

BEACONSFIELD HIGH SCHOOL



A-LEVEL DRAMA AND THEATRE

STUDENT BOOKLET

Yr11 into Yr12 Bridging Work

Summer Term 2025

Exam Board: Edexcel

Key

Yellow = Task

Blue = Recommended time spent on task

Component 1: Devising 9DR0/01

Key

Yellow = Task

Blue = Recommended time spent on task (total time should be 3 hours)

For your Component 1 work you are going to focus on the theatre company 'Complicite' who will be the practitioner you will be studying in great depth to create your devised piece. **Read the below – annotate and highlight as appropriate –**

10 minutes

Who is Complicite?


Complicite is a touring theatre company based in London. They have produced and toured work in the UK and internationally, and they are well known for their distinctive performance styles and inventive production designs.

The company was founded in 1983 by Annabel Arden, Fiona Gordon, Marcello Magni and Simon McBurney. They were initially focused on **physical performance** and **mime**, but soon expanded into other theatrical forms. Since then, with McBurney at the helm as Artistic Director, Complicite has become one of the most compelling and widely celebrated theatre companies in the world.

“Critics have tried and failed to define the essence of Complicite.”
Lyn Gardner
Theatre Critic

KEY WORDS

Physical Performance	Performance using the body. Includes gesture, dance, movement and posture.
Mime	Performing action or emotion without words.



The only way to truly appreciate the work of Complicite is to see some examples of their work. You will see how DIFFERENT all their productions can be, HOWEVER – You will also notice lots of similarities.

Watch the following links below (you may need to do this a few times) and then make 350 words of notes under the following three headings.

This should take you 1 hour

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6mqTCOM3zd0> (Complicite show reel)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vKWv001zJ_Y&list=PLLEx0tB8K9bQ-q3XszdKnPwY6yLqdcfS (Trailer for their production 'The Encounter')

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZW-OGOOcInI&list=PLLEx0tB8K9bQ-q3XszdKnPwY6yGLqdcfS&index=11> (Trailer for their production ‘A pacifist’s guide to the war on Cancer)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mkouylM8qNE&list=PLLEx0tB8K9bQ-q3XszdKnPwY6yGLqdcfS&index=177> (Trailer for their production ‘Shun Kin’)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGYMizsAf_A&list=PLLEx0tB8K9bQ-q3XszdKnPwY6yGLqdcfS&index=18 (Teaser for production ‘Master and Margarita)

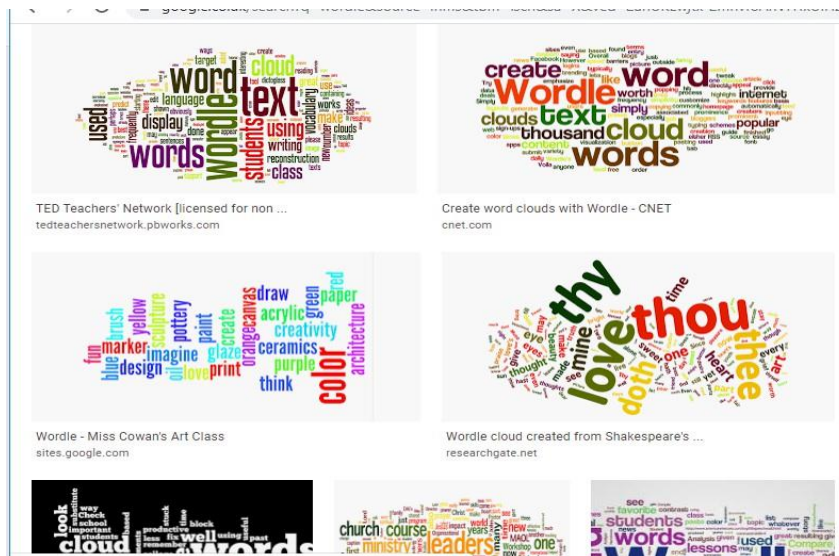
What are your first reactions to Complicite’s style of performance? (350 words)

What did you make of their performance style? How could you define it? What words/sentences could you use to describe it? (350 words)

What did you notice about their production design (set, costume, lighting, projections, effects, sound etc.)? How would you describe it? What aspects stood out to you? (350 words)

Watch the following you tube link to Complicite’s founder Simon McBurney TWICE. The first time, just watch and listen. The second time create a wordle of key words or quotes Simon Mcburney uses in the interview pausing the interview at intervals to make your notes. This should take you 30 minutes.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SnbPAGeA6Ec&t=715s> (Simon McBurney on his theatre group, Complicite) Example of a wordle –



Read the information on the next page (page 6) about Complicite (key defining elements). Create a spider diagram relating this information – and incorporate into the spider

diagram some of your work from Task 1 where you wrote your different 350 words and also the Complicite summary at the top of Page 4. This should take 30 minutes

Then you need to spend time looking around and investigating Complicite's official website.

<http://www.complicite.org/information.php>

Create a separate spider diagram entirely made up of quotes directly from Complicite's website which you think gives a real 'feel' of the 'essence' and purpose of the theatre company. This should take 1 hour as I want you to really spend time investigating the website.

The spider diagrams need to work FOR YOU – so that by looking at them you can recall important information easily in the future (you can use colours etc).

Key Defining Elements

During this section you will look in depth at the origins and work of Complicite. As with most theatre companies their works intersects with and is influenced by many other artists working at the same time as them, meaning while their work is often unique, it can be difficult to pinpoint the individuality of their style or working methods. Below are some pointers on key Complicite elements to look out for, which will be explained further through the guide.

Methodology

- An emphasis on collaboration
- Taking inspiration from other creative works
- An attitude guided by the principles of Lecoq (le jeu / disponibilité / complicité)
- A creatively stimulating rehearsal room
- Thinking about how the work will appeal to the audience
- Designers being actively involved in the rehearsal process
- Integration of technology from the beginning of the process
- Breaking down text into its component parts
- Approaching theatre in terms of 'composing' it from the different elements

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Style and Conventions

- Experimentation with Movement, mime and physicality
- Integration of and experimentation with technology
- A focus on the many ways of telling a story (narration, movement, visuals)
- Adaptable Sets
- Puppetry and Object Theatre.
- Projection
- Innovative Sound

While not all of these elements are in all Complicite shows they are a useful reference to think about their defining characteristics. They can also be useful to come back to when creating your own work to ensure you are using influence from Complicite.

EXTENSION TASKS

IF YOU REALLY CAN'T WAIT TO GET YOUR TEETH INTO A-LEVEL DRAMA

Further Reading (If you are interested and get bored over the Summer Holidays...no expectation to complete the below unless you want to) They have to be these editions of the plays if you want to read them as that is what is specified by the exam board.

Drama Spec

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/drama-and-theatre-2016.html>

Equus by Peter Shaffer

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Equus-Penguin-Modern-Classics-Shaffer/dp/0141188901/ref=sr_1_1?crid=2VQ7B7E8FPR36&dchild=1&keywords=equus+by+peter+shaffer&qid=1587476203&prefix=equus+by+peter+%2Caps%2C133&sr=8-1

Antigone by Sophocles

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Antigone-Student-Editions-Sophocles-ebook/dp/B074RF9R8Q/ref=sr_1_2?crid=9B13LPVOWWPX&dchild=1&keywords=antigone+sophocles&qid=1587476221&prefix=antigone+sop+%2Caps%2C135&sr=8-2

Top Girls by Caryl Churchill

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Girls-Student-Editions-Caryl-Churchill/dp/1350028576/ref=sr_1_1?crid=2DDB21PABD886&dchild=1&keywords=top+girls+caryl+churchill&qid=1587476260&prefix=top+girls+caryl+%2Caps%2C150&sr=8-1

See as much live theatre as possible

You can find all the below really easily online by typing them into a search engine. You do not need to spend a fortune seeing incredible theatre as an A-Level Drama student – look at all the amazing opportunities for really cheap (and sometimes free!) tickets below.

1. Sign up to 'Go Live' and get discounted tickets for west end shows [Go Live - Go Live Theatre Projects](#)
2. Sign up to the National Theatre Entry Pass to get £5 tickets.
3. Sign up to young barbican for £5 theatre tickets.
4. Sign up to RSC Key to get £5 Shakespeare shows – you can also opt to stand at the Globe for just £5.
5. Open air theatre BREEZE – gives you £10 tickets.
6. Young Vic Theatre give you £10 tickets if you are under 26.
7. Donmar Warehouse Young+Free – FREE TICKETS TO THEATRE SHOWS – NO CATCH! Sign up.
8. Hampstead downstairs club £5 tickets – sign up.
9. Almeida Theatre does £5 tickets for those under 25, use the UNDER25 code.
10. Tricycle Theatre £10 tickets.