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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

Merit

TOTAL 05

History of Gumboot Dance

The dance genre that I have been influenced to make a report of is the dancing style Gumboot dancing also known as gum booting, it is a dance genre that was founded in the late 19th century from southern miners. It was used by the miners in the 1900s as they were not able to communicate with one another verbally so they decided to make a coded way of talking to each other by making sounds that symbolise words. Back in the day the mines were extremely racist to “dark” people, the boss in the mines would treat them poorly compared to the “white” skinned humans. The history behind this genre was really intriguing and quite shocking on how such a celebrated dance style had a dark history behind it.

<https://www.neptunboot.co.za/2020/11/03/the-history-of-gumboot-dancing-in-south-africa/>

Prompt 1 Characteristic Movement

One of the key characteristic movements from Gumboot dancing that would represent the gumbooting genre alone would be the movement of stomping. The noise the miners were making with their feet would create a sense of sound and rhythm that they would then use to communicate with one another. To develop such a distinctive racket they would slightly bend their knees while hitting the top of their heels of their feet against the rough dirt in the caves. The most common instrumental movements that were used within the miners were the sound of stomping of course along with slapping against the chest and arms, sound of their palms hitting and colliding against each other to create a human body percussion such as clapping and lastly the motion of stepping which would make some sort of chime sound from the bells that were wrapped around their rubber wellington boots on their ankles. Their body postures for a majority of the movements would most likely be them bending their knees and somewhat of a slouched back.

https://toothillschool.co.uk/data/files/dept/music/y7_gumboot_southafrican.pdf

The movement alone reflects straight back to the origins of how the dance genre first started because it showcases to the audience the tapping code the south africans ancestors would have to make in order to talk to each other. The boss had forbidden any sort of mouth communication and demanded the miners to work in silence within the dark, cold tunnels. Back in the day the society was extremely racist to “dark skinned” humans but it was normalised for them to be treated unfairly not only in workplaces but just on a daily day to day basis. Showing the perseverance they had by overcoming this wall, problem solving and being able to speak to each other non verbally.

Prompt 3 Clothing/Costume

The costumes that the people would wear while performing this style typically would wear rubber wellington boots often referred to as gumboots, these were used in the gold mine to help protect the workers feet from all the water and mud in the caves. They would wear a pair of overalls not being a specific colour to keep their bodies warm in the caves, a hardware helmet that they would wear which would prevent their heads from any rocks falling on them and causing any serious head damage. They also had bells that would wrap around their ankles over their gumboots.

Costumes



Culturally the costumes worn reflect back to what they would wear as if they were there, South Africans use this dance of style as a celebration of pride to showcase to everyone what their families and ancestors have done to overcome such a thing in the racist mines. Nowadays it is not only performed in South Africa but all over the world and is a popular dance genre that many cultures interpret and perform.

Socially the public have accepted the costumes being used in this style as it is a part of the whole culture and the performers are using clothes that not only represent the miners but

give the audience an overview of what is now called history. Back in the 19th century this genre was not used as a dance but used as a way of conversing with each other. Socially not many people would think of the history behind the costumes in the dance but in my opinion I think it's amazing how performers haven't changed the costumes and continue to keep the costumes as close as the miners as possible.

Geographically the costumes being used in the Gumboot genre are being used worldwide not just within mines. It is still to this day being used in all the constructive sites but is now included in dance styles which in my opinion is different from all the other genres.

The costumes connect straight back to the history and time period because back to the roots and when they were not using the costumes for dancing. Using those costumes show the audience the history behind all of the performances and that there is more to it than just gumboots and a hardware hat.

Merit

Subject: Dance

Standard: 91938

Total score: 05

Q	Grade score	Marker commentary
One	M5	<p>The candidate described the movements used in gumboot dance with some detail, such as describing the posture, body parts, and types of movement used. The candidate linked the description of the movement back to the cultural context, and considered how the environmental and social factors may have influenced these features.</p> <p>To demonstrate a greater understanding, the candidate could have included more specifically selected evidence to support their response and, justified some of the links they were making between the key features and the context. For example, they may have included links to apartheid, or made specific connections to the regions the workers had come from. More specific evidence to support the connections they were making between the movements and context would demonstrate a greater depth of understanding in terms of how the cultural context of a dance genre relates to its features.</p> <p>This response included some explanation of how and why the features of movement are influenced by their context.</p>