

Within Her Eyes

GCSE Dance (8236)

Anthology fact file

Choreographer	As a choreographer James Cousins was recognised by Time Out magazine as one of the future faces of dance, branded 'strikingly original' by The Guardian, called 'a rising star' by the Independent and described by Matthew Bourne as 'one of the UK's most promising choreographic talents'. In 2012, he was the winner of the inaugural New Adventures Choreographer Award, where his work was critically acclaimed as 'outstanding', 'visually breath-taking' and 'spellbindingly beautiful' at a sold out performance at Sadler's Wells, London.
Company	James Cousins company , founded in 2014 by James and Creative Producer Francesca Moseley, is the vehicle through which James explores new ideas with his team of collaborators and tours his critically acclaimed productions throughout the UK and internationally. At the heart of the company is a rich learning and participation programme, driven by James' passion for nurturing and enabling young talent to grow.
Date of first performance	February 2016 (launch of <i>Within Her Eyes</i>) 7th September 2012 (date of first performance of <i>There We Have Been</i>).
Dance style	Contemporary / contact work.
Choreographic approach	The film uses the choreography from Cousins' critically acclaimed stage production <i>There We Have Been</i> and sets it outdoors in a bleak landscape. For the original choreography James worked from two starting points; narrative and emotional themes and the physical idea of keeping the female dancer off the floor. The movement was created in collaboration with the dancers through improvisation, which was all filmed and then learnt back from the video. James then pieced these segments together into a structure that reflected the narrative arc of the story.
Stimulus	For <i>Within Her Eyes</i> , James wanted to create a love story with a twist. Inspired by both personal experiences and well known narratives, Cousins wanted to portray a unique narrative combining themes of love and loss, dependency and loyalty, longing and memory. Rather than a conventional love story where, despite the bumpy road, the characters end up together; Cousins wanted to flip it around to portray a story where, no matter what happened, ultimately they could never be together.
Choreographic intention	The intention behind <i>Within Her Eyes</i> was to create a dance film that maintained the emotional intensity and visceral energy of the live stage performance of <i>There We Have Been</i> and to portray an abstract tragic

	<p>love story that is open for interpretation.</p> <p>The female dancer is constantly reaching, wrapping, balancing and falling on and around the male dancer. The choreography contrasts the folding in to him with the pulling away to highlight the pull she feels to her late lover whilst trying to allow herself to move on with the man who cares so much for her.</p> <p>The male dancer never initiates or manipulates, he merely responds to her every move, devoted to her. He needs her as much as she needs him.</p> <p>The mood is very tender, emotional and somber. Intensity is also achieved by having the dancers perform in complete contact, totally dependent on each other, with the female dancer never once touching the floor throughout the entire duet. This creates a very unique vocabulary and style both physically and emotionally.</p> <p>The duet combines both the impressive physicality with a dark, emotional heart, resulting in a daring and intimate work that both moves audiences emotionally and inspires with its physicality.</p>
Dancers	2 1 male /1 female.
Duration	17 minutes.
Structure	A prologue followed by 6 continuous sections, defined by changing locations, physicality and music that reflect the developing relationship. The overall effect is one seamless journey.
Aural setting	The accompaniment is a composition created specifically for the work, which evolved alongside the choreography, created by composer Seymour Milton in collaboration with James. The music combines electronic elements with strings and piano creating a haunting and emotive accompaniment that blends seamlessly with the choreography, flowing as one.
Costume	<p>Costumes are stylised everyday clothes. The female dancer wears a beige shirt and skirt, the male dancer khaki jumper and jeans. The darkness of his costume contrasted with the lightness of hers adds to the illusion of her just floating on him in the space.</p> <p>The darkness of his costume links him to the earth whereas the lightness of her costume gives her a more ethereal and celestial feel.</p>
Lighting	The film uses only the natural light of the environment. There is a development from daytime to evening into night to show the passage of time of the relationship. The darker setting towards the end of the duet also adds to the intensity and intimacy of the final section.
Performance environment	<p>Site sensitive; dance for camera. Filmed by Scratch.</p> <p>The film is shot and graded to reflect the dark atmosphere of the inspiration. After the prologue the camera starts very far away from the dancers giving the feeling that they are completely isolated and in their own world; the viewer is a secret observer. Gradually as the dancers' relationship grows closer, the camera moves in closer but still keeps distance until the first time the dancers look at each other when it moves right in to close up on their faces.</p> <p>The majority of the film is shot with the camera on a track, giving a very smooth quality. For the penultimate section it switches to a hand held camera giving a much more raw and unstable feeling reflecting the female character's heightened emotional state.</p>

Staging/set	The film is set in remote locations to give the feeling of isolation and highlight the characters separation from society. The locations progress from very open landscapes to more intimate settings to show a passage of time and to reflect their relationship getting more intimate and restricted as it progresses.
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