

Advanced Subsidiary GCE
PERFORMANCE STUDIES

G404

Unit G404: Performance Project

Specimen Commissions



COMMISSIONS FOR THE PRACTICAL EXAMINATION

To be handed to candidates after January in the year of the examination

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

You are required to take part in a devised group piece based on **one** of the ten commissions in the list in this booklet. Your piece must obey the following rules:

- **The minimum number of candidates per group is *three*, the maximum is *six*.**
- **You may perform in only *one* group piece and this piece should give all the performers approximately the same amount of exposure (about 5 minutes).**
- **Your piece must last no longer than 30 minutes and no less than 15 minutes. If you have a small group of 3, the piece would normally last for 15 minutes. If your group has 6 people in it, the piece may last up to 30 minutes. If your group size is between 3 and 6, adjust the time accordingly.**

There must be a balance between the art forms in each candidate's work. Your piece must demonstrate that everyone in the group has performance skills in at least two art forms although you will be assessed on everything you perform within the piece.

The questions before each commission are important. The visiting examiner will use these questions as the basis for the interview before your performance. You will lose marks if the examiner cannot see links between the commission and your piece.

You must produce programme notes for the day of the performance. These should outline the content of the piece and demonstrate how it fulfils the commission.

This document consists of **4** printed pages

COMMISSIONS–SELECT ONE ONLY**1 Performance inspired by image**1a Edvard Munch – *The Scream**1b Pablo Picasso – *Three Dancers****If you choose one of these commissions, you should consider the following:**

- What is the 'structure' of the picture – what is the eye drawn to most? Is that the centre of the picture? What is the context?
- Are there recurring themes in the picture? If so, could these be used as a structural device in the piece? What is the balance between things that appear only once and things that are duplicated in the picture?
- How are light and shadow, black and white, variety of colours used in the picture? Do these give any clue as to how the piece could be structured? For example, darkness could be equated with intensity and light with relaxation.
- What levels are used in the picture – could these be translated into 'scenes' or 'episodes'?
- Is there any physical movement implied in the piece that could become a motivic device to structure the piece?
- Is there an implied story to the picture? There is no need to invent one if one there isn't but you might use the context of the picture if it has a naturalistic dimension to it.
- What possibilities are there to work across the art forms?

**In these specimen papers we are not publishing the stated pictures, however all sources will be available in all live question papers.*

2 Performance inspired by a historical event

2a 1066 – The Battle of Hastings

2b The assassination of John F Kennedy

If you choose one of these commissions, you should consider the following:

- What period of time is covered by the ‘event’?
- Is it possible to cover this effectively in a naturalistic manner or would it be better to avoid simply telling the story to ensure that the art forms are fully integrated?
- Is it possible to take episodes in the order they occurred or is there scope for adapting the historical time line – start at the end, jump to the beginning and work back?
- How many characters are involved in the event? This may have to be adapted to the group size (minimum three, maximum six). Does this mean that some characters need to be omitted – or introduced – is there multi-role playing to cover the event effectively?
- Is there anything controversial about the event? This could be embedded in the structure of the piece as a good structure takes the audience where the performers want them to go. You could create some intrigue or mystery by the way you structure the piece. In the commission *Did They Really Land on the Moon?* it would be possible for the piece to convince the audience either that the whole thing was a hoax or that there was no room for doubt, simply on the way in which the episodes were organised.
- What possibilities are there to work within all three art forms?

3 Performance inspired by poetry

3a W.B.Yeats: *He wishes for the cloths of heaven***

3b Wendy Cope: *After the lunch***

If you choose one of these commissions, you should consider the following:

- How is the poem organised overall? Are there individual sections that could be turned into performance episodes?
- Are there repeated lines that could be used a structural or thematic device in the piece?
- Is there a rhythmic structure to any of the lines that could be used to create some music?
- Could any of the words be set to music? You are not allowed to use large chunks of the poem but it might be effective to take a line and repeat it as a choral motif, or a short musical motif that could be passed around the ensemble. Or you might use a repeated single line to indicate a change of episode.
- Is the poem telling a story? If so, you need to decide whether the piece will also have narrative elements. You shouldn’t just ‘animate’ the poem, though – you should be creative in how you handle aspects of story.
- What possibilities are there to work within all three art forms?

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4 Performance inspired by a story

4a The Mad Hatter's Tea Party (from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll)

4b The epic of Gilgamesh

If you choose one of these commissions, you should consider the following:

- What is the structure of the story?
- Where are the key moments in the story?
- Can these be turned into transition points in the performance?
- How many episodes do there need to be?
- How much potential is there for dance and music in this story?
- What characters are there – how could these be covered in the piece?
- Is it possible to use a 'parallel story' approach where a contemporary version is interspersed with the original?
- Is it possible to change the setting of the story to a different period or time? Could this be done through dance or music?
- What possibilities are there to work within all three art forms?

5 Performance inspired by other performers

5a Laurel and Hardy

5b Isadora Duncan

If you choose one of these commissions, you should consider the following:

- What is this person's most well-known contribution to the world of performing arts?
- Have you incorporated these skills into the piece?
- What aspects of the person's career or life does the piece focus on?
- What is the time span of the chosen aspects within that person's life?
- Are there key moments that can be used as separate episodes?
- Is the piece essentially a documentary about the person's life?
- Is it possible to take an angle that gives some originality – perhaps by juxtaposing scenes from contemporary events or episodes?
- What possibilities are there to work within all three art forms?