

PROGRAM 4

Creating a Multi-Arts Performance Piece

Overview

Students apply what they have learned so far in this unit to create, critique, and revise a multi-arts performance piece based on the central narrative theme in *Quidam*.

In *Quidam*, a young girl follows a guide on a journey through a fantasy world. For their original multi-arts work, students create their own journey-story that follows the thoughts and feelings the young girl might have while on her fantastic adventure.

Structurally, the participants' performance piece includes four sections, reflecting elements of the classic hero's journey:

- The Call: an invitation to adventure.
- The Challenge: temptations or difficulties that force the hero to change and grow.
- The Transformation: a character's sudden, dramatic change in response to a revelation.
- The Return: back to everyday life with new awareness and, sometimes, new challenges.

The Lesson

The creation of a multi-arts performance piece will take several days or weeks. In this lesson plan, the work is presented as a single lesson, divided into four steps:

- Outlining the Story
- Developing Ideas
- Rehearsing and Refining
- Performing and Reflecting

Objectives

Work collaboratively on the following elements of a multi-arts performance piece:

- Develop a plot structure.
- Plan and implement a dramatization.
- Plan and implement visual elements through costuming and transitions.
- Create and perform movement.
- Create and perform a musical score.
- Understand choreographic principles and processes.
- Understand the importance of critiquing and refining to the creative process.

Materials and Resources

- Art supplies
- Butcher paper and markers
- Costuming supplies
- Orff instrumentarium
- Props
- Scenic and set pieces
- Handout: Sample Rubric: Performance
- Reading: Elements of the Hero's Journey
- Reading: *Quidam*
- Reading: Orff Instrumentarium

Planning and Preparation

Read through the lesson. If necessary, divide the work into sections to be taught over several consecutive days. Natural stopping points occur in each of the steps below.

Background Information for Teachers

See the readings at the end of this document for more information on the classic journey structure, Zoe's journey in *Quidam*, and the Orff Instrumentarium.

Vocabulary

- *Choreographer*: someone who plans the movements of a dance
- *Choreography*: sequence of movements planned for a dance performance
- *Design*: the arrangement of musical parts; the form of the music
- *Dialogue*: conversation between characters in a drama or narrative
- *Duration*: music in time; the length of the sounds
- *Energy qualities*: types of "muscle" energy used to describe movement qualities
- *Expressive qualities*: variables within performance parameters
- *Leitmotif*: a musical fragment related to some aspect of the drama (character, emotion, or event) that recurs in the course of the plot

- *Orff Instrumentarium*: standard instruments used in the method of teaching music developed by composer Carl Orff (1895–1982). These instruments include xylophones, metallophones, glockenspiels, recorders, and a wide variety of unpitched percussion instruments
- *Ostinato*: a short musical pattern that is repeated persistently throughout a composition or one of its sections
- *Pentatonic*: a simple scale based on five tones that is often used when preparing students for success in musical composition. The teacher may elect to use this scale depending on the previous learning and abilities of the students
- *Pitch*: the high and low qualities of music
- *Sound Carpet*: a subtle foundation of sound intended to provide musical support to a piece of music. The sound carpet often employs an ostinato, and establishes a tonality and mood over which prominent themes or melodies are played
- *Storyboard*: a graphic, sequential depiction of a narrative, such as a comic strip. Storyboards commonly are used to map out animation or film productions, with each frame, or cel, illustrating an event
- *Symbol*: something that stands for something else
- *Theme*: a musical idea, usually a melody, that forms the basis or starting point for a composition or a major section
- *Timbre*: tone color; the distinctive quality of a given instrument, voice, or sound source
- *Tonality*: the combination of pitches as they function together

Instruction

Warm-up/Motivation

Explain to the students that they are going to engage in a collaborative process of creating and performing a multi-arts performance piece. Explain the process you will be using, going over time frame and expectations.

Lesson

Outlining the Story

Explain the following story ideas and framework:

- *Quidam* shows us how Zoe's external reality changes as she takes a journey through a fantasy world. Our story will show the internal transformation Zoe undergoes as she journeys through the fantasy world.
- Our story will follow the classic journey structure and will be broken into four sections: Part I: The Call; Part II: The Challenge; Part III: The Transformation; Part IV: The Return.
- There will be four main characters in each section of our story: Zoe, Quidam, John, and Fritz (see the theatre criteria below for more information).
- The performance of each section will last about five minutes.

Engage the students in brainstorming the plot of each section. The following questions will drive the brainstorming:

- Thinking about *Quidam*, what happens in Section 1 of the story? (Characters are introduced and Zoe is invited into the fantasy world.)
- What do you think is going on inside Zoe during this part of the story?
- What is she thinking?
- What is she feeling?
- How might we show this in our story?

Repeat these questions for each of the four sections of the story, taking extensive notes in outline form. Organize the notes on a flip chart so that each of the four groups can take their story outlines with them as they work on their section of the story.

Music

Once the story outline has been completed, guide all students to create the music for the story. Criteria for the musical score are as follows:

- The overall palette of the musical score will reflect choices that contribute to the character, plot, and action of the piece in six categories: expressive qualities, timbre, duration, pitch, tonality, and design.
- A “sound carpet” will be composed to express the mood and will:
 - use at least three contrastive instruments;
 - be built upon at least three complimentary ostinati; and
 - provide the foundation of the piece, and be significant in transitions.
- A musical theme will be composed for each prominent character in the work and will:
 - remain consistent throughout the work
 - be one musical phrase in length
 - musically reflect the character’s transformation
 - use the different instrumental timbres for each character: for Zoe, xylophones and glockenspiels; for Quidam, drums and woods; for Fritz, metals and shakers; and for John, vocal/verbal and special effects

Before moving on to small-group planning and rehearsal, pass out the Handout, Sample Rubric: Performance (found at the end of this document) or create one as a group to assess the final product. In this way, students are clear on the expectations of them.

Developing Ideas

Place students into four groups, with each group being responsible for the development of one section of the story. Groups will brainstorm, improvise, and collaborate to create their scene of the journey story. The following multi-arts criteria will be met in each group:

Dance

The students will play the roles of choreographer and dancers to meet the following criteria:

- Use movement, shapes, and time to communicate Zoe’s internal transformation between her real and fantasy worlds.
- Explore space and time transitions to express and define relationships among the characters in each section.
- Create a sequence of dance movements for each character to guide the audience through the journey using shape, space, and time.

Theatre

- In this story, there will be four characters in each segment — Zoe (the girl), Quidam (an omniscient character who knows how the fantasy world can help us all change our perspective on reality), and John and Fritz (Zoe's friends).
- All four characters must appear in each story segment.
- All characters must engage in dialogue that guides the audience to understand the inner transformation that Zoe undergoes as she journeys through the fantasy world and back to reality.
- The dialogue does not need to be realistic and can be adapted from *Quidam* itself.

Rehearsing and Refining

Bring the groups together to share their sections. After viewing all four sections, students will critique their work based on the criteria outlined above. Allow the groups time to revise their sections as necessary. When each section is complete, the whole group will plan for the transitions.

Visual art will provide the transitions between story parts. Here, students will develop a symbol that will pass through each of the four parts, altering its physical appearance as the story progresses. First, discuss with students the symbolism of the hat that Quidam gives Zoe:

- What is a symbol?
- How does the hat transform Zoe?
- What happens when she gives it back?
- How does the hat act as a unifying element in the story?

Transition Activity/Pass the Prop

To help students understand how an object can be used to show transition, try the following exercise:

- Instruct the group to stand in a circle.
- The leader starts passing an object, using movement, sound, or dialogue as the object is passed. The object may also be manipulated or changed in form.
- The object must be transformed (e.g., the object is a stick but it is used as a bat to hit a baseball) as it is passed to the next person, thus creating a transition to the next idea.

Ask the class to choose one everyday object from a variety available — hats, gloves, glasses, shoes, etc. — that would best symbolize the ideas in the story and performance piece. Ask students how this object will be altered to represent Zoe's inner transformation. Explain how the object could be added to or subtracted from to represent Zoe's transformation by using pipe cleaners, construction paper, fabric, buttons, hot glue guns, or other materials.

Discuss how symmetry and asymmetry might be used to show Zoe's emotions or mood. Will there be times during the performance when the audience will see the symbol used by more than one performer? Make the decisions as a group. Take notes and make drawings on a flip chart to document the group thought process. Allow the groups time to rehearse the transitions.

Performing and Reflecting

Perform the sections of the multi-arts piece in sequence. Have as many students as possible watch each section. Use the handout, Sample Rubric: Performance, or one created by the group to critique the performance piece. Give students time to revise, then perform the piece again and repeat the critique process to help students understand the role of critiquing and revising when creating original work.

Assessment

Formative

During the lesson, observe the group and watch for the following behaviors:

- In group discussion, students use vocabulary with accuracy and understanding.
- During group work, individuals stay on task and work collaboratively.
- Students apply previous knowledge during their creative work.
- Students practice using the critique process in the evaluation and refinement of the final product.

Summative

The final performance will reflect all criteria established in the sample rubric or through group collaboration.

Correlated National Standards

Dance

Content Standard 2

Understands choreographic principles, processes, and structures

Content Standard 3

Understands dance as a way to create and communicate meaning

Content Standard 7

Makes connections between dance and other disciplines

Theatre

Content Standard 2

Uses acting skills

Content Standard 6

Understands the context in which theatre, film, television, and electronic media are performed today as well as in the past

Music

Content Standard 3

Improvises melodies, variations, and accompaniments

Content Standard 4

Compose and arrange music within specified guidelines

Visual Art

Content Standard 1

Understands and applies media, techniques, and processes

Content Standard 3

Choose and evaluate a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas

Language Arts

Content Standard 1

Uses general skills and strategies of the writing process

Content Standard 4

Gathers and uses information for research purposes

Content Standard 8

Uses listening and speaking strategies for different purposes

Content Standard 10

Understands the characteristics and components of the media

Source: *National Standards for Arts Education*, published by Music Educators National Conference (MENC). Copyright © 1994 by MENC. Used by permission. The complete National Arts Standards and additional materials relating to the Standards are available from MENC, The National Association for Music Education, 1806 Robert Fulton Drive, Reston, VA 20191, telephone 800-336-3768.

HANDOUT

Sample Rubric: Performance

Criteria	1 Below Expectations	2 Meets Expectations	3 Above Expectations
Plot Structure	One or more of the elements of a journey are missing and/or the transition from one element to the next is unclear.	All four elements of the journey are present in the plot.	All four elements of the journey are present and distinct, guiding the performance succinctly.
Dramatization	One or more of the four characters is missing from one or more of the four segments.	All four characters are present in each segment of the journey.	All four characters are present in each of the four segments and are clearly identified by expression, gesture, music, and movement.
Choreography	One or more elements listed under "Meets Expectations" is missing, or movement sequence and communication are not clear.	Student communicates transformation of reality to fantasy through movement. Student expresses energy clearly, defining character dialogue throughout most of the choreography. Most characters have distinct movement sequences that identify them.	Transformation from reality to fantasy is clear and distinct throughout the choreography and performance. Dialogue and characters are clearly defined throughout. All characters have distinct movement sequences that define them and are consistent throughout.

The Arts in Every Classroom: A Workshop for Elementary School Teachers
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Criteria	1 Below Expectations	2 Meets Expectations	3 Above Expectations
Overall Score	Characters are not reflected effectively in the six categories, and/or more than two categories are missing (design, duration, expressive qualities, pitch, timbre, tonality).	Characters are reflected in at least four of the categories effectively.	Characters are reflected in all six categories.
Sound Carpet	The sound carpet does not express the mood of the piece or uses fewer than three contrastive instruments and complementary ostinati.	The sound carpet expresses the mood of the piece and uses at least three contrastive instruments and at least three complementary ostinati.	The sound carpet meets all stated criteria and provides significant support in scene transitions.
Themes	Musical themes are not apparent for each character or are not used consistently throughout the piece.	Each character has a musical theme that is consistent throughout most of the piece.	Each character has a musical theme that clearly identifies that character and is used consistently throughout the piece.

The Arts in Every Classroom: A Workshop for Elementary School Teachers
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Criteria	1 Below Expectations	2 Meets Expectations	3 Above Expectations
Visual Symbol	<p>A visual symbol is not used to identify transition or is not clear.</p> <p>The symbol is ineffective in unifying the four parts of the journey.</p> <p>The symbol includes fewer than three media, and/or does not effectively combine media to create symmetry or asymmetry.</p>	<p>A visual symbol is used to identify the transition into each part of the journey.</p> <p>The symbol is used to unify the four parts of the journey.</p> <p>The symbol includes at least three media effectively combined to create symmetry or asymmetry.</p>	<p>A visual symbol is used effectively to identify the transition into each part of the journey.</p> <p>The symbol unifies the four parts of the journey in an extraordinary manner.</p> <p>The symbol includes more than three media effectively combined to create symmetry or asymmetry and to enhance the development of the plot.</p>
Overall Performance	<p>Numerous elements are missing from the above categories, contributing to an inadequate overall performance.</p>	<p>All required elements from the above categories are present, contributing to a clear and adequate performance.</p>	<p>The performance includes all required elements and additional elements, creating an effective or outstanding performance.</p>

Handout

Elements of the Hero's Journey

Joseph Campbell (1904–87) was an American author who wrote extensively about mythology and its influences in modern times. Campbell held that certain archetypal images, themes, and patterns are repeated in virtually all of the world's best-known myths and stories. Major ideas from Campbell's work will be used as a framework in the creation of this multi-arts performance piece. In this series, participants will refer to four parts of what Campbell called "the hero's journey."

- 1. The Call** — The call is the invitation to an adventure. The hero may embark on a quest willingly or out of necessity. Sometimes, there is a sudden, shocking event, leaving the hero with no choice but to engage in the situation. At other times, the call is a subtle invitation, and the hero has time to decide whether he/she is going to get involved.
- 2. The Challenges** — The challenges are fears, obstacles, and trials during a journey. Having accepted the call and started on the journey (which may be physical, psychological, or spiritual), the hero encounters a series of increasingly difficult challenges. Assumptions and beliefs are questioned and temptations threaten to divert the hero from the path.
- 3. The Transformation** — The transformation is a change in way of thinking and way of viewing life. In the process of dealing with the challenges, the hero experiences a revelation about life, which changes the way he/she thinks and behaves.
- 4. The Return** — The return to everyday life is the final stage of the journey. The hero returns a changed person, possessing new awareness and skill. The hero seeks to share his/her newfound understanding for the greater good of society. Sometimes, if people are not ready to change, the hero may face further trials, and others may be called to undertake their own journeys.

Handout

Quidam

In 1996, Cirque du Soleil premiered a work entitled *Quidam*. According to Cirque du Soleil's Web site, the character Quidam is meant to be "a nameless passer-by, a solitary figure lingering on a street corner, a person rushing past. It could be anyone, anybody. Someone coming, going, living in our anonymous society. A member of the crowd, one of the silent majority. One who cries out, sings and dreams within us all. This is the Quidam that Cirque du Soleil is celebrating."

This work is different from previous productions in that it contains a narrative story line. The performance opens with Zoe, a young, angry girl who already has seen everything there is to see. Quidam, the anonymous character, invites Zoe into a mysterious, magical world, and she discovers that there is a lot more out there than she ever could have imagined. She meets John and Fritz, who befriend her and dazzle her. She is very excited about her new discoveries in this world, but then she sees her parents. Her parents, though, cannot see her, just as they don't notice her in the real world. In the end everything works out for Zoe. She is reunited with her parents and is glad to see them again. She is much appreciated in the real world now but is sad to leave the excitement of *Quidam* behind. For just a second, Zoe is reluctant to leave and looks to John for advice. He hates to say good-bye to her, but he knows she must return to her own world and her own life.

Quidam was written and directed by Franco Dragone, who has been working with Cirque du Soleil since 1985. Dragone came to the circus from a background in theatre, working with several theatrical companies across Europe. It was his experiences in Europe that led Dragone to propose an integration of theatre and circus that is now the trademark of Cirque du Soleil. The rest of the creative team included Michel Crete, set designer; Dominique Lemieux, costume designer; Benoit Jutras, composer; Debra Brown, choreographer; Luc Lafortune, lighting designer; and Francois Bergeron, sound designer. *Quidam* has more than 50 performers, ranging in age from 12 to 43. The current cast members hail from Canada, United States, France, Russia, Ukraine, China, England, Argentina, Belgium, Australia, and Israel.

Cirque du Soleil means "circus of the sun." *Quidam*, like all of Cirque du Soleil's shows, can be considered a circus performance. A circus is a type of performance staged in a circle surrounded by tiers of seats, usually under a tent. While the tradition of traveling performers can be traced back to the Middle Ages, the first modern circus was staged in London in 1768 by Philip Astley. His circus included only one act — a show of trick horsemanship. Over time, circus performances expanded to include many different kinds of acts. Today, a circus performance typically includes displays of horsemanship; exhibitions by gymnasts, aerialists, wild-animal trainers, and performing animals; and comic pantomime by clowns. The founders of Cirque du Soleil loved the circus but wanted to change it. Cirque du Soleil is not about elephants and lion tamers. It is more the circus of the future, a fusion of street performance and theatre.

The structure of *Quidam* (circus acts linked by a storyline) imitates the style called vaudeville. The American tradition of vaudeville grew out of saloon entertainment during the late 1800s. The pattern of a vaudeville performance was always the same: separate acts to musical accompaniment by comedians, serious and comic singers, jugglers, dancers, magicians, trick cyclists, etc., all structured in a single program or “bill” to be performed twice nightly.

One of the comments you will hear about *Quidam* is that it is visually breathtaking. The set for *Quidam* is stunning. One of the production’s most spectacular features is a 120-foot overhead conveyor, whose five imposing rails take up the entire interior surface of the big top. This system is used to bring performers onto the stage and to create a multitude of special effects in various acts. The costumes for *Quidam* are colorful, spectacular, and unique. The costumes were designed to let the individual personality of each performer and character come through.

The music of *Quidam* is of remarkable dramatic intensity. Drawing on influences that range from classical music to the most eclectic and contemporary sounds, the music accompanies, envelops, and accentuates the magic of the show. The music is played live by six musicians using violins, cellos, percussion instruments, saxophones, synthesizers, samplers, electric guitars, classical guitars, and a varied assortment of other string instruments. For the very first time at Cirque du Soleil, the voices of a man and a child add texture and unique color to the music.

Adapted from the Cirque du Soleil Web site, www.cirquedusoleil.com.

Reading

Orff Instrumentarium

The Orff approach to music education uses a variety of percussion instruments. Along with vocal exploration, instruments provide the means for students to experience musical inquiry, exploration, improvisation, and composition. The instrumentarium provides students the ideal medium for the exploration of timbre and texture in music, as well as the aural and visual reinforcement of pitch relationships.

Unpitched percussion instruments (those that do not function melodically) engage students in a variety of rhythmic experiences. These instruments are grouped into four categories: wood, metal, rattles and scrapers, and membrane (or skin). Playing of these parts often is prepared through body percussion. Students are first taught rhythmic phrases through word patterns that also are expressed with body sounds like clapping, snapping, and patting. They then make the same sound patterns using percussion instruments. Some familiar unpitched percussion instruments are wood blocks, claves, jingle bells, triangles, tambourines, hand drums, and bongo drums. The variety of unpitched percussion instruments is vast and provides students a rich and engaging sound palette from which to make music.

The barred instruments of the Orff instrumentarium were developed in the 1920s by Carl Orff himself. These are the “melody-making” percussion instruments of the Orff orchestra, capable of both melodic and harmonic elements. These instruments are constructed for child-friendly use. They are sized for smaller hands and arms and are designed with removable bars, enabling the students to take off bars that aren’t necessary for a given work. Student success is instantly heightened when all the “wrong” notes are unavailable!

The xylophones have bars made of rosewood or fiberglass and are voiced in three sizes — soprano, alto, and bass — covering a three-and-a-half octave range from c to a₂. These instruments are modeled after their African counterparts.

The metallophones are voiced like the xylophone family, but the bars are made of metal, which likens their sound to elements of the Indonesian gamelan.

The glockenspiels are the smallest and highest members of the Orff orchestra. They are modeled after Orff’s own (German) glockenspiel and are voiced in only two ranges: alto and soprano. Their combined range covers a two-and-a-half octave range from c₁ to a₃.

To purchase instruments for your students’ use, see www.westmusic.com.

To learn more about the Orff approach, go to the American Orff-Schulwerk Association Web site, www.aosa.org.