

To be handed to candidates after 1 January 2012

A2 GCE PERFORMANCE STUDIES

G404 Performance Project

Commissions for Student-devised Performance

JUNE 2012



INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

- For Unit G404 you are required to take part in two performances.

- **This Unit is marked out of 70 marks, divided as follows:**

Section A Performance Realisation 20 marks

Section B Student-devised Performance 50 marks

This is composed of:

Interpreting the commission [10 marks]

Individual role [10 marks]

Performance skills [30 marks]

Please note that all the members of your group will receive the same mark for interpreting the commission.

- This document consists of **8** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- Please read instructions overleaf.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- For Section B, Student-devised Performance, 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:
 - You may perform in only **one** group piece.
 - The piece must give all the performers approximately the same amount of exposure (about 5 minutes).
 - The minimum number of candidates per group is **three**, the maximum is **six**.
 - Your piece must last no longer than 30 minutes and no less than 15 minutes. For example if you have a 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 in your group. 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 following each commission are important. The visiting examiner will use these questions as the basis for the interview before your performance. Links to the commission must be evident in 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.

COMMISSIONS – SELECT ONE ONLY

COMMISSIONS BASED ON IMAGE

- 1 *The Census at Bethlehem* (1566) by Pieter Bruegel the Elder
- 2 *Nanny, Small Bears and Bogeyman* (1982) by Paula Rego

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 of the picture?
- Are there recurring themes in the picture? If so, could these be used as a structural device in your piece? What is the balance between elements that appear only once and elements that are duplicated in the picture?
- How are light and shadow, black and white, or a 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 image that could become a motif with which to structure the piece?
- Is there an implied story to the picture? There is no need to invent one if there isn't one, but you might use the context of the picture if it has a naturalistic dimension to it.
- What possibilities are there for you to work across the art forms?

COMMISSIONS BASED ON HISTORICAL SITUATIONS

- 3 *The Titanic* – a hundred years since it sank
- 4 The 1936 Olympics

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

- What period of time is covered by the commission?
- 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 all the art forms are integrated?
- Is it appropriate to take episodes in the order they occurred, or is there scope for adapting the historical time line?
- How many characters are involved in the situation? This may have to be adapted to the group size (minimum three, maximum six).
- Is there anything controversial about the event? If so, how does this affect the structure of the piece? You can create intrigue or mystery by the way you structure a piece.
- What possibilities are there for you to work within all three art forms?

COMMISSIONS BASED ON POETRY

5 *Snow Joke* by Simon Armitage

6 *Chopin's Waltz No. 7* by Sandeep Parmar

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 as structural or thematic devices?
- 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 any more than **six lines** of the poem in a single quotation, 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. Alternatively, 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 should not simply 'animate' the poem, but be creative in how you handle aspects of the poem and its story.
- What possibilities are there for you to work within all three art forms?

COMMISSIONS BASED ON STORIES

7 The story of The Blue Jackal from *The Panchatantra*

8 The story of Aladdin as found in *One Thousand and One Arabian Nights*

Please note that the published edition of each story to be used is not specified.

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

- Does the story have an episodic structure, and if so, how many episodes are there?
- What characters are there, and how could these be incorporated into the piece?
- Where are the key moments in the story? Can they be turned into transition points in the performance?
- 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 place? Could this be done through dance or music?
- What possibilities are there to work within all three art forms? In particular, how much potential is there for dance and music in this story?

PERFORMANCE BASED ON OTHER PERFORMERS

9 Marcel Marceau

10 Ella Fitzgerald

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?
- On what aspects of the person's career, life or skills does the piece focus?
- 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?
- What possibilities are there for you to work within all three art forms?

Appendix

Commission 1

Pieter Bruegel the Elder – *The Census at Bethlehem* (1566)



Commission 2

Paula Rego – *Nanny, Small Bears and Bogeyman* (1982)



Commission 5

Snow Joke by Simon Armitage

Heard the one about the guy from Heaton Mersey?
Wife at home, lover in Hyde, mistress
in Newton-le-Willows and two pretty girls
in the top grade at Werneth prep. Well,

he was late and he had a good car so he snubbed
the police warning-light and tried to finesse
the last six miles of moorland blizzard,
and the story goes he was stuck within minutes.

So he sat there thinking about life and things;
what the dog does when it catches its tail
and about the snake that ate itself to death.
And he watched the windscreen filling up

with snow, and it felt good, and the whisky
from his hip-flask was warm and smooth.
And of course, there isn't a punchline
but the ending goes something like this.

They found him slumped against the steering wheel
with VOLVO printed backwards in his frozen brow.
And they fought in the pub over hot toddies
as who was to take the most credit.

Him who took the aerial to be a hawthorn twig?
Him who figured out the contour of his car?
Or him who said he heard the horn, moaning
softly like an alarm clock under an eiderdown?

Commission 6

Chopin's Waltz No. 7 by Sandeep Parmar

The Classics contrabanded in the cellar with rose petal jam.
 (Rose petal Jam?) A week of breakfasts' invisible guest.
 Husbands and fathers, too, ghosted every meal.
 You were their substitute, rationed nephew, the favourite.

Feline cousins, Deanna and the other (what was her name?)
 Imagine Helen of Troy, only topless and more petulant)
 each claimed an arm. Above ground, Tanti Ani boudoired
 all day in a fuss with curlers and romance novels.

At dinner, she thumped the table and shouted, 'Rachmaninov!'
 The stuffed peppers swallowed their tongues, the mish-mash
 glistened indifferent. You rose, cigaretted, rolled your sleeves,
 patterning clouds with your teeth into notes in the air.

Ani forgot her communist meanness, her housedress, her wigged
 ugliness. (Where had her husband gone?) Partnered alone
 to Chopin's No. 7 (*Walzen* is to roll, revolve, to shove blame),
 she debutanted like a Hapsburg princess in a scandaled room.

Tempo cut slow enough to let the mind finger its black stakes
 back, mindful not to displace the past, the relics of conspiracies,
 black lists, shots to the temple. She could have hung herself
 and swayed, smiling for you who never wanted to leave.

Copyright Information

OCR is committed to seeking permission to reproduce all third-party content that it uses in its assessment materials. OCR has attempted to identify and contact all copyright holders whose work is used in this paper. To avoid the issue of disclosure of answer-related information to candidates, all copyright acknowledgements are reproduced in the OCR Copyright Acknowledgements Booklet. This is produced for each series of examinations and is freely available to download from our public website (www.ocr.org.uk) after the live examination series.

If OCR has unwittingly failed to correctly acknowledge or clear any third-party content in this assessment material, OCR will be happy to correct its mistake at the earliest possible opportunity.

For queries or further information please contact the Copyright Team, First Floor, 9 Hills Road, Cambridge CB2 1GE.

OCR is part of the Cambridge Assessment Group; Cambridge Assessment is the brand name of University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), which is itself a department of the University of Cambridge.