

G402 PERFORMANCE CONTEXTS 1: EXEMPLAR WORK FOR CANDIDATE B

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| <p>G402 Question: ‘Spectacular for the audience, demanding for the performer.’ Discuss the versatility required from performers of Bourne’s work. (June 2010)</p> | |
| <p>1. Matthew Bourne is a hugely successful British choreographer known for his theatrical re-works of traditional performances. He was born in 1960 in Walthamstow, London and began his dance training at London’s ‘Laban Centre’ at the age of 22. The performance demands put on the performers in Bourne’s company are huge and therefore they are required to be extremely versatile and able. I agree with the statement “spectacular for the audience, demanding for the performer” and I am going to discuss the versatility required from performers of Bourne’s work in this essay.</p> <p>Bourne is extremely keen on story telling and his pieces carry a continuous narrative. He is sometimes classed as a director not a choreographer. Therefore his performers must be able to act and successfully portray strong <u>character’s</u> to an audience by using physical dexterity and the seven performance skills. These include the following; facial expression, focus, projection, professionalism, stamina, dynamics and timing/musicality. His performers must be able to act convincingly as well as dance. This aspect is vital as Bourne chooses his performers on the basis they can act and show real passion and flair. Bourne plans his pieces very carefully, and each character is designed to connect with an audience in a certain way and evoke a specific emotion. For example in Bourne’s ‘Nutcracker’ (<u>Premiered in 2000</u> at Sadler’s Wells, London) the main character Clara is meant to emotionally connect with an audience, we are meant to feel <u>attached</u> and supportive of her journey from childhood to adolescence. Bourne does this by choreographing specific movements such as childlike skips, gallops and hops combined with exaggerated child-like facial expressions and body language. For example, when Clara is upset she performs an over-the-top, screwed up facial expression accompanied by a stooped posture with her hands clasped in front of her. This requires real performance skill from the performer and already shows that versatility is key. Bourne also deals with serious social situations such as popular kids e.g. the ‘It’ marshmallow girls and the transition from childhood to adolescence. His performers must be able to show this.</p> <p>Bourne requires his performers to improvise. His cast are heavily involved with the production from day 1, he gets some choreography and inspiration from the performers themselves. Therefore his cast must be creative, imaginative and knowledgeable of the characters Bourne is asking them to play. This is another key versatile element.</p> <p>As well as improvisation, Bourne’s performers must be</p> | <p><i>Avoid ‘hugely’</i></p> <p><i>Relevance of biog?</i></p> <p>Q <i>‘huge’?</i></p> <p><i>K implications for Q?</i> K</p> <p><i>Q characterisation</i> <i>Punc.</i></p> <p><i>K&U</i> <i>Will there be evidence of all 7?</i> <i>Repeats</i></p> <p><i>K&U</i></p> <p><i>Original 1992.</i></p> <p><i>K&U point...</i> <i>... Followed by dance detail and more related to Q with...</i></p> <p><i>....Eg but this could have been located in the action of the piece.</i></p> <p><i>K, Q</i> <i>Eg.</i></p> <p><i>Q. improvisation</i></p> <p><i>K of process, could be a MB quote to support?</i></p> <p><i>Q. range of styles</i></p> |

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| <p>extremely versatile regarding dance styles/genres. Bourne’s choreography has no boundaries, he uses every style of dance, for example; ballet, tap, modern, jazz, contemporary, flamenco, street, social, folk, <u>english</u> country, and pedestrian. He simply choreographs movement to successfully portray his strong and distinctive characters to an audience, therefore his performers must be able to dance all of these styles. For example, <u>In act</u> 2 of Bourne’s ‘Nutcracker’ we see a vast range of styles in ‘Sweetie Land’. The ‘Liquorice Allsorts’ perform Spanish flamenco dance which requires a strong and up-right torso and focussed eye line. The ‘Knicker Bocker Glory’ performs jazz dance and uses long, extended lines, slow movement and isolated hip rolls to represent his sly, <u>sleazy</u> character. The ‘Cupids’ perform true contemporary dance; turned in lines, repeated use of attitude jumps, change of direction and extensive use of the back and pelvis (inspired by ‘Isodora Duncan’ - one of Bourne’s huge influences, she was the first person to pull away from the constraints of classical ballet. Cunningham – also a huge influence on Bourne inspired his choreography in this style. Bourne studied Merce Cunningham during training. This is therefore another style his dancers are required to do.)</p> | <p>K&U</p> <p>Expression?</p> <p>Eg. Some ref. to original may have been appropriate here to indicate contextual K&U Eg with detail Eg with detail</p> <p>Eg with detail</p> <p>K&U context</p> <p>K This section could have been expanded with more e.g.s of using different styles – Q timing & musicality Modification?</p> |
| <p>Bourne’s dancers must have perfect timing and musicality. He uses the traditional scores from the classical pieces he creates with little or no <u>modifying</u>. Therefore he puts a modern performance to a famous, classical piece of music. His dancers must be able to pick out the musical highlights and express them in their movement by performing dynamically (with force and energy). This requires versatility as they have to dance technically well with strong musicality as well as portraying a character at the same time. Bourne choreographs movements which directly correlate with the music so this is essential. However he also choreographs using specific <u>dancers</u> counts so they must be able to pick these out also and count their movement.</p> | <p>Eg?</p> <p>Eg?</p> <p>Eg?</p> <p>Explain? Punc?</p> |
| <p>Bourne’s set is over sized and exaggerated as are his vibrant and over-the-top costumes. His performers must therefore be able to dance successfully in the space, and <u>elaborate</u> costumes without being completely over powered. The set is fantastic for an audience to look at, as are the costumes but the performer must do them justice. This is extremely demanding, for example, in Act 1 scene 2 of Nutcracker, the set is a huge, over sized pillow and feather to represent Clara’s dream. The performers have to successfully use the space, especially during duets to ensure that they are not overpowered by the large scenery. This requires intelligence and forward planning from the performer, therefore adds to their versatile demands.</p> | <p>Q set/costume</p> <p>Sp?</p> <p>K & U</p> <p>Eg</p> <p>Eg?</p> |
| <p>Finally, Bourne is strongly influenced by theatre and film and many of his scenes directly correlate with, or depict scenes from a film or show. For example, ‘Dr Dross’ in</p> | <p>Q film & theatre refs.</p> <p>Eg</p> |

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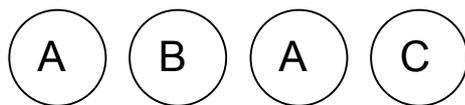
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| <p>Bourne’s ‘Nutcracker’ directly correlates with the child catcher in ‘Chitty Chitty Bang Bang’. Therefore the performer playing the role must be aware of this character in order to successfully achieve Bourne’s idea. The performer must perform in a sly and cunning manner by the use of direct eye-line and a scary, frightening aura. This is aided by his costume – a long, black leather coat. Act 2 includes a scene with Clara and the cupids. She has nothing to wear for the club in ‘Sweetie Land’ so the cupids find her a dress which is lowered from the ceiling by birds. This directly correlates with Cinderella where Cinderella herself has nothing to wear for the ball, and the Fairy God Mother (similar to the role of the Cupids) gets her a pretty dress. Bourne’s performers must be able to successfully portray these scenes which audiences love (due to familiarity) in order to create a spectacular performance.</p> <p>Performers must also be aware of Bourne’s other influences, such as Balanchine (American Ballet Choreographer) as Bourne helps to make ballet accessible to a wide audience, Mark Morris – a contemporary influence (also reworked the classical Nutcracker) and Sir Fredrick Ashton who inspired Bourne’s use of humour and narrative. All these aspects combined create a spectacular performance, if performed successfully. Bourne’s pieces have been hugely successful as he has created versatile and strong performers in his company. Versatility is therefore essential and demands on the performer are huge to achieve this.</p> | <p><i>Eg</i></p> <p><i>Eg</i></p> <p><i>Punc?</i></p> <p><i>Disney film ref.</i></p> <p><i>Q awareness of Dance influences</i></p> <p><i>K</i></p> <p><i>K</i></p> <p><i>K</i></p> <p><i>Avoid ‘hugely’</i></p> <p><i>‘huge’</i></p> |
| <p>Marks: K&U-20+QoL-6 = 26/30</p> <p><i>1119 words- rather more than is expected for an answer to this question. A very strong response that connects with the question and is able to identify specific examples that illustrate ideas. The answer also adds other aspects beyond the versatility of the performers that amplify the ‘Spectacular’ of the Q.</i></p> | |
| <p>G402 Question: ‘To what extent did The Beatles transform the structure of popular songs into something more expressive and complex?’</p> | |
| <p>I studied: “Love me do” “Can’t buy me love” “Norwegian wood”</p> <p>16. The Beatles are a hugely successful British band from the 1960’s. They changed and transformed the structure of popular songs in that era which resulted in a huge change in society and the way teenagers lived from the 60’s onwards. The band was made up of ‘John Lennon’ (founder of the band) who played lead guitar and vocals born 1940, ‘Paul McCartney’ (wrote the songs in partnership with Lennon) who played bass guitar and vocals, born 1942. George Harrison (born in 1943) who played the rhythm guitar and Ringo Starr (a late entry to the band in 1962) who played drums, born 1940. In this essay I am going to discuss the extent <u>at</u> which this legendary band changed the structure of popular songs.</p> | <p><i>Avoid ‘hugely’</i></p> <p><i>‘huge’</i></p> <p><i>Biog details – how relevant to this question?</i></p> <p><i>Gm? To</i></p> |

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In the 1950's popular music was 'crooners' for example Frank Sinatra (a famous jazz artist of the era) and 'skiffle' (a mixture of blues, folk and jazz music). John Lennon formed the band 'The Quarry Men' in 1957, which (with some adjustments) would become The Beatles three years later. They began by playing skiffle music, hugely inspired by 'Lonnie Donogan'. This style was extremely simple and used continuous strumming of a guitar and banjo. The Beatles had a banjo player but he was asked to leave in 1958 as 'The Quarry Men' were taking a musical step forward.

The Beatles (as the final 4 mentioned previously) released their first single "Love Me Do" in 1962 which was later released in the album "Please Please Me" in March 1963. The band had progressed from skiffle and were beginning to gravitate towards 'Rock 'n' Roll' music – hugely inspired by Buddy Holly (an artist who's song 'That'll Be The Day' was covered by 'The Quarry Men' in 1958) and Elvis Presley – a massively successful rock 'n' roll artist of the time. 'Love me do' however, took on the genre 'Merseybeat' (an early stage of rock 'n' roll, created by the band). Their emmaculately groomed look (Everly brothers inspired) and new innovative sound got the band noticed and this song charted at number 17 in the UK.

The song is written in myxolydian mode on G. It has a simple and repetitive rhythm (key to all The Beatles songs) in order to make it memorable and catchy. The song opens with an 8 bar intro, followed by a 13 bar phrase (made up of a 9 and 4 bar section). This was unusual for the time, as was their use of Rondo sequence – recent popular songs had been written in the form AABA, whereas as Rondo follows the structure ABAC



A is repeated
sing harmonies in 5ths

Bridge – Lennon and McCartney
sing harmonies in 5ths
(also key to The Beatles sound)

The structure is followed by a repeat of A (the 13 bar phrase) and an 8 bar outro. Also unusual for the time was the timbre in this song, Lennon plays a bluesy harmonica solo on the 8 bar intro. This was the start of musical gimmicks, which made the band so famous and expressive and developed musical structure. This solo is repeated on the repeat of the 8 bar bridge, also an unusual structure for the time. The rhythm in the drums and bass has a swing feel which shows the development from skiffle's continuous, strumming rhythm. This song is modernist and carries a romantic narrative. The lyrics, along with the chord structure (1,4 and 5) are simple to make it

Context and K & U but some sense of the structure of these ballads and skiffle songs would have been even better.

*Avoid 'hugely'
K context
?
relevance?*

Love Me Do - Q

eg

Avoid 'hugely'

And 'massively'

*explain?
Sp?*

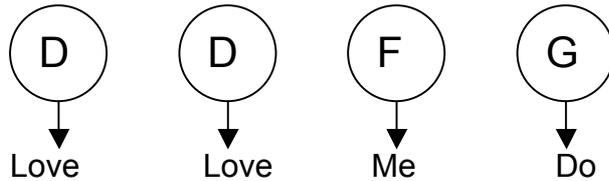
*Musical analysis
Sp?
Q structure*

Sp?

Gm? & expression?

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memorable. The repeated use of notes also aid this.



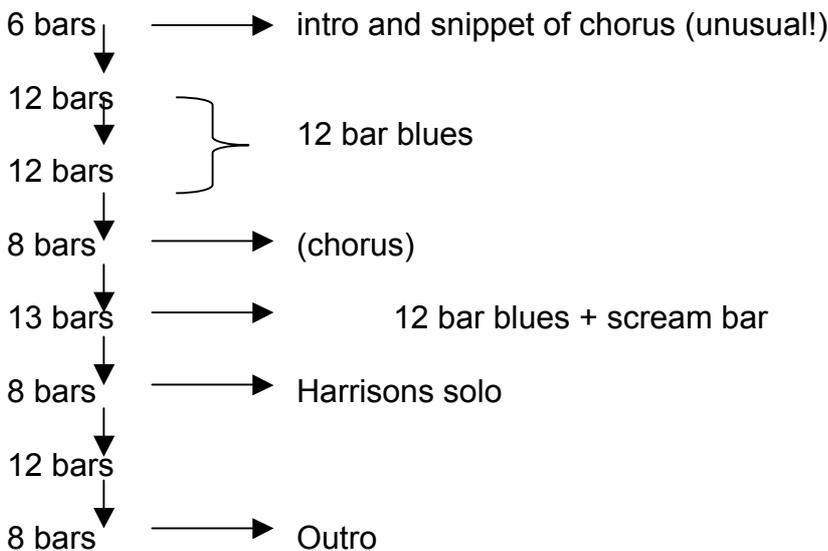
Finally, the blue note. A blue note is a note flattened by a semi-tone. The do this on the final bar of the 13 bar phrase, on the word “do” to compliment the blues feel, match with the lyrics (which reflect teenagers at the time) and appeal to the listener.

‘Can’t buy me love’ was released in 1964. This song sees further development in musical structure and is far more complex. This song is rock ‘n’ roll and has many developments from The Beatles early sound.

The rhythm is this time syncopated (a note is accented that is usually emphasised, e.g. the & as opposed to the count) this creates a bluesy, swing feel. It is written in a Dorian mode C (Bb major) but transfers to myxolydian mode on C (F major) by taking the flat off at the chorus. It opens, unusually with a 6 bar intro (another musical progression) followed by a 12 bar blues sequence (a sequence, along with ternary, that The Beatles used most often). The major chords and minor harmony create a basic blues and the repeated use of chords 3 and 6 in the chorus compliment this.

The 12 bar blues sequence is also unusually tweaked as the change chord 1 (CEG) in the 11th bar of the phrase and change it to chord 5 (FAC).

The final bar of the repeated 12 bar blues is tagged with a scream bar which is followed by a guitar solo for George Harrison. Therefore the song follows the following structure:



This song continued with the theme of love, however it was allegedly about a prostitute. This song can be seen as the

Gm?

Not clearly articulated but sense is there.-pining and whining.

Can't Buy -Q & eg

K

*But explanation somewhat unclear
Musical analysis*

Structure

*K context
Sp?*

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| <p>change in The Beatles sound, from their early <u>emmaculately</u> groomed appearance, to their dark side and serious, social themes.</p> <p>'Norwegian Wood' was released in 1965 on the album 'Rubber Soul'. This follows a year of studying Indian music (the sitar) for George Harrison. The song opens with a 16 bar intro. 8 bars played on the guitar, 8 bars played on the sitar. At this time, other bands, such as the Rolling Stones were doing the same thing eg. The Sitar in their song 'Paint it Black'. The Beatles and The Rolling Stones, along with The Who and <u>The Stone Roses</u> were classed as the 'British Invasion' at the time of the Free Love Movement in the '60's. They were huge influential rock 'n' roll figures.</p> <p>This song (Norwegian Wood) is written in Mixolydian A major and Dorian mode. It is written in ternary sequence (ABA) and the A sections are in major key, the B sections are in minor key (ironically, the 5th, most bleak section is in major key which highlights their change). This is done by taking the sharp off the G to make it natural, ie. making it major. The section A has one chord only, E. This reflects the drones of Indian music. The harmonic rhythm is slow throughout which represents the same thing. This is inspired (and the opening 8 bars are allegedly copied) by an Indian piece of music named 'Raga Bagashree'. The song is written in 3/4 time, unusual for the time and has a distinctive waltz feel. It deals with the issue of a man being <u>mislead</u> by a woman and dismissed, resulting in him burning her house down.</p> <p>Their songs <u>continued to enhance in structure</u>, eg. Eleanor Rigby (1966) dealt with the instability of a lonely old woman. The Beatles had become more about technology and effects than being together. This song sees the use of studio effects to layer the sound of 2 string quartets (session musicians) and sees just Lennon and McCartney regarding Beatles musicians singing.</p> <p>'Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds' (1967) changes key for each section and time signature 3/4 - 4/4. This also shows (allegedly) their influence of drugs at the time.</p> <p>I believe The Beatles played a huge role in developing musical structure <u>greatly</u> and creating more expressive and complex music. Over their 10 years they transformed popular music and have gone down in history for their huge success.</p> | <p><i>Norwegian Wood – Q & eg</i></p> <p><i>Excellent perf stds context</i></p> <p><i>With eg.</i></p> <p><i>Stone Roses?-24 years later. Avoid 'huge'</i></p> <p><i>Musical analysis</i></p> <p><i>K</i> <i>K but..</i> <i>expression?</i></p> <p><i>K context</i></p> <p><i>sp?</i></p> <p><i>Further examples</i> <i>Expression?</i></p> <p><i>More about style than structure</i></p> <p><i>Eg</i></p> <p><i>Avoid 'huge'</i> <i>Sp? & gm?/expression</i></p> <p><i>Avoid 'huge'</i></p> |
| <p>Marks: K&U-24+QoL-6=30</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1247 words- rather more than is expected from an answer on this paper. • An excellent response indicating a keen understanding of musical construction in this context, showing an ability to analyse and discuss the analysis. Some relation to lyrics may have helped give a more rounded explanation. • Some sp/gm/expression issues, but technical vocab. used well and spelt correctly. | <p>Paper Total = 56/60 (equivalent to a good Grade A in June 2010)</p> |