

# Year 9 Atmosphere: DANCE

## KEY VOCABULARY

### Style of dance - Contemporary

**Contemporary** is a style of dance that tells a story. It is a mix of different dance styles where key qualities are bent knees and strong leg work.

**Choreographic Device** - A method used to develop movement to make it more interesting.

**Unison:** Performing movement at exactly the same time.

**Levels** - The height of the dancer in relation to the floor. For example: sitting on the floor would be low level, kneeling/standing could be middle level and jumping would be a high level.

**Contact** – When dancers physically touch each other during movement and make contact with another performer, usually found in ballroom dancing.

**Canon** – When a group of people perform the same movement but at different times – like a Mexican wave.

**Formation** – The shape in which dancers make in the space.

**Actions** - What a dancer does eg travelling, turning, elevation, gesture, stillness, use of body parts, floor-work and the transference of weight.

**Accumulation** - When a dancer performs a series of movements and others join in at different times until all perform in unison.

**Alignment** - Correct placement of body parts in relation to each other.

**Dynamics** - The qualities of movement based upon variations in speed, strength and flow.

**Flexibility** - The range of movement in the joints (involving muscles, tendons and ligaments).

## CHOREOGRAPHER—CHRISTOPHER BUCE

### Christopher Bruce –

- Born in Leicester
- Worked as dancer, choreographer and artistic director
- Early training: classical, contemporary and popular dance (ballet, tap, acrobatics) aged 11
- He tried different genres of dance... contemporary, ballet, tap, jazz and folk.
- His pieces look at themes and political or social issues.
- He shows this dramatic choreography mixing dance and drama together.

## KEY SKILLS

**Expressive skills** - Aspects that contribute to performance and that engage the audience, such as focus, facial expression and musicality.

**Physical skills** - Aspects that create an effective performance such as posture, stamina, balance, coordination, control, flexibility and strength.

**Artistic Intention** - The aim of a dance; what the choreographer aims to communicate.

**Choreographic approach** - The way in which a choreographer makes the dance.

**Action and reaction** – One dancer makes a movement and then the other dancer creates a movement that somehow 'replies' to the partner's first movement, as if they were giving an answer.

## PROFESIONAL WORK—SWANSONG

### Swansong

- Swansong looks at the story and lives of prisoners in Chile who lived in awful conditions.
- It is a dance showing a victim being tortured by a variety of means.
- It shows the aggressive element of interrogation and how brainwashing, humiliation and playing with emotions may all be part of a long, nerve wracking game.
- Swansong is all about how corrupt the justice system was for prisoners.
- Christopher Bruce uses different popular dance styles to show how sinister the lives were for these prisoners in prison in Chile.
- The interrogators perform tap routines to indicate the questioning of the victim, and to allow him to join in and dance with them. The dance was originally created for three males, but has been performed since with a mix of genders.
- In the dictionary there are two different definitions for 'Swansong': a person's last work or act before death or retirement etc or a song that is said to be sung by a dying swan. (the swan only sings at the point of death).

