



SUBJECT:	Theatre and Performance
PAPER NUMBER:	I
DATE:	21 st May 2026
TIME:	4:00 p.m. to 6:35 p.m.

THEATRE EVENTS, PRACTITIONERS, AND HISTORY

Answer any THREE questions in essay form.

Answer all questions in English.

Start each answer on a separate page.

Write the question number of each answer in the left margin.

Questions carry equal marks.

1. The society in Ancient Greece was essentially patriarchal; however, women are often depicted as powerful characters in Ancient Greek tragedies. Discuss this statement by referring to tragedies where women are critical to the plot.
2. The Renaissance era is defined as the rebirth of art and culture, in particular that of the classics. Discuss how theatre was reinvented during this era by referring to at least one theatre practice.
3. At the end of the 19th century, a new form of theatre production swept across Europe. Naturalism had arrived. Discuss this important development in the history of theatre, making specific reference to different countries, playwrights, key texts, acting style, as well as theatre architecture and scenography. Your answer should also outline key historical, political and social moments which provided the context within which naturalism was born.
4. Excerpt 2 and Excerpt 3 present two static images of the performance *A Picture of Dorian Gray*. Excerpt 1 is taken from a performance review, of the same.
By making close reference to the review excerpt, reflect on
 - a. how digital technology has been absorbed into current theatrical performance;
 - b. the potential that this technology has presented theatre makers with.

Excerpt 1

"...this 'cine-theatre' production is technologically elaborate in its imagination....

Originally adapted in 2020 by Sydney Theatre Company's artistic director, Kip Williams, who again directs, the result is a true high-wire act, not only because of Snook's fleet and fabulous performance but also because of the accompaniment of screens, pre-recorded footage, live film crew, and orchestration of technology that is as dazzling as it is complicated, heightening theatricality rather than distracting from it.

There are moments when a camera is pressed up against Snook's face so closely we see every pore, and others when there are seven replicated versions of her... It is a juggling act of high order for Snook. She must perform in real time, react to the recorded footage and manipulate the technology herself in some scenes. She speaks in dialogue but also narrates omnisciently. Some scenes require athleticism, others sudden stillness. It demands an exacting synchronicity and she gets it pitch perfect, powering through 26 characters...

Excerpt continues on the next page.

The many moving screens spur the drama, aiding its overt construction and always remain in service to the story's themes. Dorian's many projected, fractured, selves suggest that this story might just be a narcissistic fantasy... literally projected on to the screens before us... We stay within Wilde's original period setting but the current world is folded inside it. Dorian's painting is horribly airbrushed with Instagram technology, while Jimmy Somerville's I Feel Love accompanies his hedonist entry into queer subculture."

(Source: Excerpt from a review of A Picture of Dorian Gray, in the Guardian newspaper. Performed at Theatre Royal Haymarket, London in 2024. Directed by Kip Williams. Featuring Sarah Snook performing 26 different characters.
<https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2024/feb/15/the-picture-of-dorian-gray-review-sarah-snook-succession>)

Excerpt 2



Sarah Snook on stage with camera crews in "The Picture of Dorian Gray."
Source: Image: CBS News (<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/sarah-snook-on-the-picture-of-dorian-gray/>)

Excerpt 3



Source: Image: CBS News (<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/sarah-snook-on-the-picture-of-dorian-gray/>)

(Total: 35% of the global mark)



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SECTION A: LIVE THEATRE EVALUATION

Candidates are reminded to insert the following information:

- **Title of Performance**
- **Venue of Performance**
- **Date of Performance**

YOU ARE TO REFER TO A LIVE PERFORMANCE EVENT.

Choose **ONE** of the following questions and answer in essay form:

1. With reference to a performance you have watched, discuss in detail:
 - a) the elements which you feel had a positive effect on the overall performance that the audience received; and
 - b) staging aspects which you would have done differently had you been the director of the production. Give detailed reasons for your answers.

OR

2. With reference to a performance which you watched, describe in detail which aspects of the knowledge you have gained through following an A level course in Theatre and Performance resulted in you experiencing the performance in a specific way, compared to other members of the audience who would not have followed the same course. Give clear reasons for your answer.

SECTION B: TEXT-TO-STAGE REALISATION

As a performer, discuss how you would deal with **ONE** of the extracts below and communicate it to an audience through performance.

You should use examples from the extract to support your ideas, and your answer should make reference to the performance text as a whole.

In your answer you may refer to the following aspects:

- The physical and vocal characteristics of key roles, characters, or personae
- Visual and non-verbal elements of the text
- Design aspects and staging strategies
- Mood and atmosphere generated by the text
- Performance style and theatrical devices
- Relationship between actors and audience

Please turn the page.

Extract 1**Waiting for Godot**

...LUCKY pulls on the rope, staggers, shouts his text. All three throw themselves on LUCKY who struggles and shouts his text.)

LUCKY: Given the existence as uttered forth in the public works of Puncher and Wattmann of a personal God quaquaquaquaqu with white beard quaquaquaquaqu outside time without extension who from the heights of divine apathia divine athambia divine aphasia loves us dearly with some exceptions for reasons unknown but time will tell and suffers like the divine Miranda with those who for reasons unknown but time will tell are plunged in torment plunged in fire whose fire flames if that continues and who can doubt it will fire the firmament that is to say blast hell to heaven so blue still and calm so calm with a calm which even though intermittent is better than nothing but not so fast and considering what is more that as a result of the labours left unfinished crowned by the Acacacademy of Anthropopometry of Essy-in-Possy of Testew and Cunard it is established beyond all doubt all other doubt than that which clings to the labours of men that as a result of the labours unfinished of Testew and Cunard it is established as hereinafter but not so fast for reasons unknown that as a result of the public works of Puncher and Wattmann it is established beyond all doubt that in view of the labours of Fartov and Belcher left unfinished for reasons unknown of Testew and Cunard left unfinished it is established what many deny that man in Possy of Testew and Cunard that man in Essy that man in short that man in brief in spite of the strides of alimentation and defecation is seen to waste and pine waste and pine and concurrently simultaneously what is more for reasons unknown in spite of the strides of physical culture the practice of sports such as tennis football running cycling swimming flying floating riding gliding conating camogie skating tennis of all kinds dying flying sports of all sorts autumn summer winter winter tennis of all kinds hockey of all sorts penicillin and succedanea in a word I resume and concurrently simultaneously for reasons unknown to shrink and dwindle in spite of the tennis I resume flying gliding golf over nine and eighteen holes tennis of all sorts in a word for reasons unknown in Feckham Peckham Fulham Clapham namely concurrently simultaneously what is more for reasons unknown but time will tell to shrink and dwindle I resume Fulham Clapham in a word the dead loss per caput since the death of Bishop Berkeley being to the tune of one inch four ounce per caput approximately by and large more or less to the nearest decimal good measure round figures stark naked in the stockinged feet in Connemara in a word for reasons unknown no matter what matter the facts are there and considering what is more much more grave that in the light of the labours lost of Steinweg and Peterman it appears what is more much more grave that in the light the light the light of the labours lost of Steinweg and Peterman that in the plains in the mountains by the seas by the rivers running water running fire the air is the same and then the earth namely the air and then the earth in the great cold the great dark the air and the earth abode of stones in the great cold alas alas in the year of their Lord six hundred and something the air the earth the sea the earth abode of stones in the great deeps the great cold on sea on land and in the air I resume for reasons unknown in spite of the tennis the facts are there but time will tell I resume alas alas on on in short in fine on on abode of stones who can doubt it I resume but not so fast I resume the skull to shrink and waste and concurrently simultaneously what is more for reasons unknown in spite of the tennis on on the beard the flames the tears the stones so blue so calm alas alas on on the skull the skull the skull the skull in Connemara in spite of the tennis the labours abandoned left unfinished graver still abode of stones in a word I resume alas alas abandoned unfinished the skull the skull in Connemara in spite of the tennis the skull alas the stones Cunard (Mêlée, final vociferations) tennis ... the stones ... so calm ... Cunard ... unfinished ...

POZZO: His hat!

(VLADIMIR seizes LUCKY's hat. Silence of LUCKY. He falls. Silence. Panting of the victors.)

ESTRAGON: Avenged!

(VLADIMIR examines the hat, peers inside it.)

POZZO: Give me that! (He snatches the hat from VLADIMIR, throws it on the ground, tramples on it.) There's an end to his thinking!

(Source: Faber & Faber 2006 publication pgs. 36-38)

Extract 2

Love and Information

MESSAGE

It's a message

killing people

yes because then they understand

killing yourself

they understand what you're telling them

but they don't do they, they just

because the deaths show how important it is

no they just say you're a terrorist or

and the terror is a message

but they don't get it do they, they just pass laws and lock people up and

if enough people did it because they don't really feel terror do they, they don't live in terror, if they lived in terror they'd be getting the message.

Would you do it yourself?

I don't think I would, no.

Because you're scared?

I don't think that message is what I want to say.

Please turn the page.

GRASS

What did you do that for?

I thought

What do you think's going to happen to you?

I know but

and to me and the children did you think about that?

It seemed like the right thing to do.

So will we have to change who we are and go and live somewhere else?

I didn't say

and you'll be a protected witness and all our life we'll be living in fear in a mobile home in a desert in America?

I didn't say who I was, I just made the phone call

from your own phone?

no of course not from my own phone, I'm not stupid

well you are but ok, from a public

yes of course

but near here like in the high street

no I took a train

you took a train? when?

today, to make the call, I went to Brighton

why Brighton?

I don't know, it's somewhere you can go quickly on a train

so you didn't go to work? You weren't at work you could've got the kids from school

I was in Brighton

I'd have liked a day out in Brighton

it wasn't a day out in Brighton, I made the call on a public phone in Brighton, I had a coffee and I got the train back.

And what did you say?

I just gave them the name, I said this is the person you want in connection with, no I won't give my name thank you, goodbye. That's all.

But if they know the call came from Brighton and they could find out who knew him who went to Brighton

they won't do that, they don't need to know who I am, they just need to know who to look at

but if he finds out you went to Brighton

but he's not going to know what I did in Brighton

you can't be sure of that, what if he's got a mate in the police who says we got a tip it was you, it came from Brighton, and someone else tells him they saw you get on a train to go to Brighton

how likely is that? why would he have a mate in the police? of course he doesn't have a mate in the police, do I have a mate in the police, you're making a whole thing up that's not going to happen.

I don't see why you had to do it.

It wasn't very nice what he did, was it.

He's a friend of yours.

He's not a friend of mine.

He's not now. He doesn't know he's not now, what if you see him? what if I see him? what if he comes round here and says the police are on to me what am I going to do can you help me?

You're making things up again.

No I'm not. That's what's going to happen.

TERMINAL

Doctor, one thing before I go. Can you tell me how long I've got?

There's not an exact answer to that.

I'd be grateful for anything you can give me an idea.

Well let me say ten per cent of people with this condition are still alive after three years.

That's helpful, thank you.

(Source: Nick Hern Books. 2016. ISBN 978 1 84842 288 9)

Please turn the page.

Extract 3

The Priest's Revolt.

They continue singing the refrain. Suddenly the Knights exit. Only the Priests and the Secular Characters are left singing in the background. The Rector stands up to speak.

RECTOR: You remember what Grandmaster Ximenes had said when he himself announced his edict. He said that the prohibition on hunting for wild rabbit applied to everyone. It was not long before the prohibition was no longer universal. The weak grandmaster soon gave in to pressure; not from the people because he is not bothered about that, but from those around him, those who could cause him a lot of trouble if they were to turn against him. Therefore, some exceptions were created, and naturally these were all knights. But, although Ximenes did not care what the people thought he still did not want to lose face and so used his falconer to issue these hunting licences. Naturally it was just his signature. He gave the licences to whoever he wanted. What could the poor man do? The power to grant licences was not his but the falconer's. If it had been up to him he would either have granted it to everyone or to no one. And let me tell you, it wasn't cheap to obtain a licence. Now that some knights had been granted a licence to go out hunting again, they stopped complaining, because it suited them that way. What did they care that the peasants and the priests had to swallow their pride and watch them going hunting.

Pause.

Excuse me, gentlemen. Maybe it's not my job to speak in this manner. After all, I would not want you to think that I'm taking over from the actors. But, when I remember how egoistic the knights were, I can't bear to remain silent.

The actors take up the refrain again. At a particular moment the priests walk out and the secular characters realise they are singing alone.

WOMAN 1: (*shouting*) What about these lot? Aren't you going to say anything? Didn't they abandon us as well?

RECTOR: (*taken aback*) These lines are not in the script. Cetta, what are you saying?

WOMAN 1: I'm saying that we've now really had enough; we're swimming in shit and you stuff yourselves on rabbit stew. Don't play the defenders of religion with us, because we know what you're worth. We know why you incite us to revolt. You're using us because you know that your privileges are at risk and so you push us into the front line so that we take the punches instead of you. When you start welcoming us with open arms, maybe we'll start to believe you. Look who you keep company with: those who can pay, those who can fill your pockets, those who can finance you.

RECTOR: (*dumbfounded*) But what is she saying? These are not even her words.

The novices start laughing in the background.

WOMAN 1: We don't need words of comfort from you. Words won't help us fill our stomach.

RECTOR: (*angry*) Cetta, if you don't shut up I'm sacking you from this convent, immediately. I'll look for another cook...

WOMAN 1: (*ignoring him, approaching Labini*) And what can we say about you, Monsignor Labini? Have you ever taken a walk around our villages to see the poverty we live in? No. You would be lowering yourself too much if you were to do this. And just to get it off my chest, I have to tell you I have proof that you're befriending certain French knights and that you're plotting with them to get rid of the Order and bring the French here.

LABINI: *(stands up in a rage)* This is too much, Rector. You have to check her.

RECTOR: *(approaching Woman 1)* That's enough. I want you to ask for pardon immediately and to renounce all that you've just said.

WOMAN 1: *(falling to her knees in front of Labini and kissing his hand)* Pardon me, Monsignor, I didn't know what I was saying.

LABINI: That's not possible. You offended me too much.

RECTOR: *(bullying him)* Come on, Monsignor. She's kneeling before you asking for mercy. Won't you forgive her?

LABINI: Stand up, my girl. *(Patting her on the shoulders)* Go and recite the rosary every day for a year as penance, and in your prayers remember to pray for the person who made you say these awful words about our Church and about me, maybe he'll repent and refrain from these deeds.

Woman 1 stands. Before exiting she looks at the Rector, who winks at her. The secular characters exit as well.

RECTOR: *(artificially emotional)* And then they say that the Church is not merciful. *(Pause)* Again I apologise for that incident; I apologise to you, members of the audience, and mostly, to you Monsignor Vincenzo Labini. I give you my word that tonight, as soon as this is over, I'll do my best to find out the identity of the vile person who used that innocent woman to say such disgusting words, and if I find out it was one of our students, he'll be punished accordingly.

12. AN UNHAPPY INCIDENT

RECTOR: And now, that that unhappy incident is over, we go on to another unhappy incident. Although the hunting dispute had died down, the quarrels between Bishop Pellerano and Grandmaster Ximenes went on. In August 1774 there was an incident near Cospicua wharf which did not help a little bit to alleviate the tension already existing in the country. A bishop's employee and a knight quarrelled on the quay, and the captain of the fleet ordered that if any other employees of the bishop were seen on site, they were to be beaten. And that's what happened to the first one who came along. As he would not move from the quay, he was beaten almost to death. This incident created a ferment among the priests because they felt their privileges threatened. Bishop Pellerano was of the same opinion and instead of informing the Grandmaster of what had happened, he took the law into his own hands and arrested three of the culprits. The Grandmaster asked that they be handed over to him so that he could punish them. However the bishop was adamant; and the three suspects were freed after a gang of about twenty knights stormed the bishop's prison in Senglea. The Grandmaster arrested them again but had to liberate them after the knights protested strongly. Meanwhile, the Bishop locked himself in his palace because he was afraid the knights would attack him. The members of the clergy were shocked and disgusted at these events and so they agreed to send a representative from every parish to protest against the knights' behaviour in front of the Bishop's palace in Mdina. Their aim was to show solidarity with the bishop and at the same time to press him to convene the General Chapter so that their ecclesiastical immunity would be safeguarded.

(Source: text taken from syllabus)