

Candidate 4 evidence

Drama Advanced Higher Resource Sheet	
Candidate Name	Scottish Candidate Number
Question Selected	Question 2
<p>Argument: Boyd has created, in my opinion the best reimagination of the 21st century, due to interest and relevance for contemporary audience due to modern aspects.</p> <p>Intro: "Boyd in his return to the RSC, brings to Marlowe's inordinate drama the same flair and élan he showed in his famous production of Shakespeare's histories" (2018: Billington)</p> <p>BSE: Greeks believed disability is inferiority and curse Boyd thinks theatre for few is greatest threat "We are determined that deaf, disabled and neuro-divergent audiences are not left behind, as was often the case pre pandemic" (2021: Miles-Wildin)</p> <p>Chorus: Outnumbered 21 to 10. "the problems of a production that concerned itself with superficiality and surface gestures, effect rather than meaning" (2009: Kirwan)</p> <p>Formalism Feminism: women were playthings for playwrights as not to place men in distasteful light. "Playwrights make a break from cultural idea and use female characters to explore ambitious and often dangerous moral frontiers" (Unknown: Foley) Boyd inspired by accident "It has not been a conscious piece of positive action... but it is great that we are doing something about it" (2012: Boyd)</p> <p>staging: "when they climb onto the stage, they too stand above us" (2022: Anon)</p> <p>language: Boyd pushes due to Scottish connection "There isn't a non-Scottish molecule in me" (2012: Boyd)</p> <p>conclusion: Accolades should be focused on spectacular reimagination "directed by Michael Boyd, this latest pro National Theatre of Scotland production of Medea is a fabulous success" (2022: Martin) Boyd can't entirely ditch classics, but beautiful piece, Euripides would be proud.</p>	
Word count:	250

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2.	<p>Michael Boyd, prestigious director with years of classical experience as Artistic Director of The Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) is not someone I believed would be able to create successfully step away from the classics, due to the praise and recognition he has received for how well he does them. "Boyd in his return to the RSC brings to Marlowe's inordinate drama the same flair and care he showed in his famous production of Shakespeares histories (Billington: 2018). However, he has created a spectacular reimagination with Medea at the EIF Hub this August. Medea follows originally ^{an Ancient} Greek Euripides tragedy, follows her revenge on her husband after he leaves her for a younger woman, and was her outcast from society. Boyd has reimagined Medea from it's classical root, to what I believe is the best most spectacular reimagination of the 21st century, through his adaptation and addition of accessibility, language, staging and chorus - the things the contemporary audience find</p>	

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	relevant and want to see.	
	<p>Boyd's use of British Sign Language (BSL) in his 10-strong female chorus helps form his relevance for the contemporary audience. In Ancient Greek Theatre, the Greeks believed that disability was a sign of inferiority and a curse and therefore would not have showcased this in their theatres, or adapted to support those with disability. However, this is very relevant addition for the contemporary audience as ^{due} there are rising calls for productions to become more accessible. "We are determined that deaf, disabled and neuro-divergent audiences are not left behind, as was often the case pre-pandemic" (Miles-Wildin: 2021) and interpreters more regularly appearing beside our theatre stages. Yet, Boyd has pushed this further so that it is more interesting and relevant for the contemporary audience, from just having the unlike the interpreter standing beside the stage, he has placed her in the action; standing, signing and</p>	

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speaking alongside Medea as she rants and conspires against Jason. ^{As a result} ~~This means that~~ she is captivated by the audiences attention, ~~highlighted and praised for her skill~~ they are entranced, by her skill ~~to~~ ^{to} make theatre for the many, rather than the few. Boyd has reimagined this aspect as it is not only relevant for the contemporary audience, but for him also, ~~as~~ as he has raised ^{his} ~~the~~ concern that theatre will only become for a select group "Theatre is in danger of self-selecting the wealthy" (Boyd: 2012), and ^{I believe that} ~~his~~ explains as to why his reimagination to improve accessibility is so spectacular - due to him implementing his own beliefs. Boyd's contrast from discriminatory Greek practices is a breath of ~~the~~ fresh air for the contemporary audience, and highlights the interest and relevance of his reimagination.

Although Michael Boyd has created a spectacular reimagination with Medea, for me, it could not be perfect as it felt there was something not

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<p>quite right. This is his chorus. Although highly praised "The 10-strong female chorus has a grandeur" (Fisher:2022), to me, I felt that it was too classical - a sign that Boyd cannot catch his roots. This is due to it mirroring Greek theatre practices where the practitioners were very fond of their tragic choruses, but due to the messaging of tragic chorus, used female presenting tragic chorus as to not place men into a distasteful light. And, for me Boyd's tragic chorus mirrored his act behind the times, dull practice - their harmonic if they prevented individual character relationships preventing, their harmonic and synchronised chanting felt like an overcompensation, and as a whole it felt overly decorative. Unfortunately this is complaint of overly decorative his productions is one that seems to have followed to regularly criticise Boyd "the problems of a production that concerned itself with superficiality and surface gestures, effect rather than meaning (Kirwan:2009), and this is</p>	

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	<p>my feelings on exactly what I felt about his use of chorus in Medea. But now Boyd's classical use of chorus, ^{I view as} dampening the spectacularity of his reimagination of Medea.</p> <p>* ① And as a result, female tragic chorus outnumbered male by 21 to 10.</p>
	<p>Throughout his reimagination of Medea, Boyd highlights the theme of Medea feminism - one that is with extreme relevance for the progressive contemporary audience, that is rather unlike the Greek classics. In Greek theatre, women were playing for playwrights as to not place men into a distasteful light to explore taboo topics and vulgar themes, as to not place men into a distasteful light. "Playwrights make a break from cultural ideas and use female characters to explore ambitious and often dangerous moral frontiers (Foley: Unhewn) Boyd now completely reimagined his in Medea. to highlight the Although Medea explores the the a women murdering her children due to their</p>

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<p>fathers infidelity, Boyd has directed it so that Medea comes off as a confident, poised and assured woman - in fact all the female characters have been directed in this manner, hence highlighting the theme of feminism. ^{→ for the contemporary audience.} As they address the men, the audience, each other, they have strong posture with dropped shoulders, elongated necks, chins tilted to the slightest degree and chilling, confident tones; loud volume, clear ^{strong} enunciation and clear diction. They let us, the female ^{→ contemporary} audience members in on the jokes, into what felt to me, like a bubble of sisterhood that casts the men out. Boyd now purposefully created his impact of isolating the men, in order to make them feel how the men in Medea have made her feel - a taste of their own medicine - but also a chance to celebrate the women of the play. I view Boyd's celebration of women clearly inspired by ^{→ the end of} his stint at the RSC where he was praised commended and recognised for his celebration of women, which he claimed to be accidental, but brilliant "It has not been</p>	

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<p>a conscious piece of positive action. - but it is great that we are doing something about it (Boyd; 2012). However, we as the contemporary audience of Medea can recognise that he has ^{carried} brought to happy accident of with him ^{form with} him through his highlighting the theme of feminism in Medea - perhaps the most relevant theme for the contemporary audience, the who search for posit strong female role models in the media, and that Boyd has since provided. Boyd's highlighting highlighting of feminism, I feel is not one you can miss and therefore helps out supports his spectacular reimagination for the contemporary audience.</p>	
<p>Ancient Greek theatres were built upon hillsides so that the audience looked down upon the action. Michael Boyd's staging for ^{his contemporary audience of} Medea has completely contrasted from this. He has used traverse staging with the audience planning either side, ^{but} however to make it relevant and interesting for the contemporary audience, he has built it up, and has placed them standing below the staging, looking</p>	

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	<p>up to the action. He has also made his semi-immersive as in his opening scenes, he has the chorus standing on footstools in amongst the audience, but yet again forcing us to look up at them.</p> <p>Why does Boyd keep forcing the audience to look up to the action? In order to create a contemporary thinking point In order to create a thinking point ^{that is relevant.} for the contemporary audience. By making us look up, Boyd forces us to think about giving high status to the characters of Medea, However whose actions are not good or wholehearted, and this also makes us think about those who we place in high status such as celebrities, politicians etc. and how their actions are similar to those of the characters of Medea. When When coming out of Medea, my mind went straight to this, so showing me that Boyd's reimagination of staging it is highly relevant for the contemporary audience. By creating forcing the contemporary audience to think critically of themselves, Boyd has made Medea extremely relevant for them, hence building upon his spectacular reimagination.</p>	

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	<p>Medea's tragedy would not be so tragic without her the severe isolation she faces from the community that she chose. The Greeks chose to just have this as part of their storyline but Boyd, Boyd has pushed this much further by use of Scots language.</p> <p>"To hand you baith? You'll be happy then."</p> <p>(Lochhead; 2022) This is now. He has directed it, so that she is the only one not speaking upon the spectrum of Scot's language to her, for a contemporary Scottish audience who are growing in national pride. By doing this, he is highlighting her isolation as it prevents an audience relationship and reaction of sympathy develop between them, for she will not speak in their mother tongue. ^{in her} her that Boyd has been pushed to do this by the connection he feels with Scotland, not the land he was born in, but the land he chose "There isn't a non-Scottish molecule in me" (Boyd: 2012) so I think he knows knew that this would push her isolation even further. A very political take from</p>

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	<p>Boyd, but one that is very relevant for the risingly political contemporary audience.</p>	
	<p>Although Boyd has received masses of praise for Medea, I do think more accolades should go to be focused on his spectacular reimagination that is interesting, entertaining, enjoyable and superbly relevant for the contemporary audience. The reviews don't lie "directed by Michael Boyd, his latest National Theatre of Scotland production of Medea is a fabulous success" (Martin 2022), and although I believe he could have pushed further to step out of his classical comfort zone, it is still a beautiful and touching piece. Both me and the contemporary audience will sing Boyd's praises henceforth, due to the brilliance of his reimagination.</p>	