to convey your interpretation of the character to the audience.

You must make specific reference to the social, cultural and/or historical context of *Antigone* in your answer.

Example response

The role of Ismene in Sophocles' *Antigone* is of a traditional Greek woman, whose sister, Antigone is stubborn and proud and whose actions lead to tragedy. I interpret Ismene as a sympathetic character, caring and loving to her sister, Antigone, who is often depicted as stronger than her both mentally and physically. The audience should feel sympathy for Ismene as her role is that of a victim of tragedy in the Greek play;¹ but I would not want to suggest that Ismene is weak.

I would be tall and aristocratic looking like a true royal princess of five foot eight inches with long traditionally Greek brunette hair and Grecian feature such as a long nose and rose lips. I would be beautiful, but not as striking as Antigone who must appear out of the ordinary. I would be traditional-looking, in order for the audience to understand that I am representational of a normal Grecian woman in the time set.²

In my entrance I would 'follow Antigone cautiously' as directed but in order for the audience to understand that a terrible event had just occurred – the death of Eteocles and Polynices – I would hurry my footsteps and widen my eyes to create a sense of urgency. Coming out of the large palace doors at centre stage I would hurry behind Antigone facing her, upstage left, with my head held high to show the intensity of the moment. To encourage the audience's sympathy, I would wince at the words, 'our lives are pain' screwing up my eyes and pursing my lips, demonstrating the realism in the statement for the audience. I would then take three steps forward at the words, 'and now this' to show the audience that Ismene also has control in the relationship. Downstage she would appear too weak. To help the audience understand this, I will be visibly two years older than Antigone only more reserved than her, not weaker.³

Now level with Antigone, upstage left, to show her terror in the anticipation of the news to the audience, I would use my two hands to hold each of Antigone's arms, just above the elbow, shaking my head slowly and using a deeper shaking voice at the line, 'I haven't heard a word, Antigone', as if trying not to lose control.

To convey her sensitivity and her distress about the recent events to the audience, I would then raise my voice at 'the two of us robbed of our two brothers' and shout it angrily, as if at the gods, and stride away from Antigone across the stage and down the steps of the amphitheatre to the orchestra closer to the audience and with an expression of disbelief.⁴

1. Immediate focus on the set task.

2. Could be further explained.

3. More interpretative points.

4. Clear.

Comments

After shouting, to show Ismene's obedience to convention, I will look ashamed at my anger at the gods and quieten my voice at 'both gone in a day'. This raw emotion will demonstrate how traumatised Ismene is by the tragedy happening around her.

To demonstrate to the audience that Ismene is distraught at the proclamation, first I would physically jolt at the words of Antigone, 'left unwept, unburied' facing the audience, still upstage and lower my head at, 'a lovely treasure for birds that scan the field and feast.' This weak posture shows Ismene's misery but to show her self-control, I would lift my head slowly at Antigone's harsh words of 'coward' and sneering 'royal blood' as Ismene is simply obedient and not cowardly.⁵

To show the audience that Ismene has only good intentions, I will not appear angry at Antigone's words but instead, I would place my hand furthest on Antigone's neck and tenderly say 'my poor sister' in a stage whisper, cutting off the end of the line to convey unsteady emotion and distress. I would say, 'we must be sensible', in a gentle tone, to convey Ismene's good sense to the audience.

I would gesture to myself and Antigone and slow down on the line 'remember we are women' but to show that she wishes she could have the power of a man to seek justice over her brother, I would frown while saying this, looking solemnly at Antigone.⁶

The audience must comprehend the concern Ismene has for Antigone, so I would place a hand on my abdomen as if feeling sickness in worry and remain staring at Antigone from downstage right of her with my mouth slightly open. I would close my mouth and eyes at the words, 'if I die in the act' to show the audience how much this would affect her,⁷ enhancing the overall style of Greek tragedy.

To show the audience Ismene's loss of all hope at the end of the scene, I would rush over to Antigone, take her face in my hands and say, with great urgency in my voice 'you are truly dear to the ones who love you', before Antigone exits. At her exit, to show the audience her desperation and loss, I would take a long pause and stare out into the audience with panicked wide eyes before exiting back onto the skene and after her sister through the palace doors.⁸

In my final appearance, Ismene shows herself to be both compassionate towards her sister and courageous enough to join her in death. Having had time to consider her life without Antigone and perhaps to recognise that Antigone was morally right to bury Polynices, Ismene almost appears to be a different character.⁹

When Antigone tells me 'I have no love for a friend who loves in words alone' I would shrink and then kneel beside her, pulling at the sleeve of her chiton begging her 'don't reject me, please' looking at her with solemn eyes, full of tears.¹⁰

I beg Antigone to let me share her fate and share both the guilt and the credit for burying Polynices; I would wring her hands and look into her eyes with a face full of entreaty as I beg her, 'we're both guilty, both condemned to death'.

5. More interpretation of character.

6. Quite clear.

7. Apt.

8. Some sense of original Greek staging conventions.

9. Fair point.

10. Clear.

Comments

11. Clear.

12. A neat conclusion.

I would want the audience to see I have become quite audacious with Creon. When I ask him 'You'd kill your own son's bride?' I will speak contemptuously and unbelievably, pointing at Creon in disbelief and shaking my head. I will whisper the line to Haemon, 'your father wrongs you so' and then look over at Antigone and give her a faint smile.¹¹

Ismene is a complex character; loving and considerate, yet also passionate and loyal; her final appearance shows her to be as resolute as Antigone in her own way, having recognised the flaws in Creon's laws.¹²

Word Count: 1,098

Quotations: 19

Commentary

The student offers a very clear interpretation of Ismene in this answer and maintains a consistent focus on the performance methods that would convey the interpretation.

There is clear understanding of the character and of the tragic style of the play. A sensitive and practical answer.

AO3

The answer is assured and perceptive at times, although the second section does not receive as much attention as the first. The student evidently understands the processes, practices and techniques involved in interpreting character.

Consistently creative and with a good range of strategies which are likely to be effective for an audience. Discriminating use of textual illustration; detailed and well-structured work.

Occasionally, there is useful, if brief, reference to context.

A detailed, considered and well-structured response which addresses a fair range of the Indicative Content for this question.

Band: High Band 4

Example 3

Comments

***Much Ado About Nothing* – Shakespeare**

04 As a performer, discuss the effects you would wish to create through your presentation of Don John. How would you perform the role **in at least two** sections in order to achieve your aims?

You must make specific reference to the social, cultural and/or historical context of *Much Ado About Nothing* in your answer.

Example response

Don John is the bastard brother of Don Pedro in *Much Ado About Nothing*. In the sixteenth century it was quite normal for members of the aristocracy to have children out of wedlock. Don John is jealous of his brother because he is the legitimate heir to his father's wealth and therefore he has inherited the power, prestige and property that Don John wants for himself.¹

The effects that I would wish to create in my portrayal of Don John is to depict him as a scheming villain and a character who brings a dark element into the comic plot of the play; I want the audience to enjoy disliking me.² As in other Shakespearian comedies, such as *As You Like It*, the overthrow or conversion of a 'bad brother' is part of the play's happy ending. In this play, the 'bad brother' disappears, but there is a promise to bring him back to be punished.³

When I first appear as Don John in Act One, I would wish to create the impression of a reserved man. I will say my line, 'I am not of many words, but I thank you' in a sincere tone of voice, looking directly at Leonato with a polite smile; but I would want to create the effect of my jealousy, both of my brother and of his friend, Claudio. To achieve this effect, I would scowl to myself, behind their backs and use the idiosyncrasy of cracking my knuckles when I am agitated or frustrated; I would do this here, before exiting with my brother.⁴

Don John has two faces; a public face when he is in the company of his brother and the other noble characters and gentlemen, and a private face when he is with his friends, fellow 'ne'r do wells', Conrade and Borachio. In Act Two Scene Three, I confess to Conrade that I am a 'plain dealing villain'; I will use a flat, matter-of-fact tone of voice when I say this line. Later in my speech I warn Conrade not to seek 'to alter me', I will snarl at him threateningly to show that even when he is with his friends, he is not an amiable man. This should help to make the audience dislike me.⁵

As Don John, I show complete lack of empathy for those around me and when Borachio arrives in the scene with news of Claudio's forthcoming marriage, I will sneer, 'What, the most exquisite Claudio?' and speak disparagingly of Hero, describing her as a 'March chick' and laughing lecherously at the thought of her as a bride.⁶

1. Useful context for the character of Don John.

2. Clear focus on effects to be created.

3. Overview of role, here.

4. Brief but clear initial impression of Don John.

5. Clear.

6. Apt.

Comments

I wish to show the audience how committed Don John is to the thought of getting revenge, both on his brother and his brother's favourite, Claudio. I would rub my hands in glee, anticipating 'getting one over' on my enemy saying, 'this may prove food to my displeasure' with an evil grin and I would make the sign of the cross with a mocking look on my face as I say, 'if I can cross him any way, I bless myself every way' to create the effect for the audience of someone lacking in all morality. This show of complete disrespect for religion would have been greatly frowned on by Shakespeare's contemporary audiences as faith was a central aspect of life in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁷

I would also want the audience to wonder what kind of hold I have over my two friends, Borachio and Conrade, since, despite my villainy and my melancholy temperament, these two men appear to be completely loyal to the 'Bastard' and swear to assist in his plans, 'to the death'. I would sneer at their vows of allegiance, privately, before we exit to the 'great supper'. I would laugh in a sinister way as I say 'would the cook were o' my mind' implying that I would willingly poison all the assembly. As I leave, I would swish my cloak melodramatically behind me and laugh again, to create the effect of a pantomime villain. This over-exaggeration should have the effect of making the audience laugh and enjoy my scheming.⁸

In Shakespearean theatre, audiences enjoyed watching the plotting and scheming of the stage villain who appeared in both comedies and tragedies. Don John is a typical 'malcontent' figure who blames his misfortunes on his birth and is unable to accept reconciliation with his good brother Don Pedro – much like Edmund in *King Lear*, although, as this is a comedy, Don John's villainies do not extend to attempted murder.⁹

Don John's first attempt to get back at Claudio is at the masked ball, when, knowing that the man he is talking to is really Claudio, he talks to him as if he thought he was addressing Benedick. I would put my hand on Claudio's shoulder and lean in towards him in a friendly manner, I would drop the malicious lie about Don Pedro stealing Claudio's love, Hero, casually into Claudio's ear, then clap him on the back as I advise him to 'dissuade him from her; she is no equal for his birth'. I would be standing to the side of Claudio, so that the audience could see, but Claudio could not see, my sly smile to myself.¹⁰

Later, I show my delight in plotting Claudio's ruin in Act Two Scene Two; even offering Borachio a thousand ducats to arrange a charade that appears to prove Hero is unfaithful to Claudio. One of my most chilling lines which I would want to have the effect of making the audience believe me to be a sociopath is when I tell Borachio, 'Grow this to what adverse issue it can, I will put it in practice' I will wear an evil grin as I deliver this line and crack my knuckles in a sinister way as I contemplate the misery that I can cause.¹¹

7. An inventive idea linked to the social context of the play.

8. Intended effects are clear.

9. This reveals some knowledge of the dramatic conventions of the period.

10. This could be further developed, perhaps.

11. A consistent impression of Don John is created.

Comments

12. Significance of this?

13. A plausible moment.

In my final appearance, I wish the audience to see how plausible I am as a supporter of the man that I wish to destroy. For the first time in the play, I will wear a light coloured jacket in pale blue silk, in place of my customary black clothes,¹² I will stand next to Claudio throughout his denouncement of Hero, speaking softly to Leonato who is bewildered by the events in church; I will say my line, 'Sir, they are spoken and these things are true' in a serious tone laying my hand on his arm in mock sympathy for the older man. Later I offer Hero a false sympathetic look, as I tell her, 'Pretty lady, I am sorry for thy much misgovernance' shaking my head as if sadly and as if I cared about her disgrace.¹³

These are the performance ideas that I would enact as Don John, in order to create the effect of a thoroughly bad man for the audience who, in turn, would despise me, even while enjoying my exaggerated, 'villainous' persona.

Word Count: 1,158

Quotations: 13

Commentary

The student is focused on the task of creating the effect of a 'villain' in the portrayal of Don John and there are useful references to how the audience will respond to this character type in the course of the play.

The student looks at Don John's performance in a number of sections from the play and covers quite a range of moments from within these sections.

The answer is well-focused on performance ideas for conveying Don John's villainous character.

AO3

The student's response is assured and perceptive and reveals assured knowledge of the processes, practices and techniques involved in creating a character and specific effects for an audience through that character.

Several strategies have the potential to be effective in terms of the student's intentions.

There is purposeful reference to the social context and a knowledge of Elizabethan conventions in relation to the malcontent character. Text is used well and its selection and use are appropriate.

A detailed, considered and well-structured response which addresses a goodly amount of the Indicative Content for this question.

Band: Low Band 5

Example 4

Comments

The Servant of Two Masters – Goldoni

05 As a designer, **or** as a performer playing Smeraldina, discuss the production **or** performance methods you would employ in order to create comedy for your audience in **at least two** sections of the play.

You must make specific reference to the social, cultural and/or historical context of *The Servant of Two Masters* in your answer.

Example response

A Servant of Two Masters is a play written by Carlo Goldoni, in 18th Century Italy. It is in the style of Commedia d'ell arte, a farcical comedy style founded in Italy. Smeraldina is influenced by the Commedia stock character, Columbina, and although I do not wish to portray this stock character entirely, my performance would be influenced by Columbina in my posture. Her centre of movement is her chest so I would mostly stand with my chest stuck out and one leg extended with the other bent and the foot on its ball. I would also wear a low neck dress in order to show off my 'assets' as is traditional (since the character is very flirtatious with Truffaldino, the original harlequin.)¹

In Act Two Scene Fourteen, Smeraldina is very flirtatious towards Truffaldino, even though she does not know his identity at this point. I would want to create comedy through her attraction to the character that the audience sees as a complete (if loveable) rogue.²

Smeraldina is very impressed by Truffaldino, at first, as they sit together on a bench outside Brighella's Inn, centre stage. I would sit with my legs together and my hands on my lap, but sticking my chest out as far as possible in order to appear flirtatious. I would fan myself modestly with a lace handkerchief and the contrast between forwardness and modesty would amuse the audience.³

I would turn and look out at the audience with raised impressed eyebrows and a pleased smile as I tell them, 'He's quite sophisticated' making them laugh as they know he's the opposite. I will also create comedy when I repeat 'Accoutrements!', even though Truffaldino mispronounces it and Smeraldina has no idea what it means, again causing laughter as I pull the same expression at the audience.⁴

I will glance at the audience again before I shuffle up the bench to get closer to Truffaldino. When he says he's shy, I turn to the audience with a grin and a wink and I say 'The little tinker', making my flirting intentions obvious. I then turn to Truffaldino and say 'I'm rather shy myself' biting my lip and speaking slowly and seductively (as I place a hand on his chest to show the audience that I am rather attracted to him).⁵

1. Some knowledge here, although the focus on comedy is only implied.

2. This is quite late in the play to begin a consideration of the role.

3. Needs a little more to create comedy.

4. A reasonable example.

5. Comedy is implied here.

Comments

6. More context would be useful.

7. Apt.

8. Fair idea.

9. Clear comic invention here.

10. Performance detail needed to support here.

11. There is comic potential in this piece of business.

12. Mildly comical moment.

By the end of the scene, I am sat closely next to Truffaldino. Going directly into Scene Fifteen I suddenly spring away from him and stand up as Pantalone enters, showing the audience my exaggerated fear of being caught by my master.⁶

Pantalone demands why I am here, and I show the audience my nervousness as I back away from him with wide eyes, replying 'Nothing, sir' In a ridiculously high pitched and fast pace voice with a terrified tone for comic effect.⁷

However, when Pantalone threatens to smack me I quickly adopt an outraged expression; I will suddenly stand up very straight, chest out with one leg extended, one bent and declare, 'I beg your pardon' in a booming, furious voice as I stare at Pantalone with wide angry eyes so the audience can see my outrage and laugh at the swift change in my character from dreamy and besotted to feisty and aggressive.⁸

I end the scene saying 'you rheumatic old git,' and I would be right up in Pantalone's face, fists clenched at my side. I would enunciate each word and speak in a loud, angry voice, eyes narrowed. I would poke him in the chest on 'git' causing him to stumble backwards comedically. I will then flounce off with large, over exaggerated strides, tossing my many of red hair behind me as I exit, to show my stubborn, no-nonsense attitude towards life and towards my employer and create comedy for the audience.⁹

In Act Three Scene Twelve I will create comedy as I interact with Clarice. Although I appear sugary sweet towards her as I sympathise with her situation I also wish to amuse the audience by showing that, deep-down, I am fairly contemptuous of my mistress's inability to reconcile with the man she loves.¹⁰

I begin by comforting Clarice, saying 'All men are bastards to some degree or other' and I would really emphasise the word 'bastards' I would look out into the audience, move towards the front of the stage and clock one or two men in the front row and nod at them, cheekily, before snapping back into role and comforting Clarice with a few pats on her back. This reflects Smeraldina's somewhat feminist attitude throughout the play. I would then kneel beside Clarice, taking her hand in a conciliatory gesture and staring rudely at the two audience members that I had singled out. This will make the audience laugh.¹¹

After Clarice forgives Silvio, although outwardly I am supportive, inwardly Smeraldina is despairing of all the farce the lovers went through. When Clarice declares, 'I forgive you' I would once again be stood in my typical position with chest out, downstage, and I would exaggeratedly roll my eyes with a despairing sigh. I then say 'The patient is prepared' in a resigned tone, as I inwardly judge Clarice for taking Silvio back so readily.¹²

In conclusion, I aim to create comedy through my 'love-struck' relationship with Truffaldino as well as through my somewhat impertinent relationship with my master and mistress who I show little respect for, even though I am only a servant.

Word Count: 904

Quotations: 10

Commentary

The student does focus on the task of creating comedy through the performance methods adopted to play Smeraldina and there are some potentially effective moments.

The student looks at three separate sections and offers suggestions for creating comedy through the delivery of lines, posture and comic business. There is scope for further development.

AO3

The student's response is focused and reveals considered knowledge of the processes, practices and techniques involved in creating comedy in performance.

Several strategies have the potential to be quite effective in terms of the student's intentions; others need a little more development.

There is brief reference to the commedia style of theatre and to Smeraldina's 'stock' character of Columbina – some of this knowledge is applied.

Text is used well at times, and its selection and use are appropriate.

There is a slightly uneven overview of the play as only the second half of the play is considered.

The answer is clear and, at times, it includes appropriate detail in a structured response which addresses a decent amount of the Indicative Content for this question.

Band: Low Band 4 (recognises occasional elements of Band 3)

Example 5

Comments

Hedda Gabler – Ibsen

08 As a performer, discuss how you would want your audience to respond to the role of Judge Brack in the course of the play. How would you perform the role in **at least two sections** of the play in order to achieve your aims?

You must make specific reference to the social, cultural and/or historical context of *Hedda Gabler* in your answer.

Example response

Judge Brack plays a very significant role in the play, *Hedda Gabler*, as well as in the 'dramatic life' of the play's protagonist. Charming and sophisticated, the Judge appears to be an amiable friend of the Tesmans as they begin their married life together.¹

In order to prepare myself for my role, I will have undertaken some research into the society within which the play is set. I will bear in mind the fact that Norway, like Britain, in the nineteenth century was a patriarchal society in which women were very much seen as the inferior gender. Women from 'good' families would have few life options beyond marriage and those from poorer families would take low paid work or go into service. Women from the 'middle classes' like Mrs Elvsted might become governesses.²

Hedda Gabler, daughter of a General, and therefore from a high social class, 'settles' for bourgeois Jorgen Tesman when her marriage prospects elsewhere are frustrated. We learn of her inappropriate relationship with Eilert Lovborg as well as the possibility of some sort of 'romance' with Judge Brack that he evidently had no intention of concluding with marriage.³

It is also relevant to consider the fact that sexual mores were also very different when the play was written and that well-brought up women were expected to know nothing of sex before they married and to remain monogamous throughout.⁴

It is within this social and cultural that Brack plans to entertain himself with the newly wed Hedda Gabler; light-heartedly offering her the relief of an affair, when he hears that she is unhappy in her marriage. Later, more dangerously, he threatens to expose her part in Lovborg's death unless she submits to his will.

This information and context will inform my performance as well as dictating the audience responses that I want to achieve.

I would want my audience to be initially beguiled by my performance as Judge Brack, to find his flirtation with Hedda mischievous rather than predatory and to enjoy my apparently playful teasing of my friend Jorgen Tesman. Later, I would want my audience to begin to despise the Judge as he attempts to blackmail Hedda into an illicit relationship.⁵

1. A clear start.

2. Purposeful reference to context.

3. Evident understanding.

4. More relevant context.

5. Very clear intentions for the audience response.

Comments

The first time the audience meet the Judge, in Act One, we have already heard that he has helped to arrange the purchase of the Tesman's new home and 'kindly' arranged for Tesman's elderly Aunts to act as security for the mortgage. I will attempt to engage the audience's good opinion of me by appearing perfectly sincere when I visit my 'friend' to make sure that everything is alright with the arrangements that I have made on his behalf.⁶

I will be a smartly dressed man of about forty with dark gelled hair and a sleek moustache that I have a habit of stroking, for effect, as I pause to deliver some of my lines. I would also wear a monocle on a chain, which will help to give me the air of an aristocrat as well as a judge as I will use it to peer through on specific occasions.⁷

I will greet Tesman warmly in Act One and shake his hand with an obviously firm grasp, laying my left hand on top of my right as I grasp his hand. I will also greet Hedda in a friendly way, and bow gallantly both to her and to Mrs Elvsted when we are introduced. When the women go out I would turn cheerily to Tesman and ask, 'Well, is your wife satisfied with everything?' in a pleasant, light-hearted tone, emphasising 'wife' as people often do with newly-weds getting accustomed to the new relationship.⁸

When talking about Lovborg's book, I would adopt a neutral facial expression and while allowing that it has created 'Quite an unusual stir', I would not say the line with any enthusiasm. I would like to appear to be protecting my friend's feelings.⁹

When I begin to broach the subject of Tesman's nomination not coming through, 'as quickly as you hope and expect', I would clear my throat before saying the line and look a little uneasy, as if the prospect of upsetting Tesman was also upsetting me. As Tesman begins to 'flap' at the thought of being in competition with Lovborg, I would clap him warmly on the back and say in a reassuring tone, 'Well, well, I'm sure you'll get it' and smile encouragingly at him.¹⁰

The next time the audience sees Brack is at the beginning of Act Two, I would want the audience to sympathise with him briefly as he is clearly unnerved by Hedda shooting at him with her pistols, as he wails, 'No, no, no! Don't aim that thing at me!' As I enter the room I will be dabbing my brows with my handkerchief to show my relief at having 'dodged' the bullet.¹¹

Once inside, however, I will quickly recover my composure and sit in a relaxed way in the chair opposite to Hedda's. I respond to Hedda's confession of boredom with little surprise but I will move to the edge of my seat to be closer to her when I begin to insinuate an affair. I will pause and stroke my moustache in a sensuous way before inviting Hedda, using the train journey analogy, 'Why not jump out and stretch your legs a little, Mrs Hedda'.¹²

6. Clear aims.

7. Apt.

8. Apt.

9. Apt.

10. Ideas are calculated to make the audience like Brack.

11. Fair idea.

12. Useful example.

Comments

13. Apt.

14. Detailed and appropriate suggestions.

15. Apt ideas for fulfilling aims.

16. Very good detail.

17. Brief but apt conclusion.

When she tells me she is not the jumping sort, I will laugh and then lower my voice a little and repeat my gesture with my moustache as I say, calmly, 'But suppose a third person were to step into the compartment?' pausing before the word 'compartment' to indicate that this is a 'double entendre'. Still, I would not want my audience to dislike me, so I would remain light-hearted with an open smiling face. My smile slips a little when Tesman is heard at the door.¹³

I would want the audience to feel very differently about me in Act Three when I show my jealousy of Lovborg's relationship with Hedda and try to maneuver her into forbidding him to visit her. I will emphasise the word 'respectable' as I adopt a more dictatorial tone than before telling Hedda that, 'From now on, every respectable house will once again be closed to Eilert Lovborg'. I will take out my monocle, polish it and replace it before going on to say, 'I should find it more than irksome if this gentleman were to be granted unrestricted access to this house', pausing before 'this house' and stroking my moustache, as it is clearly Hedda that I wish to keep Lovborg from.¹⁴

Hedda under-estimates me here, smiling as she suggests, 'You want to be cock of the walk'. I will answer her seriously and unsmilingly, lowering my voice and removing my monocle; staring into her eyes threateningly as I whisper, 'Yes, that is my aim. And I shall fight for it with – every weapon at my disposal'. I would like this line to create a chill for the audience as they see, with Hedda, that Brack is a dangerous man.¹⁵

In Act Four, I wish the audience to find me completely despicable. Although Hedda has already lost the sympathy of the audience, having led Lovborg to return to his previous ways and given him the weapon that killed him, they should recognise how hideous her life would be as plaything for Judge Brack.

As I taunt Hedda about the pistol and speak of the scandal that she will face if I expose the truth about where Lovborg got the gun from, Hedda attempts to retain her composure. I will be standing over Hedda, who is seated on a stool by the stove and when she looks up at me, quietly stating the fact that has dawned upon her, 'From now on you've got your hold over me' I will smile knowingly before bending down to whisper in her ear, 'Hedda, my dearest', I will pause and touch her neck with the back of my hand before adding in a low and lecherous voice, 'believe me, I will not abuse my position' and I will allow my hand to travel further down to touch her breasts before quickly removing my hand and standing upright again, looking over to where Tesman and Thea are sitting together, to check that he has been unseen. Hedda's despair does not move me and I utter the line about people resigning themselves to 'the inevitable' with a cruel smile.¹⁶

I intend to make my audience hate me in the end and feel slightly foolish for having been taken in by my superficial charm in Act One.¹⁷

Word Count: 1,438

Quotations: 15

Commentary

The student is consistently focused on creating appropriate audience responses to Judge Brack and offers a good range of performance ideas that are calculated to achieve these responses. Useful sections have been selected to exemplify the performance ideas.

AO3

The student's response is assured and perceptive and the performance ideas are very creative. There is evident understanding of the processes, practices and techniques involved in interpreting and performing theatre.

The student offers a coherent creative overview and plentiful strategies have the potential to be highly effective. Textual support is discriminating and entirely appropriate.

There is considered reference to the context of the play and to some of the cultural mores of the times when the play was written and set that are fully relevant to the role of Judge Brack

A detailed and often compelling response which addresses a good range of the Indicative Content for this question.

Band: Band 5

Example 6

Comments

***The Caucasian Chalk Circle* – Brecht**

10 As a performer in a multi-role production of the play, discuss how you would perform Natella Abashvilli (The Governor's Wife) in one section and The Singer in another section, in order to create specific effects for the audience.

You must make specific reference to the social, cultural and/or historical context of *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* in your answer.

Example response

In the wake of the second world war and while in exile in America, Brecht wrote the play to teach his audience the value of a communist approach to property.¹ Following Marxist theory that 'property is theft' Brecht shows the audience that in a well-run state, everybody is part owner of all the state's wealth and assets whether they are natural resources like oil or fertile pasture land or goods, such as food.²

The play opens with a Prologue in which the fruit-growers and the cheese-makers argue their case for taking possession of a valley, previously used by a collective of goat herders, before the war, but now forming part of a larger agricultural plan to irrigate a large area for the production of apples and wine.

Villagers representing each group have come together to discuss the plans and this is in keeping with Brecht's custom of presenting political viewpoints in a dialectical manner.³ The Singer, Arkadi Cheidzi has been invited to entertain the villagers in the evening with a performance. He presents and narrates a dramatisation of the story of the 'Chalk Circle' as a parable to help the villagers recognise the 'moral' of the story which is that 'what there is shall belong to those who are good for it', and to apply it to their own lives⁴. *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* is one of a number of parable plays that Brecht wrote with the intention of teaching Marxist principles in an entertaining way.

If I were playing the Singer, I would want to create the effect of being a very fair and honest character; I need the audience to trust my version of events as I narrate the story of Grusha and Michael. I also want to help convey the 'fairy story' aspect of the narrative and to create a bond between my character and the audience.⁵

I would be tall and handsome with a fair beard and blue eyes. I will wear high leather boots with trousers tucked into them, a long cream shirt that is open at the neck and a long jacket with lapels and pockets. In my pockets I will keep a harmonica, a whistle and a triangle which I will play on at various moments in the story. I will have a warm smile and twinkly eyes which will help the audience trust me.⁶

1. Brief context.

2. Understanding.

3. Knowledge.

4. Understanding.

5. Fair intentions.

6. Fine.

Comments

7. Intentions.

8. Possibly.

9. Creative.

10. Good point and knowledge of the style of the play.

11. Effect states and this is apt.

12. Could work.

13. Some comic business here.

14. Creative piece of 'slapstick'.

In my first appearance I will stride onto the stage with other musicians who are to play during the performance and greet the assembled villagers warmly. I will be carrying some masks, and hand these out saying, 'We have brought along the old masks'. My presence will charm the audience who have already heard about the dispute over the valley and are perhaps anxious for more entertainment.⁷

I will explain that the story is to be an old one and say very clearly and with some humour 'old and new wisdom mix very well', my laughter will be infectious and the villagers will laugh and the mood lighten.⁸

When the rather serious 'Expert' asks me confidentially how long the piece will last, I will think for a moment before saying, 'It is actually two stories' and pause before adding, 'A few hours'. The Expert will look alarmed, stressing that he needs to get back to Tiflis but this will only amuse the Singer further. When the Expert asks, 'Couldn't you make it shorter?', I will look to the audience for their support (they have paid to see the show) and wink at them before saying curtly to the 'Expert', 'No' and then I would let out a peal of laughter, which would make the audience warm to me.⁹

This scene then dissolves into the opening of the main story, Scene 2, The Noble Child. I will re-enter with a small handcart from which I will take various props and costumes during the play to help me in my multi-role or to play an instrument or produce a hand prop. For example, when the doctors come on I would pass First Doctor a stethoscope out of the cart, this will create humour but also chime in with Brecht's idea that actors are only demonstrating characters, not 'inhabiting' their roles.¹⁰

I will be standing in the centre of the stage for the opening of the scene. I want to create the effect of a street entertainer, talking directly to my audience and I would be strumming a guitar. I would simply strum a chord each time I say the line 'Once upon a time' which I say five times. This will give a lyrical fairy-tale feel to the scene.¹¹

I would have each of the characters come on as I name them and do a bow or curtsy to the audience. When I introduce the Governor's Wife I will stress the words 'beautiful wife' which will create comedy as I am soon to play this role.¹²

After the Fat Prince has said 'Happy Easter, Little Michael' and tickled the baby's feet, I will put down my guitar, remove my moustache with one quick rip, then hop up and down in 'pain' as a result of the 'rip' and then put on long veil attached to a small crown, this will cover part of my costume but will look ridiculous and make the audience laugh.¹³

I will then assume a shrill voice when I shriek out 'He's coughing Georgi' about the baby but with no attempt to tend to the child myself. I will speak harshly to the Doctor, poking Second Doctor in the chest quite roughly as I tell him to 'take better care of him' pushing him backwards a step with each syllable which I would articulate clearly; this would show that I am not capable of looking after my own child and create comedy as this 'woman' is able to push the cringing (male) doctor around so easily,¹⁴

This will make the audience laugh but should also have the effect of making the audience reflect on the political message of the play which presents the upper classes as lazy and useless. It helps to promote the idea that the Governor's wife is not 'good' for his child and allowing us to recognise that Grusha is a better mother when that part of the plot unfolds.¹⁵

When the Fat Prince reminisces about the 'good old days' when it was easy to deal with inefficient doctors, saying 'In the old days it would have been: Off with his head!' I would be nodding in agreement and burst into a peal of laughter. I would then look pointedly at each doctor, glaring at them fiercely, in turn, so that their legs begin to knock together for comic effect.¹⁶ Then I would continue in my high shrill tone, 'Let's go to the church' then I would make an elaborate sign of the cross and drop a little curtsy as if to God, drawing attention to my hypocrisy, (Brecht frequently mocked the church in his plays)¹⁷ before booming out, crossly, 'Very likely it's the draught here' I would start this line, 'Very likely' in the same falsetto feminine voice but then drop out of this into a deep bass to say 'it's the draught'.

I would then bend over the cart and find a fake fox fur stole with the head and feet still on and wrap this around my shoulders to further emphasise my selfish and irreligious nature, surrounded as we are by all the petitioners and starving, poor beggars that are our 'constituents'.¹⁸ I would then sweep out regally with the doctors and the rest of the retinue following on behind. I would aim to leave the audience laughing, but also fully aware of my selfish nature and self-importance; I am no role model for mothers!

Word Count: 1,296

Quotations: 11

Comments

15. Good – an appropriate effect.

16. Apt.

17. This shows knowledge although it might have merited a sentence/ paragraph of its own.

18. Creative business with the props here.

Commentary

The student is consistently focused on creating appropriate effects for the audience through a multi-role approach to the Singer and the Governor's Wife and offers a good range of performance ideas that are calculated to achieve a variety of effects. Useful, albeit quite brief, sections have been selected to exemplify the performance ideas; the answer is very detailed.

AO3

The student's response is assured and perceptive and the performance ideas are very creative. There is evident understanding of the processes, practices and techniques involved in interpreting and performing theatre.

The student offers a coherent sense of the wider play and plentiful strategies have the potential to be highly effective. Ample textual support is provided and is entirely appropriate.

There is considered reference to the original context of the play and to some of Brecht's broader intentions.

Given the question's demand for only one section per multi-role, there is a good range of the Indicative Content for this question targeted by the answer.

Band: Band 5

Example 7

The Accidental Death of an Anarchist – Fo

11 As a director, or as a performer playing Inspector Bertozzo, discuss the production or performance methods you would employ in **at least two** sections of the play in order to create the sense of farce required by the play.

You must make specific reference to the social, cultural and/or historical context of The Accidental Death of an Anarchist in your answer.

Example response

Although this play is a farce, it was written as a serious political comment on the so-called ‘accidental death’ of a man being held in police custody having been identified as an anarchist by the police, in Milan in 1969. The basis of the play is therefore a true story and that true story was anything but funny for the anarchist in question, Guiseppe Pinelli, who was probably innocent of all the crimes that he was charged with.¹

My contemporary audience would not probably know the background to the play but the fast-paced farcical nature of the play is balanced by some hard-hitting anti-police messages, so it would be difficult for them to miss the point that the play is a criticism of pro-fascist tendencies in police forces everywhere.²

As the performer playing Bertozzo I would aim to amuse my audience through my portrayal of this aggressive but fairly unintelligent Inspector.³

I will be looking at the opening section of the play, where I introduce myself to the audience and the section in Act Two where I return to the action of the play and show myself to be completely out of my depth.⁴

My first speech is direct to the audience, I will speak pleasantly, familiarly with them pointing out that the set is ‘my office on the first floor of our notorious headquarters here in Milan’ and explain the background to the play. The farce begins when the Maniac enters.

While I am discussing the Maniac’s charge for impersonating a professor, the Maniac bamboozles both me and the Constable with a string of references to syntax and punctuation which leads me to asking the rhetorical question, ‘I’m an arsehole am I?’ in an incredible outraged voice.⁵ The Maniac seizes on this and tells me patronisingly that my ‘grammar is a bit retarded’ which leaves me exposed to the Constable’s ridicule.⁶

More farcical action occurs when the Maniac begins to chase Bertozzo round the office threatening to bite the constable’s arse and I would create comedy by jumping on the table to avoid him.⁷

1. Useful reference to the context and source of the play.

2. Good.

3. Focus on comedy.

4. Fine.

5. Comic potential.

6. Needs development to create farcical comedy.

7. Farcical business.

Comments

8. This is narrative; lacking performance detail.

9. Narrative.

10. Narrative.

11. Just about creates a comic moment but it reads as descriptive.

12. How is the 'penny dropping' moment performed?

13. The hopping is apt but the description trails away to narrative again.

14. The student clearly understands where there is potential for farce but it is not consistently realised.

The next farcical moment is when the Maniac climbs onto the window-ledge and at first I tell the constable to give him 'a hand' to push him out but I end up begging him to come down when he threatens me with the consequences. I also get wound up when telling the Constable to lock the drawer and the maniac tells him to swallow the key. It is a farcical moment when I encourage him to swallow the key and then realise what I am saying. Eventually I am so angry with the Maniac that the Constable and I throw him out of the door.⁸

My exit is funny as I shout at the Constable for not reminding me about my appointment event though we have both been completely taken up with the antics of the maniac.⁹

My second section is when I come back into the play. The Maniac has completely succeeded in persuading Pissani and the Superintendent that he is the Judge appointed to investigate the death of the anarchist. I am wearing an eye patch to cover the bruise/black-eye from when Pissani punched me in the face and I am carrying a bomb that is supposed to be a replica of the bomb that went off in the Agricultural bank.¹⁰

At this point, the Maniac is scrabbling on the floor along with Pissani, looking for his glass eye. Inevitably, in a farce, someone has to step on the glass eye and here that someone is me. As I go flying, the bomb goes up in the air and everyone watches in horror before the maniac catches it and says, cheekily, 'Howzat?!' before tossing the bomb in my direction; I catch it and explain, 'there's no detonator', causing all the others to sigh in unison.¹¹

While the Maniac is fussing over the eye, I will be staring at him intently trying to work out where I have seen him before (he is in a new disguise and wearing an eye patch', saying suspiciously, 'Your face looks very familiar', to which the Maniac laughs and says patronisingly, 'that's because we've both got bandaged eyes'. Then the penny drops with me and I realise it is the Maniac from earlier.¹²

When the Superintendent introduces the Maniac as 'Captain Marcantonio Piccini of the forensic department', I shout out, 'Piccini? That's impossible, I know him' and Pissini kicks me. I will be hopping round the stage on one foot holding my injured shin moaning 'You! You kicked me. You're assaulting me again, why?' then each time I try to say that the Maniac is not Piccini, one of the other policeman, Pissani or the Superintendent kick me as they do not want me to expose the Maniac (who they think is the Judge now disguised as Piccini) in front of the journalist, Feletti.¹³

My role, as Bertozzo in this scene is to create farcical humour from being kicked, punched and generally injured by my colleagues as they protect the identity of the Maniac who will ultimately have the last laugh as all the police are left to be blown to bits by the 'replica' bomb.¹⁴

Word Count: 868

Quotations: 11

Commentary

The student does focus on Bertozzo's role and offers some mildly farcical ideas; however, the answer is predominantly narrative rather than practical in focus.

The student looks at two separate sections and offers a few suggestions for creating comedy/farce through the delivery of lines, and the description of some comic business. There is scope for much more development and detail.

AO3

The student's response is straightforward and largely pertinent.

Occasional creativity is evident and some strategies have the potential to create some effects; others need a little more development.

There is useful reference to the farcical style of the play and to its historical and cultural context.

Text is used and quotations are appropriate.

There is a slightly uneven overview of the play.

The answer is clear and, at times, it includes appropriate detail in a structured response which addresses some of the Indicative Content for this question.

Band: Band 3

Example 8

Comments

Jerusalem – Butterworth

14 As a designer, discuss the effects you would wish to create for the audience through your costume designs for Johnny, Ginger and Phaedra in **at least two** sections of the play.

You must make specific reference to the social, cultural and/or historical context of *Jerusalem* in your answer.

Example response

Jerusalem is an unusual contemporary play set in a clearing in a wood in the South of England. Its anti heroic protagonist is Johnny Rooster Byron, a larger than life figure that some commentators have compared to a Falstaffian figure because of his sense of mischief, complete indifference to the law and his corruptive effect on impressionable youths and young women.¹

The costume designer's task is important in creating an anti-establishment figure in Johnny, a man in late middle age who refuses to grow up.

His appearance is described in the text as 'Wiry. Weathered. Helmet. Goggles.'

He is evidently unconventional and he carries a loud-hailer that he has just used to inform the authorities trying to evict him to 'F yourself, Woof Woof!'

I want his costume to amuse the audience when he first emerges from his trailer.²

I would have him in dirty blue jeans with a checked shirt in red, blue and white to signify the Union Jack – as this play is about contemporary Britain. His sleeves would be rolled up to the mid arm, revealing tattoos up both arms.³

He is wearing his signature helmet and goggles and carrying his loud hailer.

Rooster's costume does not change much in the course of the play, although he does take his helmet and goggles off.⁴

The second moment where I would wish to create an effect through his costume is in the final section of the play when he re-emerges, crawling from the caravan having been severely beaten up by Troy and two other thugs who have also used a blow torch and a branding iron on him. So he will need another version of the costume that I have designed but this one will be ripped and covered in blood.⁵ I would have only one sleeve left on the shirt which would now be undone and the jeans are covered in mud. He would not wear his boots as he crawls down the steps of the van and he has crosses branded into his cheeks, this time the effect of the costume will be to shock the audience.⁶



1. Knowledge of character.

2. Effect considered.

3. Apt, although text refers to a 'vest'.

4. Perhaps more on the anti-establishment element would be helpful.

5. Understanding of practicalities of design.

6. Good point on effect here.

Comments

7. Apt.

8. Potentially apt.

9. Understanding.

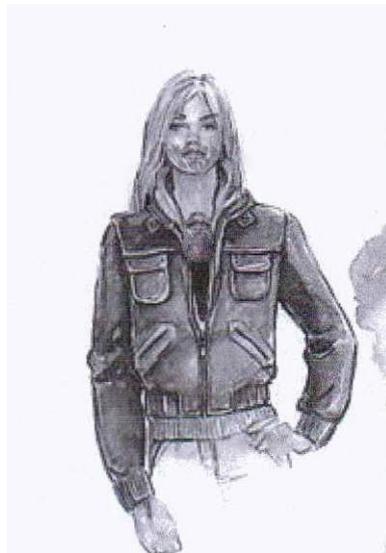
10. Clear sketches.

Ginger counts himself as Johnny's best friend, but he is a coward and runs away when Troy and the other thugs turn up and start beating Johnny up. Ginger fancies himself as a DJ, although Johnny describes him as an out of work plasterer. He tries to talk big and act tough although he is physically weak and I would want to show his 'act' through his costume.

He would have longish straggly ginger hair and have a stubby beard and moustache and try to present himself as 'cool'.⁷

I would have him in Doc Martin boots, cargo style khaki jeans with pockets in for his drugs and a sleeveless khaki combat jacket over a black tee-shirt. He would have a dragon tattoo on his left arm and wear a chunky sports watch.⁸

The effect I want to create through my design is of someone who things and acts 'Big' but is actually all a front. Like the rest of the youths who frequent Johnny's caravan, Ginger is a loser. He has stayed for years after other hangers-on his age (like Troy) have grown up and got lives of their own but Ginger is dependent on Rooster and not only for drugs.⁹

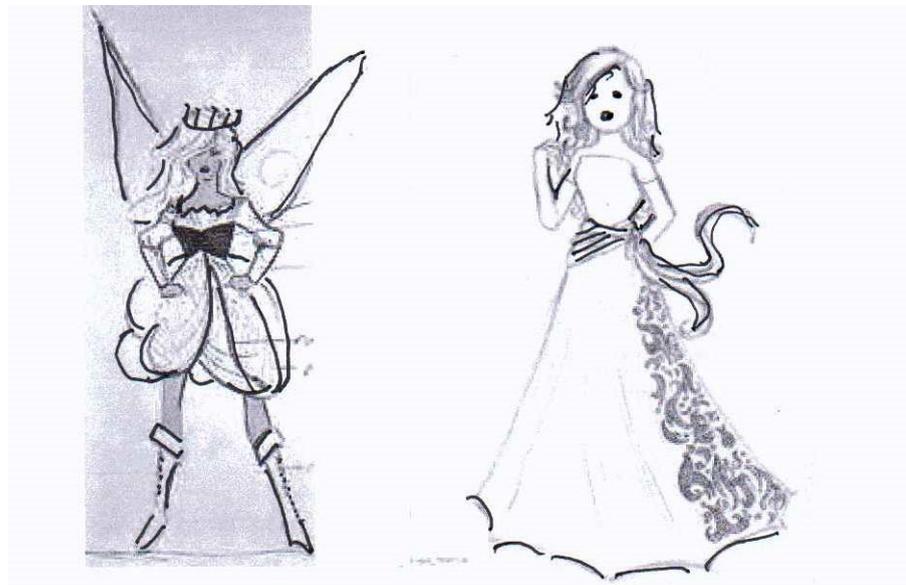


In Act Two he wears a leather jerkin as he is hoping to 'pull' at the fair.¹⁰

Phaedra is the under-age girl that is hiding in Johnny's caravan. In the prologue to the play she appears as a fairy. I have made her a slightly punk looking fairy in my design as she should not be seen as sweet and innocent. I want her appearance to intrigue the audience at the beginning of the play, wondering who or what this fairy is.¹¹

Like the other young people, she goes to Johnny for drugs and drink and to escape from her step-father, Troy, who it is hinted at, actually sexually abuses her.

I want the audience to be shocked by Phaedra's emergence from the caravan¹² in the second Act. When she is dressed as the Queen of the May, then I want the audience to see that she is only really a child and to fear for her.¹³



In her first appearance I would have her in a white puff-ball skirt with a black bodice and puffed sleeves; I have put her in high white leather boots to give her a raw edge and she must have wings attached to her costume which she can make flap by pulling a string attached to her waistband. She wears a fairy crown of leaves stiffened on a coronet. She sings the 'overture' to the play and I want the audience to be impressed by her voice which should be pure and sweet in contrast to her slightly raunchy fairy appearance.¹⁴

Her costume as the Queen of the May is a traditional looking flared A line dress with a strapless bodice. I would put her in long white gloves and satin shoes. There is a pattern of a floral garland at the back of the dress on a train and she has a pink ribbon over her white dress. This will emphasise her actual vulnerability despite her teenage 'attitude'.¹⁵

Word Count: 879

Quotations: 0

Comments

11. Effect has been considered but more detail about who Phaedra is might be helpful.

12. Apt.

13. Apt.

14. Fair points.

15. Needs more of a conclusion.

Commentary

The student does focus on the task of creating specific effects through the design of costumes for the characters and more than two sections are covered. The sketches show workable designs for each of the characters and they have some potential to be effective.

References to the play as a whole are few and far between and the creative overview is not clarified. There is some useful costume detail however and the ideas are mainly apt, if not fully justified.

There is scope for further development.

AO3

The student's response is focused and reveals considered knowledge of the processes, practices and techniques involved in creating effects through costume design.

Several strategies have the potential to be quite effective in terms of the student's intentions; others need a little more development.

There is brief reference to the style of theatre but this knowledge is unevenly applied.

Text is not used purposefully to justify ideas or locate moments.

The creative overview of the play is incomplete.

The answer is clear and, at times, it includes appropriate detail in a structured response which addresses a decent amount of the Indicative Content for this question.

Band: Cusp of Band 4 and Band 3 as the sketches are very appropriate while the knowledge and understanding of the play is not made explicit enough.

Section B: 20th and 21st century drama

Example 9

Comments

Yerma – Federico Garcia Lorca

15 Answer all parts of this question. You must make specific reference to the social, cultural and/or historical context of *Yerma* in your answers and ensure that your interpretative ideas are appropriate to the play as a whole.

15.1 Explain and justify how you would direct the performers from **line 1** to **line 46** of the extract in order to demonstrate Yerma's growing desperation.

Example response

In this part of the play Yerma's growing desperation is plain to see and the audience are feeling very sympathetic towards her. Her husband Juan has brought his two sisters into the house and Yerma believes they are there to spy on her.¹

Lorca was writing at a time when a woman's purpose in life did not extend beyond marriage and bearing children. Although Yerma is married, she does not feel fulfilled without a child.²

The printed section begins after Juan and his sister have gone into another room to eat. Yerma has refused to go, saying that she is not hungry. As a director, I would want to show that Yerma is hungry, but for a child, not for food.³

I would direct Yerma to look blankly at the door that Juan and his sister have just closed before she speaks her first lines, the stage direction says, 'as though dreaming' but I would tell her to look angrily at the door and beat her fist on the floor beside her where she is sitting, saying 'Oh, door now closed to happiness!' then I would direct her to raise the same fist to her heart and beat it there twice. She would then sob out loud and clutch at both her breasts desperately crying out, 'These streams of warm milk in my breasts ... shake the branch of my anguish.'⁴

I would tell her to collapse forward onto the floor, and sob uncontrollably. Then slowly she would lift her head and listen intently then call out sweetly, as if talking to a young baby, 'But you shall come, my love, my child' and I would direct her to stand up and smile to herself and move her arms into a cradling position, so that this is how Maria sees her as she passes the main door.⁵

1. Brief but pertinent context.

2. Some reference to context.

3. Intention is apt.

4. These are appropriate ideas but there is no justification offered for ignoring the stage directions.

5. This is appropriate but could be linked more directly to the question.

Maria has a 'real' baby in her arms and I will direct Yerma to reach out to take the baby and look longingly into its face. When Maria tells Yerma not to complain, I would direct Yerma to glare at Maria and move away from her, standing in the centre of the stage looking down at the child fondly. She shrugs off Maria's comforting words and when Maria goes to take the child back I would direct Yerma at first to hold the child closer to her but then give the baby up with a tone of defeat saying sadly, 'Yes, take him! He prefers to be with you. I don't have a mother's touch'.⁶ Then I would direct her to hug herself, and then let her empty arms fall by her side as she begins to work herself into another state of frustration. I would tell her to look at her 'useless hands' and shake her head and then speak venomously to Maria as she spits out, 'these hammer-blows here instead of my child's mouth.' Once more hitting herself in the chest and trying to stifle a sob.

This is how I would direct the actress to show her growing desperation.⁷

Word Count: 509

Quotations: 6

Commentary

The student's ideas appear to be considered and they are focused on directions for Yerma at the beginning of the extract. However, the question refers to the performers (plural) and while Maria is mentioned in the answer, she has not been directed explicitly.

There is no harm in focusing more on Yerma than Maria, given the question focus, but there is a sense here that the scope of the question has not been fully appreciated. The suggestions are likely to reveal Yerma's unhappiness but they have not been convincingly justified in terms of 'growing desperation'.

AO3

The answer is quite creative but could be further developed; ideas are consonant with the play as a whole but the scope is quite narrow; rather brief on context; use of text is appropriate.

Band: Cusp of Bands 4 and 3

Comments

6. Direction is apt.

7. A simple conclusion but 'growing desperation' has not been mentioned before.

Comments

15.2 As a performer, explain and justify how you would perform the role of Maria in this extract in order to create your preferred audience response to the character.

Example response

I see Maria as an ordinary village girl who has fulfilled the expectations of society by marrying and having a baby; probably the first of many. She is a friend of Yerma's but Yerma's intensity and overwhelming desire to have her own child is difficult for Maria to cope with. Earlier in the play, Maria confided in Yerma about her pregnancy but now that she has a child of her own, she is less willing to spend times with Yerma who seems to Maria to be becoming obsessive.¹

The village that Maria and Yerma live in a simple rural village in Andalusia; Maria would be simply dressed in a cream blouse and calf length brown skirt in calico. Her baby will be wrapped in a cream cotton shawl and will be a life-like doll in my production.²

When I enter the scene I am passing Yerma's door. I do not want to be seen by her because I know she will make a fuss and probably cry so I will be tip-toeing past looking down at my baby and hoping that it won't start to cry. When³ Yerma sees me and calls out, 'Maria! Why the hurry? Aren't you coming in?' I will freeze in my tracks than look in at Yerma and smile apologetically saying, 'When I've got the baby ... you always cry' in a gentle tone, as if trying not to upset my friend.

I see Maria as a glass half-full sort of a person and she tries to cheer Yerma up, telling her to count her blessings, 'You have lots of other things. Listen to what I'm saying. You could be happy', here I would look around the room and point broadly at all the things that Juan has bought for Yerma in the house; good furniture and copper dishes and vases. I would go over to a pretty vase and look at it admiringly before turning back to Yerma with a pitying smile.⁴

When Yerma begins to get angry and starts to curse the 'God-forsaken wilderness' that she lives in, I would be worried about the safety of my baby and I would go over to her holding out my arms to take my baby back. When Yerma passes the baby to me I would take it gently then hold the baby closely to me and kiss its forehead.⁵

I would try to calm Yerma down when she beats her own breast, by talking softly to her as I say, 'You shouldn't say such things.' And I would shake my head gently side to side to show that I disapprove of her attitude, I will say strongly, 'Everyone has some purpose in life.' And I will cross myself with my free hand, to help to show the audience that I am religious and God-fearing and believe that everyone has a purpose in God's eyes, because these were the beliefs in Spain in the early part of the twentieth century.⁶

1. This is a useful summary of the student's interpretation of Maria, but it does not address the question directly.

2. General but apt.

3. Understanding here.

4. Performance ideas are apt but they have not been justified.

5. Still apt but not focused on the set question's demand about audience response.

6. Apt reference to context.

I try to reassure that Juan loves Yerma, but she shrugs me off. When I remind her of the sufferings of Jesus I will be really emphatic and touch her shoulder to remind her of her duty to God and to Christ, saying 'It's hard for you, I know. But remember how our Lord suffered too' trying to put Yerma's unhappiness into context.⁷

When the baby begins to wake up, I look fearfully at Yerma, as I know she will be more upset and when she begins to weep and nudges me to go I will hurry away without looking back at her.⁸

Word Count: 597

Quotations: 7

Commentary

The student's ideas appear to be considered and they are focused on performance ideas for Maria in the extract. However, the question specifically asks for ideas to be justified as well as demanding that the given ideas should be linked specifically to creating a specific audience response to Maria. This aspect of the question has been ignored.

The suggestions given are entirely appropriate for Maria but they have not been justified in terms of the preferred audience response to Maria, which is never identified.

AO3

The answer is quite creative but does not address the demands of the question explicitly; ideas are consonant with the play as a whole but are only loosely appropriate because of the lack of focus on the question, some reference to context and use of text is appropriate.

Band: Band 3

Comments

7. Response?

8. Apt ideas but there has been no mention of the audience response.

Comments

15.3 As a designer, outline your costume or set design ideas for this extract. Explain and justify how these would help to create appropriate mood and atmosphere at this point in the play.

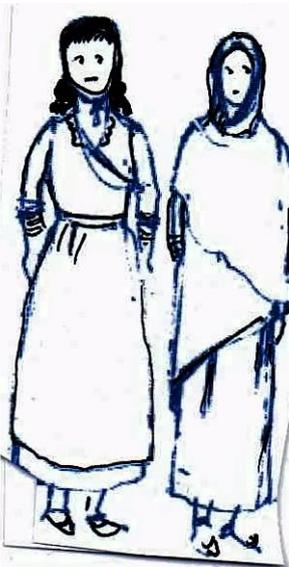
Example response

The sketches below show my ideas for costume design for Yerma, Maria, the Sisters and the young Girls who we see in this extract.

Yerma is in her own home, so she would be fairly informally dressed. I have not given her any kind of head-dress and her dark, Spanish hair is loose. In the 30s, in Andalusia, housewives in farming villages would not have had expensive clothes.¹

Yerma will wear a cream cotton blouse with a slightly frilled neckline and a cross-over style bodice. I have also designed quite a full, dark brown, skirt which is covered with an apron here as she is a working housewife. She is wearing plain brown leather shoes. My overall colour palette for the play is browns, creams and beige for the main female characters like Yerma and Maria. This will help to create the domestic mood of the scene.²

Yerma Maria



Maria comes in from outside so I have covered her head and given her a shawl that she can use to wrap the baby in for carrying like a sling. Maria's skirt will be brown and so will the shawl that covers her head but underneath she will wear a cream blouse but without the frill that Yerma's blouse has, as she is less well off. I want her shawl to suggest the outside world her and also help with the atmosphere of secrecy and confidence between the two women.³

1. Fair point.

2. The nominated mood is appropriate.

3. Possibly.

The younger girls wear slightly shorter skirts and they have bare arms, while the married women will have three quarter sleeves. I have designed slightly flared skirts

for the young girls as this reflects their youth. Their dresses will be dark green with lighter green ribbons and the second girl has artificial leaves made of light green material. I am using earth tones for the married women and fresher natural tones for the young girls; when they come in the atmosphere is lighter as they are younger and innocent.⁴

1st Girl 2nd Girl

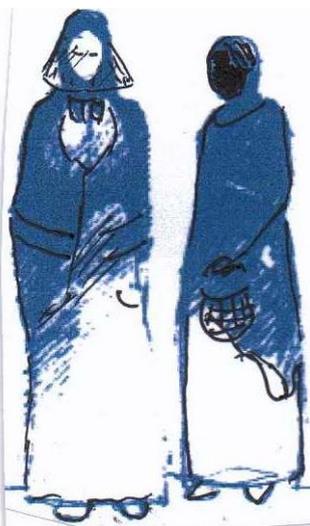


Yerma's Sisters in Law are dark shadowy figures.

It may be that Juan has brought them in to the house because he is afraid of Yerma harming herself as she becomes gradually more bizarre in her behaviour as she mourns the child that she cannot conceive. But to Yerma, they are his spies. I am presenting them as if from Yerma's viewpoint and want them to create a slightly sinister atmosphere.⁵

I have given them long black dresses from neck to toe. The elder sister wears a veil over her face at all times and looks quite intimidating and mysterious.⁶ The younger sister is not quite as forbidding to look at but still wears a long black dress cut simply. Both wear black leather shoes.

Sisters in Law



I think my designs will help to create appropriate moods for this extract, as the atmosphere changes with the arrival of different characters and becomes tense when the elder sister in law interrupts Yerma and Maria, when she comes in for the bread.

Word Count: 503

Quotations: 0

Comments

4. Reasonable justification.

5. Apt.

6. Yes, she does on the sketch.

Commentary

The student's ideas appear to be considered and they are focused on creating mood and atmosphere through costume design. The sketches clarify the ideas that are outlined in the answer and help to confirm the potential of the designs to create a domestic mood, a more innocent mood with the young girl and the sinister appearance of the sisters. Victor appears at the end of the extract and is obviously a significant character but no designs are offered for his costume.

The suggestions given for the others are entirely appropriate.

AO3

The answer offers quite creative ideas which are consonant with the play as a whole, some reference to context and period and the sketches are fully appropriate to the task.

Band: Band 4

Example 10

Comments

***The Glass Menagerie* – Tennessee Williams**

16 Answer all parts of this question. You must make specific reference to the social, cultural and/or historical context of *The Glass Menagerie* in your answers and ensure that your interpretative ideas are appropriate to the play as a whole.

16.1 Explain and justify how you would direct the performers from **line 1 to line 46** of the extract in order to demonstrate Amanda's growing anger with Tom.

Example response

Directing Amanda, Tom and Laura in this section near the end of the play, I want to show Amanda's growing anger with Tom.¹ She is already almost hysterical with disappointment when the Gentleman Caller leaves after all the trouble she has gone to.²

When Tom comes in eating a cake and with his glass of lemonade it sets her off even more. I would tell her to look disgustedly at Tom, before returning to her fake good humour when she says, 'What a wonderful joke you played on us!' which I would direct to be spoken sarcastically, emphasising 'wonderful' and adding a fake laugh.³

I would have Tom smiling when he comes in because Amanda has pretended to be amused by something and calls him in saying she has something 'awfully funny' to tell him. I would have Laura crouch down on the floor behind Amanda not wanting to witness what she knows will be a terrible scene.⁴

When Tom says he didn't know that Jim was engaged, I would tell him to say it defensively and look directly at Laura as if to assure her that he did not know. I would ask Amanda to grab Tom's face by the chin and force him to look directly at Laura as she yells, 'You don't know things anywhere! You live in a dream; you manufacture illusions!'⁵ I would have her turn his head back to look into her eyes at this point with a face twisted in anger. This would show how her anger with Tom is growing to a dangerous level.⁶

I would tell Laura to bury her face in her arms, resting on her knees, sobbing softly.⁷

When Tom walks away from Amanda heading for the door, I would tell Amanda to walk in front of him and block his path and grab his arms almost screaming at him, 'Where are you going?' And I would have her dig Tom in the chest with her finger, but he ducks under her arm telling her 'I'm going to the movies'. At this point I will have the portrait of Mr Wingfield illuminate above the stage.⁸

Amanda is at boiling point here and delivers her long speech about the waste of time and money with increasing bitterness. When she refers to Laura as 'an unmarried sister who's crippled and has no job!' I would have Laura look up with hurt on her face and Tom just turns on his heels and exits the stage calling out bitterly, 'All right, I will! The more you shout about my selfishness to me the quicker I'll go, and I won't go to the movies!'⁹

I would have Amanda slap Tom's face at this point and then look in horror at her hand and drop it to her side as Tom swiftly leaves the stage and Laura gasps in shock at what her mother has done.¹⁰

1. Focus on task.

2. Very brief context for the extract.

3. Apt.

4. Useful attention to non-speaking moments.

5. A good moment.

6. Focus.

7. Apt.

8. Useful direction.

9. This could have been more fully explored.

10. This departure from the text needs a little justification but it is a good dramatic end to the sequence.

Word Count: 482

Quotations: 7

Commentary

The student's ideas appear to be considered and they are focused on directions to show Amanda's growing anger. Ideas are mainly appropriate and unified although there is scope for further development.

The references to directing Laura, who has no lines in this section of the extract reveal a thoughtful approach to direction.

AO3

The answer is focused and considered and is quite creative but could be further developed; ideas are consonant with the play as a whole but the scope is not extensive; rather brief on context; use of text is appropriate. There are no specific references to the social, cultural or historical context and this depresses the achievement.

Band: Cusp of Bands 4 and 3

Comments

16.2 As a performer, explain and justify how you would perform the role of Tom in his final monologue in order to create your preferred effects.

Example response

The Glass Menagerie is a memory play and Tom has a pivotal role in communicating that idea to the audience. The¹ whole of the action in the play comes from Tom's memories, so to an extent, he is the only 'living' character in the text. It is really important that the audience feels some empathy with him and I would want to create that empathy as an effect in this section of the extract.²

The play is drawing to its conclusion here and the effect must also be poignant³ for the audience as Tom reveals his remorse for abandoning Laura, I am deviating slightly from Williams' intentions in this sequence as I would want the 'pantomime' that Williams describes in his stage directions to be played as projected film, silently unfolding behind me on the cyclorama.⁴

I would walk forward to the illuminated square on the set that signifies the fire escape (see sketch above) and hang my head deliberately then raise it slowly as I deliver my first line, with a look of shame on my face, 'I didn't go to the moon, I went much further – for time is the longest distance between two places' then I would sigh and shrug and say with a half-smile, 'Not long after that I was fired for writing a poem on the lid of a shoebox' I would shake my head as if disappointed in my youthful self.⁵ This would help the audience to empathise with me as I am clearly regretful.

When I refer to 'my father's footsteps' I would want the portrait to be illuminated briefly and then fade out (see sketch). Tom feels guilty about following his father in his cowardly abandonment of his mother and sister, knowing how difficult it would be for them to make ends meet in the 'hungry thirties'.⁶

In a more matter of fact tone, I would state, 'I travelled around a great deal' and I would turn and walk across several squares until I am standing under the suspended glass animals. I would cross the stage under the illuminated glass menagerie and point upwards as I say the sentences, 'Perhaps I am walking along a street at night ... like bits of a shattered rainbow' I would emphasise 'shattered rainbow' by pausing before saying the words and looking at my hands as if I was the one who smashed the rainbow and consequently smashed Laura's dreams. Hopefully the audience will understand my remorse here.⁷

I would then walk forward and stand on one of the squares associated with Laura, which will light up pink as it did earlier. Then I will shudder and touch my left shoulder with my right hand and turn, as if the touch was Laura's saying, hesitantly, 'Then all at once my sister touches my shoulder. I turn around and look into her eyes ...' Then I will let out another more tortured sigh and speak yearningly and full of regret as I speak my line directly into the audience, 'Oh, Laura, Laura, I tried to leave you behind me, but I am more faithful than I intended to be!'

1. Awareness of style.

2. Clear.

3. Apt.

4. Helpful detail.

5. Good detail.

6. Brief reference to the social context.

7. Useful intentions and performance ideas.

Then I will leave a pause of five seconds and turn and walk over to the square at the front of the stage that will illuminate blue, I will reach for a cigarette and light it and take a drag on it and as I say 'cross the street' I will walk back to the square that has been my fire escape to show my cowardice and need to escape my own truth. I want the audience to understand me here, despite condemning my actions.⁸

From here I can half turn and look at the closing moments of the 'pantomime' on the cyc before saying, softly and sadly, 'Blow out your candles, Laura – and so good-bye ...' I will then step off the stage and exit through the audience as Laura, on the film, blows out the candles and all led lights under the squares go out just leaving Tom's fire escape square illuminated and the audience convinced of my sincere feelings for my sister.⁹

Word Count: 687

Quotations: 9

Commentary

The student's ideas are fully appropriate to the closing section of the play and reveal an assured knowledge of Tom's feelings of guilt. Ideas are coherent and justified and the decision to answer on the set first makes sense when reading this response.

AO3

The answer is assured and perceptive and includes some very creative ideas that are consonant with the play as a whole. A very brief comment relates to context; text is used in a discriminating way to support performance ideas.

Band: Band 5/4 cusp

Comments

8. Useful focus on the effect upon the audience.

9. An effective ending for the play/answer.

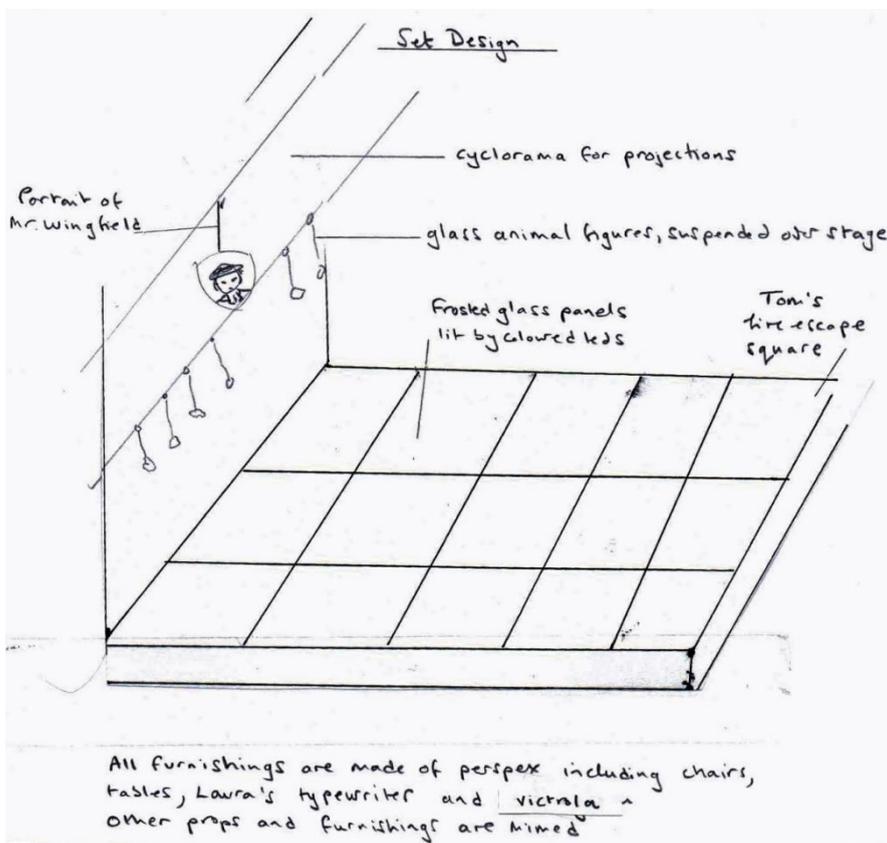
Comments

16.3 As a designer, outline your set design ideas for this extract. Explain and justify how these would help to reinforce the idea of *The Glass Menagerie* being a memory play.

Example response

Please note that I am answering this question before 16.2 as it will help to clarify the ideas for stage movement that I have for Tom's final speech.¹

I have undertaken a fair amount of research into previous set designs for *The Glass Menagerie* and one of my favourite designs and one that foregrounds the fact that this is a memory play² is one that I saw that was designed for The Triad theatre in 2010. What attracted me to it was the designer's minimalist approach, rather than filling the stage with shabby 1930s style furniture³ as so many designers have done. Below is a rough sketch of my own ideas for the play:



1. Makes sense.

2. Focus.

3. Brief reference to period.

4. This is quite a basic sketch but it does convey the key ideas as described in the body of the answer; it would be useful to see the design of the 'Perspex furniture'.

5. This could work, but it isn't entirely clear on the sketch that this 'wall' slides.

I would have an open end-on stage with a raked auditorium. The back wall is one large cyclorama, onto which I will project a range of images, some still and some filmed, throughout the play. It also acts as a sliding door (the portieres) to provide entrances and exits at stage left and right, depending on which entrance is being used.

In this extract for example, Amanda will slide it to let Jim leave the apartment stage left and then Tom will slide it to enter from stage right.⁵

Comments

I have kept furniture and props to a minimum – as this is Tom’s memory being played out and, in our memories, we tend to remember people, rather than chairs and tables.⁶

I have decided to divide the stage floor into zones that will be indicated by LED lighting beneath square frosted glass panels set into the stage floor. The zones will be coloured differently for different characters and will light up when their character is standing or sitting on them.⁷

Laura’s colour is pink, Tom’s is blue and Amanda’s is yellow. The Gentleman Caller, Jim, will have a green zone. Tom’s fire escape is indicated by a large square zone, lit with white light and situated down stage left at the front of the stage. The lack of colour is part of its attraction to Tom, who is able to feel free when on the fire escape.⁸

The only furniture, that I will be using will be made of Perspex because this will give the surroundings the insubstantial quality of inanimate objects as remembered in the memory or seen in dreams.⁹ I will have two upright chairs with arms in Perspex; the table for the meal will also be Perspex, but the meal itself will be mimed.

Another feature of the Perspex is that it will add a dream-like/memory quality to the projections which can spill over it onto the plain floor beneath. The furniture will start the play in a line at the back of the stage and items (Perspex and so very light in weight) will be lifted and put into place by the actors, as required – once again suggesting that memory is fluid and only relates to people and incidents involving them – not to static bits of furniture in a room.¹⁰

Laura’s typewriter and the Victrola will also simply be represented by Perspex boxes and I will use projected images of the real items when they are discussed.

In this extract, the green light that was The Gentleman Caller’s will snap off as ‘he grins and ducks jauntily out’ using the sliding door stage left leaving Amanda to move upstage centre onto her yellow lit square and Laura centre stage on her pink one. The other squares remain unlit until Tom comes into the room and stands next to Amanda on his blue square.¹¹

Above the stage, I will have suspended the all-important glass menagerie, I will use over-sized glass ornaments in a range of pretty jewel colours and they will catch the light and can be raised or lowered during the production for Laura to handle. In this extract I will lower them when Tom is discussing ‘The window ... filled with pieces of coloured glass, tiny trans-parent bottles in delicate colours’ and raise them again after ‘shattered rainbow’.¹²

6. This is a fair point.

7. This is creative.

8. Perhaps the other colour choices could be justified.

9. This is a good point.

10. A clear idea – could be a little impractical.

11. Some details here about how the coloured squares will work.

12. This could work.

Comments

13. Apt.

14. Focus is maintained on this aim, throughout.

I have also suspended a picture of Mr Wingfield above the stage that can be lit or unlit depending on the action and the lines. Here it will be lit when Tom mentions his 'father's footsteps.'¹³

A key aspect of this extract is Tom's speech at the end; in my production, after Tom has smashed his glass on the floor, Amanda and Laura will leave the stage using the sliding door, stage left, and the whole of the pantomime will be projected, as film, as Tom delivers this closing speech. When Laura blows out the candles, the film will snap off, Tom will step off his white square and exit through the audience and the stage will also go to unlit, apart from Tom's 'escape' square.

These are my ideas for reinforcing the idea of this being a memory play.¹⁴

Word Count: 808

Quotations: 3

Commentary

The student's ideas are very well focused on the question and they are creative (if not always fully convincingly practical) The sketch does convey some information although the furnishings are not realised on the sketch. Ideas are coherent and justified.

AO 3

The answer is assured and perceptive and includes some very creative ideas that are consonant with the play as a whole. A very brief comment relates to period; text is referred to, at times, as is action, to support the answer and, although the sketch is indeed quite 'rough', it does convey some of the necessary detail.

Band: Band 5/4 cusp

Example 11

Comments

Metamorphosis – Steven Berkoff

17 Answer all parts of this question. You must make specific reference to the social, cultural and/or historical context of *Metamorphosis* in your answers and ensure that your interpretative ideas are appropriate to the play as a whole.

17.1 Explain and justify how you would direct the performers from **line 53** to **line 108** of the printed extract in order to demonstrate the attitude of the lodgers to the family.

Example response

Berkoff's adaptation of Kafka's short story, *Metamorphosis*, has become a classic of modern theatre. It was originally a novella published by Kafka in 1915 in the middle of the First World War and¹ has been described as being the best example of what is meant by 'Kafka-esque'. 'Kafka-esque' describes a situation where an individual who is normally a functioning member of society is suddenly overwhelmed by an external force that makes his existence meaningless or unbearable and that is certainly true of what happens to Gregor Samsa in Kafka's story and Berkoff's play.²

I feel that Berkoff's play makes this feeling even more overpowering than the short story since the theatre transforms Kafka's words on the page into a concrete theatrical experience in three dimensions that totally engulfs the audience.³

The printed extract occurs towards the end of the play. The Samsa family find themselves short of money since Gregor's metamorphosis into a beetle, as it was his salary that was paying for their comfortable life-style and they are forced to take in lodgers.⁴

Berkoff's own stage directions would guide my direction of this section, the Lodgers are three actors who move in complete synchronicity and all three wear pig masks; I would also make sure that they were all wearing fat suits. I would also have them wear short stilts so that they are slightly taller than Mr and Mrs Samsa and Greta and this will help to emphasise their superior attitude towards the family who they intend to bully and belittle.⁵

This is clear in what they say, for example, they mention that the house 'will do', that they can't 'bear slovenliness' and that they will list all their 'objections'. So⁶ they are very negative toward the family; I would make the 3rd lodger particularly harsh and unpleasant as he appears to be the one who says the rudest things and I would give him the habit of snorting at the end of his lines to further emphasise the pigginess of the character.⁷

The Lodgers' attitude towards the family is one of intended exploitation, but it is quite clear from the opening sequence of this extract, that the family see the Lodgers purely as a means of getting money and all their promises of looking after them are also based on an intention to exploit. Just as they had exploited Gregor. This time, however they will have to do some work themselves.⁸

1. Period context.

2. Some understanding here.

3. Some appreciation of the power of theatre.

4. Context for the action.

5. Some invention here but mainly adhering to stage directions. Understanding of the Lodgers' attitudes, however.

6. How will these lines be delivered?

7. Could be apt, needs text to illustrate.

8. Theoretical understanding is evident.

Surprisingly, at the end of this sequence the Lodgers express no objection to pets and I would direct them to speak in complete harmony when they cry out in chorus, 'Oh no we're fond of pets' and I would have each lodger petting one of the Samsa family and stroking their backs for comic effect and to show their superior attitudes towards them as they are treating them like pet animals.⁹

Kafka's story has been interpreted as an exploration of prejudice and in this sequence the Lodgers appear to look down on the Samsas as if they were an inferior race.¹⁰

Word Count: 505

Quotations: 4

Commentary

This is a largely theoretical answer although it is focused on the demonstration of the Lodgers' attitudes towards the Samsa family.

The student's practical ideas, when they are explained, are generally appropriate to the nominated section, but the practical suggestions are narrow in range. The answer is relatively brief.

AO3

The answer is straightforward and ideas are not inappropriate but narrow in range. Occasionally creative; lacking detail and slightly uneven as an interpretation. A very brief comment relates to context; text is used occasionally to support performance ideas.

Band: Band 3

Comments

9. A direction here.

10. This could be developed but is an allusion to cultural context.

Comments

17.2 As a performer, explain and justify how you would perform the role of Mr Samsa in order to demonstrate your understanding of Berkoff's intended style of acting.

Example response

Berkoff's acting style is very physical and is often described as being expressionist. He believes in the actor as the most important element of any performance and although he does use costume, make-up, light and sound (mainly made by the actors themselves) the actor is at the centre of all his work.¹

Berkoff has actually played the role of Mr Samsa himself in a 1986 production having originally played the role of Gregor in an earlier production.

I would want to be as faithful to Berkoff's physical style as possible but I have to confess that the sheer stamina necessary to perform in the heightened physical style is extraordinary.

Mr Samsa is a repulsive character, he is greedy and lazy and has few paternal qualities. Gregor's transformation only affects Mr Samsa in so far as he can no longer afford beer and cigars; he shows no regard for Gregor and is the one who gives Gregor his death blow when he throws the apple at him.²

At the beginning of this sequence, I am hanging in Gregor's cage while 'Gregor walks to work'. I will have my legs hooked over one of the bars at the top of the cage and use my arms to help me swing back and forth in time with Gregor's walking on the spot. Then I will gently lower myself onto the base of the cage and begin to roughly push Gregor around the stage telling him 'don't be lazy'. I will twist my body round in a contorted way as I say this and look Gregor directly in the face, then stretch my legs out in front of me before placing them on the ground just in front of him.³

When I throw the apple at Gregor I will do an exaggerated mime, pulling my right arm back over my head as far as it will go like a fast bowler and I will run up before releasing the 'apple' and then bend over with my hands on my knees as if watching the parabola of the apple. As Gregor reacts to the missile, I will walk over to him with exaggerated high knee steps and then with the others, stand over him muttering and I will shake my head in an exaggerated way.⁴

When the Lodgers arrive, the audience will see a new Mr Samsa.

I will plaster a false smile across my face and speak in a sickly sweet tone as I assure the Lodgers that we are 'very friendly' and that we will 'do our best'. The audience have only ever heard Mr Samsa goading Gregor, so this will be effective.⁵

Berkoff's acting style relies on exaggeration and a stretching of the muscles behind every movement. All actions need to be precise and the delivery of the lines also has to be muscular and sinewy.⁶

Word Count: 474

Quotations: 4

1. Knowledge.

2. Understanding of role.

3. Some performance ideas in a physical style although not fully clear.

4. A clearer example.

5. Needs a little more detail.

6. Somewhat generalised summary of Berkoff's style.

Commentary

This is also quite a theoretical answer; the student shows understanding of Berkoff's intended style of acting but offers insufficient detailed description of how the role of Mr Samsa might be performed to exemplify that style.

The offered practical ideas are generally appropriate to Mr Samsa's role in this extract, but the ideas are underdeveloped. The answer is relatively brief.

A 3

The answer is straightforward and pertinent. Occasionally creative ideas, but lacking detail and slightly uneven as an interpretation. There is secure theoretical understanding of Berkoff's style which helps to support a few specific performance ideas.

Band: High Band 3

Comments

17.3 As a designer, outline your ideas for lighting or sound for this extract. Explain and justify how these would help to create your preferred effects at this point in the play.

Example response

As a sound designer for this extract I would want to create the effect of an increasingly surreal experience for the audience and also support the frantic pace of the action. I would want to shock them during the extract by the suddenness and intensity of some of the effects; but also make some of the action amusing through the use of sound.¹

I would start the extract with the sound of a series of different ‘alarm’ clocks going off, first a digital beep, then a traditional ringing, finally a crazy cuckoo clock sound. I would use surround sound speakers in the auditorium, so that the audience would be surrounded by the insane noise of alarm clocks for about 30 seconds before Mr Samsa booms out, ‘Work, Gregor, time to get up’.²

When Greta says ‘four o’clock’ I would fade in the chimes of church bell ringing four. Then when Mrs Samsa says ‘Hurry, Hurry, Hurry’ I will have the sound of whip-cracking faded up and then down to be replaced by Gregor’s accelerated heart beats as he begins running on the spot. This would then continue through the mime sequence of Gregor running frantically for the train.³

I would then have Gregor’s scream, when he is hit by the apple amplified and on reverb as it echoes through the auditorium, shocking the audience by its intensity and by the length of the agonised scream.⁴

Then I would have absolute silence for the next 20 seconds before the mime continues.⁵

Mrs Samsa takes Gregor back to his room and the dream sequence ends. I would want the mime of Mrs Samsa comforting Gregor to last for about a minute, then as the lights fade down and then suddenly snap up to dazzling brightness I would have the knocks of the Lodgers – three sharp raps with a door knocker – ring through the auditorium to, hopefully, shock the audience once more and make them jump.⁶

I would have a signature sound for the Lodgers when they appear like the snuffling of pigs in a trough which would be recorded and played softly through the entire section when they are on stage. This would help the audience to identify the Lodgers with pigs – to match their masks – and help define the 3rd Lodger’s snort as being distinctly porcine.⁷

When Mr Samsa is warning the Lodgers that they ‘keep a pet in the back room’ I would fade in, in quick succession the sounds of a cat meowing, then a dog barking, then a horse whinnying, then a monkey screeching, then a bear growling, then a lion roaring while the Lodgers stand with open mouths before saying in canon, ‘Oh Yes?’ and this would be a comical if surreal moment for the audience.⁸

1. Clear and appropriate intentions.

2. Inventive and also apt.

3. Clear ideas linked to the action described in the stage directions.

4. Apt.

5. Could be effective.

6. Apt.

7. Perhaps a little too much but the question is about sound, so ...

8. This is inventive and potentially effective.

Comments

When they go on to say 'we're fond of pets' I would bring up the scratchy amplified sound of cockroaches scampering for about five seconds and then cut to silence before Mrs Samsa's line, 'I'll show you to your quarters, then'.⁹

I believe these sound effects would really support the action in this extract and continue the effect of the audience being engulfed by Gregor's experience that would have been part of the production from the start.

Word Count: 536

Quotations: 7

Commentary

The student's ideas are well focused on the question and they are creative. The student sets out appropriate intentions and ideas are unified and workable.

AO3

The answer is assured and perceptive and includes some very creative ideas that are consonant with the play as a whole. No explicit reference to context but ideas are appropriate to Berkoff's style. Text is used well to locate the sound effects and support the answer.

Band: Band 5/4 cusp

9. Clear idea – not sure what cockroaches sound like ...

Example 12

Comments

***Our Country's Good* – Timberlake Wertenbaker**

18 Answer all parts of this question. You must make specific reference to the social, cultural and/or historical context of *Our Country's Good* in your answers and ensure that your interpretative ideas are appropriate to the play as a whole.

18.1 Explain and justify how you would direct the performers from **line 33** to **line 83** of the printed extract in order to highlight each of the characters' feelings.

Example response

Act Two Scene One, 'Visiting Hours' is a critical scene in *Our Country's Good*.

The play follows the fortunes and misfortunes of a small number of transported convicts who found themselves, far from home, in Botany Bay as a result of having committed crimes in Britain, where the prisons, in the late 1700s, were full to over-flowing.¹

Although set in 1789, the play is not meant to be a 'history play'. Wertenbaker has made plain that the play is a 'metaphor' about the present day, not an exploration of Georgian values.²

Liz Morden, the most dangerous woman in the colony, has been charged with stealing food from the stores and is being held, chained, in a prison cell along with Arscott and Caesar, who have been captured trying to make an escape. With them is Wisehammer who has been jailed by the bully, Ross because, as Ross said, 'You're Jewish aren't you? You're guilty!' One of the themes of this play is the exercise of justice and this theme is explored through the many injustices that are committed against the convicts.³

Their 'jailors' – the Officers in this play – don't appear in this scene although their oppressive presence should always be felt.⁴ While I will direct Act 2 Scene 1 to convey Wertenbaker's message about 'what it means to be brutalised' and 'to live without hope', I will also show how being in the play together has begun to have an effect on Liz and her fellow convicts and has helped to create a sense of community amongst them.⁵

I want my audience to see how being involved in the play has helped the convicts to begin to see meaning – and the possibility of a future – in their own lives. Although this optimism is not present here.⁶

The section from line 33 to 83 reveals the different characters of Liz, Wisehammer, Arscott and Caesar.⁷ Liz has already described her youth in her monologue but she reveals herself to be a realist. I would direct her to ask Wisehammer how he got to be in the camp with a genuinely inquisitive tone.⁸ It is the first time we see her asking someone about themselves.

I would direct Wisehammer to speak clearly when he describes, in single abstract nouns, how he has come to be where he is. The contrast between Liz's detailed 'history' of her background and Wisehammer's answer is striking; I would ask him to pause between each noun as if trying to find the best word to describe his situation:⁹

1. Brief, useful context.

2. Knowledge but not linked to the question, here.

3. More context for the scene and some understanding of themes.

4. How?

5. This is a fair aim but it is not the specific brief of this question unless related to 'feelings'.

6. So, relevance?

7. The question is about characters' feelings rather than 'characters' alone.

8. Fine but needs to be linked to feelings.

9. Some direction here.

'Betrayal' pause, 'Barbarous falsehood' pause, and then be more animated when he says 'Intimidation', looking hard at Liz (who is herself quite intimidating') and then conclude emphatically with 'Injustice' – a key theme of the play. I would ask the actor to sound the plosive b sound in the first two words very powerfully to show Wisehammer's interest in words. Similarly, when he says the words that begin with 'in', 'Intimidation' and 'Injustice' and then 'Innocent' I want him to stress the 'in' prefix. This will show his passion for language as well as his vehement feelings of having been treated unfairly.¹⁰

Liz shows that she feels puzzled by Wisehammer as he doesn't speak words that she can understand, she has more of a connection with Arscott who she describes as 'thinking English' because like her, he speaks the language of the ignorant, criminal class. This is 'English' to Liz.¹¹

Arscott, like Wisehammer, feels that he has been cheated, but he is unable to articulate his experience, lacking Wisehammer's vocabulary.¹² His repeated cry of 'There's no escape!' shows his limitations but also his desperate feelings to be free. Having been cheated by a Sailor who has exploited his ignorance as well as his illiteracy, he can only wonder 'Why didn't it work?' Arscott is strong and macho but easily outwitted because of his lack of education. I want him to show his feelings of impotence and failure when he pleads with Wisehammer, 'What does it say?' in a plaintive voice.¹³

Caesar expresses his feelings of alienation in the colony; his greatest wish is to return to Madagascar and his Ancestors. He expresses the wishes of all dispossessed people to return to his homeland. I would cast Caesar as a noble looking man with soulful eyes which he turns on Liz when she dismisses his ideas about joining his ancestors. I would have him stare into her eyes and say defiantly, 'I want to go home, I will escape again'.¹⁴

Word Count: 749

Quotations: 11

Commentary

This is a relatively lengthy answer, but a proportion of it lacks close focus on the set task. There is useful context here and evident knowledge and understanding of Wertebaker's broad aims, although not all of the introduction is purposeful in terms of the directorial focus of the question.

AO3

The answer is assured and knowledgeable; ideas are carefully considered and there are some quite creative ideas that are focused on highlighting the characters' feelings.

The explicit reference to context of the play reveals knowledge and understanding.

Text is used throughout to support the answer.

Band: Band 4

Comments

10. Feelings are dealt with here and this is apt direction.

11. Puzzlement is a feeling but there is no direction here.

12. Feeling is apt, here.

13. A successful paragraph.

14. Caesar's feelings are also communicated quite clearly here.

Comments

18.2 As a performer, explain and justify how you would perform the role of Liz in her monologue in order to reveal your interpretation of the character.

Example response

Although Liz is presented as a violent and dangerous woman at the beginning of the play, by the time the audience sees her in Act Two Scene One, she has begun to connect more with the rest of the convicts that are in the play with her.¹

Interestingly, Liz is the only character in the play who was not drawn from the source material but is entirely made up, although based on a dangerous female prisoner, called Josie, that Wertebaker interviewed during the workshopping of the play.²

I interpret Liz as being a hard woman because of her criminal upbringing but to have some vulnerability as we see here and also in the second rehearsal when she cannot bear to hear the cries of Arscott being whipped.³

Here, Liz speaks in a 'canting' idiom which is difficult for the audience to understand. I would try to make sure that I conveyed the gist of the monologue through my emphasis of certain individual words and phrases that sound like swear words. There are lots of references to her selling herself for money or food so when I say 'Miss Laycock' and 'mother of saints', I'm really referring to selling my body and although I am being crude I use a euphemism which does show that I have begun to have a bit more self-respect.⁴

I will be very bedraggled at this point in the play wearing a dirty grey blouse with a torn bodice and a ripped, ankle-length skirt. My face and arms will be covered in grime which I will achieve using stage make up and will also make me look bruised.⁵

I will be chained to a pole, centre stage with the other prisoners, also chained, stage left of me. I am not facing them directly although I am speaking to them. This will show the lack of relationship that I have with the others at this point.⁶

When I start speaking, my tone is harsh; 'Luck?' I would scoff after this and then go on more familiarly, 'Don't know the word.' Another laugh, this time to myself, 'Shifts its bob when I comes near' with an emphasis on 'I' to show her sense of being particularly unlucky.⁷

When I say 'Born under a ha'penny planet', I think this is the opposite of 'born with a silver spoon' and I would add another mirthless laugh. I pass unemotionally over the facts that 'Mum leaves' but when I say 'My own father' there is a sense of disbelief in my voice as I remember the cruelty of a father betraying his own child.⁸

I will show something of the spirit of the character when describing the older brother, by imitating his gruff voice saying 'men want Miss Laycock, don't look at your mug.' in a harsh way; again laughing at myself as I remember.

1. Fair point.

2. This is not made relevant to the question.

3. Interpretation.

4. Some understanding.

5. Appearance is generally apt.

6. OK.

7. All appropriate.

8. Good.

Comments

9. Good.

10. This is perceptive and detailed work on the speech.

I will also imitate Governor Phillip saying 'You could nob it here, Lizzie' putting on a received pronunciation accent and holding out my little finger to suggest gentility while I articulate the sentence clearly. This will show my ability to find humour, even in the darkest moments.⁹

I would smile while thinking about the play, 'good crew of rufflers' to suggest I have become more friendly as a result of 'civilised' company, but then, as I reflect on Ross I would make my face a grim line of self-pity saying, 'Ross don't like my mug' harshly.

The casual way that I contemplate impending death, 'up the ladder to rest for good' saying the line without a beat or tone of regret shows how brutalised I have become. But when I say 'Well' I would pause for a moment, sadly, before summing up 'Lizzie Morden's life' and then turn casually to Wisehammer to ask, 'And you?' as if it was the most natural thing in the world to be facing the death penalty and I am simply socialising with a new group of acquaintances.¹⁰

Word Count: 657

Quotations: 16

Commentary

The student's ideas appear to be considered and they are focused on performance ideas for Liz in the extract. Ideas are often clearly explained and are appropriate. Often the student shows good understanding of Liz, even if performance ideas could be a little further developed.

AO3

The answer becomes more focused and creative as it proceeds. Performance ideas are consonant with the play as a whole, there is some reference to the context of the play's production and the use of text, especially latterly, is appropriate and practical.

Band: Band 4

Comments

18.3 As a designer, outline your ideas for lighting **or** sound for this extract. Explain and justify how these would help to create an appropriate mood and atmosphere at this point in the play.

Example response

Although *Our Country's Good* is an epic play, in that it has 22 scenes, in all, over the two Acts, it is not a Brechtian play. This is important as in Brechtian, 'epic' theatre, the technical elements are there simply to illuminate the stage (lighting) or (with sound) to indicate location.¹ A good production of *Our Country's Good* should make full use of technical elements to create a wide variety of different appropriate moods and atmospheres throughout the play, from the excitement of the Officers out shooting birds in Scene Three, to the eerie presence of the Aborigine at various stages of decline to the romantic love scene on the ocean shore between Mary and Ralph in Scene Nine.²

Act Two Scene One has its own shifting moods and atmospheres, from Liz's sardonic account of her early life at the opening of the scene, to Arscott's howl of frustration and misery at not being able to escape. The scene ends on a note of hope when Sideway and Mary and Duckling arrive to rehearse the play.³

This scene is a fairly static one and the opening section, from which the extract is taken, is particularly morbid in atmosphere as the characters contemplate their bleak futures.⁴ Because it is so static, it is really important that it is carefully lit. In Max Stafford Clark's 'case study' of the production, the only note that he makes about the lighting in Act Two Scene One is 'In a prison, dark and dank'. Although I have wondered how dank a prison would be in Australia, this is the brief that I am working to.⁵

I have decided to use dry ice as a means of creating the 'dankness' of the prison but only a thin layer needs to be produced as the actors are chained and probably sitting on the ground and I do not want to choke them or obscure their faces. This will take fine-tuning.⁶ The scene is relatively short and the 'rising damp' effect that I wish to create will have dispersed in time for the scene change to Phillip's tent. I think it would also be useful in creating a night-time atmosphere to incorporate a 'practical' of a lantern on stage. This would be a replica of the style of lantern used in the late 1700s and would have to be battery operated (for safety) and probably hung from a part of the set, above the 'action'.⁷

I want the rest of the stage to be largely blacked out and use pin spots on each of the speaking characters, shone from above the actors' heads with a steep top light to create shadows on their faces and suggest the malnutrition that they have suffered in the colony. Added to this, although perhaps a lighting designer's cliché, I would use the gobo of prison bars that help to define the cramped space of the prison and add to the mood of claustrophobia and depression.⁸

1. Secure understanding.

2. Knowledge.

3. Focus on mood.

4. Clear on.

5. Fair point.

6. Aware of practical implications.

7. Justified suggestions and some creativity; reference to period.

8. A reasonable idea – cliché is acknowledged but this is a valid solution.

Comments

9. The question refers to lighting or sound.

For sound, I would have a constant drip, drip of water hitting a metal bucket and this should also support the 'dank' atmosphere required. I would imagine that all crude prison buildings in the Georgian period, whatever the country, would attract rats as there is bound to be some food stored there. I would add in the odd rat squeak and pitter-patter of rats' feet for additional horror for the audience.⁹

As the play is set near the ocean, it might also be useful to use an occasional crashing wave effect to signify the freedom outside the prison and contrast it with the lack of liberty within and the atmosphere of confinement. It is night-time, so the tropical birds that would have been heard during the day will have fallen silent and there is no need to include them.

All in all, my technical design ideas should support the varied moods and atmospheres of this short extract.

Word Count: 650

Quotations: 0

Commentary

The student's ideas are focused on the question and they are generally quite creative. The student sets out appropriate intentions and ideas are unified and workable, if a little narrow in focus. The question asks for attention to either lighting **or** sound. The student has dealt with both, but the attention to lighting is the more significant portion of the answer and so this is the part of the answer that has been credited.

AO3

The answer is focused and considered and includes some creative ideas that are consonant with (and make productive reference to) the play as a whole. Some consideration of the epic style is included. There is also brief reference to period. Text is referred to, rather than quoted, and it supports the answer.

Band: Band 4

Example 13

Comments

Cloud Nine – Caryl Churchill

19 Answer all parts of this question. You must make specific reference to the social, cultural and/or historical context of *Cloud Nine* in your answers and ensure that your interpretative ideas are appropriate to the play as a whole.

19.1 Explain and justify how you would direct the performers playing Victoria and Lin from **line 38** to **line 119** of the printed extract in order to develop an appropriate performance style for this part of the extract.

Example response

The most appropriate performance style for Act One of *Cloud Nine* is comical parody as almost all of the action is totally ridiculous and an exaggerated style is needed. Act Two is different. The style of the interaction between Victoria and Lin is naturalistic.¹

The scene is interior but it is a play hut so not very fancy, I would have the set of the hut trucked on and there would be a row of institution type plastic chairs in blue plastic for the mothers to sit on. I would have Victoria and Lin sat on two of the chairs centre stage facing the audience there will be the bags and coats of other mothers on some of the other chairs, also lots of big plastic toys such as a toy cooker and a toy car. There would also be a painting table stage left and a small coat stand next to it with plastic aprons on it for the children to wear at the hobby table.²

All of these setting items will help to create a realistic setting for this part of the play.³

At line 38, Cathy has gone out leaving the two mothers alone. Lin fancies Victoria and her motivation in this scene is to persuade Victoria to go out with her; she wants to seduce her even though it is obvious that Victoria is in an okay marriage and is not really interested in having sex with a woman. But she isn't shocked when Lin tells her she fancies her. I would direct Victoria to say 'What?' as if she didn't hear what Lin said rather than in a shocked way.⁴

Victoria isn't shocked by the idea of going 'to the movies' she doesn't seem to understand that Lin has an ulterior motive in taking her to the movies and she wants to know what the film is.⁵

I would direct Lin to be perfectly natural asking Victoria out and I would tell her to look closely at Victoria's reactions although Victoria is able to read her book, talk to Lin and supervise her child's play all at the same time.⁶

I would direct Lin to have a warm tone of admiration when she says 'Like your shoes, Victoria' and smile and nod in appreciation of Victoria's taste.⁷

When Victoria talks about the Swedish ban on 'war toys' she would do so seriously but naturalistically; she is more middle-class than Lin who seems quite common from the way she talks to her daughter.⁸

1. This could be further explored.

2. This is relevant to establishing the context and a realistic style although the focus of the question is on directing the actors.

3. Fine.

4. One direction here and some description of the situation.

5. No direction here.

6. Limited direction.

7. This line is not in the stipulated part of the extract.

8. A rather vague direction although the point about class could be made relevant.

When she says about her husband not hitting harder, I would want her to say it quite matter of fact whereas Victoria will look shocked as she is not used to domestic violence.⁹

When Lin says 'I hate men' I want her say is with real feeling.¹⁰ Victoria again offers quite a rational, middle class response about taking a 'historical perspective' but Lin says angrily 'I just hate the bastards'.¹¹

I would leave a pause here for comic effect before Victoria says neutrally, 'Well it's a point of view'.¹²

Word Count: 506

Quotations: 7

Commentary

The student's ideas are straightforward but often tend towards a literary rather than a practical based answer. The section on the set helps to establish a naturalistic setting, although the question requires 'direction of the performers' and this aspect has not been fully developed. A naturalistic style is appropriate for the interaction between Victoria and Lin although perhaps the presence of a four-year old girl being played by a forty-year-old man might merit some comment.

AO3

The answer is only occasionally focused on concrete direction of the performers and creativity in terms of the performers is limited – better on setting. Ideas are loosely appropriate to the play as a whole; little if anything on context and question focus is not consistently secure.

Band: Cusp of Bands 3 and 2

Comments

9. More generalised direction.

10. Not fully clear.

11. Slightly clearer.

12. A little direction here but the student has not brought the answer back to performance style.

Comments

19.2 As a performer, explain and justify how you would perform the role of Cathy in order to reveal your interpretation of the character at this point in the play.

Example response

First of all, you have to remember that Cathy is both 'aged 4' and 'played by a man'. This is quite a difficult character to play for any actor or actress. I would want Cathy to come over as cute – that is how I interpret the character but also she is a bit grotesque.¹

I have decided that she would wear a sundress to play in the park and it would be funny for the audience to see a male actor, who I would see as being about 5 foot ten inches, wearing a short sundress. I would wear shorts under the dress because 'at one point, I am sprawled on the floor painting with my legs in the air behind me.'²

The stage directions say I am 'clinging' to Lin so I would be sat on the floor next to her chair with my arms round her legs. I would put my free thumb in my mouth. When the scene starts I begin to chant rude songs that I have picked up in the playground. I would emphasise the word 'bum' in the 'bubblegum song and laugh in a babyish way after saying it. I would also look up at my 'mum' to see if she was going to be cross with me.'³

When Lin asks me to do a painting, I will pull a rude face and answer her back, 'You do a painting'⁴ and make a raspberry sound, because as I interpret Cathy, she needs attention from her mother who just doesn't give it to her.'⁵

I will squabble with Lin as if she was just another kid but when she says there is nobody on the big bike I will look out at the playground and yell 'Yes!' and run off because I want to go on the bike.'⁶

I will come back in to the hut when Vicky says, 'I suppose I'm very lucky with Martin'. Neither Lin nor Victoria take any notice of me then. I will start painting with my mouth open in concentration,⁷ but not wearing the apron and I am quite contented doing this because my mother has not asked me to do it.

I interpret Cathy as an unfortunate child who has no Dad and is in an unconventional family.'⁸

Word Count: 380

Quotations: 6

1. These ideas about the character need to be justified.

2. This is reasonable in terms of maintaining modesty but a sundress is not apt for this extract set in winter.

3. Fair point but not developed.

4. Fine.

5. More justification needed.

6. Lacks performance detail.

7. A detail.

8. Although the interpretation is appropriate it has not been justified.

Commentary

This is quite a short answer which lacks justification for the offered ideas.

The student's ideas are not inappropriate but they are under-developed and insufficiently linked to text. Some misreading of the extract's setting in winter.

AO3

Although there is some evidence of straightforward knowledge, ideas lack support and detail. There is negligible evidence of understanding the social, historical context of the play and the purpose of the cross-gender and 'cross-generational' casting is not considered or commented upon. Reference to the text is loosely appropriate but incomplete.

Band: Cusp Bands 2 and 3

Comments

19.3 As a designer, outline your costume **or** set design ideas for this extract. Explain and justify how these would help to establish the change in period from Act One.

Example response

The period in Act Two of *Cloud Nine* is set in the 'present tense' which for Caryl Churchill, when she wrote it was 1979. I think it is important to stick to this period for Act Two, because much of what happens in it and the whole topic of sexual orientation as discussed in the Act is rooted in the late seventies attitudes towards marriage, homosexuality and lesbianism.¹

Cathy



The first important costume is for Cathy who is played by a male actor. In the original production, this actor was Anthony Sher.

I have researched the type of 'everyday clothes' that girls wore in 1979 and based my design on that. I have incorporated a 'pig-tails' style wig.²

The dress is cotton and I have chosen a pink and white gingham material. The dress is short and should be worn with lycra shorts underneath to protect the actor's modesty as he sits on the floor at Lin's feet at first with his legs sticking out in front of him.

The 'sun-dress' style is especially 'cute' and this will add to the comedy as the arms are bare and will be masculine.³

This outfit will clearly signal that we are no longer in the Victorian era.⁴

For accessories, Cathy wears pink ribbons in her hair and would wear white shoes with a bar across.⁵

Victoria will look nothing like a 'Victorian' woman. She is smart and 'trendy' for the time. Lin comments on Victoria's shoes before she tells her that she 'fancies' her; I see Victoria as quite stylish. She has auburn hair in a modern (seventies) flicked-up style – like Emma Peel.⁶

She would wear a cream chiffon shirt under an orange and cream striped belted tunic top. Orange was a very fashionable colour in the seventies.

I have also given her coffee coloured flared trousers which would be in one of the 'synthetic' materials like crimpelene that were also popular in the seventies.⁷

She has on canvas, open-toed sandals in matching coffee colour and I have given her the accessory of sun-glasses as she is quite a sophisticated character.⁸

1. Fair point.

2. Pig-tails are apt.

3. The extract is set in winter so the strappy sun-dress is not an appropriate costume, although aim is apt.

4. Question focus.

5. Accessories are apt but white shoes suggest summer time.

6. Possible apt.

7. Evidence of research into fabrics and colours of the seventies, although Betty comments on Victoria's skirt and shoes, so perhaps trousers not an apt choice.

8. Unlikely to wear open-toe or sunglasses in winter.

Comments

9. Question focus here.

10. Thoughtful approach which does refer to the question demand.

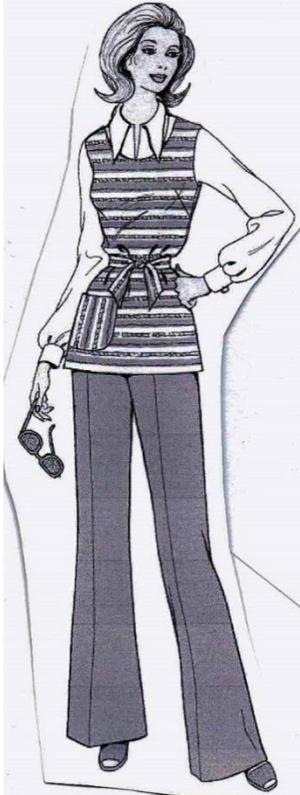
11. Some detail here.

12. Apt.

13. Apart from the short sleeves, this looks to be an appropriate outfit.

14. Focus on question.

This is a casual outfit as both Victoria and Lin are attending a children's' activity club. Victoria was only a child in Act One (aged 2) and was played by a 'dummy'. I would have designed a typical Victorian child's dress for the dummy involving layers of flouncy white and pink lacy material, so the shift into the 1970s will be very clear for the audience.⁹



Lin is another young mother and a completely new character to the play in her appearance in Act Two. There is no need to surprise the audience by the change in costume but her costume needs to reflect the nineteen seventies and to suggest her sexuality as she confesses to Victoria that she fancies her and also states quite starkly that she is a lesbian.¹⁰

The fact that she comments on Victoria's shoes suggests to me that she likes nice looking clothes although she is probably more 'masculine' in her choice of clothes.

I have Lin with short dark hair that is layered at the back and sides but still quite full on the crown.

I have designed a stylish pair of dungarees with prominent stitching. She is quite discriminating I think. She is wearing a blue gingham checked shirt with short sleeves and an open collar. I have also added a neck scarf, in royal blue, which I think adds a masculine hint.¹¹

The gingham patterned shirt ties her to Cathy.

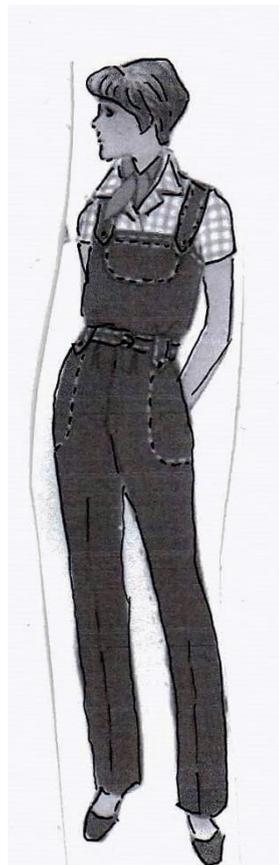
The dungarees are denim which was fashionable in the seventies and again adds a slightly androgynous look to the outfit.¹²

She cares about shoes, so I have given her blue suede flatties.¹³

I think that, overall, my costumes shout nineteen seventies, the colour palette, fabrics selected, and the cut and the lines of each costume have been carefully researched and are all authentic to the period.

I think these costumes will certainly help to demonstrate the shift in time from Act One to Act Two as well as indicating something of the characters of Victoria and Lin.¹⁴

Cathy's costume can be exploited for comedy.



Word Count: 692

Quotations: 0

Commentary

The student's ideas appear to be considered and they are focused on creating the nineteen seventies period through costume design. The costumes are described quite well and relate to the characters in the scene but there is some carelessness in setting the extract in the summer. Lin's costume is the most appropriate for the character. Victoria's costume is fine apart from the sandals and sunglasses. Cathy's costume is not really apt for a winter's day.

The sketches clarify the ideas that are outlined in the answer and help to confirm the potential of the designs to create an appropriate period.

AO3

The answer offers quite creative ideas which are consonant with the characters if not the winter setting. There is some reference to cultural context (Lin) and period and the sketches are appropriate to the task.

Band: Band 4 (low)

Example 14

Comments

Brontë – Polly Teale

20 Answer all parts of this question. You must make specific reference to the social, cultural and/or historical context of *Brontë* in your answers and ensure that your interpretative ideas are appropriate to the play as a whole.

20.1 Explain and justify how you would direct the performers from **line 1 to line 32** of the extract in order to demonstrate the tensions in the Brontë household.

Example response

Brontë is Polly Teale's imaginative reconstruction of life at the Brontë parsonage in Haworth, Yorkshire. Time is handled fluidly in this play and the action moves back and forth from the childhood of the Brontës' to their 'adulthood' and ends with Charlotte's death. The time period covered is the early part of the nineteenth century from around 1820 to 1855. The play is also peopled with characters from the Brontës' novels who have assumed lives of their own and who interact with the writers in moments of expressionistic energy.¹

The printed extract follows a tense moment between Charlotte and Emily about the care of their father, Patrick, who is going blind and has become confined to the house. Like many ordinary sisters, Charlotte and Emily disagree and they are each fairly territorial and protective about him.²

Emily's line just before the extract begins is taunting and callous as she tells Charlotte, 'We managed for a year without you'.³

This extract begins with the physical follow-through to that dismissive line so I would direct Emily to snatch the dog-lead from one of the many hooks on the kitchen door and ask her to fold it and then hit it against her skirt as an outlet for her anger at Charlotte who begins wiping the table energetically as if she, too, has nervous energy to spend. These actions will help to demonstrate the tension at this point.⁴

I would direct Charlotte to stop suddenly, mid 'wipe', and wheel round to face her sister who has already whistled to her dog, unnecessarily loudly. I will ask her to throw down the cloth that she had been using to wipe the table, in a further angry gesture and face Emily directly, chin up and ready for a challenge. I want her to say her speech, here, quite bitterly.⁵

She starts defensively however, saying 'It was not my choice to go away' in an even tone, before remembering all she has done to protect Emily's freedom and rushing through the rest of the speech with emphasis on 'every moment' 'spoilt child' and 'miserable baby'. Then⁶ I would have some of her anger drain away and she grasps Emily's hand when she says, plaintively, 'I did it for you' and then adding, in a more conciliatory tone, 'that you might not be parted from what you must have'.

1. Some sense of period and style here.

2. Context to the extract.

3. As is this.

4. Good focus.

5. Apt.

6. How?

I would direct Charlotte to look directly into Emily's eyes here, holding her hand quite tenderly. However, to further demonstrate the tension, I would have Emily snatch her hand away from Charlotte's grasp, abruptly, saying, 'Then let me go to it' in a frustrated tone and turning towards the door to escape from her sister.⁷

At this point the door opens and I want the opening of the door to make both sisters flinch as they are afraid of their father especially when he is angry. I want him to look stern and forbidding here with his clerical collar tight at his throat and his stick grasped tightly in his hand as he uses it to feel his way into the room. This is the first time the audience has seen Patrick and I wish the impression to be intimidating and for the sisters to exchange nervous glances, showing the tension in the house.⁸

Patrick does not need to raise his voice to make his presence felt and I would have him say 'Why are there voices raised in my kitchen?' with a voice full of incredulity and stressing the word 'my' to impress upon the girls whose house it is.⁹

When Charlotte tries to tell her father that he should not have stirred himself, Patrick will snap impatiently, waving his stick in Charlotte's direction as he snaps, 'I should. I should not' he is angry with his daughters and refused to be ordered about by them despite his growing infirmity. When he demands, 'What was (the quarrel) about?' I would direct the actor to face first Emily and then Charlotte and then back to Emily with a stern facial expression.¹⁰

When Charlotte volunteers that they were arguing about what to serve their returning brother and sister for dinner, Patrick harshly cuts her off mid-speech. I would have Patrick spit out the line, 'Go and lay a fire in my study' pointing at Charlotte but not looking at her, fixing his attention on Emily.¹¹

I would have a pause then, full of tension as Charlotte sweeps out of the room darting one resentful look at Emily.¹²

When Patrick reaches out to touch the manuscript that Emily is holding, I would have her flinch and this arouses Patrick's curiosity. I would have him ask with pointed interest, 'What are you reading?' and when Emily simply says, 'a book' I would have him twitch with impatience.¹³

If I directed the actors in this way, I think I would succeed in demonstrating some of the tensions in the Brontë household.

Word Count: 819

Quotations: 14

Comments

7. This is detailed and creative work.

8. Good.

9. Very clear and focused.

10. Good and full of tension.

11. Apt.

12. Apt.

13. Still apt.

Commentary

This is an assured and perceptive response to the question. There is some useful context here and evidently well-developed knowledge and understanding of how to create tension on stage.

AO3

The answer is assured and knowledgeable; ideas reflect a perceptive understanding of the relationship between Charlotte and Emily at this point in the play. A highly creative interpretation of the section with discriminating selection of text to support.

Band: Band 5

Comments

20.2 As a performer, explain and justify how you would perform the role of Emily in this extract in order to create your preferred audience response to the character.

Example response

Emily is the strangest of the Brontë sisters, she is a loner and rebellious and is the feistiest of the sisters. I would play her, generally, as sullen but, in this scene, she is both angry and when with her father more passive than usual.¹

The extract begins with Emily's anger at her sister for quizzing her over the care of their father.²

When Charlotte is complaining about what it was like to be a governess, I would roll my eyes and tap my foot impatiently. When Charlotte takes my hand on the line 'I did it for you', I would let her hold it briefly before snatching it away and snapping, 'Then let me go to it', stressing the phrase 'let me go' as this is really what I want, to escape Charlotte's cloying companionship.³

When Patrick enters, I say nothing, dropping my eyes while he fumes about being ordered about. When Charlotte tells him that I have made soup, I would glare at her ferociously, but say nothing; the audience would see me physically biting my lip to stop myself from bursting out with something that would annoy my father.⁴

After Charlotte has left us, I would sigh audibly with relief but when Patrick touches the manuscript, I would flinch.⁵

I am a little in awe of my father but I still feel able to be obstinate with him, when he asks what I am reading, I only say, softly, 'a book'. I will not tell him that the book is my own and that I am still writing it. I answer Patrick's question about the book in flat monosyllabic tones.⁶

However, when I begin to read from my book my tone becomes animated and when Cathy appears and speaks the lines of the novel with me, my face lights up and I begin to enjoy the unfolding story.⁷

When Patrick interrupts, saying, 'you are right, it is unusual' I would stop, mid-sentence and nod sullenly, the reverie over.⁸

Word Count: 331

Quotations: 4

1. General points but they are apt.

2. Context.

3. The snatching of the hand is perhaps more appropriate than the eye-rolling here.

4. Good performance suggestions; audience response would be what?

5. Apt.

6. OK.

7. It would be useful to have some of the lines here.

8. Apt, but not linked to the precise demands of the question.

Commentary

This is a relatively short answer; the answers to 20.1 and 20.3 are both considerably longer and more carefully developed. The student's ideas appear to be considered and they are focused on performance ideas for Emily in the extract. However, the question specifically asks for ideas to be justified as well as demanding that the given ideas should be linked specifically to creating a specific audience response to Emily. This aspect of the question has not been addressed.

The suggestions given are mainly appropriate for Emily (eye-rolling perhaps rather out of keeping with the period) but they have not been justified in terms of the preferred audience response to Emily, which has not been identified.

AO3

The answer is quite creative but does not address the demands of the question explicitly; ideas are consonant with the play as a whole but are only loosely appropriate because of the lack of focus on the question; use of text is appropriate.

Band: Band 3/4 cusp

Comments

20.3 As a designer, outline your costume **or** set design ideas for this extract. Explain and justify how these would help to create the appropriate period and production style at this point in the play.

Example response

The play is set in the early part of the nineteenth century and the sisters' lives are domesticated and ordinary so the costumes that they wear will be homely rather than extravagant. All three sisters live to a tight budget which would be reflected in the condition of the costumes.¹ Although the style of the play is expressionistic rather than naturalistic, I would want the costumes to look authentic to the period.

Charlotte



Charlotte's costume would be a light grey colour, it would be full length with an integrated bodice and full skirt, with pin tucks at the waist. It would be made of a blend of wool and linen. A small amount of lace at the throat and slight 'leg o mutton' sleeves with tapered cuffs would indicate that she is the daughter of a gentleman.²

I have researched the costumes of the period and have incorporated a little pleated detail on the bodice of the dress; the fake pearl buttoned front leads up to a small velvet bow beneath an attached cotton collar in white.

Around the hem of the skirt there is a plain braided decoration.³

Charlotte is also wearing low-heeled black leather boots, which she would have needed to walk on the unmade up roads that were characteristic of rural Yorkshire (indeed of rural anywhere) in the early nineteenth century.⁴

A woman of the Brontës' class would have had her clothes made especially

for her but possibly would get a new dress only once or twice a year. She would probably have a dress for everyday and a slightly smarter dress, perhaps made with silk for Sunday 'best'.⁵

As Charlotte has been a governess, I have decided that she would be wearing one of the dresses that she had made for her to suit that position.

In the Haworth museum there are a number of dresses that are said to have been Charlotte's and this design is similar to a photograph that I have seen of Charlotte's clothes.⁶

1. Reasonable point and focus is on period and style.

2. Social milieu considered.

3. Costume has the look of authenticity about it.

4. Historical context.

5. Knowledge.

6. Some research asserted.

Comments

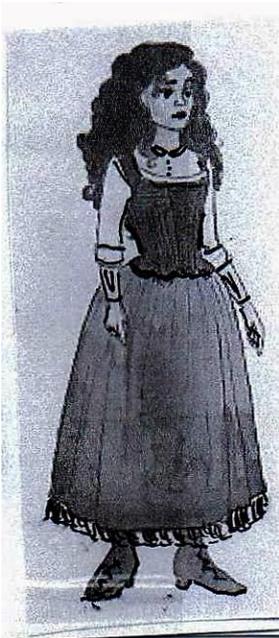
As Charlotte's father was the clergyman, she would not be shabby, despite the limited budget that is mentioned in the play.⁷

Patrick's costume would be a black woollen jacket with wide revers, black trousers and shoes and a grey double-breasted waistcoat. He would wear stocks (like a scarf twisted around the neck under the shirt or his clerical collar (dog collar) at his throat. The clerical collar would be stiffened white cotton with two short 'ties'. He would not be shabby but is evidently not a showy man and wears plain rather than patterned materials; he would have a pocket watch of the period attached to his jacket lapel.⁸

Emily is a slightly feistier character and I have reflected that in her costume, although it still retains features of nineteenth century conservatism.

According to Polly Teale, Emily refused to wear a corset or petticoats so she needs to look different from the other sisters.⁹ Emily's costume, as I envisage it consists of an olive green bodice with a slight peplum over a cream blouse with three-quarter length cuffs. The full skirt is dark green with a slightly pin-tucked waist, typical of the early nineteenth century.

Emily



I have also given her black boots with small heels and laces. When she gets ready to go out in this extract she would put on a woollen cloak that ties at the throat and has a hood.¹⁰

I have sketched her with her hair down for this scene but that is so the audience can recognise her rebellious streak and associate her with the 'creature' of her imagination, Cathy Earnshaw.

Emily would probably have worn her hair in a bun in the house, possibly letting it down on the moors. I am using dramatic licence here, as I want the character of Cathy to mirror Emily, when she appears in this extract and this is acceptable in terms of the expressionistic style that Polly Teale has created.¹¹

The character of Cathy (as well as the characters of Heathcliff, Rochester, Bertha and Arthur Huntington) appear as emanations of the Brontë sisters' psyches, throughout the play, and therefore it is clear that a non-naturalistic approach to costume – especially for the fictional 'phantoms' is appropriate.¹²

The Cathy that appears here is the tormented one, now married to the wealthy Edgar Linton. Cathy is in a feverish state and later in the scene she rips open a pillow and is counting the feathers, obsessively identifying all the birds that she has seen in their habitat around the parsonage.

7. Link to text.

8. A fair summary description of Patrick's costume.

9. The sketch suggests a corset but this is a fair point.

10. Text refers to a shawl but this is a small point.

11. The idea has been justified.

12. Reference to the style of the play.

Comments

Cathy



Cathy will be in a nightdress of the period; her hair is down, curly and wild. The nightdress will be made of cambric and will have embroidery round the neckline and the cuffs and the hem. I will also add some deep pink ribbon at these points, too, as this was typical of the nightwear of a fine lady in the nineteenth century.¹³

Because the play is a reimagining of the Brontës' lives and which opens with a scene in which twenty first century actresses are getting into their costumes on stage and talking objectively about the Brontë sisters, I think it is acceptable to present Emily as slightly more feisty than her sisters. Cathy appears as a character out of fiction, so her slightly idealised appearance also suits the production

13. This is apt to the married Cathy.

14. Clear justification in terms of production style.

style of the play.¹⁴

Word Count: 889

Quotations: 0

Commentary

The student's ideas appear to be considered and they are focused on creating period through costume design. There is also some thoughtful reference to production style. Patrick's costume has been described rather than sketched but this is acceptable.

The sketches clarify the ideas that are outlined in the answer and help to confirm the potential of the designs to create an appropriate period. The sketches for Cathy and Charlotte convey period and the social milieu of the play more convincingly than the sketch of Emily.

AO3

The answer offers quite creative ideas which are consonant with the play as a whole, some reference to context and period and the sketches are fully appropriate to the task. Perhaps a little more on production style would be helpful.

Band: Band 4/5 cusp

Section C: Live theatre production

Example 15

- 21 Briefly explain how live and/or recorded sound was used to create or change the mood or atmosphere at particular moments. Analyse and evaluate how this contributed to the total dramatic effectiveness of the production.

Example response

On the 7th March, this year, I went to see *The Women in Black* at the Lowry Theatre in Manchester. The play is a ghost story and follows the Hauntings of Eel Marsh house by a mysterious ghost named 'The Woman in Black', the play was directed by Robin Herford.¹ I felt that Ron Mead, the sound-engineer created interesting and vividly engaging and frequently changing atmospheres which made me, as part of the audience, feel suspense, fear and horror, which are all apt moods and atmospheres for a ghost story.²

Ron Mead cleverly achieved the different moods required by the Meta-theatre nature of the production, as the story was performed from a 'play within a play' perspective. Ron Mead used subtle yet musically brilliant audio sound effect throughout.³

At various points in the production, the actors would actually acknowledge and gesture out to the 'sound engineer' to cue specific music; drawing attention to the theatricality of the performance which was a 're-enactment' of events. This, I thought, was very effective in changing the mood on stage because when the actors cued some of the sound effects, it reminded the audience that we are in a theatre and watching a performance.⁴ This added to the total effectiveness of the production as some of the sounds cued seemed 'artificial' while others seemed entirely real.⁵ For example, at the beginning of the play, the sound effects were supporting the idea that this was a 're-enactment' of events whereas whenever the 'woman in black' made an appearance, the sound became distinctly realistic and frightening.

The first moment in which I thought a successful atmosphere was created was near the beginning of the play. Previous to this scene, the character Kipps has been approached by a character called 'Actor', seeking performance advice to allow him to tell of his experiences at Eel Marsh house. In⁶ this specific scene Kipps and 'Actor' are re-creating the first part of the story which is set in a solicitor's office. Kipps asks 'Actor' who is playing his boss (Mr Bentley in the story) about the owner of Eel Marsh house (Mrs Drablow). He then asks 'has she got children?' Immediately on this line Ron Mead introduced a very sudden chime of a grand-father clock, (which is been ticking away in the background previous to this). The chime was very loud and was cued exactly on 'children'. Reverb⁷ was added to give an echoing effect. This really emphasised the word 'children' and made me very unsettled and tense as the change in volume created an eerie atmosphere tinged with sense of foreboding.⁸ This type of effect created by the sound designer made a massive contribution to the success of the production as a whole, which depended upon an audience susceptible to tension and fear.⁹

Comments

1. Useful reference to the style of the play.

2. Good focus on sound and atmosphere and there is implicit evaluation here.

3. Assertion which needs more detailed support.

4. An example would be helpful here.

5. Question focus and analysis.

6. This is useful context.

7. Useful reference to a precise, particular moment here.

8. Useful linking of sound effect and atmosphere.

9. Evaluates in terms of whole production effect.

In the second scene, Ron Mead very much impressed me with his skills as a sound designer by creating a vivid and almost naturalistic atmosphere of a busy London street. Here we find the character Kipps and the Actor discussing how they will go about creating the start of the ghost story. Ron Mead used a brilliant sound-scape. By layering textures of the mumbles and voices of people passing by, showed the huge number of people in a London street. Whilst having the footsteps of horses' hooves, representing the nineteenth century horses and carriages passing by. By using a muffled quality to the sound, it captured a real sense of a busy London street in the hustle and bustle of the day which created a very busy atmosphere and sense of period.¹⁰

Another impressive moment in terms of sound, was the moment 'Is there a family grave?' – here Kipps has travelled to Eel Marsh and is attending the funeral of Mrs Drablow (Woman in Black) as he is charged with accounting for her possessions as instructed by Mr Bentley.¹¹ Here Ron Mead successfully established brilliantly the location of a grave-yard by using a sound-scape of cawing crows and low pitched strings. The cawing slowly was panned into 'surround sound' speakers which totally immersed me in this graveyard location.¹² At the same time cello strings subtly and slowly swept in, in the background of cawings of the crows, using minor keys and discordant notes. This created a really ominous and gloomy atmosphere which in turn made me feel very spooked and uneasy as the air of death in the graveyard unnerved me; effects like this fully supported the scary atmosphere that was essential in keeping the audience fearful and anxious – a key factor in a ghost story.¹³

Another great moment was later on in the scene where Kipps chooses to go to sleep at Eel Marsh house in order for him save time travelling to and from Mrs Drablow's house, as he has an excessive amount of items that all need tending to. Here Kipps sets up a bed CS. He pulls a blanket over himself and drifts off to sleep. The use of 'quiet' here – as part of the sound design – lulls the audience into a false sense of security – essential for the shock effect to come. The lights darken and the moon light dimly shines through the cracks of the windows. At this point which I found was highly successful was Ron Mead's simple introduction of dull thudding noises.¹⁴

Ron Mead steadily faded the sound up into the audience's hearing; it had a fast paced rhythm and the thud repeated. Also the thud was muffled using an EQ device in which the frequency wave length was made longer whilst also adding a pitch limiter. This allowed for a dull and muffled thudding sound that we heard; Ron Mead also panned the sound on to speakers about the stage, which made it sound as if the thudding noise was coming from upstairs. This¹⁵ was so simple yet brilliant as it still makes the hairs stand up on the back of my neck.¹⁶ Ron Mead made me shiver in fear as I believed that the Women in Black was creeping up and down upstairs in the house. I also felt very tense as the suspense of the scene built with the sound effect and the actor was looking around the house in fear.¹⁷

Comments

10. Another clear example with evaluation of success.

11. Another precisely identified moment.

12. Some useful technical detail here and the moment is well described.

13. Evaluation.

14. Useful context to the sound effect.

15. Technical awareness.

16. Personal response.

17. Good focus on question.

Comments

18. Focus on question.

19. Some analysis and evaluation here, as well as in the body of the response.

In this production, the sound effects were one of the most effective ways of controlling the audience's response to the unfolding ghost story and definitely contributed to the total dramatic effectiveness of the play.¹⁸ Because we were aware that the play was in fact 'within a play' it would have been easy to have felt removed from the action, but Ron Mead's manipulation of mood and atmosphere through carefully cued music and controlled sound effects meant that we were sucked into the story.

The actors were outstanding in making us believe in the reality of certain aspects of the story. For example, their mimed reactions to 'Spider' the dog, who the audience never sees, but believes in because the actors convince us he is real by synchronizing their eye-lines to focus on him and each clearly envisaged the same size dog in exactly the same spot on stage. The play clearly would not have worked without the actors; however, in terms of creating the eerie mood, from the ghostly rocking of the chair that sounded like a heartbeat to the circling crows in the grave-yard, for me it was the sound designer who knew how to terrify the audience. Another sound effect, of course was the sound of our own racing hearts and screams from various members of the audience. A successful production all round, but amplified by the sound design.¹⁹

Word Count: 1267

Quotations: 0

Commentary

This answer is a very clear response to the demands of the question. We are told exactly where and when the production was seen. There is useful context offered for the particular moments from production where sound was used; these are identified very clearly. The student offers brief but useful explanation of who the 'characters' are and what is actually happening on stage when the sound effects are used. The student writes enthusiastically about the skills of the designer, who is referred to by name throughout.

AO3

Assured knowledge and perceptive understanding of the style and form of the production with many purposeful references to the aims of the production team as expressed through artistic choices made by the sound designer. Sound theoretical understanding of the aims of the designer and team. Technical vocabulary is used in an assured way.

Band: Band 5

AO4

The production is an appropriate one for this question and the student offers precise details about the effects that were created at particular moments. The answer is personal and enthusiastic and offers perceptive evaluation and analysis of how the sound design contributed to the total effectiveness of the piece.

Band: Band 5

Example 16

- 22 Briefly explain the effects created by a non-naturalistic approach to costume design at particular moments. Analyse and evaluate how this contributed to the total dramatic effectiveness of the production by referring to **two** or **three** specific designs.

Example response

The production that I saw where the designer took a non-naturalistic approach was *A Midsummer Night's Dream* which I saw as an open air production in July 2015 at Chepstow Castle. The designer, Molly Dyer, took an unusual approach in her presentation of the fairies; the non-naturalistic design added to the comedy of the play.¹

The role of Puck was played by a woman, Susie Jones, and she was presented to be in a very close relationship with Oberon and always seemed to be trying to seduce him.²



This was made extra comical by her costume which was a cross between a cow-girl and a buffalo!

She wore a hat that appeared to be made of leather (cow-girl) but also had animal horns protruding from the side (buffalo).³

She had a black leather jerkin on with feathered 'wings' attached to the shoulders and along with all the other fairies, she wore metal bracelets on her wrist.

Another design theme shared by all the fairies was a 'lacing' effect that looked like thin leather strands or thongs. Puck's lacing was across the chest of her rather revealing leather bodice top; which was actually later revealed to be a leotard.

Sometimes Puck carried and used a lasso, also to comic effect, as when she captured Bottom to put his 'ass-head' on.⁴

All the fairies also wore eye masks like 'The Lone Ranger' and Puck was no exception.⁵

Puck's 'skirt was also a mix of human and animal. It began at the waist with a tartan patterned skirt in black and yellow. As Oberon also wore a long tailcoat in the same coloured tartan, this skirt looked as if it was a part of the Fairy King's servant's uniform. Protruding from under this skirt was what could only be described as a furry fringed petticoat with

fringes that were uneven in length but, at their longest point, reached Puck's calves.⁶

Puck also wore high heeled cow-boy boots and furry socks!

Comments

1. Focus on a non-naturalistic approach to costume design as well as to the effects created by it.

2. Some useful information.

3. The sketch is helpful in clarifying this rather impressionistic description.

4. A 'theme' is emerging.

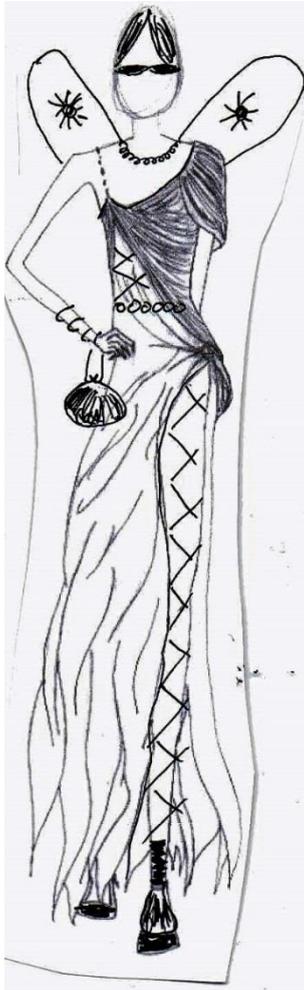
5. For any particular effect?

6. Clear on sketch.

The audience found Puck's costume hilarious, especially at the point where Puck has rounded up all the lovers (using the lasso) and they are lying on the ground.⁷

After putting the magic juice into Lysander's eyes, Puck looked as if she was going to leave them to sleep on the cold ground, then she came back, whipped off her 'skirt' and covered the sleeping lovers with it like a blanket and tucked them in gently. This was when we realised that her skirt was a blanket and that one of the furry 'fringes' of her petticoat was actually a 'tail' which was attached to her rear: – more buffalo!⁸

Another character whose costume was non-naturalistic, was Titania. She wore a customised multi-coloured evening dress with large chiffon wings attached at the back.



The main bodice of the dress was in a ruched silky material which fell from the left shoulder, this left hand side had a draped cap sleeve and the whole of the 'bodice' was in shades of purple and blue that seemed to merge together under the lights. The skirt of the dress was in shades of yellow and orange so the overall effect was of a walking rainbow; the fabric looked very fluid.⁹

The skirt was slit to the thigh and under the skirt, Titania wore criss-crossed 'fish-net' style tights.

Her 'Lone Ranger' mask was narrow and orange coloured and her platform soled boots were also bright orange. She had a little pouch handbag in flaming orange silk and this had a mirror and lipstick in it which she used during her first confrontation with Oberon.¹⁰

She re-applied her lipstick carefully while Oberon was accusing her of loving Theseus; then, when he had finished speaking, she did not immediately reply. Instead she carefully put the cap back on her lipstick and put her lipstick and mirror back in the pouch bag which she snapped shut with a satisfying click before telling him, in a sultry voice, 'These are the forgeries of jealousy'.

The audience found this hilarious.¹¹

Another effect created by Titania's costume was her use of her wings which were mainly a translucent cream with a motif of a sunflower in the centre of each wing. I am not sure how she did it, but these wings were capable of flapping gently and when she did this movement, when she was firing her insults at Oberon, it was amazingly funny for the audience.¹²

All in all, the designer's contribution to the total effectiveness of the production was really strong and the quirky 'cow-boy meets fairy meets animal' theme worked really well to create comedy for the audience.

Comments

7. A moment.

8. The effect is clear.

9. The student uses descriptive ideas well to convey a sense of the production.

10. Another helpful sketch.

11. An effect although possibly more to do with the actor than the costume.

12. Better.

Word Count: 767

Quotations: 0

Commentary

This is a focused response to the demands of the question with evidence of thoughtful consideration of the effects created by the non-naturalistic design.

The student writes enthusiastically about the effects created by the designs and has included two clear and helpful sketches to support the answer.

AO3

Focused knowledge and understanding of the contribution of a non-naturalistic costume design; there is some reference to the style of production but this aspect could have been further developed. The student could have considered the aims of the production team a little more fully. Focused attention is given to how meaning was created through design, however.

Band: Band 4

AO4

The student refers in detail to design elements for two characters and also refers to particular moments in the production when these designs were used effectively.

The answer is personal and enthusiastic and offers some considered evaluation and analysis of how the designs contributed to the total effectiveness of the production.

Scope for further development.

Band: Mid Band 4

Example 17

Comments

- 23** Briefly explain the effects created by the performers' use of physical skills at particular moments. Analyse and evaluate how the performers' physical work contributed to the total dramatic effectiveness of the production.

Example response

The performance I went to see was Frantic Assembly's version of Shakespeare's *Othello* at the Bolton Octagon. The rendition was modernised and was based, not in the Cyprus army but instead following a street gang as they live out their lives. A particular strength the actors showed was the ability to perform in a very physical style and to portray aggressive gang members whilst also not straying too far from Shakespeare's original language.¹

The first moment in which I found the actors to be very effective in their use of physical skills was the first scene; this scene was a movement scene set to music. The male actors (Iago and Montano) were frozen playing pool and the stage was blacked out other than a fruit machine in the corner. This already suggests to the audience that the play is modern.²

When the light fades in the men are playing pool on the pool table and as the dance music reaches its climax they break into a movement part. Both men place the cues behind their heads and slide (one going left, one going right). They then high-five and set the table up for another game. By high-fiving, the actors can keep doing their impressive dancing, whilst also convincing the audience that their characters are tough and masculine.³

At that moment, the female characters rush in and start flirting with the men.⁴ The character of Montano puts his hands out by his side and puffs out his chest, dancing with swagger towards the ladies, a smirk on his face. This, to the audience, gives an impression of a young man who is drunk, getting false confidence and trying to show off to the women. This moment is effective because most people have seen young men act like this.⁵

At the same time, Emilia tries to flirt with Iago while he takes his shot and he misses and gets annoyed and so he pushes her away. The obviously drunk Emilia does not care and stumbles away as Iago shakes his head and scowls.⁶ This is also convincing to the audience because it displays how competitive a man can be with sports and also shows how fickle Iago can be. This idea of Iago constantly being fixed on the pool table can be taken as symbolism showing his attitude towards his relationships with other characters. He plays everyone like a game and the use of a billiard table is interesting imagery especially because of how the white ball pots every ball of its colours and finally pots the black ball, thus linking in with the racial theme in *Othello*.⁷

1. We need a bit more detail about the style of this production.

2. This does not contain any concrete detail about the physical skills, although the student does assert its effectiveness.

3. A movement routine is described but not in much detail.

4. How?

5. Some sense of the actor physicalizing 'bravado' and a little assessment.

6. Some physical business is described here.

7. Interesting point but not related to the question focus.

Comments

8. Focus is on describing some non-verbal work here.

9. Lacks development.

10. Another moment where the actor uses physical skills.

Another moment in this first scene we see characters using their physical skills is when Othello and Desdemona stand embracing in the back corner and Brabantio (Desdemona's father) sits on the sofa in front of them, leaning back with his hand across it. Brabantio looks the other way and shakes his head as if he is disgusted.⁸ This is a convincing relationship for a father to have with his daughter's lover as they are typically more protective. Later on Brabantio refers to Othello as a 'moor' which at the time was a racist term for North Africans. Brabantio may be disgusted because Desdemona is with a black man.⁹

Later on, Iago has a soliloquy in which he talks about his feelings for Cassio and Othello. He scowls and shakes his head saying 'I hate the moor' but he drops the 'h' on 'hate' and pronounces Moor in a Yorkshire accent like 'Moo-er' and he adopts a proud posture and stance so that he outwardly resembles Othello briefly; this is effective because he uses his body to make fun of Othello's noble bearing.¹⁰

Word Count: 618

Quotations: 0

Commentary

This is a very generalised and under-developed response. There is some description of how the chosen moments were performed but with very little purposeful detail about the performers' physical skills. Limited attempt is made to analyse or evaluate the contribution of the performers' skills to the total effectiveness of the production. Many lost opportunities.

AO3

Generalised knowledge and understanding of style; little exploration of the form, style and aims of production

There is an attempt to consider how meaning is created but this is under-developed.

Band: Cusp of Bands 3 and 2

AO4

Generalised analysis with a lack of coherent organisation.

There is limited detail about the physical skills used and appreciation of those skills is generalised; occasional evaluation but this is based on fairly sketchy details of the performers' skills.

Band: Cusp of Bands 3 and 2

Example 18

- 24 Briefly explain the ways in which **one or more** performer(s) used their performance skills in order to convey emotions at particular moments. Analyse and evaluate how this contributed to the total dramatic effectiveness of the production.

Example response

Our Country's Good, Bolton Octagon

Our Country's Good is a play set in 1787 written by Timberlake Wertenbaker about convicts going from England to Australia. It has naturalistic acting with epic theatre conventions such as costume changes on stage. The¹ convicts rehearse for a play, *The Recruiting Officer* in this play and the redemptive power of art changes them into better people and brings the convicts together. I² am going to write about one of the performers, Cairan Owens, who played Major Robbie Ross, a sadistic officer, hostile to the convicts as well as to the Governor's aims to rehabilitate them into society.³

In Act 1 Scene 6, the Authorities discuss the merits of the theatre. All the officers are arguing about *The Recruiting Officer* going ahead, proposed by Ralph. Major Robbie Ross (Cairan Owens) replies to this suggestion with 'And you say you want these contumelious convicts to act in this play. The convicts!' he delivered this line in disbelief and horror to show he despises the idea.⁴ He leant forward on his chair to really address Ralph and be nearer and more threatening, shown through proxemics and an aggressive facial expression. He growled 'The convicts' to himself in a disgusted tone with a lower volume when repeated and had a tone of loathing just thinking about the convicts; facially his brows were furrowed and he shook his head in disbelief.⁵ Owens was fully convincing in conveying his emotion of disgust for the convicts as well as his complete contempt towards Ralph.

Owens' main eye contact was with Ralph to threaten him and make him say 'no' to the play. He clearly loathed the second lieutenant and looked down upon him both as a 'junior' and as a champion for the play. Owens' performance skills were superb and his creation of an aggressive opponent to Ralph contributed to the total effectiveness of the play, since he exuded his feelings of contempt for Ralph whenever they came into contact with one another throughout the play.⁶

In Act 1 Scene 11, in the 'First Rehearsal' Robbie Ross ignores Ralph's authority over the convicts and he spoke to him dismissively; when Ralph objects to the presence of Ross and Campbell telling them that they are interrupting him when he is rehearsing, Owens mimicked Ralph's slightly effeminate tone, exaggerated it and added a lisp when he echoed 'Rehearsing! Rehearsing' then he made a mock curtsy before wheeling round to confront him about the escaped convicts.⁷

Comments

1. More about the acting style would be helpful.

2. Brief context for the performance is given.

3. Useful 'sketch' of Ross.

4. Useful context here.

5. Good detail here.

6. Evaluation but could do with more performance detail.

7. A clear moment explained with precision.

Ross insults each of the would-be actors one by one. Owens said 'Liz Morden, you will be tried for stealing from the stores. You know the punishment? (pause) Death by hanging' which he said by delivering the line with a low volume, with an almost gleeful tone to suggest his sadistic nature. He emphasised 'Know' to show he enjoys knowing her fate, which I personally felt made me hate him more as he enjoys this. His emotion of self-satisfaction was reflected in a sly smile to himself.⁸ He walked straight up to Liz slowly, creating tension and showed that he was pleased to be able to taunt her; he wants a reaction from her by taking long definite strides to make her aware of his presence. He looked at her directly in the eyes, boring into her with an unpleasant hint of a smile. These made the words sound more threatening and personal during the confrontation and I felt horror and shock at his attitude to tormenting the convicts.⁹

The tension that Owens created as he savoured his mental torture of Liz added to the terror of the situation and the fact he enjoys it makes the audience sympathise with Liz. This was really effective in making the audience see things from the perspective of the convicts and this was clearly the writer's aim, so this was really important in contributing to the total effectiveness of the production.¹⁰

Owens uses acting skills to get a response of disgust from the audience at his behavior and his callous emotions towards the convicts. In the same scene he humiliates Mary Brenham, straight after, with 'where's your tattoo Brenham? Show us, I can't see it. Show us; if you can't manage, I'll help you'. As he knows this tattoo is on her thigh he is purposefully making Mary feel weak by physically exposing herself. This was particularly emotional and memorable. There was suspense as she lifts up her skirt higher. Ross stood close to Mary, with a lecherous expression on his face, making her (and the audience) feel uncomfortable as he sexually degraded her.¹¹

This made the audience feel sympathetic to the women of the colony who were just seen as whores and for sex. The close proxemics showed how much he enjoyed intimidating a helpless woman as he trapped her. Owens paused on each line, making the audience feel uncomfortable with Mary tense and rigid. He delivered the line quietly with a low and comforting tone. He kept direct eye contact with a serious and cold glare, further making the audience feel tense, horrified and feel sympathy for Brenham being made to show her tattoo against her will; this was very effective as Owens brought across an atmosphere of terror and intimidation, combined with a sense of sexual pleasure, making the moment intense and horrible to watch.¹² Owens was successful here as elsewhere in creating a memorable character that the audience loved to hate!¹³

In Act 2 Scene 10 during the questioning of Liz, she is brought into court and Governor Phillips mentions to Robbie how he is anxious about hanging the first woman in the colony so wants the truth about her theft. Owens replies 'Truth! We have 800 thieves, perjurers, forgers, murders, liars, escapers, rapists, whores, coiners in this scrub-ridden dust-driven, thunder-bolted, savage-run, cretinous colony' showing, for the first time, his frustration¹⁴ with the system and actually making the audience feel slightly sympathetic for the strong character finally reaching his limit and breaking down.

Comments

8. Attitude or emotion?

9. Personal response.

10. Good evaluation.

11. Strong sense of quite complex emotions here.

12. Some detail.

13. Sense of audience response.

14. Emotion.

Owens sat DSR with his shoulders hunched forward closing himself up with physical tension. He was very still and has his legs open with a stick between them on the ground being held.¹⁵ His eyes were locked down on the ground with concentration, as if in deep thought and calculating. He emphasised each word and his volume rises as he gets near to the end of the list until he shouts 'savage colony'. His pitch was high showing frustration and anger. He had an aggressive tone filled with frustration and over pronouncing each word, articulating the consonants to show his disgust.

He almost had to stop himself ranting; slowing down his heart rate deliberately and taking a breath, which showed the audience his anger and upset. He had no eye contact with the other characters which is different to his controlled glare, before. He delivered the lines with passion and becomes teary where Campbell standing behind touched his shoulder in reassurance.¹⁶

He delivered the words full of weight, feeling the filth and disgust of the type of convicts here and brows furrowed to show his facial tension and disapproval. Feeling each word makes the¹⁷ audience feel sympathy for Ross as he is having a meltdown of finally realising the kind of people he has to put up with. I felt particularly sympathetic in this moment as I finally understood why he feels such disgust and anger. This made a huge contribution to the effectiveness of the production as a whole as it revealed that it was not only the convicts who were suffering in the colony.¹⁸

To conclude, Cairan Owens successfully played the character of Robbie Ross to convey, as well as to instil in the audience, a wide range of emotions. This was done by his intimidating interactions both with the convicts and with his fellow officers; he made the audience fear him, but also, finally, to understand him; which was a significant achievement.¹⁹

Word Count: 1,321

Quotations: 0

Comments

15. ?

16. Quite clear here.

17. How shown?

18. Evaluation – but not entirely convincing support.

19. Fair conclusion.

Commentary

This is an assured and focused response to the demands of the question.

The student understands the emotions that Ross was expressing/suppressing and offers several useful examples of where and how these emotions were conveyed.

There is some useful context offered for the particular moments selected, which are identified very clearly. The student writes enthusiastically about the skills of the actor, who is referred to by name, throughout.

AO3

Focused knowledge and understanding of the role played by the chosen actor; there is some reference to the style of production but this aspect lacks development. The student has considered the aims of the production team. Focused attention is given to how meaning was created by the performer.

Band: Low Band 5

AO4

The student offers some very precise details about the methods used to convey emotions and has made a good choice of moment to support the assessments. The answer is personal and enthusiastic and offers some perceptive evaluation and analysis of how the actor contributed to the total effectiveness of the production.

Band: Low Band 5

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