

DRAMA – Component 3 – INTERPRETING THEATRE – 2018

Section B: Acting Question

Analyse and evaluate how movement skills were used in two key scenes to communicate meaning to the audience.

In your answer refer to:

- *the acting style*
- *how movement skills were used to create character and communicate meaning*
- *your response to the performance as an audience member.*

Romeo and Juliet, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, March 2018

In March 2018 I went to see a production of Romeo and Juliet presented by The Royal Shakespeare Company at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford upon Avon. The production, directed by Erica Whyman, was very modern and took influenced from you culture of today. There were ideas of changing gender roles, blurring the boundaries between what is male and female and how the youth are carving a new place for themselves in society. As such, the production was very modern in style with a strong sense of naturalism in both the design and the acting. There were also several very stylised moments in the action that highlighted and marked particular moments of the play that were important.

A scene that used very stylistic movement in it was Act 1 Scene 5 when Romeo and Juliet first meet and talk for the first time. The scene is set in the Capulets party and there are about 10 to 15 other characters on stage around Romeo and Juliet. They are well spaced around the stage, making it look full but not overcrowding Romeo and Juliet. The two central characters were centre stage with plenty of stage space around them. This allowed them to able to experiment with their proxemics. The other actors around Romeo and Juliet were all dancing, over exaggerating their movements and moving in slow motion. This helped to communicate the busyness of the party, but the use of space and the mix of pace highlighted the intimacy of the moment for Romeo and Juliet. This movement also created a sense of idea of time going slowly for Romeo and Juliet in that intimate moment. Romeo and Juliet circled each other centre stage. The actress playing Juliet, Karen Fishwick, used stylised movement to communicate to the audience her character during this scene. She moved slower than Romeo but just as excitedly. Her stance was close and posture up right. She looked up towards Romeo with facial expressions that communicated her desire to listen to him and a growing love and desire for him. She did this with a broad wide smile and wide eyes which she maintained eye contact with Romeo throughout the conversation. As they circled around each other they closed their proxemics. Starting with their hands touching for the holy palmers kiss, then closing further until they do kiss. Again, this movement communicates to the audience the idea that these two are falling in love as we watch them.

A scene where the actors used a more naturalistic acting was in Act 3 Scene 5. In this scene Lord Capulet demands that Juliet marry Paris and has moved the date of the wedding forward. Of course, through dramatic irony, we know that Juliet is already married but can't say anything about it and instead refuses to follow his orders. The actor playing Lord Capulet, Michael Hodgson,

communicates his characters anger at this very well through movement, body language and facial expressions. During the stand-off between him and Juliet, he stands rigid with a very straight posture and stance. His facial expression show his anger through narrowing his eyes and making piercing eye contact with Juliet. He then switches between looking like this to Juliet and to looking at Lady Capulet in bewilderment. He maintains a distant proxemics between him and Juliet. This communicates to the audience the strain in their relationship at this moment. When Juliet attempts to close the proxemics down to help placate her father, he uses a strong gesture with his arm to stop her in her tracks and even takes a few steps back from her to maintain that proxemics. Finally when he is ready to close the proxemics, he does so in a threatening way. He takes small but clear steps forward, that builds up the tension, until he crosses into her personal space. She attempts to stop him by putting her hands up towards him but he aggressively holds her hands down towards her sides and steps up next to her. With the benefit of his height over her as well, this communicate his superior status over her and her powerlessness to do anything about it. It was a very effective and emotive piece of naturalistic acting that demonstrated the control that Lord Capulet has over his family.