

G402 PERFORMANCE CONTEXTS 1: EXEMPLAR WORK FOR CANDIDATE C

G402 Question: ‘How does Newson’s work challenge attitudes and issues that he sees as unjust or oppressive?’ (June 2010)

<p>5. From 1980 Lloyd Newson attended the London School of Contemporary Dance, in which he opted out of the choreography class as he didn’t feel he was given ‘the artistic freedom to create dances he wanted to make’. His attitude towards dance started to drop however went on to join Extemporary Dance Theatre in 1981 to continue his experience. Newson soon left in 85 as he became “frustrated” with the concept of what ‘defined dance’. Following this he left to set up ‘DV8’ with Nigel Charnock in ‘86. ‘DV8’ stemmed from “deviating away from the norm” and is often described as “Total theatre” because of its inclusion of several art forms – not just dance. This, at first challenged the <u>audiences</u> views, as it wasn’t what constitutes “dance”.</p> <p>After studying dance <u>himself</u> it opened his mind up to new and exciting things and thus, came his artistic policy in 1995 which shocked the audience even further. Newson stated he wanted to “communicate ideas and feeling clearly and unpretentiously” in a “radical yet accessible way”, which is exactly what he has done. He states he wants to create “dance about something, breaking boundaries between dance, theatre and personal politics.”</p> <p>As research proved that dance was the least popular art form, and the <u>audiences</u> attitude towards dance was increasingly getting lower, Newson and DV8 provided a new form of ‘total theatre’ to challenge the <u>audiences</u> attitudes towards dance.</p> <p>Newson therefore creates his work around taboo subjects and issues he sees in society. He says that “content is the key factor that drives his work” which is evident in most of his pieces. Before choosing these themes/subjects Newson would often carry out research to ensure realism was a huge element in his work. This would also ensure issues were addressed that were seen as ‘unjust’ or ‘oppressive’, so would therefore have a much larger impact on the audience. For example the inspiration for ‘Enter Achilles’ came when he was in hospital undergoing surgery on the Achilles heel, and he noticed that only women and his homosexual friends came to visit. In addition to this he sent his dancers into a pub to order half a pint – which <u>is seen unlikely for males to do so</u>. He then recorded how these men felt and also others attitudes towards them. The main subject in Enter Achilles therefore, shows insecurity, masculinity and sexuality. Masculine movement and stereotypes are used to emphasise the masculinity, this is so when other emotions/movement is shown it is even more shocking for the audience. For example when one man screams into the glass – showing insecurity and the comfort men have in drink – an issue in society that is very common</p>	<p><i>Biog but becomes relevant with...</i></p> <p><i>Quote. K, Q, U.</i></p> <p><i>Gm?</i></p> <p><i>Confused in dates, but point is made that he was ‘challenging attitudes’.</i></p> <p><i>K, context.</i> <i>Punctuation?</i> <i>Q</i></p> <p><i>Unnecessary.</i></p> <p><i>Explain</i> <i>K</i></p> <p><i>K</i></p> <p><i>Punctuation?</i></p> <p><i>Appears to repeat the point above.</i> <i>Punctuation?</i></p> <p><i>into Q</i> <i>K</i> <i>Evidence?</i></p> <p><i>Avoid ‘huge’</i></p> <p><i>Eg.</i></p> <p><i>Point?</i></p> <p><i>K</i> <i>Gm?</i> <i>K</i></p> <p><i>K</i></p> <p><i>awkward expression</i></p> <p><i>eg</i> <i>Q</i></p>
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G402 PERFORMANCE CONTEXTS 1: EXEMPLAR WORK FOR CANDIDATE C

<p>but not normally <u>adressed</u>, so challenges the audience. Newson attended a march for sexual politics as he was <u>shocked of</u> 'clause 28' and felt this issue should be one of the main themes throughout his work. <u>Feminist movement is used to represent homosexuality</u>. Humour is then added to make the piece a lot more shocking as it emphasises the serious nature behind the issue, (<u>superman</u>)</p> <p>When beginning to think about the different subjects, Newson would inform his dancers of them, but would not choreograph the dance as he says he sees himself as a "teacher, stimulator and facilitator" <u>NOT</u> a choreographer. Therefore dancers are told to improvise (standard improve/contact) so that the dance comes from their own emotions and experiences. This often creates pedestrian movement, shown in the majority of his works e.g. in Enter Achilles, the men are shown to be playing on games machines and watching TV. Because of this Newson's work is a lot more challenging for the audience because of the realistic element, they can really relate to what is happening but Newson pushes it to extremes so the audience almost feels uncomfortable, but engaged.</p>	<p>Sp? When? Gm? Explain? Explain?</p> <p>K Eg, but more could have been made of this, than evidence in brackets.</p> <p>Caps not necessary.</p> <p>Explain? K K Eg.</p> <p>Punctuation? K Evidence?</p>
<p>Newson states "dance often prevents you from seeing the individual, which is what I work against as it's the individual I'm interested in – what their life story is – what's inside their heads." - which is where many of his issues arise from.</p>	<p>K Eg?</p>
<p>Newson also uses symbolism <u>to</u> and horrifying yet shocking images to challenge the issues he sees as unjust. For example, in Enter Achilles a blow up doll is used to represent a woman which is later abused and raped, a shocking yet truthful way to challenge the audience. The rape in Enter Achilles also symbolised support between men and trust, which is often stereotyped as being 'gay' or very feminist. However this juxtaposes the physicality the man (Jose/Superman) shows, as he has a lot of strength. In Dead Dreams of Monochrome Men hanging bodies represent that of mass murderer Dennis <u>Nelson</u>, an issue Newson feels is unjust. <u>Newson's</u> previous knowledge of psychology after studying it at Melbourne University allows him to really highlight challenging human behaviour and relationships, and issues around these.</p>	<p>Gm? Eg. Unclear, explain When? Detail? Context. Reference a little unclear Nilsen Context biog Eg?</p>
<p>Linking with this Newson has said "I tired a long time ago of dancers who had replaced brain cells for thick thighs". This is one of many attitudes/issues Newson <u>sees</u> <u>^unjust</u> within dance and society and therefore chooses "older, fatter, disabled and odd-looking dancers" to challenge this view. For example in The Cost of Living a disabled man is shown to be discriminated against with the ballet dancers and also from the questions asked by the film maker. However these are all questions many people in society would be thinking themselves so really pushes the audience and provokes</p>	<p>Eg ? Q. Eg ?</p>

G402 PERFORMANCE CONTEXTS 1: EXEMPLAR WORK FOR CANDIDATE C

<p>thought.</p> <p>In addition to his choice in dancers Newson’s attitude towards dance is that it “embodies denial” and is often “artificial” which is why a lot of his movement is again very realistic but also shocking. A section in Unison in Enter Achilles is the only part of the dance really choreographed in a group, so the dancers will have been asked to justify these movements to ensure they related to the issue and really meant something. This in fact represented how men feel more comfortable and are more confident in groups. The sections as solos show the competition between males (e.g. press ups in bar) an issue Newson again feels is unjust. This post modern, realistic movement is also evident in the work of Pina Bausch who also challenges <u>her</u> attitudes and issues she sees in society.</p> <p>Overall <u>Newsons</u> work challenges attitudes and issues that he sees as unjust/<u>oppressive</u> by his use of shocking imagery, realism/naturalistic feel, “normal dancers” and his use of the “total theatre”. Using dialogue and song when movement could not bring out the emotion to challenge the issues (e.g. in Strange Fish singer ‘Jesus’ on cross, challenged audiences views as it went against religion in that ‘Jesus’ was a man, but a woman was chosen as she could reach a wide vocal range). Also in Strange Fish women are shown to change their appearance to a blonde wig and dress in order to win the man – another issue in society which Newson brings to attention.</p>	<p><i>Explain</i></p> <p><i>Eg, but needs locating from the piece more clearly</i></p> <p><i>K&U</i> <i>K</i> <i>Eg</i></p> <p><i>Context</i> <i>Remove</i></p> <p><i>Sp?</i></p> <p><i>Eg</i></p> <p><i>Q-Eg</i></p>
<p>Marks: K&U-20+QoL-4 = 24/30</p> <p><i>1167 words- rather more than might usually be expected for an answer in this unit. An assured response that uses contextual knowledge and understanding as part of the answer. There could be better use of movement detail to improve the illustrations and examples.</i></p> <p><i>Some unnecessarily excessive language here- huge, shocking- that could be lost.</i></p>	
<p>G402 Question: ‘Explore the relationship between the different elements of Godber’s work and how they fit together to create effective theatre.’ (June 2010)</p>	
<p>12. The different elements within Godbers works <u>compliment</u> each other, resulting in a piece of effective theatre. This is shown to be true as he is the 3rd most performed British playwright. One of his works in which this is most evident is ‘Teechers’ a play written in 1987.</p> <p>Godber states he wants a non passive audience and therefore directly <u>addresses</u> them throughout to keep them engaged. “I’m Oggy Maxon... I told you you’d have to use your imaginations”. Another way Godber keeps his audience totally engaged with the play is by his episodic structure, this also helps to keep the pace and easily change time within the play, e.g. “Christmas at White Wall and love was in the air” This is directly influenced from his experience in TV writing for shows such as ‘Grange Hill’. Popular culture through television is also</p>	<p><i>Punctuation?</i> <i>Sp?</i></p> <p><i>K</i></p> <p><i>K</i> <i>Sp?</i> <i>Q</i> <i>Eg</i></p> <p><i>Q</i> <i>K</i> <i>Eg</i> <i>Context</i></p> <p><i>K</i></p>

G402 PERFORMANCE CONTEXTS 1: EXEMPLAR WORK FOR CANDIDATE C

<p>used in Teechers to attract a wider contemporary audience, for example “Alrigh, Arthur, how’s it goin’ me love?”</p> <p>In relation to this <u>Godbers</u> use of music to help change and set the scene was also influenced from his experience of TV writing and also by Brecht, which is similarly evident in a lot of his works, An example of this from the play would be “A choir sings” telling the audience about the scene and also when the school bell sounds to indicate a change of time and scene. “But sir the bells gone” ... “The bell is a signal for me to move, not anyone else”. The music cues are also just stated as ‘music’, so that it can be updated <u>an</u> kept current in <u>today’s</u> culture. The minimalist setting and props also allows the play to be kept up to date but also represents social and political issues at the time as education was changing, the school reform was current, and social classes were also updating “please don’t throw the books around, it’s one between three.”</p> <p>In relation to this characters within the play also represent social/political issues at the time, for example Mr Basford represents old school “Nobody speaks in Mr Basford lessons, you can’t work and talk” and Mr Nixon represents the academic progression. This is an effective way for the audience to visualise and relate to the serious issue. Corporate punishment was also abolished at the time which Basford also represents – “treat the less able kids like <u>rhubard</u>, keep them in the dark and shit on them” which also allows the audience to understand the issue but uses comic satire to address it, evident in the work of Chekhov, this is also evident in the play when Gail tells Mr Nixon “they ask us if we can add up and if we’ve got table tennis homework”</p> <p>Additionally a mix of light and dark humour is used to create an effective and engaging piece, <u>adressing</u> serious issues in a more accessible way e.g. “when Oggy Moxon said shit – you did” and “Gail is stagnant to inert and fights when cornered” (dark) again an influence by Chekhov.</p> <p>The characters are all also very stereotypical characters took to the extremes, for example, Oggy Moxon, the typical working class northerner who is the tough guy in school. Godber makes this evident in “Oggys Moxon’s speech about being hard”... “The cock of Whitewall high” Characters are also made memorable by their dialect and language. For example, often when performed Mrs Parry has a strong Scottish accent, whereas Oggy has a strong Northern accent. This is also directly influenced from Godbers background as main character Gail Hobby and Salty all have a Yorkshire dialect and have a Yorkshire <u>sociallect</u>, for example “knackers!”. Coarse language is also used to add an element of realism – “what the fuck is she gonna do about it?” These colloquialisms are all something the audience can relate to, again linking back to Godber wanting a non passive audience as he states...</p> <p>“A play is non-existent without an actor – audience relationship”</p>	<p>Eg</p> <p>Punctuation?</p> <p>K</p> <p>Expression?</p> <p>Eg</p> <p>Eg</p> <p>Sp? Punctuation?</p> <p>K</p> <p>Expression?</p> <p>K</p> <p>Eg?</p> <p>Q</p> <p>K</p> <p>Eg</p> <p>Unclear?</p> <p>Eg Sp?</p> <p>K</p> <p>Context but needs evidence for comparison with Chekhov</p> <p>Eg</p> <p>Q</p> <p>K</p> <p>Sp?</p> <p>Eg</p> <p>Eg</p> <p>Explain this reference</p> <p>Q</p> <p>K</p> <p>Eg</p> <p>K</p> <p>Eg</p> <p>Punctuation?</p> <p>Sp?</p> <p>Eg</p> <p>K</p>
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G402 PERFORMANCE CONTEXTS 1: EXEMPLAR WORK FOR CANDIDATE C

<p>To strengthen this Godber's style of Epic Theatre – influenced by Brecht helps to keep the audience engaged throughout, “All we want you to do is use your imaginations because theres only 3 of us and we have to play different characters...” “... and narrators”. This also keeps the audience informed of the action, similar to the use of music, e.g. “smack him Oggy he's only a drama teacher”, which again relates to the discrimination against teachers and working class at the time and of course today. This was directly influenced from his work as a drama teacher, which also aids the realism within the characters, so the audience can really relate to them, evident in the characters of Stanislavski.</p> <p>Finally multi-role play, a distinctive feature in Godbers plays, especially in Teechers which many other elements link around. For example quotable gestures are used in the same way as dialect and accent, to utilize characters helping to keep the <u>audiences</u> attention – reasoning for his episodic structure. For example, often when performed Basford can be <u>regonised</u> by stroking his moustache. This is also a big element within <u>Brechts</u> work. The <u>minimalistic</u> props makes the actors use characterisation and physicality to make each character recognisable and different for the audience, but narration also helps this – “right now I'm Mrs Parry”</p> <p>Overall the use of <u>multirole</u> play (3 actors playing 20+ characters) allows a non passive audience and also brings attention to the self conscious <u>theatricalism</u> similar to Brecht, which is effective for the audience as they are being kept involved. The use of music, movement, language and episodic non-linear structure also highlights this in an effective and exciting way to create an effective piece of theatre for a wide audience.</p>	<p><i>K context</i> <i>Eg</i></p> <p><i>Punctuation?</i></p> <p><i>Eg</i></p> <p><i>K context</i></p> <p><i>explain punctuation?</i></p> <p><i>Punctuation?</i> <i>Sp?</i></p> <p><i>Context – eg?</i> <i>minimal</i> <i>K</i></p> <p><i>eg</i> <i>sp?</i></p> <p><i>K</i> <i>Theatricality?</i></p>
<p>Marks: K&U 22 + QoL 6 = 28/30</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>1327 words, more than would normally be expected for this unit.</i> • <i>Strong, well-informed answer that shows a clear understanding of the work in the context of both the playwright and the performing arts.</i> • <i>Some of the references are over-assumed and need a little more support, but the answer is well-organised with a wide range of reference and example.</i> 	<p>Paper Total = 53/60 (equivalent to a Grade A in June 2010)</p>