



**HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION**

**1997**

**DRAMA**

**2 UNIT**

*(40 Marks)*

*Time allowed—One hour and a half  
(Plus 5 minutes reading time)*

**DIRECTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

- Attempt TWO questions, ONE from each Section.
- All questions are of equal value.
- Answer each question in a *separate* Writing Booklet.
- You may ask for extra Writing Booklets if you need them.

**SECTION I**  
**DRAMA AND THEATRE IN AUSTRALIAN**  
**SOCIETIES AND CULTURES**

(20 Marks)

Attempt ONE question.

All questions are of equal value.

**QUESTION 1. Contemporary Aboriginal Theatre**

*EITHER*

- (a) In Aboriginal theatre, familiar forms of 'white' theatre are used to say new things.

Discuss this statement, with reference to TWO plays from the set texts.

*OR*

- (b) Contemporary Aboriginal theatre often presents indigenous characters living in the context of a mixed society.

Choose ONE play you have studied from the set texts and discuss how it explores this experience on stage.

Texts set for study:

Roger Bennett, *Funerals and Circuses*  
Jimmy Chi and Kuckles, *Bran Nue Dae*  
Jack Davis et al., *Plays From Black Australia*  
Robert J. Merritt, *The Cakeman*.

**QUESTION 2. Theatre in Education***EITHER*

- (a) Writers and performers in Theatre in Education set out to make the subject matter in their plays relevant to their audiences.

What techniques do the plays you have studied use to achieve this aim?

*OR*

- (b) ‘Any good theatre will of itself be educational—that is when it initiates or extends a questioning process in its audience, when it makes us look afresh at the world, when it extends our notion of who we are.’

TONY JACKSON

‘Learning through theatre’, Tony Jackson, Routledge 1993, p 35.

Discuss this statement in relation to TWO of the Theatre in Education plays you have studied.

Texts set for study:

Manuel Aston, *Fossils*

Nick Enright, *A Property of the Clan*

David Holman, *No Worries: Three Plays for Children*

Peta Murray, *Spitting Chips*.

**QUESTION 3. State or Regional Theatre Companies***EITHER*

- (a) Theatre should be for everyone—no matter what age.

What evidence have you found, in both the operations and artistic policy of the theatre company you have studied, that this is an important principle for state or regional theatre companies?

*OR*

- (b) A theatre company can provide what it thinks the public is familiar with, but must also try to give its audience new theatrical experiences.

Discuss this statement, with reference to the state or regional theatre company you have studied.

Theatre companies set for study:

Sydney Theatre Company  
Melbourne Theatre Company  
Royal Queensland Theatre Company  
South Australian Theatre Company  
Q Theatre  
Hunter Valley Theatre Company  
Riverina Theatre Company  
Theatre South  
Murray River Performing Group  
New England Theatre Company  
Theatre North.

**QUESTION 4. Australian Theatre 1965–75***EITHER*

- (a) Discuss why and how Australian theatre from 1965 to 1975 attempted to present new people, new problems, and new ideas on stage. In your answer, refer to at least TWO of the plays set for study.

*OR*

- (b) ‘Playwrights and theatre workers between 1965 and 1975 were exploring a self-consciously Australian larrikin\* style that suited the climate of the time and that attracted new Australian audiences.’

\* *larrikin* rebellious, irreverent, cheeky

Discuss this statement, with reference to at least TWO of the plays set for study.

Texts set for study:

Michael Boddy and Bob Ellis, *The Legend of King O’Malley*  
 Jack Hibberd, *A Stretch of the Imagination*  
 John Romeril, *The Floating World*  
 David Williamson, *Don’s Party*  
 Alexander Buzo, *The Front Room Boys*.

**QUESTION 5. Nineteenth-century Australian Melodrama***EITHER*

- (a) ‘Melodrama is essentially visual theatre, and . . . tends to look very thin and disjointed on the page.’

MARGARET WILLIAMS

‘The Sunny South’, G Darrell, ed M Williams, Currency 1975 Preface p x. Reprinted with permission.

Discuss how both *Robbery Under Arms* and *The Sunny South*, in performance, would have created what Williams calls a ‘stirring theatrical experience’ for their original Australian audiences.

*OR*

- (b) Australian nineteenth-century melodrama was largely based on the English model but that model could never be taken entirely seriously in Australia; the tone and style were much more light-hearted.

Discuss this statement, with reference to *Robbery Under Arms* and *The Sunny South*.

Texts set for study:

Alfred Dampier and Garnet Walch, *Robbery Under Arms*  
 George Darrell, *The Sunny South*.

**QUESTION 6. Louis Nowra***EITHER*

- (a) Nowra presents his ideas in a strongly visual way, often confronting the audience with shocking, thought-provoking images.

Discuss this statement, with reference to at least TWO of the plays set for study.

*OR*

- (b) A dominant theme in Nowra's work is the confrontation between the individual's vision of the world and the reality outside.

Analyse how Nowra explores this confrontation theatrically. In your answer, refer to TWO plays that you have studied.

Texts set for study:

*The Golden Age*  
*Summer of the Aliens*  
*Sunrise*  
*Visions.*

**QUESTION 7. Women and Contemporary Theatre***EITHER*

- (a) An artist who is a woman will only have an impact if she deals in her art with 'women's issues'.

To what extent is this statement true of the work of the woman performer AND the woman playwright you have studied?

*OR*

- (b) To what extent have the performer AND the playwright you have studied contributed to and enhanced the place of women in contemporary Australian theatre?

Women performers:

Robyn Archer  
Wendy Harmer  
Justine Saunders  
Ruth Cracknell.

Woman playwrights:

Linda Aronson, *Dinkum Assorted*  
Alma de Groen, *The Rivers of China*  
Dorothy Hewett, *The Chapel Perilous*  
Hannie Rayson, *Falling From Grace*.

**SECTION II**  
**DRAMA AND THEATRE IN SOCIETIES AND CULTURES**  
**OTHER THAN AUSTRALIAN**

(20 Marks)

Attempt ONE question.

All questions are of equal value.

**QUESTION 8. Shakespeare in Performance**

*EITHER*

- (a) Choose ONE of the plays set for study. What aspects of the play are likely to appeal to audiences in the late twentieth century? How could the play be presented to appeal to modern audiences, using modern rather than Elizabethan performance conventions?

*OR*

- (b) The rapid pace and complexity of plot and subplot in Shakespeare's plays appeal to modern audiences accustomed to film and television.

Discuss this statement, with reference to TWO plays you have studied.

Texts set for study:

*The Taming of the Shrew*  
*Romeo and Juliet*  
*The Merchant of Venice*  
*A Midsummer Night's Dream.*

**QUESTION 9. Caryl Churchill**

*EITHER*

- (a) Discuss the theatrical techniques that Caryl Churchill employs in her plays to disrupt audience expectations of gender roles and social values. In your answer, refer to TWO plays you have studied.

*OR*

- (b) Caryl Churchill's plays often break out of a single historical period. What techniques does she use and for what purpose? In your answer, refer to TWO plays you have studied.

Texts set for study:

*Fen*  
*Cloud Nine*  
*Vinegar Tom*  
*Serious Money.*



**QUESTION 10. Greek Tragedy***EITHER*

- (a) Discuss the ways women are presented on stage in BOTH Sophocles' *Antigone* AND Euripides' *The Bacchae*.

*OR*

- (b) Conflict as portrayed in Greek tragedy is not always a simplistic 'right versus wrong', but often two ideals up against each other.

Discuss the ways conflict is presented on stage by both characters and chorus in EITHER *Antigone* OR *The Bacchae*.

Texts set for study:

Sophocles, *Antigone*  
Euripides, *The Bacchae*.

**QUESTION 11. Peter Brook***EITHER*

- (a) 'I can take any empty space and call it a bare stage. A man walks across that space while someone else is watching and that is all that is needed for an act of theatre to be engaged.'

PETER BROOK

'The Empty Space', Peter Brook, Penguin UK 1968, p 11.

Discuss this idea with reference to Brook's emphasis on the importance of the actor compared with other theatrical elements. In your answer, refer to his productions of *Marat/Sade* and EITHER *King Lear* OR *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

*OR*

- (b) Look carefully at the picture below. How do the images in it reflect key elements of Brook's production of Peter Weiss' *Marat/Sade*?



Dennis Stock/Magnum. Courtesy Magnum Photos.

**QUESTION 12. Dario Fo***EITHER*

- (a) 'Our theatre is a throw-away theatre (*un teatro da bruciare*), a theatre that won't go down in bourgeois history, but that is useful, like a newspaper article, a debate or a political action.'

DARIO FO

'Dario Fo, People's Court Jester', Tony Mitchell, Methuen Theatre File, NY 1984, p58.

Discuss this statement, with reference to TWO plays you have studied.

*OR*

- (b) Franca Rame refers to the 'satirical violence' of Dario Fo's scripts.

Discuss how Fo combines violence and satire as ingredients of farce, and analyse the purpose they serve. In your answer make reference to at least TWO plays you have studied.

Texts set for study:

*Accidental Death of an Anarchist*  
*Can't Pay, Won't Pay*  
*Mistero Buffo*  
*Trumpets and Raspberries.*

**QUESTION 13. Augusto Boal***EITHER*

- (a) 'The Theatre of the Oppressed is about acting rather than talking, questioning rather than giving answers, analysing rather than accepting.'

ADRIAN JACKSON

'Games for Actors and Non-actors', A Boal, Routledge, London, 1992, Intro pxxiv.

Discuss this statement in the light of Boal's political objectives.

*OR*

- (b) In a world where forms of oppression have been a constant in society, Boal believed that theatre should be a force for change.

With specific reference to THREE of the following concepts, discuss how Boal expected this change to occur.

- the spect-actor
- forum theatre
- the cop in the head
- magic solutions
- dynamising the image
- model and anti-model.

**Please turn over**

**QUESTION 14. Commedia dell'arte**

*EITHER*

- (a) The stock characters were clearly differentiated in terms of their appearance, regional origin, relationships, and plot function.

Discuss this statement, with close reference to **THREE** of the characters.

*OR*

- (b) Although the *innamorati* were not the main attraction of the troupe, they played a significant role in the performance of the scenarios.

Discuss the contribution of the young lovers to Commedia dell'arte, referring to their functions in the improvised plots and their relationships to the other stock characters.