

Ideas for short answer questions

1) Briefly describe the two main arm gestures used as motifs within *White Man Sleeps* in sections 1 and 2.

Section 1 contains one of the arm gestures used as part of a motif in *White Man Sleeps*. All the dancers perform this arm gesture at some stage in section 1 of the dance. This recurring arm gesture is introduced in section 1 where the right arm circles the head clockwise and meets the left arm in front of the head where the hands end up palm to palm and stretched out. At the beginning of section 1 this motif is introduced by three dancers while they move from stage left to stage right and are then joined by the two other dancers. Then duets are performed which include a phrase of movement with this motif and even when the music changes, repetition of the phrase occurs. Later in this section, jumps are added to the phrase and the choreography starts to develop with spatial and directional changes as well as changing fronts. Finally all the dancers repeat the phrase and transform it a little in accumulation canon to finish off this section.

Section 2 contains another of the arm gestures used as part of a short phrase of movement in this dance. This motif is introduced after the opening duet for section 2. It consists of a female dancer wrapping her head with her hands as if to frame the head indicating that the dancer may be supporting herself or holding herself together. It is a sharp, and strong movement that is repeated three times in a diagonal pathway and each time to a different diagonal.

2) Briefly describe the quality of the travelling movements incorporated into *White Man Sleeps*, and the floor pattern over which it most often occurs.

There are many travelling movements incorporated into *White Man Sleeps* perhaps as a way of indicating the way in which Siobhan Davies travelled when she made her visit to America. At the beginning of section 1, the dancers join in one by one and move from stage left to stage right. As two more dancers join in we see the dancers do a quick skipping movement as a different way of travelling. In the duet of section 1, we see the man and woman move more quickly in stepping patterns mostly travelling in straight lines. They perform the motif and turn to face different directions to perform the motif again. They use much of the space then all the dancers perform a motif in canon changing directions and front, and using a different amount of space each time. Their movement is shown in a variety of different ways in this section and this introduces us to the different ways in which they may travel later in the dance.

Section two starts with an energetic duet performed by a male and female dancer in which they travel in different ways from one side of the stage to the other. They drive through the space making much contact between them, mostly consisting of fluid movement, big lifts, and expansive and jumpy movements between them. Their duet conveys a sense of energy and freedom to the dance and then they perform extended leaps and runs toward stage left showing good quality of different travelling techniques. They are replaced by a female dancer who enters stage left and runs energetically to stage right where she then performs her motif in a straight line. She repeats the phrase three times each time facing a different diagonal but still travelling in a straight line pathway. She is then joined by three more dancers where there is a reprise of the duet but a male dancer performs a solo and the original female dancer is doing another solo. The two soloists go off stage leaving the duet to continue their fluid and flowing movements. The duet makes a curved pathway starting from the front of stage left, moving across to stage right and ending up at the back of the stage in the middle. In this time they perform movement, making contact most of the

time and supporting one another. There is much counter pull, lifts and repetition of the other dancers movements and they travel off stage left and are replaced by a solo male dancer. He performs a series of twisting and spiralling movement and travels from the front of stage left to the back of stage right in a diagonal. This brief solo is followed by the same duet still as energetic and playful as before with a lot of weaving movements as the dancers wind in and out of limbs whilst making most of the space on the stage. As the music gets louder the dancers perform leaping runs off stage left. The solo male dancer then repeats twisting movements in the same diagonal pathway and this is again followed by the same duet but facing a different direction. The section is complete when the female dancer goes off stage left leaving the male dancer on stage at the bottom of stage left.

3) *White Man Sleeps* was choreographed in 1988 as a response to a journey which the choreographer Siobhan Davies made through the U.S.A. The dance is made up of 5 sections, to music composed by Kevin Volas, and played by a string quartet. There are 5 dancers; 3 male and 2 female. The dancers wear costumes designed by David Buckland. The set for the dance consists of woven floor cloth on the ground, and images of the musicians projected onto a backdrop. The set designed by David Buckland, represents America and the space in which Davies travelled throughout her visit around the country. The premiere performance of *White Man Sleeps* was at the Riverside Studios in London, performed by the Siobhan Davies Company (later named Siobhan Davies Dance Company). The dance was broadcast in 1989 and was directed and televised by Peter Mumford who was also responsible for the lighting design.