Year 9 Unit 3: Practitioner- Steven Berkoff

Key Words Relating to Berkoff

Total Theatre

Every aspect of theatre must have **purpose**: every movement, that is choreographed, each line, lighting effect, mood or message; each sound effect to each prop that has a use.

Extreme moods to give the audience an overwhelming experience and to shock, amuse, scare, or amaze them.

Minimalist, with bare stages and little language Focus remains on the physical movement.

Mie

'Mie' – when the actor strikes a pose and holds it for a while – rest of cast freeze.

Audience Address/Direct Address Physicality Exaggeration Repetition Mime Music & sound Projections (set)

Kabuki

Movement is considered to be elegant and grand. Very melodramatic in style.

Stylised gesture and forms – performance is like a slow dance. (Similar to the kata and martial arts)

KEY TECHNIQUES IN TOTAL THEATRE			
1	Base Pulse	the rhythm and ensemble movement used in choral work	
2	Bouffon	performance style used by Lecoq drawing on mimicry and the	
		grotesque	
3	Chorus	A group of performers found in Greek drama who comment	
		together on the dramatic action both vocally and physically	
4	Cryptos	the Greek meaning of hidden	
5	Ensemble	a group of actors performing together	
6	Grotesque	fantastic and outrageous element of bouffon	
7	Japanese Noh theatre	Stylised classical Japanese dance drama using characters masks	
8	Jo ha kyo	kabuki concept where jo is a slow and auspicious beginning, ha	
		speeds events up and ku is a short and satisfying conclusion	
9	Kabuki	a classical Japanese dance drama with elaborate face make up	
10	Kvetch	taken from a Yiddish noun and means to complain all the time,	
		usually with humour	
11	Marche sur place	a stylised way of walking on the spot	
15	Mie	a character pose using a heightened physical style	
16	Strip Mime	a character pose using a heightened physical style	
		a style used in clowning and pantomime	
17	Attitudes	a series of movements to help go beyond natural gesture	
18	Commedia del arte	masked improvised comedy originally from Italy	
19	Counter mask	playing against the emotion a character mask is showing	
20	Identification	finding a character by physical identification with materials and elements	
21	Neutral state	when you are in a state of balance before you become a character	
22	Neutral mask	used to make your body the focus of expression	
23	Base Pulse	the rhythm and ensemble movement used in choral work	
24	Action Mime	to replay a physical action as close as possible.	
		Also to copy the handling of objects	
25	Pantomime	where gesture alone replaces words and associated with white pantomime/Pierrot	
26	Cartoon Mime	peformed like a silent movie of images	
27	Figurative Mime	The body to represent objects	
28	Storytelling Mime	Narrative spoken and used with any of the mime family	
29	Mimage	A zoom into a character's internal feeling	
30	Mimodynamic	Movement found fom colours, words or music	
30	INITIOUYIIAINIC	Intovernent round form colours, words of music	

Methods & Techniques

- * Berkoff tells stories in a **poetic** and **heightened** way, both vocally and physically using **minimal set** and a **non-naturalistic** style with lighting and music. Characters use a mix of **poetic language**, sometimes Shakespearean, often **vulgar and muscular**, almost physical.
- * Berkoff's early work is based on **classical Greek texts** and contemporary modern day verse in an **ensemble** environment.
- * Berkoff often uses the **chorus** in a stylised sequence of movement, usually heightened both vocally and physically. They reflect the mood of the story and express what the main characters cannot say.
- The Kabuki concept of jo-ha-kyo. This Japanese concept governs actions of actors, structures of plays and scenes.
- Jo is a slow and auspicious beginning (the way Berkoff often introduces character and plot), ha speeds events up (Berkoff often uses this and culminates the story with a moment of tragedy) and ku is a short, satisfying conclusion. Many of Berkoff's characters move on quickly after tragedy.

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LECOQ'S SEVEN LEVELS OF TENSION		
I	Exhaustion	Heavy, like a jelly fish.
2	Laid back	No worries, relaxed, on a sunny beach.
3	Neutral	No story, blank.
4	Alert	Curious, lost something, confused.
5	Suspense	Suspicious, cautious.
6	Passionate	Melodramatic, despair.
7	Tragic	Grief, petrified, frozen with fear.

Plays & Productions

East.

West

Messiah: Scenes from a Crucifixion.

The Secret Love Life of Ophelia.

Decadence.

Harry's Christmas.

Massage. Acapulco.

Brighton Beach Scumbags.

One Man.

Shakespeare's Villains.

Requiem for Ground Zero.

Metamorphosis.

The Trial.

The Fall of the House of Usher.

Agamemnon.