

## Extended Programme Note

Title: Solar Yoga – My dance makes use of yoga movements and typical classical Indian dance movements to worship the sun.

Music: Om Namah Shiva by Jah Wobble

Description: Motif 1: ▲ tray like movement with the arms, one arm is carried across the body followed by the other arm. From either right to left/left to right, depending on the direction that the dancers are going to travel in.

Motif 2: ▲ wiping action, where the hand sweeps across the opposite arm, from shoulder to arm, to lead in to the next movement.

Main Choreographic Devices used:

- Wipe motif is performed sometimes with one hand sweeping across the other arm, but later changes to have the opposite hand sweep the other arm to follow. The levels at which it is performed also changes during the performance.
- The tray motif is generally quite slow at the beginning of the performance but tends to speed up when the music gets faster to lead swiftly into the next movement.
- Sometimes the dancers meet, e.g. when dancer 2 stretches on top of dancer 1, but mainly the dancers work individually in unison.
- There are sections of the performance when the dancers perform in symmetry to each other, e.g. when the dancers perform the wipe motif directly in front of each other.
- The dance is performed close to the right side of the stage to help communicate the focus - the sun (which the dance is based on), to the audience.
- Parts of the Sun Salutation (Surya Namaskar) are used in the dance. These are phrases of yoga movements which salute the sun, and are also used to promote flexibility in the limbs and spine.

There were 2 stimuli that influenced my dance. The first were movements that people did before and during worshipping a god or goddess. Before people go into places of worship, it is common practice to be bathed and clean, this is quite an important feature in most religions and so I thought it was important to include it in my dance. This was where the idea of my wiping motif came from. During worship, the namaskar position is popular in most religions to unite the worshipper with god, so I included this in my dance. In Hinduism, a puja tray is used when praying to god. This is a tray of offerings which is circled around the god a number of times, this was

the stimulus for my tray motif. The second stimulus was a yoga book (Yoga: Mind & Body – by the Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Centre). While reading this book, I noticed pages on the Sun Salutation, which I thought had good positions that I could incorporate into the dance. There were also some simple asanas (movements) in the book which I thought I could include in the performance.

Appraisal: I felt the idea of using the sun as a dance idea would be very good because not only would I be able to develop my dance using relationship, action, dynamics and speed, but I would also be able to have a focus in my dance which I could communicate to the audience. I thought that communicating with the audience is quite good because they can see that the dance is about worshipping the sun, and not only a collection of dance movements. Yoga comprises of many stretches, which I have included in my dance, but the main asanas (yoga movements) asanas that I used were “The Tree”, where your left foot is flat against your right knee. I developed this by changing the level and making dancer 2 do it on the floor. Another asana that I used was “The Triangle”. I didn't actually include it in the dance, but I changed it by stretching your left hand to the floor, bending your back towards the floor, and stretching your right arm to the ceiling. The last asana I used was “The Cobra”, which is one of the movements in Surya Namaskar. Dancer 2 did the position exactly as it was supposed to be performed in Surya Namaskar, but I developed this with dancer 1 by having one of their legs in the air while they balanced on their arms and other leg. Snake like movements helped me to develop “The Cobra” asana, for example, when the dancers swing their arms from side to side to show a snakes undulating motion. I changed the position of the focus from down stage centre, to down stage right, to finally up stage centre. I think this was good because as the sun moves across the sky, so does the focus.

The music is quite slow at the beginning and then becomes faster later in the dance because it enabled me to contrast the same movements but with different dynamics, for example, the tray motif is performed much faster when the music goes faster. The main problem I found with the dance was the ending. The music didn't have a definite ending until after 5 minutes and there was no way for me to edit the music, so I decided to fade the music at the end, and having “The Tree” asana as my finishing position. Also another problem that I had was the counting of the dance. As the music got faster, it was difficult to count it, and so the dancers had to rely on remembering what movements were performed in different parts of the song. This meant the dancers had to rehearse the dance lots of times to get their timing right. I'm extremely pleased with the dance because it shows well the idea of worshipping the sun, and the movements went well with the accompaniment.