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Level 1 Dance RAS 2023

91938 Demonstrate understanding of the relationship between key features and cultural context of a dance genre or style

EXEMPLAR

Excellence

TOTAL 07

91938 External Prompt 1 & 2

The Philippines has a vast variety of cultural dances that represent the country's people, past and present. Depending on where you go, or where you come from, the country welcomes you with its vibrantly colourful dances that give insight on the culture and the things that Filipinos value. For this essay, I have chosen to research and write about the Filipino dance genre, Sinulog. Sinulog is a Christian dance festival celebrated on the third Sunday of every new year in honour of Santo Nino, Jesus Christ. It began in the '80s within the borders of Cebu City, and tells the story of the country's religious history- their acceptance of the Christian faith from the Spaniards. Sinulog Dance is about honouring Santo Nino, which the festival showcases with a series of dances that have incredibly distinct movements, both playful, and elegant, to express the people's gratitude and joy for the saviour Jesus Christ.

There are many different aspects and elements that come together to adequately represent Sinulog dance. Movements showcased in Sinulog are performed with elegance from the sole of the dancers' feet, travelling through their bodies and out the tip of their fingers. This flowing dance is done to symbolise fluidity, and takes inspiration from the origin of the word Sinulog: "sulog" that translates to, *the current of the river*. It focuses on presentation showcased with dramatic movements where dancers raise their arms gracefully above their heads, sometimes holding a small statue of Santo Nino to represent Jesus being higher than everyone. It incorporates a two step forward, one step back technique, to travel through the festival crowds, stepping as they move their arms and hips in the shape of a figure 8, gliding through the air, making use of the space around them, dancing to the fast pace beat of indigenous instruments guiding their path. Every Sinulog Festival has a queen representative who is usually portrayed by a young woman in her late teens-early 20s. These women are shown to have great dedication to Jesus. She dances relatively similar to rest with the same stepping pattern however, is set apart by her costuming which will be touched on later. She exaggerates movements like the rest of the dancers do, but the gown she wears sways as she moves which creates a clear difference between them. Although Sinulog is a relatively new festival, the dance movements have been within the culture long before the Spanish stepped foot in the Philippines and introduced Christianity. In the past, the movement of raising your arms up was done to give offerings to the pagan Gods that Filipinos used to believe in. If they had a harvest of food during a special occasion, they would lift it up to the sky in hopes that it would reach the Gods, showing their thanks for the

blessing. However, since the Spanish introduced Christianity, the dance has been modernised replacing the pagan Gods with the true Santo Nino. The dance movements have been repurposed, and now show grace to the child Jesus.

The dance genre of Sinulog has a lot of lore and meaning behind the festival; this includes influential people that inspired the dance genre. There are many ideas that the dance takes inspiration from regarding dance steps, costume, and meaning. Starting with the history of it. As previously mentioned, the word Sinulog means, the current of the river, and in this case, the river that is talked about specifically refers to the Pahina river which is where the Spaniards first landed their ship in Cebu in the 16th century. The rulers at the time, King Rajah Humabon, and his wife Hara Humamay, also known as Queen Juana of Cebu, were key people relevant to Sinulog, as Queen Juana is who the Sinulog festival queen's character is based on. She is significant to the history of Sinulog because it was her, and her husband who led their people during this time of alteration and supported the change in conversion to Christianity. The festival queen is always dressed extravagantly, in large gowns with intricate beading, that shows her royalty, separating her from the other dancers who all dress almost identically to one another in vibrant colours which prove the queen's higher status compared to them. It is influenced by the divinity that Queen Juana showed all those years ago.



Hara Humaya

Festival queen

Sinulog is a dance style that demonstrates the cultural beauty of Cebu and its religious origins showcased in a performative aspect using elements of grace to tell the story of the past. Though Sinulog is a big celebration of colour and dance, it is so much more than a big party. It is a tradition rooted in Cebu's culture in their acceptance of faith.

Excellence

Subject: Dance

Standard: 91938

Total score: 07

Q	Grade score	Marker commentary
One	E7	<p>The candidate has examined the relationship between cultural context and the key features of a dance style. The candidate described the movements of the dance style in detail, referring to the elements of dance to support the descriptions. They have directly connected the descriptions to the cultural context of the style, referring to religion (e.g. dancers raise their arms gracefully above their heads, sometimes holding a small statue of Santo Nino to represent Jesus being higher than everyone).</p> <p>The candidate also included some analysis of how the key feature (the specific movement) has changed with the cultural context of the influence of the Spanish and the introduction of the Christian religion, e.g. that the movement was initially about giving offerings to the pagan gods. The candidate has analysed the impact of these events on the dance style and the influence on its movements and their purpose.</p> <p>Important people during a significant period of the origins of the dance style were described, and allowed specific details that were linked to the earlier information in the response. The candidate explained the relationship between an influential person and how they influenced the costuming of the dance style. To strengthen this section of evidence, the candidate could provide more specific details about the features of the costume and how these reflect certain aspects of the context.</p>