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91423



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Level 3 Music Studies, 2016

91423 Examine the influence of context on a substantial music work

2.00 p.m. Wednesday 23 November 2016
Credits: Four

Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Examine the influence of context on a substantial music work.	Examine in depth the influence of context on a substantial music work.	Examine perceptively the influence of context on a substantial music work.

Check that the National Student Number (NSN) on your admission slip is the same as the number at the top of this page.

Write ONE essay in this booklet.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–12 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

YOU MUST HAND THIS BOOKLET TO THE SUPERVISOR AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.

Excellence

TOTAL

E7

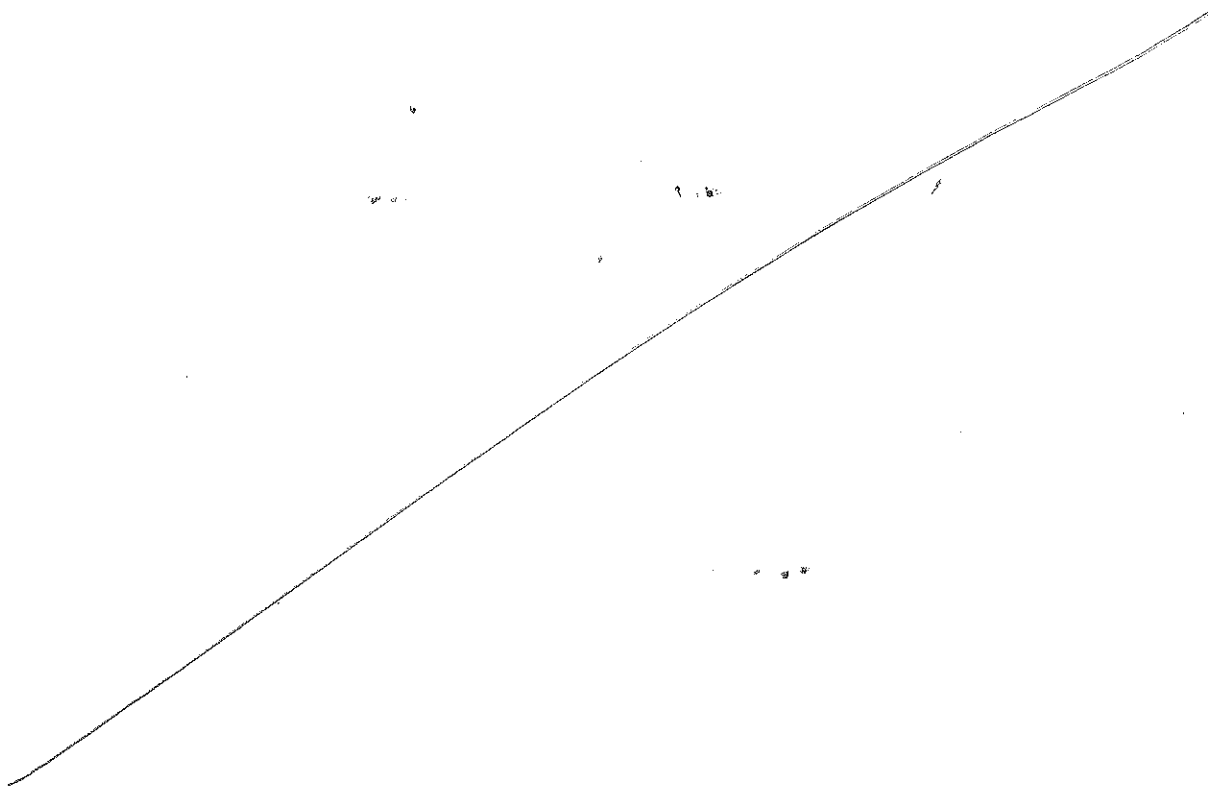
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INSTRUCTIONS

Write an essay on a substantial music work that you have studied, in response to ONE of the questions below.

Give the details of the work in the box at the top of page 3.

QUESTIONS (Choose ONE)

1. Music has the ability to affect our emotions. For instance, in the past, music that was well organised and structured was considered pleasing to listen to.
To what extent has the feeling and emotion of the music influenced the conception, production and interpretation of your chosen work?
 2. Composers are a product of their time. Their music reflects not only their thoughts but also those of the society around them.
To what extent has the historical context influenced the conception, production and interpretation of your chosen work?
 3. As technology has advanced, so have the resources that are available to the musician.
Explain how changes in technology have influenced the conception, production and interpretation of your chosen work.
 4. Composers are often inspired by the environment in which they live, and the cultures and traditions of the society around them.
To what extent has culture and/or tradition influenced the conception, production and interpretation of your chosen work?
- 

Work title(s): The Firebird

Composer(s) / performer(s): Igor Stravinsky

Genre/style/period: Ballet

PLANNING (OPTIONAL)

Consider the following aspects of the work:

- its conception
- its production
- its interpretation.

Environment
Cultures & tradition

- Young composer
- Traditions & breaking them.

Conception:

- Russian tradition
 - Firebird character from Russian fairytales collection collated by Afanasyev.
 - Firebird motif in Finale is almost an exact copy of #21 in 100 Russian Folk Songs by Rimsky Korsakov.

- Exoticism

- French ballet audience had heard Scherezade by R.K. in earlier ballet season & wanted to hear more - it is different.
- "Charm of the unfamiliar"

- Impressionism

- Tritones polyphonic texture, dissonance
- Create atmosphere rather than specific details.

Production:

- French ballet so must meet traditions & cultures of ballet
- Diatonicism & chromaticism for magical & non-magical
- Breaking culture & tradition by negating cadences using pedal notes & drones
- Motifs to help audience understand ballet - motifs as structure
- ^{is breaking tradition.} Breaking tradition - virtuoso techniques.

Interpretation

- 1911: follows traditional large ^{late} romantic-period orchestra trad.
- 1919: shorter, smaller orchestra - war
- 1945: neo-classicism - breaking tradition with new culture balance & structure //

You should aim to write a concise essay of no more than 750 words. The quality of your ideas is more important than the length of your essay.

Support your response with musical evidence from the work(s).

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Begin your essay here:

Question number: 4

The Firebird by Igor Stravinsky is a ballet which has been shaped by the interaction between culture, tradition, and the want for something new. The influence of culture and tradition can be analysed when one considers the conception, production and interpretation of this work. Through analysing these and the characteristics of this work, it becomes apparent that culture and traditions have heavily influenced this work. //

The Firebird is essentially a Russian nationalist ballet crafted to please a French ballet audience, so the conception of this work has been ~~so~~ influenced by both cultures. ~~Russian~~ The main character, the Firebird, first featured in a Russian fairytale collection collated by Afanasyev. Thus the inspiration for The Firebird lies rooted within Russian traditions. It is not just the characters that this music portrays that has been inspired by Russian tradition and culture, ~~by~~ but also the music itself. This is evident in the motif that accompanies the Firebird when she enters the stage, because this motif is almost an exact copy of the melody of a Russian folk song found in a collection of 100 Russian folk songs by Rimsky-Korsakov. This motif and original folk song have been written on the music manuscript on the next page for comparison. Russian

nationalism is also evident in the strong anthemic chords and loud fortissimo dynamics, such as in the infernal dance. Thus the conception of The Firebird has been inspired by Russian tradition, culture, and nationalism. //

However the Firebird is more than just a Russian-inspired ballet. It was written for a French ballet audience, so in order to appeal to this audience, aspects of French culture have been included in the conception and production of the work. In 1910, when the ballet premiered, impressionism was a large cultural movement in French society. The impact of impressionism is apparent in The Firebird. For example, ^{many} ~~most~~ of the motifs used in The Firebird are based around the interval of an augmented fourth or diminished fifth, known as a tritone. This creates a very dissonant atmosphere. The use of polyphonic texture throughout much of the work also contributes to this murky, dissonant atmosphere. The effect of this is that specific details of the music are difficult to separate from the music as a whole. This was to fit in with the impressionist ideal of creating an overall atmosphere as //

#21 of "100 Russian Folk Songs" by Rimsky Korsakov.



The Firebird Motif at the start of the Finale

Augmented and transposed a minor third higher, but otherwise unchanged.



opposed to clarity of individual features. Thus it can also be concluded that French culture has heavily influenced The Firebird. //

with and Russian Tradition
The extent of the influence of French culture becomes clearer when the production is also considered. Because Stravinsky was composing for a French ballet audience, he needed to balance Russian ideas with music that would appease his audience. Because the audience had already heard Rimsky-Korsakov's ballet *Scherazade* in an earlier season, they wanted to hear more Russian ballets because it was something exotic; different; new. This ~~exoticism~~ and wish for exoticism helped Stravinsky to fuse French and Russian cultures into The Firebird. However he also needed to ensure that the ballet was new and exciting for the audience. To do this, Stravinsky ~~was~~ broke away from musical tradition through the use of new orchestration techniques. ~~He~~ He used harmonics on open strings, 'col legno' and 'sul ponticello' in the strings, used rapidly repeated notes rather than flutter tonguing in the woodwinds, and virtuoso techniques in the brass, such as arresting stopped horns. The effect of these ~~the~~ virtuoso techniques is that by breaking from tradition, Stravinsky was able to weave together Russian and French cultures in a new, ~~an~~ exciting way for the audience. //

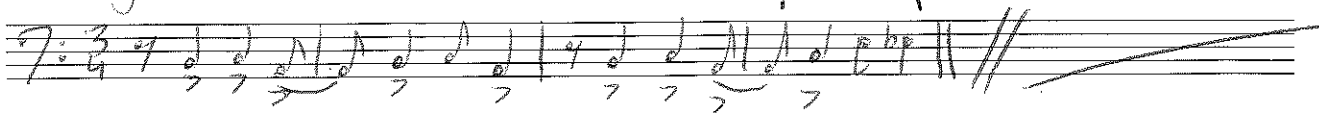
Much of the production of The Firebird was done in a way that breaks tradition, so that these cultures could be mixed in novel ways. Firstly, Stravinsky negated the

④ traditional classical-era harmonic progression of chords to cadences, choosing instead to utilise pedal point and drones. This created an element of surprise for the audience, because it broke from tradition, so broke their expectations. Stravinsky

⑤ instead used rhythm and motifs to structure the Firebird. It is possible that the use of motifs is related to the ballet culture, because in ballet a story is told through music and dance not words, meaning that characters are described using the music and actions attributed to them. Here, Stravinsky kept to tradition, utilising an instrumentation technique that his mentor Rimsky-Korsakov used in his final opera: The Golden Cockerel.

He used diatonicism to represent the non-magical world, and chromaticism to represent the magical world. The clear difference in sound between these tonalities helped the audience to understand more about the ballet characters. ~~Below~~ King Katschei's motif has been drawn on the manuscript below as an example, with a tritone interval noted. Thus the production of the Firebird uses some aspects of musical tradition, but is also largely breaking from tradition in order to merge the //

King Katschei's Motif in the Infernal Dance tritone.



French and Russian cultures in a novel way. //

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The interpretation of The Firebird has also been influenced by culture and tradition. Aside from the original ballet score, there are three further versions of this work. The first was written in 1911 when Stravinsky was still living in France. This version has been heavily influenced by the traditions of romantic-era music. This is shown through the very large orchestration of a late romantic period orchestra, including quadruple woodwinds, three harps, and expanded brass and percussion sections. In contrast, the following version in 1919, whilst Stravinsky was living in ~~the~~ Switzerland, is written for a much smaller orchestra. This is because, due to World War One, ~~was~~ the trend in classical music at the time was to break the tradition of large orchestras, instead favouring smaller, chamber orchestras that required less people to play. The 1919 work is also approximately forty minutes shorter than the original work, which could be due to the shift in society towards shorter attention spans and faster ways to obtain an idea. The final version in 1945 shows a complete break of tradition, to instead a more neo-classical approach. This version has an extra four movements: Pas de Deux, and Pantomime I, II, III. These serve as links between the main ballet movements, making the work more structured. This is due to the influence of neo-classical culture that places large emphasis on structure and balance in music. Therefore the interpretations are largely a break from tradition, towards the cultures of society at each time. //

French and Russian cultures are craftily merged by Stravinsky to create The Firebird, a Russian nationalist ballet that appeases a French impressionist audience. ~~It~~ The influence of these two cultures is particularly profound in the Firebird because Stravinsky was only 26 at the time of its premiere. Being such a young composer, he was yet to develop his mature style, so was more easily swayed by external influence from these two ~~second~~ cultures. Thus culture has had a profound impact on the conception, production and interpretation of The Firebird. The extent of the influence of tradition on this work is more difficult to ascertain. ① The conception of The Firebird ~~was~~ was highly shaped by Russian and ballet traditions, yet the production and interpretation sought to break from tradition to create a new sound for the audience. By carefully building on tradition to try new ideas, The Firebird combines ~~French~~ ~~and Russian culture in novel ways~~ the influence of French and Russian culture in novel ways. //

Excellence exemplar 2016

Subject:	Music Studies	Standard:	91423	Total score:	E7
Q	Grade score	Annotation			
4	E7	<p>A well-planned response with clearly defined paragraphs.</p> <p>Insightful links are made throughout the essay between the influence of Russian and French cultures, traditions of the time, and their impact on musical conception, interpretations and subsequent revisions of the work.</p> <p>The production aspect could be explored in more depth, and the candidate could have enhanced the essay overall by more clearly defining the aspects of conception, production and interpretation being discussed.</p> <p>The candidate makes frequent use of accurate musical terminology and supports strong opening statements with well-chosen and detailed musical evidence.</p>			