

Performance Studies

Coursework

Dance Year 1

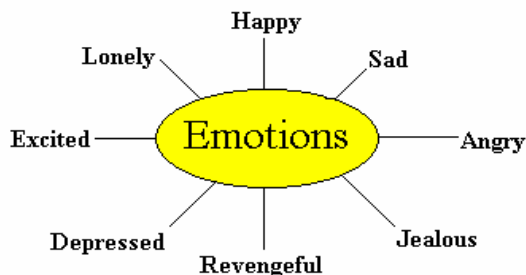
Introduction

Our Dance aims were to choreograph a dance piece based on a chosen colour that related to a particular emotion. We chose the colour red and explored anger. We were exploring anger we found ourselves branching off into passion. I think this is because they are linked e.g. passion can be created from anger and anger is mainly made up of passion. To achieve our aims the audience would need to understand what colour and emotion we were trying to express through our movement. For example we used a lot of pushing and pulling to express the emotion of being emotionally pulled and pushed about in a relationship which usually comes from being in a relationship with someone who has a lot of passion. The dance was structured by using binary form where there is an A and B phrase. The B phrase shows developments on motifs which occur in A.

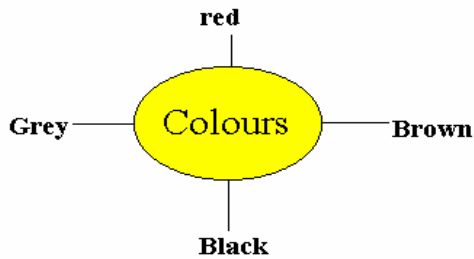
Our group chose a particular piece of music because we had decided that we didn't want to show anger in itself. We wanted to show the reasons and outcomes of anger. Our music reflected the sound of a heartbeat. We thought this music would be a good tempo to devise a dance piece to and it also linked in with the idea and theme of wanting to show a person feelings, form and persona when angry. The sound of the heartbeat would suggest the tension of when someone is angry.

Improvising

Initially we brainstormed different colours and emotions associated with each other and how they could be expressed through movement:



From this spider diagram we decided to pick the emotion Anger. We then went on to brainstorm colours that were associated with anger:



We decided to focus more on anger and the breakdown of unity as we devised movements. We realized we would be able to show these ideas effectively through our relationships with each other. An initial idea was to show a couple being split up by someone else who wanted to take his or her place. We started improvising by devising a series of tableaux that conveyed breaking up and anger:

Tableau 1

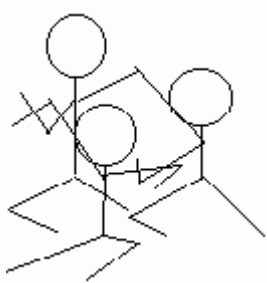


Tableau 2

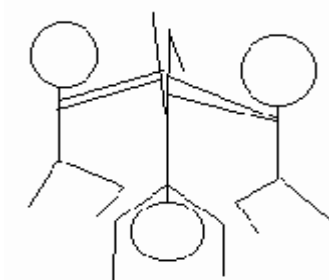
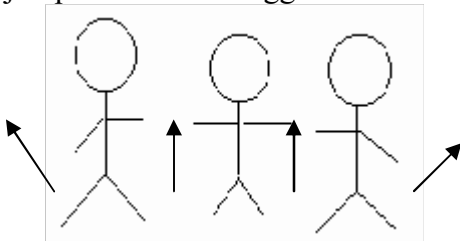
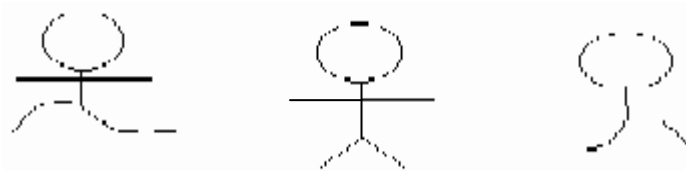


Tableau 1 aimed to show the feeling of being bound and trapped by your partner when in a relationship. Which leads to anger and separation. Tableau 2 showed the break up of the group.

Each piece developed a structure; and each piece built up to a climax. In our dance piece our climax came when we transition between our A and B phrase. We devised a series of jumps and more exaggerated movements to reflect the build in the music.



Once of our dance motifs we devised was formed around straight-arm gestures. This was used at the beginning of our dance; we each stood in a line pulled our arms up in different directions. We later developed this motif using different direction, levels, straight and rigid lines. This motif expressed the feeling of always reaching out and the use of different directions expressed the confusion in a relationship when different problems arise. Another motif we devised shown in the diagram. It shows one of the performers splitting up the other two, which built the anger. The two outside people appear as being pushed away by the center person.



The dynamics within the piece are dramatically different between the two different phrases. I think this is important because we wanted a clear and concise change of mood so that we can reflect and build the emotion. We wanted to show that there are different types of passion not just love but also hatred.

I think that we used a lot of varied space. We stood in a lot of different positions on stage throughout the piece. This comes back to conveying how a relationship can go in many different directions. Even though we used different parts of the stage we decided we didn't want to keep these positions for too long though because we thought it would break away from the tension of being confined.

I think that our dynamics were the most important part of the piece and also the element we had the most trouble with. Our piece was mainly about the changes of a relationship so varying the dynamics was important. Our change was all to do with speed and we had to get these dynamics right. You can tell where the change because we make the piece a lot faster straight after I step in between the other two performers as shown in the diagram above. We also make the use of pushing and pulling each other a lot more strong and angry as if fighting back. For example I pull one of the performers away so she turns and does a swing gesture to suggest hitting me while I fall to the floor.

I think the quote "two's company threes a crowd" really expresses what our piece was about. We wanted to show how one person can get in between a couple and play mind games to get their way. We wanted to show one person getting in between the other two so they can split the couple up. This is usually a cause of jealousy and this is what I think this quote explains. That you can't have three in a relationship without someone feeling crowded or hurt.

Rehearsing

Our dance piece wasn't truly thought out because the B phrase wasn't a true reflection or adaptation of the A phrase. It wasn't clear enough for the audience to understand that it was based on the A phrase. Some of it was an adaptation but the movement wasn't exaggerated enough to portray this. Other moves in the dance weren't really an

adaptation but merely an extension. I think our group would think of a movement and want it part of the piece because they thought it would look good but would forget that these certain movements were not in any part linked to the A phrase and this is where we would lose the connection between the two. As a group we re-thought the structure of the B phrase exaggerating the movements which were adaptations but needed to be stronger. Then we removed the movements which were not an adaptation from the A phrase and devised some more from the A phrase. We modified movement from the A phrase for the B phrase with a range of techniques. We changed the space, direction and level with most of the movement, we also added in actions (transitions between each movement) for example our group adapted a movement from being directly behind each other to spreading ourselves across the stage in a diagonal line because we made it much more spread out we had to add in extra transitions move into these movements.

Performing

After the performance our audience gave us some feedback. In our dance piece the majority of the audience understood the base of the piece was the colour red and the emotion anger. The feedback we got was:

- We didn't have a strong enough link between the A and B phrase.
- We didn't use enough facial expression.
- We did have a good vary of actions and gestures.
- We chose music that reflected of piece and emotion well.
- We kept the piece from dragging by projecting each movement and perfecting the fluidity.

I think that our dance piece was our best performance yet. We might not have got across exactly what we intended as we never managed to establish a suitable connection between the A and B phrase but I think that was more down to the devising and not the performance.

Throughout the piece I have learnt that it isn't about adding in a piece of movement just because you like it, you need to think "does that really represent what I am trying to show?" I have learnt that full projection in a performance through your facial expression and your body can be vital to achieving a good show. I learnt that having the right music to accompany the dance can give you a second opportunity to give the audience a good understanding of what your trying to express. Each of these points will be considered in any future performance piece.

By Victoria Barnes