

**Performance Studies**

Advanced GCE **G403**

Performance Contexts 2

**Mark Scheme for June 2010**

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## Generic Mark Scheme

Marks	AO1 Knowledge and Understanding
<b>31-36</b>	An excellent answer that shows a mature overview of the topic studied and clearly addresses the question set. The candidate is able to identify distinctive approaches in discussing contrasting aspects of performance material and to make sophisticated links between the art forms. Contrasting approaches are well defined and statements are supported by close reference to the works studied. The context of the genre is understood in depth and the answer demonstrates detailed understanding through a well-chosen range of examples.
<b>25-30</b>	An accomplished answer that demonstrates some overview of the topic studied, makes comparisons and answers the question set. Aspects of the topic are discussed in detail and a range of examples offered, drawing effective links across the art forms. Whilst these are very helpful in supporting the argument, at the bottom of this band their significance may sometimes require further comment or possibly further reference. The significance of distinctive approaches of practitioners is commented upon but candidates performing towards the bottom of the band do not distinguish them fully. Contextual links are commented upon in some detail but these are not always fully supported by examples, illustration or reference.
<b>19-24</b>	A competent piece of work that addresses the question set. The answer demonstrates an understanding of the essential features of the topic although detailed connections or contrasts between the work of practitioners are not fully developed. The depth of discussion is variable and not always supported by reference to works studied and the candidate needs to draw more out of them to establish stylistic and contextual links. Use the top mark of this band as a ceiling if there is scope for better use of the works studied. Use the lowest mark in this band as a ceiling for answers that evade the question set, but be open to rewarding evident knowledge and content of the topic.
<b>13-18</b>	An adequate approach to the discussion that makes a number of useful points about the topic. The discussion is heavily focused on only a few examples with few connections between examples or across art forms that are insufficiently developed by the candidate. The answer is slightly pedestrian in moving from point to point and is variable in depth. Use the highest mark in this band as a ceiling for formulaic or generic answers. The question may only be answered by implication, although there are some valid points.
<b>7-12</b>	A limited response that does not fully address the scope of the studied topic. Some aspects are explored but with a few basic, poorly-chosen illustrations or references to works. Contrasting approaches are dealt with, albeit superficially, but the answer may imply that there is little to compare or contrast between the work of practitioners.
<b>0-6</b>	An answer that makes a few points but which does not deal with any of them adequately or in depth. The answer does not address the question and there are hardly any references to works studied <b>or</b> the references do not relate to the context of the question. There is some factual accuracy but generic claims are made on the basis of very little supportive evidence.

## Quality of Language

Marks	AO3 The ability to use clear and accurate English
8-9	Engaging writing with an assured sense of style. The prose is well structured and the movement between ideas is clear and fluent. Complex ideas are very well explained and expressed. There will be few, if any, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
7	Fluent writing with a developing sense of style and an ability to move easily from one idea to another. Complex ideas are well expressed and errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar are rare.
6	Generally fluent writing with an emerging sense of style and well-structured sentences and paragraphs. Points are mostly relevant and are explained as the argument progresses. There are occasional errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
5	The writing is somewhat matter-of-fact in style and the argument may stray away from the point; ideas are expressed clearly. Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar are present but not such as to suggest real weakness in these areas.
4	Pedestrian writing, which expresses simple ideas clearly but is likely to be awkward when dealing with more difficult concepts. Spelling, punctuation and grammar do not obscure the points made but do require further refinement.
3	Disjointed writing, which may confuse or obscure the meaning. Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar are noticeable and intrusive, suggesting weaknesses in these areas.
0-2	Poorly-expressed points with frequent errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar. The writing has little or no sense of direction and its style is likely to undermine its content.

### General Expectations

When considering the criteria for the marking bands, examiners should note the following expectations of this unit:

- There should be evidence that the candidate has studied three examples of the work of three different practitioners, one each of Dance, Drama and Music. Thus, nine works in all, but this is not necessarily a counting exercise, unless the candidate(s) are clearly in breach of the specification for this unit. Check the front sheet for the works the candidates have looked at in extract form.
- There is an expectation of comparison and/or contrast across the works studied so that points can be made with specific example rather than generalities. Further credit could be given for relevant illustration, which is drawn from works beyond the prescribed three examples from each art form, providing it does not become just a list of works.
- There should be evidence of the scope of the area studied, a sense of overview that shows a confident knowledge and understanding.
- There should be evidence in the answer of how the art forms work together. This may not be all at the same time, but a balance and awareness of all three must be evident.
- The studied extracts should be used as a means to an end, to answer the question and explain the generic area under discussion. Methodical plodding through the three extracts of each art form would indicate that the candidate had not progressed from the work-specific approach required in G402.
- Where appropriate, the candidate can offer traceable influences upon the genre under discussion, but should not indulge in unqualified historical background merely for the sake of it.
- Similarly, where appropriate, the candidate should be able to make wider reference to the social, cultural and historical context from which the genre arose, in which the genre was nurtured and to which it made its own contribution.
- Use of appropriate vocabulary, terminology and other relevant practitioners.

### Guidance to examiners on Post Modern Approaches to the Performing Arts since 1960

Given that this area is anti-form, defies definition, deliberately counters attempts to 'fix' itself, it is difficult to be specific about 'rules' or elements of which candidates should be aware and therefore evidence in their answers. However, there are some general characteristics, features in common practice, which we might claim are common and therefore identifiable, but it is unlikely that all of the works cited will have all of the following features:

- Anti-modern – no clear 'manifesto' or even identifying features except a reaction to Modernism thus giving rise to an ironic outlook blurring the boundaries between "high" and popular art, self-consciously ironic and eclectic eg Ballet with Street Dance, Berkoff's resetting of classical plays in the East End of London. There is no "one knowledge", but a variety of "knowledges", overlapping relationships of discourses with the predominant the avant garde.
- The end of History – the use of previous art, social, political personalities and movements as a source for reflecting the present and commenting on the past. The fragmentation of time, social structures, human experience, artistic style presented in an eclectic way.
- Re-cycling, refiguration, pastiche, parody, whether in the re-working of classical ballets and plays within a new highly fragmented society or the exploitation of recorded and electronic means to sample, re-use and make music.
- The creation and re-creation of iconic figures and concepts from the everyday and popular cf. Warhol's "15 minutes of fame"; linked to the consumerism of art and existence.
- Gender – the questioning of gender assumptions in outlook, clothing, reversal including the rise of "camp", "so bad its good" concept of art cf. Sontag's Notes on Camp '64.
- Value-free, a sense of having no pedantry, no definitive line, no structural, formal imperatives to follow and reflects the disappearance of "grand narratives", like Marxism, commenting on the consumer society and its products rather than trying to achieve the essence of universal existence in inherent in modernism.
- Freedom from 'Meaning' – no more need for everything to mean something in a post-Freudian sense, hence Cunningham's rejection of Graham's emotionally charged gestural vocabulary for "Dance for Dance's sake".
- Sense of risk – obvious in the growth of physical theatre and dance, but equally present in experimental music and drama forms where the opportunities for a piece not to work by virtue of the disruption of the form are many eg Riley "In C" and Churchill's overlapping dialogue.
- Intertextuality – the witty, "intellectual joke" created by making quick unlaboured reference to other works within a piece, for the sake of it, for fun, for comparison, for emphasis eg Vardimon's brief reference to Thriller amongst many in Park, or Bourne's nod to Hitchcock's The Birds in Swan Lake; the idea of Quotation across and from other forms.
- Playful response to the problems posed by the 'the Modern'. A sense of the ludic trickster at work which can be seen in the work of for example, Berkoff, Nyman, Innes and Morris.
- Manipulation and fragmentation of language (eg Pinter, Mamet, Churchill – use of the poetic – Bond, Cartwright) and form-fractured and dislocated non-linear timelines eg Top Girls, juxtaposition of the historical and the present.

- A larger scale perspective, a world picture, yet often created in an apparent random D-I-Y fashion or 'bricolage'; giving rise to the projection of Consumerism in art and performance, the audience as consumer, the performance in the here and now and not purporting to be a contribution to a canon of work. Thus, Cage/Cunningham's Happenings or Events giving rise to site-specific performance. (Ironic, and characteristic of everything the Post Modern approach was working against, that we now want to seek out recordings of these as formative works on the picture today).
- Collaboration – for example, Cage, Rauschenberg & Cunningham; Glass, Childs and Wilson; Nyman & Jeyasingh; Churchill, Gough & Spink, Pinter and Clarke, Adams & Morris, Tavener and Random Dance – deliberate working across forms. Also collaborative working within companies – eg Joint Stock, Wooster Group.
- An eclecticism in form and genre, often combining characteristics from different forms or sectionalised sharply juxtaposed works.
- The use of conventional forms within a new context: identification of formal structures and the purposes for which they have been used since 1960.
- The use of these earlier devices to establish security or to challenge audiences.

**1 'Isn't it ironic?' Discuss the use of 'irony' in post-modern performance.**

The focus of this question is related to significant stylistic features of post-modernism. Primarily, irony, as expected by the question, but candidates may well make further reference outside of the pure 'ironical' by way of argument. Providing these are part of an holistic answer then they may be credited.

Indicative Content:

- Broad definition of irony as the primary mode of post-modern expression.
- Conventions being abused and subverted through irony.
- Nothing is what it seems, pastiche, intertextual reference, sexuality, history.
  - \* Fragmentation of 'art' to create satirical or romantic irony.
  - \* Increasing scepticism of grand, or meta-narratives with some universal truth, and thus a rise in abstract juxtaposition of ideas and techniques in performance.

**2 'You can trace some common practice, but everyone does their own thing'. How is this a fair assessment of dance, drama and music since 1960?**

The focus of this question is the techniques used in post-modern approaches to the three areas of the performing arts.

Indicative Content:

- Distinctive contribution of collaboration and integration of the performing arts, but also interest in random effect of juxtaposition of art forms eg Cage, Cunningham and Rauschenberg.
- 60s introspection and self-expression, 80s self-centredness and the reaction to them as expressed in the performing arts.
- Key aspects of common practice: eclecticism, fragmentation of time, social structures and human experience, reflection of consumerism, gender assumptions and multiple knowledges, re-cycling, re-using and repetition, intertextuality, freedom from value and meaning, reaction to modernism, re-definition of high and low, popular and elite art, re-making of iconic figures.

**Guidance to Examiners on Politics and Performance since 1914**

This broader area is intended to widen the horizon of political performance beyond the rather restricted view often perpetrated through the previous construct of this unit. Essentially, candidates need to indicate awareness of:

- The relationship between the art forms and the audience.
- The manner in which the 'politics' are expressed through the dance, music and drama. For some this will be obvious didacticism, for others the positioning is more subtle.
- The manipulation of an audience's expectations, opinions, values and world view.
- The use of influences from the past to give reference, weight and justification.
- The structural and presentational devices used to communicate ideas, eg ballad, epic form, documentary setting with film and information as the backdrop for action or dance.
- The use of humour and comedy, farce, satire and irony as a stylistic device to poke fun and to persuade.
- The use of allegory of and/or direct reference to political situations and figures.
- The use of exaggeration, repetition and scale.
- The type of 'norms' that the candidate believes are being challenged through the range of studied works.

**3 Analyse the distinguishing features that you would expect to find in a political performance and the variety of techniques practitioners use to achieve them.**

The focus of this question is the techniques used by practitioners in politics and performance.

Indicative Content:

- The identification of a theme or issue, which may be specific or wider and more generalised, these need not be elaborated unless relative to the focus of the question.
- A particular point of view taken or a range of options for the audience to consider and how these are presented.
- Techniques to engage the audience, such as, narrator, MC, multi-media projections, voice-overs, martial rhythm, humour, satire, documentary.
- Use of mixed forms, words, music and images in dance, song and dance in play texts and words and images in musical composition.
- The effect of the audience's perception and political interpretation of works not directly intended to be political.

**4 Outline the development of political performance since 1914 and identify the contribution of key works to the style.**

The focus of this question is on the development of political performance within the constraints set. The specification encourages a broad view across the chosen examples and therefore there should be a confidence, if not great detail in places, in attempting the breadth of this question.

Indicative Content:

- Basic chronology, to include an awareness of eg Agit-Prop, feminist and Documentary Theatre, protest songs, nationalist music, Dance with political themes.
- Progression linked to social, historical and cultural shifts, eg wars, suffrage, political movements and ideals.
- Where exemplary works fit both in terms of chronology and style.
- Significance of key works such as Green Table, Oh What a Lovely War, Blowin' in the Wind.

### Guidance for Examiners on The Twentieth Century American Musical

Again this is now a broader concept than previously considered and whilst it would be important to have a less prescriptive view of the first, and last, two decades, (Oscar Hammerstein II had already written several musicals prior to *Showboat* and there were some classic and highly influential songs written in the early part of the century), the main focus is likely to be on the most productive 50 year period in the middle of the century 1927-1977.

Key areas of response should obviously focus on:

- The Book and the new significance given to the plot, development of character, situation, and dialogue; the importance and exploitation of Romance and Comedy; the 'book' as the lead sheet for the whole musical, often determining the energetic pace, the structure, the all important sub-plot, mirroring and commenting on the central action; the mature balance between clever dialogue, rounded character, and engaging predicament for the audience so that none dominates, but all are necessary.
- The Lyrics of the songs and their dramatic purpose; the notion of progression within the lyric, or 'lyric ascension' where the song has a definite structured intention; different styles of songs, ballads, charm songs, 'list' and patter songs, 'torch' songs, entire 'music scenes', such as 'Tonight' in *West Side Story*, stand-alone songs or deliberate punctuation of the plot, as Sondheim in *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*; the techniques of the lyricist in building songs, such as the use of rhyme, metaphor and structure.
- The Score and the importance of music within the musical: reinforcing emotion and dramatic expression, complementing the dramatic action and movement; establishing tone; capturing essential quality of a character, moment or setting an emotion through the use of leitmotif; setting and manipulating mood and atmosphere; as a transitional device between action and scenes, bridging and retaining flow through the use of segue. The importance of rhythm and melody, use of harmony and dissonance. Structural elements, such as the use of overture, opening or establishing number, mixes of songs, the underscoring, the score as a complete entity, rather than a collection of songs and entries.
- The Choreography, and the integration of dance as a structural element, replacing dialogue, establishing atmosphere, creating spectacle, progressing the plot and understanding of the characters; the distinction between functional or show dance and the use of movement closely related to complex rhythmic structures: the increasing importance of dance in the form and the milestones eg *Oklahoma!*; the variety and eclecticism of style drawing on ballet, vaudeville and burlesque and traditional folk and contemporary street and modern.

**5 In what ways does the American Musical represent both celebration and criticism of American Society?**

The focus of this question is the cultural, historical and social context of the American Musical.

Indicative Content:

- Significant social and cultural influences upon the musicals across the breadth of the time frame.
- Range of issues, not just race but obviously that should feature, war and violence, gang and crime, rich & poor, gender roles.
- Exemplifying the ideal, a 'way of living', social mores, the American Dream.
- Strength in the collective, buddies, and especially the family.
- Individual responsibility and entrepreneurial achievement.
- Characterisation, with songs, to "celebrate and criticise".

**6 What evidence is there to support or contradict the view that the 'Book Musical' was at its peak between 1927 and 1957?**

The focus of this question is on the significant stylistic features of the American Musical with a particular emphasis on the given 30 year period, but candidates may well wish to argue the evidence for going before or after that specific period, or possibly both.

Indicative Content:

- The relative significance and integration of, and the roles played by, the book, the lyrics, the score and the choreography in Musicals, individual practitioners are incidental.
- The range of practitioners and collaborations working on 'book musicals' at their height.
- The areas of difference and commonality between the musicals in the range in terms of structure, themes and content.
- The particularity of and relationship between the range chosen and the wider Musical genre.
- The different ways in which the Romance tradition is used and developed throughout that 30 year period and the subsequent decline.
- The importance of setting, in terms of what is possible, both within the narrative and theatrically eg Carousel, Cabaret.

### Guidance to examiners on Performance in the Far East

The aim of this topic is to allow a broad study of non-Western approaches to performance. It could include elements of Kabuki, Noh Plays, Javanese Puppet Theatre, the drama of specific countries such as Japan, China, and Malaysia. Some of these genres are highly disciplined and text-based, others exist primarily through detailed performance conventions or oral tradition. Each style is culturally distinct, yet shares a common geographic provenance, often intermingled over hundreds of years. Like many western styles, there are distinctions between court and popular performance, but sophistication is not reserved solely for the former. This topic covers performance styles originating in the following countries: Borneo, Brunei, Burma (Myanmar), Cambodia, China (embracing Hong Kong and Taiwan), Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, The Philippines, Vietnam.

Many of these areas of performance have influenced the performing arts in the West, particularly in the last 100 years and candidates making effective reference to that influence should be rewarded, providing it is not extended.

The art forms manifest themselves in a different way than that to which many candidates will be accustomed:

- In drama, the 'story' is often known, but the emphasis is often placed on the manner of the telling, in terms of the performer's skill. This can be sometimes a solo performance or a using a range of role types, as distinct from the character types, with which we are more accustomed. Dialogue can be formal or improvised, with topical, local references, much like the Christian medieval mystery tradition or contemporary pantomime.
- In dance, the emphasis is on a stylized language of movement, a vocabulary of gesture, head turns, hand movements, body positions, often mirrored in the limited but no less expressive puppet forms. Dance can include ancient ritualistic weather and crop dances, the slow lift of a head, a walk in which the performer appears to glide rather than take steps, the coquettish flap of a handkerchief or wild choreographed non-contact martial arts.
- Musical forms vary, but instrumentation has often a mixture of strings, drums and natural wind elements. Rhythm and repetition are important, building tension, but as significant is the complementary role of central participation in the piece, much more than 'accompaniment'. Musicians are seen as well as heard in many forms, and the ensemble often creates the stylized sound effects.

The purpose of the topic is to allow candidates to explore three contrasting areas of investigation, which must include a thorough study of each art form for each area. Questions will require candidates to demonstrate a thorough understanding of how the art forms work in each genre and points of similarity and contrast between the genres studied. Thus, examiners should be alert to and reward comparative discussion both within the style discussed and across the art forms. Most importantly, all of this should be discussed in the context of the arts in South-East Asia and the Far East.

Examples of works should be drawn from across the geographical area identified above and candidates must study a range of extracts drawn from work produced in **three** countries; the work of each country should embrace all of the performing arts.

**7 Analyse the way performance styles in the Far East reflect their cultural, historical and social context.**

The focus of this question is the cultural, historical and social context of approaches to performance in the Far East, and the impact that has had on the styles of performance.

Indicative Content:

- A sense of key chronology and the background to national styles.
- How that cultural, historical and social background is manifested in present forms.
- Conventions of the national forms, particularly those that have connection with the historical, cultural and social antecedents.
- Comparison between aspects of the national forms, how they coincide and in what ways they differ.

**8 Discuss the view that ‘storytelling lies at the heart of many performance styles in the Far East’.**

The focus of this question is the techniques used by practitioners in performance in the Far East, with a particular emphasis on narrative approaches, through the three art forms.

Indicative Content:

- The ways stories are treated in different national forms.
- Stories used – myth, legends of gods or everyday human experience.
- Use and conventions of movement to complement or tell the story eg combative, stylised, improvised freestyle, human/non-human.
- Use and conventions of music to accompany and drive the story, dance or song, underscoring, types of instrument and sounds, melodies created.
- Means of telling the story, via roles/characters, single voice.
- Puppet, mask and costume conventions.

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