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# 2

91215



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## Level 2 Drama, 2015

### 91215 Discuss a drama or theatre form or period with reference to a text

2.00 p.m. Wednesday 25 November 2015  
Credits: Four

Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Discuss a drama or theatre form or period with reference to a text.	Discuss a drama or theatre form or period with reference to a text showing informed understanding.	Discuss a drama or theatre form or period with reference to a text showing perceptive understanding.

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

**You should attempt ALL the questions in this booklet.**

If you need more room for any answer, use the extra space provided at the back of 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.**

**Merit**

**TOTAL**

**18**

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To answer the questions in this paper, name the drama/theatre form or period you have studied, and ONE text from the form or period to which you will refer. (If the text was not written as a script – as for example in commedia dell'arte – give brief details of the action.)

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Drama/theatre form or period: New Zealand Theatre

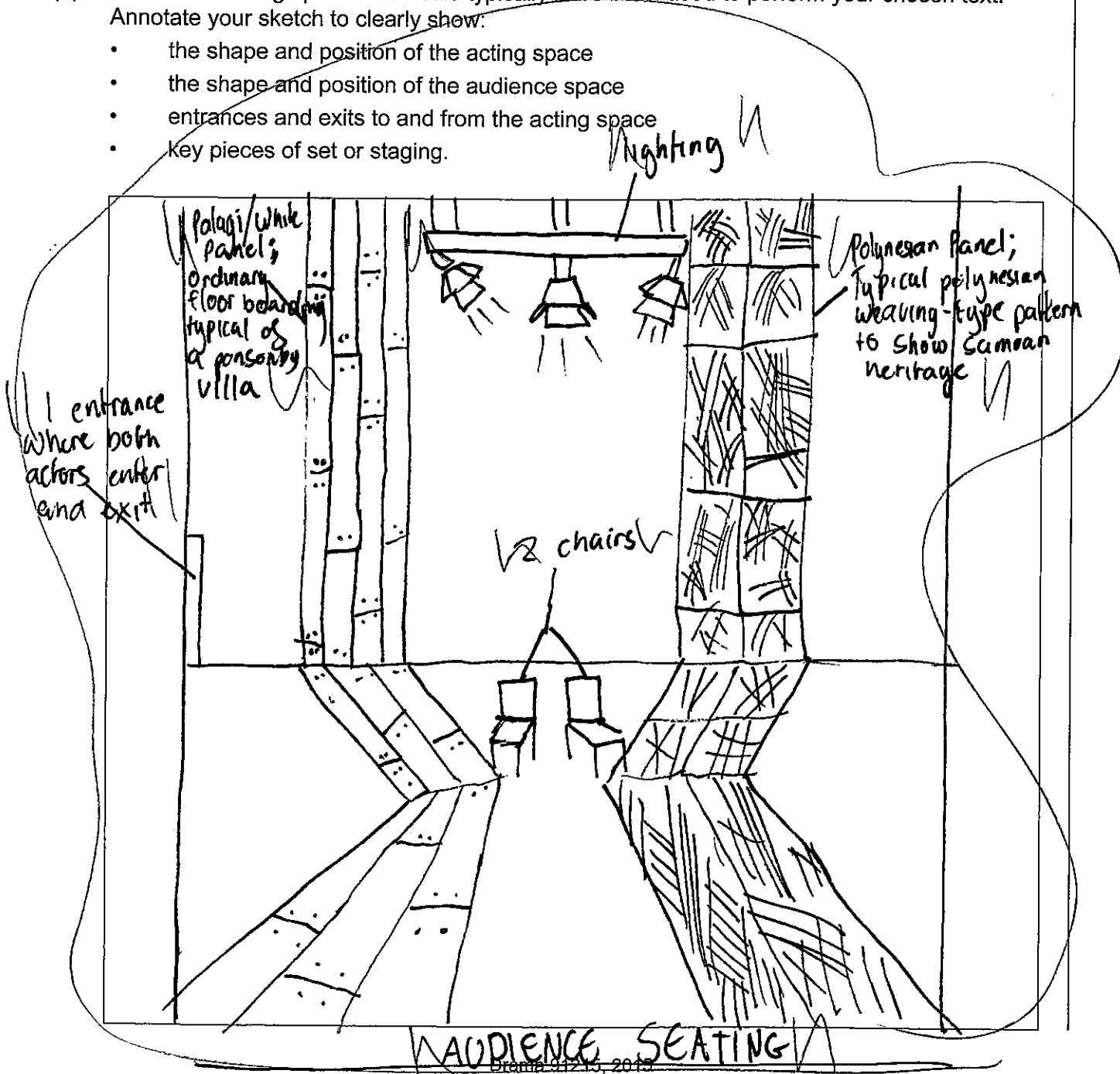
Title of the text (or summary of the action): Nio Sila

Playwright (if applicable): Oscar Kightley & Dave Armstrong

**QUESTION ONE: THE ACTING SPACE**

(a) Sketch the acting space that would typically have been used to perform your chosen text. Annotate your sketch to clearly show:

- the shape and position of the acting space
- the shape and position of the audience space
- entrances and exits to and from the acting space
- key pieces of set or staging.



(b) Explain how the actors would typically have used this space in a key scene from the text. Give specific details from the text to support your answer.

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This set of Nio Sila is a very minimalistic set. It is very typical of New Zealand theatre in its versatility and simplicity. Because of its simplicity, it gives actors a chance to display their personal motives and beliefs, this means conventions such as mime are heavily used. The only props used in the play are the 2 chairs, this means that the chairs can be used in many different ways for many different scenes. For example, when Ioane and Peter (2 main characters of the text) are playing cricket, the 2 chairs are spread to opposite ends of the stage to allude the idea that they are wickets and the boys are playing on a pitch. In this scene, the convention of slow motion is used. The purpose of this is to display the intensity as the boys hit the ball and run for the wickets on the other side of the pitch. To reinforce this intensity, actors use techniques involved with voice such as raising volume and speed as they speak. "Run Peter Run," is something Ioane screams at the top of his lungs as they are mid-game. Along with voice techniques, Peter uses the convention of direct address when he is narrating this intense scene to the audience, "I sprinted for my end, Ioane for his, it was suicide!" Lighting is a technology typical of New Zealand theatre, this also helps establish time and place. For example the lights are a bright and neutral colour during the cricket match scene, to show that they are outside on a sunny day. But as the intensity of the scene built, the lights grew dim to help show the seriousness of the game to Peter and Ioane.

- (c) Discuss how the acting space affected the audience's experience of the performance. You might consider:

- the interaction between actors and the audience <sup>change in personal space</sup>
- the use of theatre technologies of the time <sup>lighting</sup>
- the audience's experience in other theatre forms or periods. <sup>Big flash european shows</sup>

Although the set is minimalistic, there are features of the set, such as the polynesian and palagi panels, which represent a key idea in the play. This central feature is very typical of New Zealand ~~and~~ theatre and can be seen in other New Zealand plays such as Paniora, where maori marae pillars are ~~expressing~~ expressing the presence of maori culture of the play. These polynesian ~~panels~~ and palagi panels are paying homage to the Samoan culture as well as white/european culture. Both these cultures are represented by the ~~Polynesian~~ Tajioka family and the Burton family and even more so by Peter and Ioane. By putting these panels in the set it shows the audience these 2 different cultures living side by side. It also ~~expresses~~ helps to show the progression of Peter and Ioane's friendship and a loss of childhood innocence due to societal pressures <sup>which have</sup> pushed them apart. The panels represent this because they come in close to each other, ~~at~~ displaying the intertwine of cultures as the boys are young and are able to see past the superficial layer of race and colour. But then the panels split off and start going in opposite directions, this shows that society has pushed them away from each other. The actors show this loss of friendship in the way they relate to one another throughout the play. Also in the way they relate to the audience. When Peter is narrating the story as a little boy he is lively and expressive, "This is my best friend Ioane! We are gonna be friends forever!" This narration dramatically changes towards the end of the play <sup>where</sup> where the characters have a bitter reunion. <sup>MB</sup> CONT.

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## QUESTION TWO: A LANGUAGE FEATURE

Identify a language feature that is typical of your chosen form or period. If the form is traditionally silent, you may identify a feature of body language.

Language feature:

Colloquialism/Informal Register

(a) Describe this language feature, and give an example of the feature in your chosen text.

Colloquialism and informal register is the type of language used by a specific group. We can see examples of colloquialism and informal register in many parts of the world such as sporting 'lingo' or a specific niche having their own slang. In *Nero Sola* it is the FOB (Fresh off the boat) accent. This is heavily used by Ioane in his speech.

(b) Explain how an actor would use the drama techniques of voice, body, movement, and/or use of space typical of the form or period to perform this example. Give specific details to support your answer.

In terms of the example "Oggy Peter, Let's play Rugby." which is said by Ioane when he is young and heavily influenced by his Samoan family and roots therefore he ~~talks~~ talks very loudly and with a strong Samoan accent. Which is very typical of a young Polynesian boy. Because New Zealand theatre isn't dependent on complicated technology like microphones, it meant that the actor who played Peter needed to be expressive in his emotion of excitement and glee. He did this using body and movement, by fidgeting and doing eccentric movements with his hands, it helped show the audience that he was very excited.

(c) Discuss how the use of this language feature is typical of the form or period.

You might consider:

- the style of the form (e.g. realistic, surrealist)
- the time and place in which the form was performed
- the purpose of the playwright or creator(s) of the text.

The language feature of colloquialism and informal register, especially the FOB accent, is typical to NZ theatre due to the significant influence of Polynesian culture into New Zealand culture. The style of the theatre form is naturalism, but it is also satirical. The FOB accent is very present in New Zealand society and has been since the 70's. Therefore it has been welcomed as a part of New Zealand culture and that is what makes it typical of New Zealand theatre. Because New Zealand theatre is a modern form of theatre, many of the ideas and messages that they are trying to portray are relevant to many Kiwis in this day and age. So essentially the purpose of the playwrights in this text is to hold a mirror up to society and enable the audience to relate personally to the characters and ideas. Some people watching the play will recognise the FOB accent and perhaps associate it with someone they know.

## QUESTION THREE: A THEME OR IDEA

- (a) Describe ONE theme or key idea from your chosen text.

<sup>Institutionalised Racism</sup>  
 A key theme in the play is institutionalised racism. Institutionalised racism occurs when racism is so common and widespread, that it becomes embedded in the minds of nearly all society. It is when racism becomes a societal normality and is even present in a nation's institutions. This theme is ongoing throughout the play, and is the main cause as to what splits Ioane and Peter apart.

- (b) Explain what a character does or says to communicate this theme or idea to the audience. Give specific details from the text to support your answer.

<sup>Teacher  
Police  
Mrs Heathcote</sup>  
 Institutionalised racism is seen many times throughout *Nio Sila*. We first see it when Ioane and Peter are young boys at school. Their teacher at school has obviously been influenced by society and is a racist herself. She would often offend Ioane, "You know that I can't pronounce your islander name Ian." This is blatant ignorance and a lack of respect for Ioane's Samoan culture. We see it again when she promotes Peter to a higher class but leaves Ioane in a lower class even though they are on the same level of intelligence. When Mr. Burton, Peter's father, goes to complain, she tells him, "Ioane can remain in this class, I have no trouble teaching Maoris, Pacific Islanders and other slow learners." This is implying that all Maoris or Pacific Islanders are worse learners than white kids which is a completely unfair generalisation. The institutionalised racism is CONT.

- (c) Discuss the importance of this theme or idea to the people originally in the audience. You might refer to:

- <sup>Dawn Raids</sup>
- social structures (e.g. class systems)
  - the geographical or historical context
  - moral or cultural values.

New Zealand theatre has developed most in recent years therefore, when *Nio Sila* was first shown to New Zealand audiences, institutionalised racism was a thing of the past. Although the play still had just as much of a powerful effect. *Nio Sila*'s key themes involving <sup>institutionalised</sup> racism have a lot of historical context. In the 1950's-1960's there was a large immigration of Pacific Island people to New Zealand, this was because of the large gap in the labour industry. Although because of the large influx of Pacific Island people, white New Zealanders weren't able to get jobs. So the prime minister of the time, Muldoon, initiated a series of police raids in the suburbs of Auckland which intended to deport illegal immigrants and overstay back to their home islands. These raids occurred in the 70's and involved police violently entering homes (usually without a warrant.) These raids were not dissimilar to Nazi Germany in their sheer brutality. The dawn raids ultimately exemplified the widespread racism entrenched in New Zealand's institutions and the gross injustices which stemmed from it. This demonstrates the dawn raids relation to *Nio Sila*, and they also happened to be around the same time and setting of *Nio Sila*. *Nio Sila* was such a powerful play to many New Zealanders as it showed the shift in moral values from a time where racism was an accepted part of society, to a time where cultural diversity is celebrated and racism is shunned.

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(c) "That was my best friend loane, what an asshole."  
~~Peter and loane progressively~~ Peter and loane progressively grow more bitter in their relation to the audience as the play goes on, this is because of their loss of childhood innocence and happiness. Since New Zealand theatre is a relatively new theatre form, it hasn't received a lot of funding and therefore grand-scale ~~theatres~~ sets, with elaborate costume and props isn't typical of this theatre form. Whereas it is very typical of some types of European theatre forms. Therefore New Zealand theatre relies heavily on lighting to display time and place, we can see this in the cricket scene. There are many benefits to having a minimalistic set typical to a theatre form. It means that they are very portable, therefore making them easy to tour. It also beneficial because it doesn't take the audience's attention off the actors, whereas other theatre forms with big flashy props and costume will remove the audience's attention from the actors.

2(a) for example, "Ogay Peter," and "Let's play <sup>Rugby</sup> ~~Rugby~~." Here loane has swapped around the 'k' sound for the 'g' sound, this is very typical of Samoans as in their own language 'k's sound like 'g's and 'g's sound like 'k's. Due to their alphabet. So when Samoans speak English they incorporate aspects of their first language, Samoan.



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(b) not only seen in the schooling system but also present in the police force. Constable Holden Kingswood made various appearances in the play, but only when it was to do with Ioane, not Peter. This leads the audience to believe that the police officer is targeting Ioane specifically because he is Samoan. When Peter and Ioane are outside a dairy, doing nothing illegal, officer Kingswood sees them and begins to accuse them of theft. He radios another police officer. "I have a polynesian offender and oh... um... his Caucasian accomplice." This shows that Kingswood immediately assumes Ioane to be doing something illegal simply because he is polynesian. A final example of institutional racism is not in an institution but demonstrates the effects of institutionalised racism on society. Ms. Heathcote is the neighbour of the Tafioke and Burton families, she is constantly saying racist, uneducated, ignorant and offensive remarks about the Tafiokeas. She tells Mrs. Burton things such as, "You shouldn't let your boy play with those islander children." and "I heard they were drinking last night, that's when [polynesians] begin to rape and murder!"

Annotation for Merit paper AS 91215 L2 Drama 2015

We selected this paper as it is a good exemplar of New Zealand theatre/ Pasifika as a theatre form. Although Question 3 is an Excellence answer, the paper in its entirety is a Merit one.

Q1 The sketch is very clear showing two panels with explanation of both. The sketch and explanation is typical as the candidate says, "weaving-type pattern to show Samoan heritage." The purpose of the acting space as well as where the audience is seated is also shown. The candidate clearly identifies and describes the cricket scene. Detail is shown by describing the purpose of the scene as well as how conventions, technologies and techniques are used to enhance the use of space. The candidate in (c) demonstrates some understanding of how the panels represent the two cultures. They make reference to use of panels in Paniora. The reference to this feature being typical is valid. This answer is more an M6 than an E7 as the candidate needed to make a stronger link to audience experience and understanding of typicality. The pushing away of panels is a directing decision and may not necessarily be typical.

Q2 The candidate clearly explains the colloquialism as a FOB (Fresh off the boat accent) and gives an example. Knowledge of typicality and how this is shown through use of drama techniques is clearly explained. The candidate says, "he talks very loudly with a Samoan accent...[and] by fidgeting and doing eccentric movements." This is an M5 rather than an M6 as typical use of drama techniques (such as space and movement), is not fully explained. "Eccentric movements" is too general, for example.

Q3 "Institutionalised racism" is a key theme of *Nui Sila* and the candidate explains giving details of how the teacher communicates the theme. The candidate gives a number of examples illustrating what the teacher does and supports their answer with examples. The student does give more examples of another character, Ms Heathcote; however, the teacher example is sufficient for an M6. In (c) the candidate demonstrates a strong understanding of the historical and social context of the play. The refer to the immigration of Pacific Islanders for jobs as well as the dawn raids in the 1970s. This answer is an E7 rather than an E8 as the candidate could have made stronger links to audience understanding at the time the play was written.