

# Assessment Report

## New Zealand Scholarship Drama 2020

### Standard 93304

#### Part A: Commentary

There was a great range of texts used in the text-based performance. Many candidates were able to select work that made sense in relation to their age, convictions and perspectives.

Some candidates chose to 'create' a monologue for their text-based performance. Candidates can be disadvantaged if they 'edit out' other characters from the scene if the original script is a quick-fire two-way conversation, particularly if they pause to 'listen to each reply' (which markers do not hear). Many candidates did, however, create effective monologues by amalgamating speeches from a scene. It is important to ensure that there is some kind of shape or 'build' when working like this, otherwise it is difficult to establish the journey of the character.

For the devised pieces, candidates often referred to contemporary practitioners or work they had seen by established companies. These first-hand experiences (or digital recordings of performances) appear to have created a more accessible relationship to the devising task in many cases. It is important, however, for candidates to research and demonstrate understanding of the methods used by these companies (and practitioners) as well as the theoretical ideas behind their established practice, rather than just copy the style of a performance that they have seen.

#### The prepared introductions

Successful candidates were able to provide useful context for their chosen pieces in simple succinct ways.

For the text-based performance many candidates discussed:

- a sense of the world of the playwright and the world of the play
- important pointers regarding the extract or scene
- their character's journey and role in the story of the piece
- preparatory techniques and processes used to explore and present.

For the self-devised piece many candidates were able to explain:

- their purpose for selecting particular material to explore
- processes used to devise and refine their piece
- key influences on their piece and the relevance of these research choices in relation to the piece shown
- the techniques they used to prepare their piece for performance.

The simplest and clearest introductions were not learned word-for-word or gabbled in order to include every possible shred of work undertaken. Instead, they came across as thoughtful, selective and considered.

For some of the most effective introductions, candidates often approached the camera to introduce their work, or set up their space as they explained what they were about to show us.

## The commentary after the impromptu performance

Candidates who were able to comment on what they discovered by doing the exercise were very engaging. Many candidates chose to speak about what key things drove their short test-piece and share specific ideas about how they develop or try new approaches with the same task – if they had a second go.

The **impromptu task** allowed quick thinking candidates to ‘play’ instinctively. Frequently, the stronger candidates were able to create surprise as well as set the scene quickly and show a range of distinct interesting characters. Candidates who used the performance space in the preparation minutes to briefly sketch the physical shape of their piece often used the space to support their piece more effectively.

Examination conditions vary hugely across the exam centres and candidates often must put up with unexpected interruptions, for example, school bells or other outside noise. Candidates should be reassured that such complications are acknowledged in the marking process.

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## Part B: Report on Performance

Candidates who were awarded Scholarship with **Outstanding Performance** commonly:

- demonstrated an independent and explorative approach to the tasks set, often extrapolating from the given brief with authority
- used a comprehensive range of techniques and understanding across all three tasks
- applied a wide range of appropriate theory through the variety of their choices in the different parts of the exam
- integrated theory and techniques in a sophisticated and assured manner
- delivered thoughtful and convincing introductions to camera showing a well-embedded understanding of their practice
- created sophisticated compositions in which they have solved the problem of transitions between moments, ideas or characters
- demonstrated a conscious specificity in their introductions which was clearly evidenced in their embodied performance
- understood and applied the power of metaphor to create moments of layered composition, which reads on multiple levels.

Candidates who were awarded **Scholarship** commonly:

- clearly articulated their ideas and referred to theorists they had researched in order to put these into practice within their performances
- demonstrated a range of performance techniques with frequent authority
- were evidently conscious of the preparatory processes they are using to build from
- successfully demonstrated and applied their learning through the set tasks of the exam
- show some lack of sophistication or perception in one aspect of the assessed criteria (communication of thinking, embodiment of techniques, realisation of ideas), but over-all they demonstrate sound skill and understanding.

Other candidates

Candidates who were **not** awarded Scholarship commonly:

- demonstrated a limited range of performance techniques
- may be less conscious of the preparatory processes they could have used to build from or were not communicating their understanding of this on the day
- were often not able to demonstrate and apply their learning through the set tasks
- did not clearly articulate a theorist’s methods or ideas having researched them in preparation for their performances
- revealed a misunderstanding of processes used for performance preparation or of the particular theorist’s ideas that they speak about in their introductions
- applied theories, ideas and processes to Part I texts that were not appropriate for the genre of play they had selected
- struggled to select relevant theorist’s ideas or acting techniques to support their devised work or not applied these effectively

- appeared to have created a piece of performance for Part II and then retrospectively mixed ideas from practitioners and theorists to 'meet the criteria' rather than studying the ideas and theories and creating a piece using those theoretical frameworks or creative practice
- spoke about what they would show, but did not show this in their performances
- learned their introductions by heart, but muddled their words and ended up revealing a lack of comprehension.

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## [Subject page](#)

### **Previous years' reports**

[2016 \(PDF, 186KB\)](#)

[2017 \(PDF, 41KB\)](#)

[2018 \(PDF, 91KB\)](#)

[2019 \(PDF, 189KB\)](#)

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