

Candidate 3 evidence

Drama Advanced Higher Resource Sheet	
Candidate Name	Scottish Candidate Number
Question Selected	1: "A principle author is the person who has the most influence in shaping the dramatic meaning or impact in a performance" Analyse the extent to which the principal author achieved their theatrical aims in ONE performance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hanya Yanagihara's - Versweyveld (partner) - Hours to endure - Lawyer Jude, actor Willem, artist JB, architect Malcolm, Harold adoptive father - NYC - Belgium 1958 – studied Brussels - How performed - Theatrical aims - Toilet Scene – ritual – self-harm (graphic) – design "You know when he starts looking at the sink that he's going to cut himself again, so it's also an aspect of a spoiler that we use, which [also adds] a little bit of suspense," - Rape – whipped "The audience is seated on either side of the action, which Van Hove says "creates an enormous intimacy and also a togetherness because you'll always look at people that are also looking at the same things that you shouldn't be looking at." - Running – car "The big challenge for Van Hove and Versweyveld has been to make this very complex play with it ingenious structure as simple as possible for the audience." - Mopping up blood – step dad – ringing out the masses "We have only four hours to give people that same sensation,' so we tried to be minimalistic with maximal effect." - Adoption – vulnerable – belonging - Suicide – escape – wheelchair – drip endured whole performance watching Jude's broken life and pain did not create a successful ending it did not live up to the other scenes that audience already tolerated - Hove's vision and lack of compromise within his directorial authorship created a production that respected the source material of the novel and created a production that cannot be ignored or forgotten. 	
Word count:	250

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Subject: *AH Drama***QUESTION ONE**Extra Minutes Used: *20mins*
Signed (Invigilator): *_*

During the 2022 Edinburgh International Festival, Ivo Van Hove's adaptation of Hanya Yanagihara's *A Little Life* was performed at the Festival Theatre Edinburgh. Hove who was born in Belgium in 1958, went to boarding school until age eleven where he found his love for theatre before moving to Brussels to study. This profoundly moving production of epic proportions was performed in Dutch with English subtitles. It was a very well-crafted production in which it was four and a half hours for the audience members to endure. Hove's theatrical aims for this production was to leave the audience feeling a sense of sympathy whilst making them become engrossed in a piece of theatre which is not for the faint hearted. *A Little Life* follows the lives of four friends who move to New York to start up their careers and lives, the piece centres around Lawyer Jude who is accompanied by his friends: Actor Willem, Visual Artist JB and Architect Malcolm. As the play starts to unravel it is clear that Jude has not had an easy life, and as the audience, we are about to endure his pain with him.

Hove and his partner Versweyveld have truly influenced the dramatic meaning and impact of this performance especially throughout the scenes where Jude is sat centre stage about to cut himself. "You know when he starts looking at the sink that he's going to cut himself again, so it's also an aspect of a spoiler that we use, which [also adds] a little bit of suspense."

Versweyveld ensured that the design within the repetition of these scenes were simple yet successful. These scenes were very minimalistic with only the basics that are always used inside an apartment like a small kitchen with two leather sofas that were placed at the back and at the side of the stage with the simple white sink standing alone right in the centre of the stage. Throughout the production a constant projection of New York is shown at both sides of the stage mirroring each other however, each time Jude is going to cut himself the busyness of the city is no longer the same. The simplicity of the projections no longer showing busy New York. This allows the audience to narrow in and focus on the intimacy between themselves and Jude and allows them to experience the harrowing process that Jude is about repeat and endure.

Hove puts his stamp of authorship on this production when we are introduced to the violence and torment of Jude's past. The scene in which Jude is raped by what used to be an important figure in his life, is explicitly shown on stage which is unbearable to watch the process as part of the audience, allowing Hove to create a successful approach to his theatrical aims. 'The audience is seated on either side of the action, which Van Hove says "creates an enormous intimacy and also a togetherness because you'll always look at people that are also looking at the same things that you shouldn't be looking at'."

This scene truly projects the vulnerability that Jude has experienced and the only way the

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audience can react is by sympathising for Jude throughout this horrendous time. Jude is instructed to take off each item of his clothing on stage whilst his abuser watches and will not let him stop until he is left with no clothes on, until he is naked. His abuser then progresses on to whip Jude as he is on his hands and knees shaking in pain, on the floor. You can see Jude wanting to beg him to stop but holds himself back in case he is abused even more. The stage picture during this scene is horrific to watch, it leaves you wanting to look anywhere but the stage although, there is nowhere else to look, and it is so loud it overpowers any other thoughts that audience members might be trying to have to distract themselves from what is actually happening.

Another scene in which I believe Hove to of been successful in achieving his theatrical aims is where one of Hove's abusers is chasing him after Jude tries to escape. "The big challenge for Van Hove and Versweyveld has been to make this very complex play with its ingenious structure as simple as possible for the audience."

Hove, I believe, was successful as this scene was definitely not for the faint hearted. The scene showed Jude naked trying to escape from his abuser as he chases after him, as Jude is trying to run away the scene is crafted by his abuser with a ginormous light that was representing a car light, which follows him round the stage as he is trying to run away. This simple idea left the audience in shock and disbelief as to how Jude has been treated and how he is being punished by his abuser. This scene will live with the audience for a long time as we are shown the vulnerability of Jude as he is naked and exposed for all to see.

Another way in which Hove puts his stamp of authorship on this production is when Jude's newly adoptive father, Harold, is left clearing up the masses of blood that Jude has left upon the stage. "We only have fours hours to give people that same sensation, so we tried to be minimalistic with maximal effect."

After Jude exits the stage, we see Harold tremble onto stage slowly before getting onto his hands and knees to start ringing out the masses of blood that his son has left. This is a torturous task for Harold to have to do and the amount of blood that is upon the stage is hard to even look at without starting to feel nauseous. This scene truly illustrates Hove's theatrical aims whilst allowing the audience to sympathise but also have a sense of shock and pain. This scene is so simple yet so effective it does not have much going on and it is not complex, but it is compelling to watch such a simplistic scene with a lot meaning behind it. It really is "minimalistic with maximal effect" as hove states.

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The final scene in which Jude resulted in taking his own life and committing suicide was not a successful ending and Hove, in my opinion did not achieve his theatrical aim. Jude is left alone centre stage where he is sat in a wheelchair connected to a drip you can see that he



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no longer feels a sense of belonging, he has lost his boyfriend and almost everyone around him whether he has distanced from them with it being his own choice or they have chosen to distance themselves from him. Jude is broken emotionally and physically which is both clear to see from him having no expression or life in his face, he does not even have the energy to talk and him sitting in a wheelchair with closed body language and broken bones and broken memories of his past. The way in which Jude commits suicide is simplistic but not effective, a white box is slowly lowered from above and covers the majority of the stage including Jude, after a moment of silence the box is lifted back up with Jude no longer on stage. After enduring this whole performance watching Jude's broken life and the pain that he has suffered Hove did not create a successful ending nor did it live up to the other scenes that had already been tolerated by all.

I believe that Hove's vision and lack of compromise within his directorial authorship created a production that was able to respect the source material of the novel that Yanagihara produced and Hove managed to create a production that cannot and will not be ignored or forgotten – at least for those who managed to endure the lengthy four and a half hour production without fainting or having to be directed out by an usher because they could not last any longer watching the pain and suffering that Jude had experience for such an extensive time.