

Christopher Bruce

Swansong

The dance is in 7 sections with each section being linked with tapped out questions and/or the entrances and exits of the interrogators/guards.

Section 1 (Questions and answers)

Section 2 (Tea for two)

Section 3 (First solo)

Section 4 (Slow trio)

Section 5 (Second solo)

Section 6 (Cane dance)

Section 7 (Third solo)

The lighting was designed by David Mohr.

There is a blue wash of light on the stage, this creates a dark and unfriendly atmosphere which ensures the audience feels uncomfortable and uneasy.

There is a shaft of light from USL to DSR, this has several interpretations. One could be that the light is guiding the victim to heaven at the end of the dance. You will learn about the different interpretations throughout the term.

Floodlights are used throughout the show enhancing the dark and uneasy atmosphere. This is enhanced through the shadows that the lights creates.

Fact file:

- First performed: November 1997
- Style: Contemporary, with physical contact and some balletic movements. Includes references to social dance, ballroom, theatrical dance and tap.
- Theme: Human Rights
- Stimulus: The work of Amnesty International, saying goodbye to a career as a dancer, the experiences of Chilean poet Victor Jara, the novel 'A Man' by Oriana Fallaci

Dancers:

There are three male or female dancers within Swansong. This dance is typically performed with an all-male cast, but has been performed with an all-female cast. There will never be a performance of this work with a combination cast.

The three dancers play different characters within the dance. There is one prisoner and two interrogators/guards.

Accompaniment

Composed by Phillip Chambon. Electro-acoustic with digitally sampled sounds, vocals, a reed pipe and popular dance rhythms. Unaccompanied interludes enable us to hear the tapping of the feet. The accompaniment was composed in collaboration with the choreographer. Section 2, 6 and 7 and part of section 1 were choreographed to specific counts in the music and relate strongly to a beat or pulse. During the other sections, the dancers move away from any sense of counts, either performing phrases more freely or in some cases in silence.

Costumes

Designed by Christopher Bruce

Everyday clothes associated with the role

Uniforms for the interrogators

Jeans and red t-shirt for the prisoner