

B O A R D O F S T U D I E S
NEW SOUTH WALES

HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

1999

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) Contemporary Aboriginal theatre presents female characters who are wise, affectionate, compassionate and full of knowledge.

Using this statement as a starting point, discuss the presentation of female characters, and their impact on other characters and the audience.

In your answer, refer to TWO of the plays set for study.

OR

- (b) Storytelling has always been a part of our Aboriginal heritage, not just for entertainment.

JUSTINE SAUNDERS, Aboriginal actor

Discuss Aboriginal theatre as a modern form of storytelling which combines theatrical entertainment with recording important aspects of Aboriginal cultures.

In your answer, refer to TWO of the plays set for study.

Texts set for study:

Roger Bennett, *Funerals and Circuses*
Jimmy Chi and Kuckles, *Bran Nue Dae*
Jack Davis, *No Sugar*
Robert J Merritt, *The Cakeman*

QUESTION 2 Theatre in Education

EITHER

- (a) How do writers, directors and performers working in Theatre in Education take into account a young audience, untrained in theatre conventions?

In your answer, refer to TWO of the plays set for study.

OR

- (b) Plays for Theatre in Education typically present young characters with lessons to learn.

Discuss this statement, referring to both the content and the theatrical techniques of TWO of the plays set for study.

Texts set for study:

Manuel Aston, *Fossils*
Nick Enright, *A Property of the Clan*
David Holman, *The Small Poppies*
Peta Murray, *Spitting Chips*

QUESTION 3 Theatre in Contemporary Australian Society

EITHER

- (a) There is no point having a theatre company that produces great art if no one ever goes.

Discuss this statement, referring to theatre as an artistic and/or popular medium in contemporary Australian society.

In your discussion, refer to examples from the work of companies and/or organisations you have studied.

OR

- (b) Theatre is a collaborative art form but that does not mean that the best way to support it is by setting up companies and organisations. The focus should always be on the individual artists.

Discuss this statement, referring to examples from the work of companies and/or organisations you have studied.

QUESTION 4 The New Wave in Australian Theatre 1969–1974

EITHER

- (a) The New Wave was just a bunch of blokes being naughty and mucking up, really. They thought they were creating a revolutionary, new Australian theatre, but it was just the same old men's stuff in a new, rough style.

Discuss this statement, referring to TWO of the plays set for study and to the theatrical conditions in which they were produced.

OR

- (b) How did the plays of the New Wave, and the spaces in which they were performed, create new problems for both theatre workers and audiences. In your answer, refer to the dramatic forms and performance styles of 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*

Question 5 Australian Puppet Theatre

EITHER

- (a) Actors are limited by the shape and possibilities of the human body. Puppets can be and do almost anything.

Discuss how puppet theatre can go beyond the limitations of the natural human body. In your answer, use examples from the work of companies you have studied.

OR

- (b) In puppet theatre the animator, whether visible or not, is as important as the puppet.

Referring to the photograph and this statement, discuss the relationship between puppet, puppeteer and audience. In your answer, use examples from the work of companies you have studied.

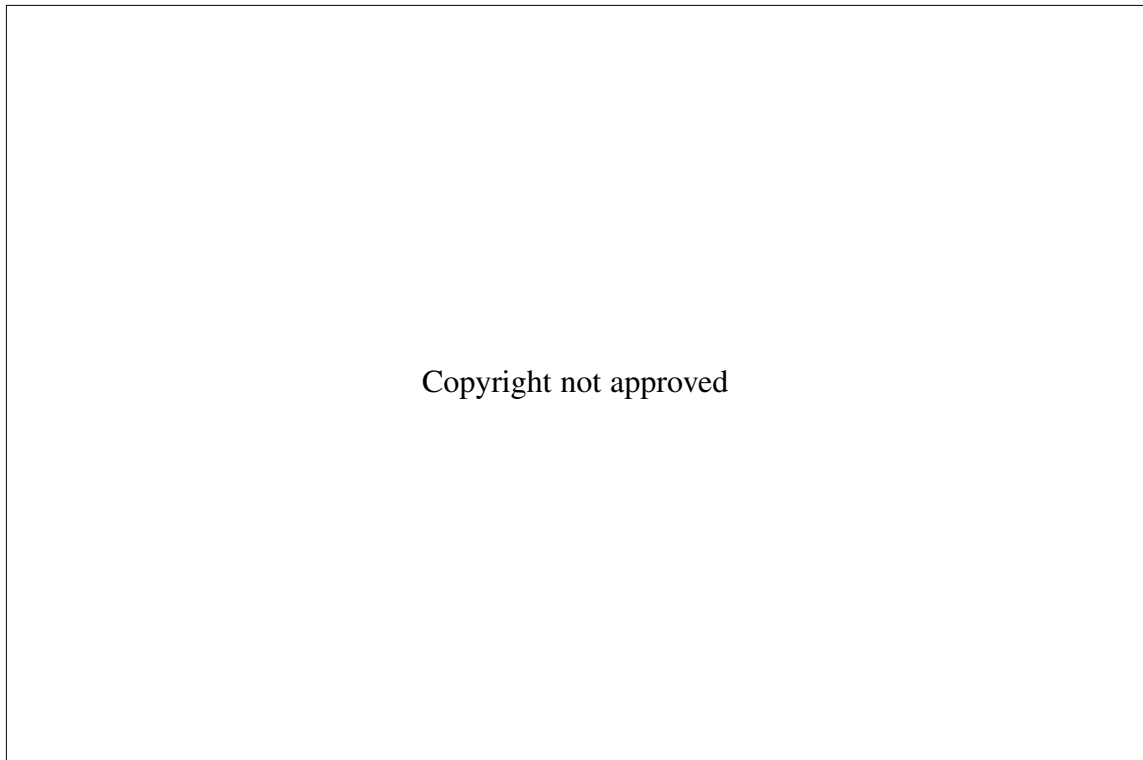


FIG. 1

QUESTION 6 Louis Nowra

EITHER

- (a) I knew somehow I was not in sync with the world around me and I floated away from it, like a balloon cut free from its moorings.

LOUIS NOWRA

Using this statement as a starting point, discuss the ways in which Louis Nowra's visionary characters relate to the everyday world in which they find themselves.

In your answer, refer to TWO of the following characters:

- Bethsheb in *The Golden Age*
- Lewis in *Summer of the Aliens*
- Nona in *Radiance*
- Juana in *Visions*.

OR

- (b) Everything that happens in a Nowra play, however personal and intimate it might seem to the characters concerned, has broader implications in the wide world in which they are trapped.

How does the theatre of Louis Nowra use the experiences and actions of individual characters to explore broad social, political and philosophical ideas?

In your answer, refer to TWO of the plays set for study.

Texts set for study:

The Golden Age
Summer of the Aliens
Radiance
Visions

QUESTION 7 Australian Women's Theatre

EITHER

- (a) . . . it is possible for women to support each other and begin to escape from their socially-conditioned selves, to search for a different sense of self.

TAIT AND SCHAFER

Using this statement as a starting point, discuss how TWO of the plays set for study employ different theatrical forms to explore the relationships between women.

OR

- (b) Women create theatre that is different from the theatre men create because they experience the world differently.

Discuss how plays by women writers use forms and styles in a distinctive way to reflect women's experience.

In your answer, refer to TWO of the plays set for study.

Texts set for study:

Eva Johnson, *Murras*

Dorothy Hewett, *The Chapel Perilous*

Tess Lyssiotis, *The Forty Lounge Cafe*

Suzanne Spinner, *Running Up a Dress*

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) Discuss the ways female characters are presented in Shakespeare's plays. What challenges do these characters present to modern directors and actors of Shakespeare's work?

In your answer, refer to TWO of the plays set for study.

OR

- (b) The beauty and complexity of Shakespeare's language, both verse and prose, have to be sacrificed in modern productions so that audiences can understand the plays.

Discuss this statement, referring to TWO of the plays set for study.

Texts set for study:

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

QUESTION 9 Theatre of the Absurd

EITHER

- (a) Compare and contrast the ways that the Absurdist plays you have studied use patterns of movement and stillness, exits and entrances, and what is onstage and offstage, to reflect their playwrights' philosophies regarding the futility of life.

In your answer, refer to *Waiting for Godot* and at least one of the other plays set for study.

OR

- (b) In the Theatre of the Absurd the plays do not just talk about the absurdity of life, they act it out on the stage.

Discuss this statement, referring to the characterisation, dramatic forms and conventions of *Waiting for Godot* and at least one of the other plays set for study.

Texts set for study:

Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*

Edward Albee, *Zoo Story*

Eugene Ionesco, *The Bald Prima Donna*

Harold Pinter, *The Dumb Waiter*

Arthur Adamov, *Professor Taranne*

QUESTION 10 Medieval English Cycle Plays

EITHER

- (a) Banners, pennants, processional staging and music emphasise that one of the main features of the Cycle plays was a processional quality, a sense of marvel following on marvel.

Discuss this statement, referring to the Cycle plays you have studied.

OR

- (b) How are the comic and the solemn elements of the Cycle plays interwoven, to create a performance that is both a religious festival and a public entertainment?

In your answer, refer to the Cycle plays you have studied.

Texts set for study:

The Creation and the Fall of Lucifer

Noah's Flood

The Second Shepherd's Play

Herod the Great

The Crucifixion

The Judgement

QUESTION 11 Peter Brook

EITHER

- (a) In Peter Brook's production of *The Mahabharata*, what is the effect of bringing together different, international theatrical traditions to tell the story of one culture?

In your answer, refer to the multicultural casting, the staging techniques and the storytelling.

OR

- (b) Study the two photographs closely. What elements of Peter Brook's production style are revealed in them, and how do these elements reflect his overall work as a director?

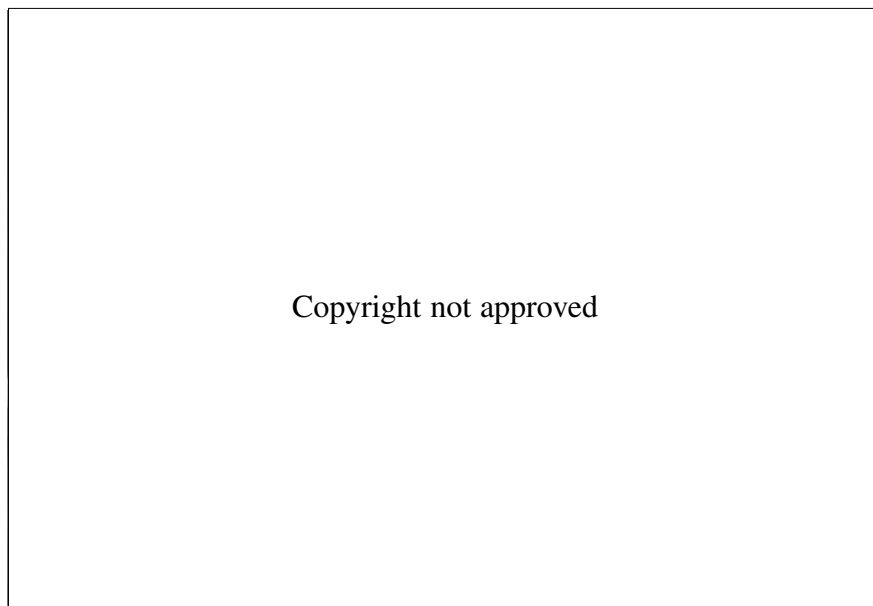


FIG. 2

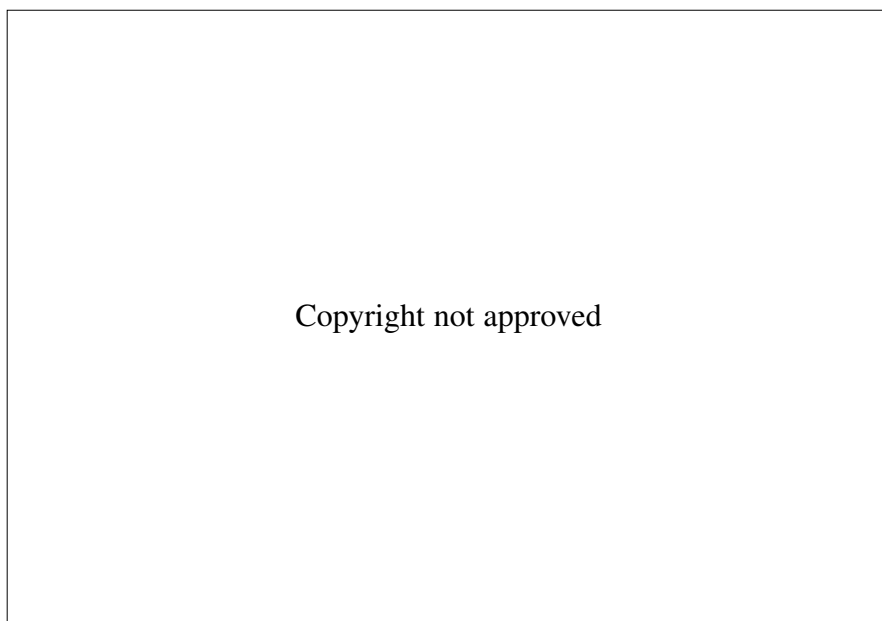


FIG. 3

QUESTION 12 Dario Fo

EITHER

- (a) Political theatre need not be divorced from humour and entertainment value.

Discuss this statement, referring to TWO of the plays set for study.

OR

- (b) Look at the three photographs of Fo acting in his own plays. Using these as a starting point, discuss the use of extreme physical characterisation in his theatre.

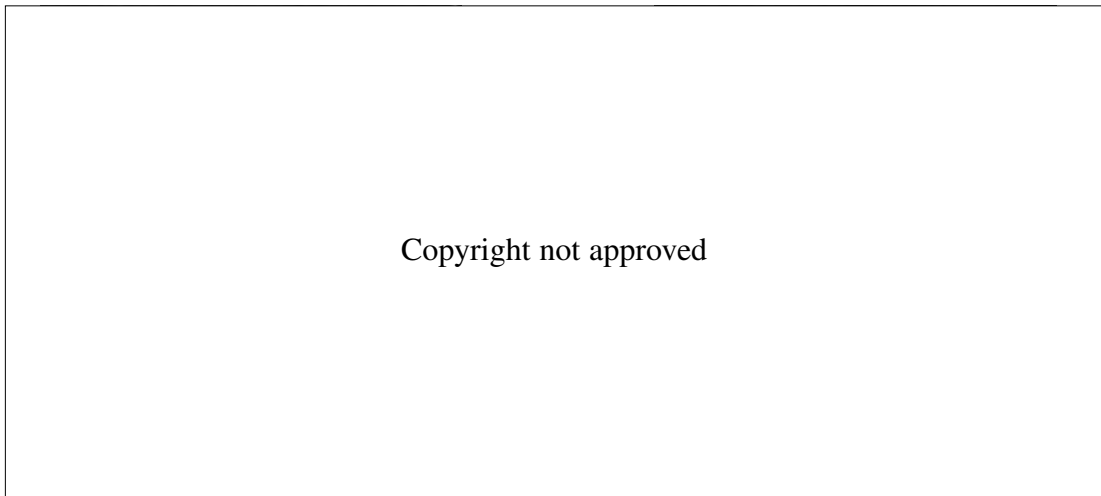


FIG. 4

FIG. 5

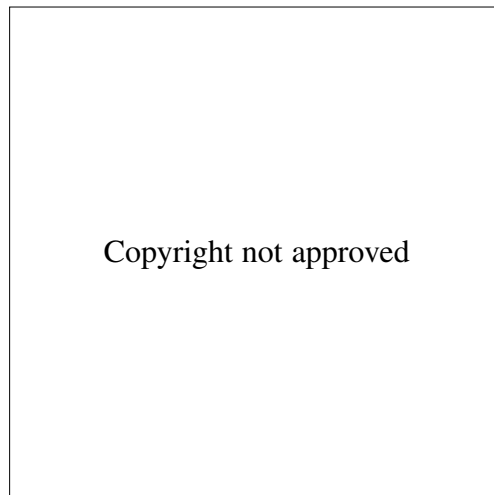


FIG. 6

Texts set for study:

Accidental Death of an Anarchist

Can't Pay? Won't Pay!

Mistero Buffo

Trumpets and Raspberries

Please turn over

QUESTION 13 Augusto Boal

EITHER

- (a) Everything that actors do, we (non-actors) do throughout our lives. The only difference is that actors are conscious that they are using the language of theatre and are thus better able to turn it to their advantage.

AUGUSTO BOAL

How does Boal's theatre practice, including his use of games and exercises, help non-actors use theatre techniques in their struggle against oppression?

OR

- (b) Boal's choice of theatre techniques depends on the nature of the group, the occasion and the problem to be addressed.

Describe and discuss Boal's work with two different groups, showing how the different needs of each group required different theatre techniques.

QUESTION 14 Commedia dell'arte

EITHER

- (a) The commedia dell'arte performances were not just light-hearted entertainments. The characters, themes and performance styles also reflected the serious issues of the places and times in which they were performed.

Discuss this statement with reference to the commedia dell'arte of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries.

OR

- (b) The commedia dell'arte performer needed to be a comedian, acrobat, singer, dancer and mime, as well as being quick witted.

Discuss the need for these skills in the commedia dell'arte performers of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries.

End of paper