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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.

Achievement

TOTAL

A3

ASSESSOR'S USE ONLY

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): Jesus Christ Superstar

Composer(s) / performer(s): Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice

Genre/style/period: 1970's Rock Opera

PLANNING (OPTIONAL)

Consider the following aspects of the work:

- its conception
- its production
- its interpretation.

Rhythm

- Consistent, forward-moving driving
- Bass riff - consistent
- Back beats 2 & 4
- $\frac{4}{4}$ time sig

Timbre

- Rock instruments
- Musicals, classical orchestral.

Harmony

- Strong, simple
- Primary chords
- riff

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

Jesus Christ Superstar is a 1970 Rock Opera by composer, Andrew Lloyd Webber and lyricist, Tim Rice. The immensely popular culture of rock music at the time ~~at~~ influenced ~~them~~ musical genre, while movement of society away from the conservative views on religion influenced the controversial themes in Jesus Christ Superstar. //

One of the ways Jesus Christ Superstar (JCS) is ~~influence~~ inspired by the culture of the rock music genre can be seen in the rhythm. Rhythm is arguably the most important element in rock music. It tends to be consistent and forward-moving, driving the music forward. Often it is set up by a foundation of a bass riff or ostinato ~~at~~ which we can see in the song, "Heaven on their Minds." ① The bass riff is set up by the bass guitar and gives the entire song a consistent rhythmic feel. The bass riff was used frequently in rock music culture, a notable example being in the song "Hotel California" by The Eagles. Over the consistent bass riff, the melody often displayed much rhythmic freedom, with vocalists being given //

freedom to improvise. Rock music also tended to have a $\frac{4}{4}$ time signature, with an accent on the back beats, 2 and 4. Once again, this is most prominent in the song "Heaven on their Minds." (2) //

Timbre in JCS shows the influence of rock music culture as well as ~~classical~~ musical theatre culture on the composer, Andrew Lloyd Webber.

Typical rock instruments such as the drum kit, bass and electric guitar and keyboard synthesiser are used in songs such as Heaven on their Minds⁽¹⁾, Blood Money. These instruments were popular and were used frequently in 1970s rock culture by artists such as The Who, Led Zeppelin and Queen. However, the influence of musical theatre culture and its conventions are also evident in songs such as "Gethsamane"⁽³⁾, "I Don't Know How To Love Him"⁽⁴⁾, and ~~King~~ "Herod's Song". These songs all contain typical musical theatre instruments such as strings (violin, viola, cello), piano, and flute. //

(1) $\frac{4}{4}$ Dm
i
lis-ten les-us I dont like what I see

(3) $\frac{4}{4}$ B^{\flat} E^{\flat} A^{\flat} D^{\flat}

(4) $\frac{4}{4}$ D^{\sharp} G^{\sharp} D^{\sharp} G^{\sharp} A^{\sharp}
I IV I IV V

Harmony in rock music tended to be strong and simple. The primary chords I, IV and V were frequently used. We can see these chords being used in JCS in songs such as "I Don't Know How To Love Him" (4) and "The Last Supper" (5). The melody rarely strayed away from its home key and bass riffs were used to centre music around one chord. This is evident in "Heaven on their Minds" where the bass riff keeps the music centred around the first chord, D minor. Evidence of this occurring in Brock music culture can be seen in Stevie Wonder's "Superstition" where the bass riff keeps the music centred around the first chord. //

Society in the 1970s began to move away from the conservative religious traditions of the previous decades. This was spurred on partly by the hippie movement which introduced people to the new ideology of hinduism, in what had previously been a predominantly Christian society. John Lennon of The Beatles controversially said, "Christianity will die out. There's no question about that. The question is, which will die out first:

Christianity or rock and roll." Although JCS is not in any way an anti-Christian work or ~~work~~ suggests that it will die out, we can see the 1970s culture of questioning religious traditions in the portrayal of characters (particularly Indas) in JCS. //

Lyricist Tim Rice said that he didn't ~~see~~ want to portray Judas as a purely evil character. In the Bible, Judas is the person responsible for betraying Jesus and causing his death. However, Rice didn't think that the Bible showed any motivation for Judas's betrayal. In JCS, Judas is portrayed more sympathetically. He explains his reason for betraying Jesus, ~~you've~~ "All the good you've done will soon be swept away. You've begun to matter more than the things you say." After Jesus's death, Judas expresses remorse ~~saying~~ singing, "I'd save him all his suffering if I could." This sympathetic portrayal of such a despised character ~~shows~~ ^{reflects} the 1970s culture, where people were prepared to see a different side to an old story. //

The portrayal of Jesus also reflects 1970s culture and shows a flawed side of the man. As Rice said, "We wanted to bring him down from the stained glass ^{windows} and off of the pedestal." We see this //

⑤

in the song "Bethsemane" where Jesus is coming to terms with his death. He goes through the stages of grief, first being in denial, "Take this cup away from me for I don't want to taste its poison." (6) Next he displays anger, "Why should I die?", ~~and~~ ~~and~~ sadness "Then I was inspired", now I'm sad and tired." Finally, he shows acceptance, the last stage of grief, "Alright. I'll die." The fact that he goes through stages of grief like everyone else shows the composers' intent to portray him as human. It shows the culture of questioning in the 1970s as this flawed portrayal of a religious figure might not have been possible in previous, more conservative decades. //

JCS reflects both the rock music culture and musical theatre culture of the 1970s as well as society's culture of questioning religious traditions. This is ^{evident} ~~relevant~~ in the musical conventions in JCS which reflect musical conventions of the 1970s rock and musical theatre music. //

Achievement exemplar 2016

Subject:	Music Studies	Standard:	91423	Total score:	A3
Q	Grade score	Annotation			
4	A3	<p>This essay shows a basic understanding of the work studied and makes brief explanations of the impact of society and rock music “culture” on some aspects of conception, production and interpretation.</p> <p>The work may have been better suited to Question 2 (historical context), as much of the discussion is about the societal views and music of the 1970s.</p> <p>Simple musical evidence is used to support statements, though the notated examples do not enhance the written material.</p> <p>While some good connections are made with other artists from the time, more focus on the impact of the context on the music is required at this level, with less emphasis on plot characteristics as presented in the final paragraph.</p>			