

Within Her Eyes  
James Cousins Company

CHOREOGRAPHER INFORMATION

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.

BASIC FACTS

* February 2016 (launch of Within Her Eyes) 7th
* September 2012 (date of first performance of There We Have Been).
* Dancers – 2, 1 male 1 female
* Duration – 17 minutes
* Structure: 6 continuous sections defined by changing locations



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.

CHOREOGRAPHIC APPROACH

The film uses the choreography from Cousins’ critically acclaimed stage production There We Have Been 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 Within Her Eyes, 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.

PERFORMANCE ENVIRONMENT

Site sensitive; dance for camera. Filmed by Scratch.

Using different colours, highlight the POINT, EVIDENCE and EXPLANATION in this answer.

**TASK**

Describe and explain a performance environment in Within Her Eyes.

**Explain**

**Evidence**

**Point**

HOW/WHY: Explain yourself to make it clear

WHERE: Give an example from the dance to back up your point

WHAT: Make your point in answer to the question

**Question:** Describe and explain the performance environment in Within Her Eyes.

**Answer:** In the prologue of Within Her Eyes the dancers are set in a deserted street this gives a feeling of loneliness and isolation. There is a graveyard which the dancer walks through it has a large concrete cross ahead of her this could suggest she has lost someone close to her. The sky is overcast and light grey with drizzling rain which creates a blank atmosphere.

**TASK**

Your turn, have a go at this question remember: Make your point, give evidence from the video and explain why or what this might suggest.

**Question:** Describe and explain the physical setting in the first section of the performance of Within Her Eyes by James Cousins.

**Answer:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Focus** | **Description** |
| Prologue | Deserted streets, graveyard, overcast sky and drizzle of rain Colours, grey, white, minimal, black, |
| 1.The Beginning | Two locations, an open vast field where long grass moves in the wind. The hill in the distance becomes second setting. A barren cliff top with uninterrupted views. Colours: green, white, grey |
| 2.Moving Close | A field looking towards a misty valley with hills in the distance.  Colours: green, grey, brown |
| 3.Flow One | A dense forest with shafts of light coming through the trees.  Colours: Dark Green, brown, black |
| 4.Kneeling | A field at dusk with long grass around them. Dancers become silhouettes  Colour: Blue, grey, black |
| 5.Flow Two | Three Locations: A cliff top a quarry and the field which has been seen in previous sections  Colours: Blue, grey, black |
| 6.Floor | Returns to field as seen in ‘Kneeling’, the dancers are in a small clearing.  Colours: White, green, grey, black, blue |

**Describing and Analysing Setting**

On this page we will be looking at how to describe the physical setting and analysing this from Within Her Eyes.

**DESCRIBE:**

**TO SAY WHAT YOU SEE**

**ANALYSE:**

**TO SAY WHAT THE MOVEMENT MEANS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Focus** | **Explanation** |
| Prologue | Deserted streets, graveyard, overcast sky and drizzle of rain suggest a sense of isolation that the girl may have lost someone close to her. Rain and overcast sky leave a feeling of emptiness and create a bleak and blank atmosphere. |
| 1.The Beginning | The environment appears infinite which further reinforces the dancer’s isolation and enhances the lonely mood. The vast space also complements the choreographic intent as the dancers are using as much space as possible between them whilst remaining in contact. |
| 2.Moving Close | The grass in front of the dancers makes the set seem less barren than the cliff top, however it still seems isolated and the mist gives a sombre atmosphere. |
| 3.Flow One | The more enclosed performance suggests the dancers are getting closer and the relationship is getting more intimate. It suggests that time has passed by. |
| 4.Kneeling | The field at dusk contrasts to a previous setting and suggests a more intimate mood. It reinforces the idea that the dancers are getting closer and shutting themselves off from the world. |
| 5.Flow Two | The quarry seems secluded but also a harsh environment which could reflect the tension in the relationship. The locations being mixed together could suggest a play between reality (in the field where they have just been) and an internal struggle (the harsh environment of the quarry) |
| 6.Floor | The setting appears much more intimate as they are surrounded by grass and closer to the floor. This more intimate setting is complemented by the dimmer lighting. |

**Structure**

Watch ‘Within Her Eyes’ and comment on the structure of the piece. There should be 6 parts to the dance. 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.

**TASK**



**Overview**

**Lighting**

**Within Her Eyes was filmed OUTSIDE and uses NATURAL LIGHT. The film was shot in Wales in mostly grey, gloomy weather, which gives it a sombre atmosphere. In post-production the film was given a slightly dark undertone enhancing the mood further.**

**The light gradually fading and becoming darker as the dance progresses reflects the passing of time in the relationship and also adds to the sense of intimacy as the characters become closer towards the end of the piece**

Watch each section carefully comment on what the lighting looks like and describe the colours you can see in each section fill in the table. Then think about what that could mean and analyse the lighting and fill in the table on the next page.

**TASK**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Focus** | **Description** |
| Prologue |  |
| 1.The Beginning |  |
| 2.Moving Close |  |
| 3.Flow One |  |
| 4.Kneeling |  |
| 5.Flow Two |  |
| 6.Floor |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Focus** | **Explanation** |
| Prologue |  |
| 1.The Beginning |  |
| 2.Moving Close |  |
| 3.Flow One |  |
| 4.Kneeling |  |
| 5.Flow Two |  |
| 6.Floor |  |

In the prologue, she wears a jumper over her costume. She wears a light coloured shirt that is thin and delicate and is worn buttoned up to the top.  
This reflects her vulnerable, fragile & conservative character. The light colours link her to the heavens.

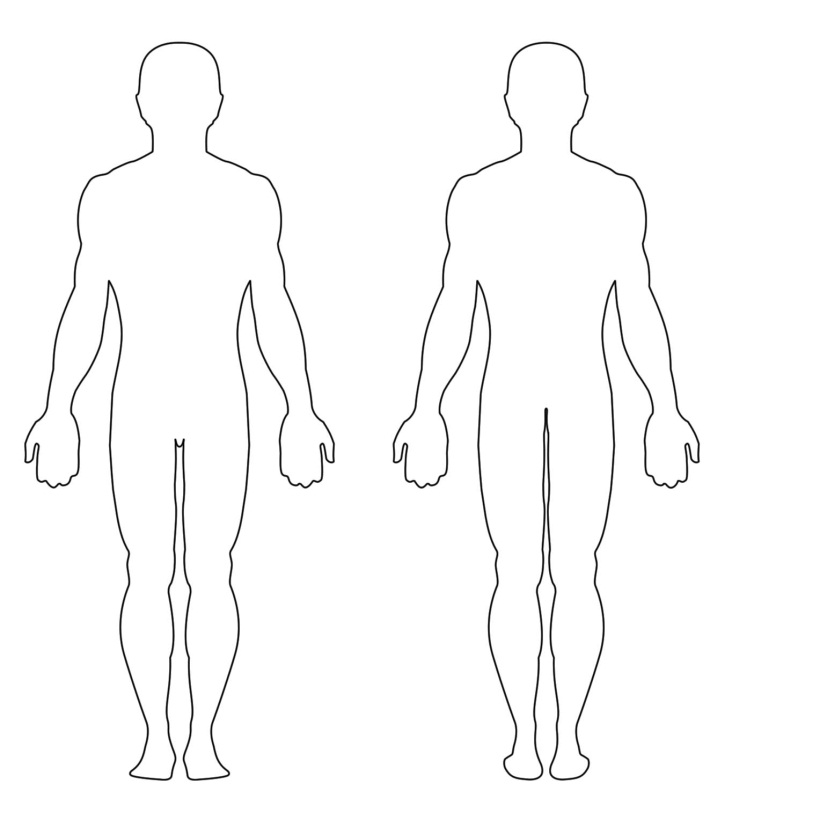
The clothes are easy to move in and allow the movement to be seen clearly.

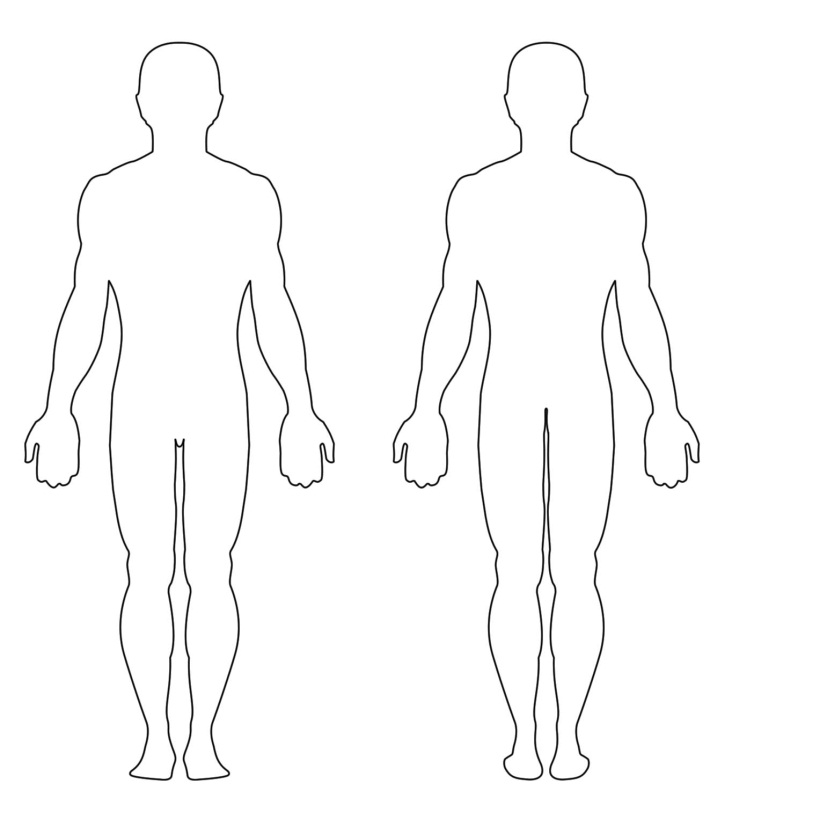
The shirt buttoned to the top suggests she is conservative & reserved.

Draw, colour and label the costumes in Within Her Eyes

**TASK:**

**Costumes**





The male dancer wears dark and earthy colours.

The colours reflect the support & stability he brings to the relationship.

The dark colours link him to the ground.

He wears everyday clothes that help the viewer to see them as people and read into the narrative of the relationship.

The darkness of his costume contrasts with the lightness of hers adding to the sense of her floating on him in the space, especially the floor.

**Accompaniment**

The accompaniment of the work is an original score composed by SEYMOUR MILTON, which fuses electronic and classical sounds. It was created in collaboration with JAMES COUSINS alongside the choreography.

There are two clear halves that reflect the structure of the choreography and the narrative and TWO CLIMAXES that correlate to the end of both FLOW ONE & FLOW TWO.

The accompaniment helps to communicate the dark and sombre atmosphere and adds tension but is also delicate to reflect the fragile relationship. The score uses strings that are very emotive, as well as piano, which gives a fragile and tentative quality

Complete the mind map, listen to the music for James Cousins and describe the instruments used in the different sections.

**TASK:**

Accompaniment

**Question:** Describe and explain the climax in Within Her Eyes

**Answer:**

**Question:** How does the accompaniment communicate a mood and atmosphere in Within Her Eyes?

**Answer:**

**TEST**

1. How many dancers are there in Within Her Eyes? (1)
2. Who is the choreographer? (1)
3. What is the dance about? (2)
4. What was the choreographer’s stimulus? (1)
5. What date was the first performance of Within Her Eyes? (1)
6. What is the name of the company who performs Within Her Eyes? (1)
7. Describe the set/props used in Within Her Eyes (2)
8. Explain the set/props used in Within Her Eyes (2)
9. Describe and Explain a motif from Within Her Eyes(6)
10. What is the style of dance used in Within Your Eyes? (1)
11. Describe and analyse the costume of the dancers (6)
12. How does the accompaniment help communicate the choreographic intent to the audience? (3)
13. What is the accompaniment for Within Her Eyes? (1)
14. Who is the lighting designer? (1)
15. Describe the structure for Within Her Eyes and explain how it communicates the choreographic intent (4)

**Mark /33**

**FEEDBACK**