

**ADVANCED GCE
PERFORMANCE STUDIES**

Performance Project

G404

Commissions – for Student Devised Performance

To be handed to candidates after 1 January 2011

JUNE 2011



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

- 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:
 - 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 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 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 Cruise* by Mary Adshead
- 2 *Nebuchadnezzar* by William Blake

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 things that appear only once and things 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 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 for you to work across the art forms?

COMMISSIONS BASED ON POLITICAL STRUGGLE

- 3 The abolition of apartheid in South Africa
- 4 Berlin between 1961 and 1989: a city divided?

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

- What period of time is covered by the 'struggle'?
- 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? What possibilities are there for you to work within all three art forms?
- Is it possible 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 struggle? If this has to be adapted to the group size (minimum three, maximum six) could you use multi-role?
- 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.

COMMISSIONS BASED ON POETRY

5 *I cannot dance upon my Toes* by Emily Dickinson

6 *If* by Rudyard Kipling

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 a motif?
- 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 Trojan Horse (from Virgil's *The Aeneid*)

8 *Pinocchio* by Carlo Collodi

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

- Does the story have a particular structure that you could build upon (e.g. episodic)?
- 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?
- 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?
- 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?

COMMISSIONS BASED ON OTHER PERFORMERS

9 The Andrews Sisters

10 Freddie Mercury

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

- What is their most well-known contribution to the world of performing arts?
- On what aspects of their career, life or skills does the piece focus?
- What is the time span of the chosen aspects within their life?
- Are there key moments that can be used as separate episodes?
- Is the piece essentially a documentary about their life?
- What possibilities are there for you to work within all three art forms?

Appendix

Commission 1

Mary Adshead – *The Cruise*



Commission 2

William Blake – *Nebuchadnezzar*



Commission 5

I cannot dance upon my Toes by Emily Dickinson

I cannot dance upon my Toes –
No Man instructed me –
But oftentimes, among my mind,
A Glee possesseth me,

That had I Ballet knowledge –
Would put itself abroad
In Pirouette to blanch a Troupe –
Or lay a Prima, mad,

And though I had no Gown of Gauze –
No Ringlet, to my Hair,
Nor hopped to Audiences – like Birds,
One Claw upon the Air,

Nor tossed my shape in Eider Balls,
Nor rolled on wheels of snow
Till I was out of sight, in sound,
The House encore me so –

Nor any know I know the Art
I mention – easy – Here –
Nor any Placard boast me –
It's full as Opera –

Commission 6

***If* by Rudyard Kipling**

If you can keep your head when all about you
 Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;
 If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
 But make allowance for their doubting too;
 If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
 Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
 Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
 And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream – and not make dreams your master;
 If you can think – and not make thoughts your aim;
 If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
 And treat those two imposters just the same;
 If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
 Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
 Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
 And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools;

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
 And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
 And lose, and start again at your beginnings
 And never breathe a word about your loss;
 If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
 To serve your turn long after they are gone,
 And so hold on when there is nothing in you
 Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on!"

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
 Or walk with kings – nor lose the common touch,
 If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
 If all men count with you, but none too much;
 If you can fill the unforgiving minute
 With sixty seconds' worth of distance run –
 Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
 And – which is more – you'll be a Man, my son!

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