A Linha Curva
GCSE 2016-2018
Overview: The chequer-board stage is filled with rhythmic pulses and sexual tension, with irresistible samba-inspired lines and curves, blended with a Brazilian style and contemporary dance technique. This new version for Rambert (2009) by one of Israel’s most talented choreographers was a sensation and a real crowd-pleaser.

Choreographed by Itzik Galili

Lighting plays an integral role, and his interest in the medium led him to design the lighting for most of his works.

Performed by Rambert

Rambert is Britain’s national company for contemporary dance. The company thrives on its unique ability to share the widest range of repertoire: works from our rich heritage as the UK’s oldest dance company. Bold, risk-taking, agile and beautiful, the dancers combine rigorous technique and artistry with an extraordinary ability to challenge and entertain. The company is also renowned for its use of live music and is the only UK-based contemporary dance company always to tour with an orchestra.

Date of Premier


Dance Style

The work is a contemporary dance piece filled with rhythmic pulses and blends samba and capoeira.

- **Samba** - syncopated timing, bounce, rolling hip action and pelvic tilt and a great deal of rhythm is expressed throughout the torso. In a Linha Curva, there is a real freedom within the hips in which they swing across in some of the movement.
motifs. Also, the torso is really able to move freely and a little bit differently, perhaps, to some of the normal techniques that people might use as they’re doing their contemporary classes on a day-to-day basis.

- **Capoeira** - A mixture of Brazilian martial arts and break/ street dance styles. It is highly athletic and powerful but requires a huge amount of balance and stamina.
- **Contemporary Dance** - a mixture of modern dance styles that utilizes floor work, curves, gravity, contractions, tricks, improvisation and gestures that has technical roots in ballet.

### Choreographic Approach

When originally creating *A Linha Curva*, Itzik Galili worked collaboratively with the dancers and nearly all of the motifs were composed from improvisation. One of the tasks set by Galili was quite simple, he asked the dancers to choreograph a very short solo (2 – 3 counts of eight) of some of their favourite moves which stayed within the boundaries of their allocated square within a checkerboard grid (see lighting) that takes up the floor space of the stage. Galili believes that you can see essences of the dancers’ personalities in these sequences. From these individual phrases, he was then able to work with the dancers to create some duet sections. So, the men working with the women to have small duets that are then performed in a series of canon, which are the dancers moving and starting the phrase four counts or two counts after one couple, so it has a ripple effect across the stage. Each of these sequences was named after the dancer who made it and the dancers then learnt each other’s sequences to form the basis of this large ensemble work. One of those solos is actually improvisation and each night that solo will be different, if you were to come and see the show, because the dancer isn’t setting the movement to repeat it every night. They are given that freedom to use improvisation and to really live in the moment on that particular solo.

### Stimulus

*A Linha Curva* means The Curved Line in Portuguese. The stimulus for the work is Brazilian culture. Galili wanted to create a celebration the Brazilian way of life and the ability to live in the moment. *A Linha Curva* is essentially an abstract work. It doesn’t have a particular story that it’s
trying to tell the audience as such. It’s really about looking at how Brazilian men and women might interact with each other. How the men might interact with each other as a group and how they, potentially, might be showing off to each other or competing with each other.

**Choreographic Intention**

The intention behind the choreography is simply to have fun - but there are also a few contradictions, as touched upon in the title. Large ensemble sections of vibrant Brazilian inspired movement are performed in regimental straight lines, creating a sense of samba parade. There are also a number of narrative sections that through the choreography present observations of how Brazilian men communicate with women, for example men in tribes hunting the girls as well as showing off and competing with each other.

**Motif Development**

These individual solo phrases were created by the dancers in Brazil, in the company in Brazil that he created the work on, and they were then taught to all the company dancers. So, every dancer knew a selection of motifs, really, that would become the basis of the work. It then became Itzik’s decision to decide how to fragment (the order) of the motifs and how many times they would be repeated. So, one phrase might join to another phrase, but it might change according to how he wanted the group to develop the work. Also, as well as these, sort of, bank of movement phrases you will see that there are a number of duet phrases that also appear in the work, and you see these happen in a canon formation. So, one couple will start the duet and then another couple will start it four counts later. This creates a ripple effect down the stage. In the first group section you see this happen on a diagonal, and in the final group section you see this happen in a straight line. So different formations but still with a canon of movement happening across the stage
Dancers
28 dancers: 15 male and 13 female

Duration
23 minutes

Structure
Distinct parts to the piece that are made up of big ensemble dance sections interspersed with scenes that have more of a sense of narrative and character. The big ensemble dance sections involve the dancers performing a series of repeated phrases in a number of different formations that are dictated by the grid-like, multi-coloured lighting. The more narrative scenes do not feature the grid lighting effect and it is during these sections that Galili explores the competitive nature of the males and how they relate to the women.

Aural Setting (music/ sound)
The music is written by Percossa, a percussion group based in Holland. The music, which includes vocal sounds, is played live by four percussionists and is influenced by Brazilian samba music. The dancers also contribute to the vocal sounds. A Linha Curva is really inspired by Brazilian life and Brazilian culture. The men and the women are interacting by using their voices; they’re calling out to each other. The men are also interacting with each other and perhaps dancing and initiating another dancer to come into the space and dance. You can hear a berimbau (instrument), which is used in Capoeira classes.

Costume
Designed by Itzik Galili. Male and female dancers both wear black vests with different coloured Lycra shorts. The zips on the black bests go in different directions for each dancer. The colours are carnival inspired and enhance the impact of the lighting. The shorts are made out of wet look. Lycra and come in ten different colours. This uniform look adds to the feeling of equality in the ensemble sections. The men wear metallic disc-shaped collars that reflect the light for the opening of the dance.

Tip: If you get a question saying: “Describe the costume for A Linha Curva”, don’t simply state the items of clothing e.g. shorts, tops; this is not a description! You get marks for listing: colour, texture, size, material or pattern so make sure you practice this!

**Lighting**

Designed by Itzik Galili. The different coloured and timed lighting creates a Chequer-board effect on stage and defines the lines and spacing for the dancers in large ensemble sections of the piece. The timing and cues for the lighting is pre-programmed and so in a way dictates the speed and pace of the dancing and music.

“The lights are changing in formation throughout the work and the dancers, really, are being dictated where to move in the space by the change of the lights in the space. It’s like the lights are pulling the dancers into their next space, in order to do their next set of movements. I think this really gives an essence of a samba parade”. 
Top tip: you get marks for stating the lights intensity, colour, direction, type of light e.g. spotlight and patterns (if applicable).

Performance Environment

End Stage

This is where the audience is facing one direction. The stage is usually square or rectangular.

Staging/ Set

There is no set apart from a raised platform at the back of the stage upon which 4 percussionists perform. In one section skateboards are used to propel 5 dancers across the stage on their backs.

Section 1: Carnival # 1

Space

- Female dancers are on a linear pathway towards DS facing DS.
- Travel bit by bit towards US as a new linear path of light is added. Eventually, the whole stage is lit with light. The dancers then perform their routine from downstage, to upstage, to downstage to US. This is when a singular spotlight shines on one central dancer to create a solo.
- Generally the females dance facing DS or US whereas the males usually face SL, SR or DS.
- The males enter from SR in a linear line that goes from DS to US. They are facing SL. The solo dancer continues to dance US in the center.
The routines are both mainly danced on a medium level. However, the females use floor work when they go into a straddle and when they lie on their front as swipe the floor sharply as they roll onto their back. There are also some dancers who occasionally jump.

Dynamics - Sharp, strong, accented, rebounded, fluid, released, free-flow, regimented, aggressive

Relationships

Dancer to dancer - Unison, accumulation, solo, men vs women, canon amongst the male dancers.

Costume to light - during the introduction, the collars of the dancers reflect light. When the male dancers make loud squawking noises, their collars bounce slightly on their collar bones and create flashes of light.

Dancer to light - dancers are only to dance in the beams of light. These are linear and build in size in the female’s routine until the whole stage is filled, allowing dancers to use the whole space. Similarly, when the males dance the stage fills with light from right to left which allows more dancers to join in during the canon.

Actions - swipe, plie in second position, thrusts, swinging of the arms, tilts, leaning to the side, shimmy, circling the arms, ripples of the torso, shifting weight, isolations of the shoulders, clapping, lunge, turn, spins, flapping hands, shaking hands, undulations of the pelvis whilst walking in a plie, squat/ crouch, contractions, jump, scoop, lift, splits (during a lift), fouette a la seconde.

Top tip: when writing motifs, it’s important that you stick to a formula. Each sentence should include one action, one dynamic and one spatial element. The first sentence below is an example:
Motif 1: arms **swing above head** in parallel and then **suddenly** rebounds to swing in front of the body. The hands circle in front of the torso (bending from the elbow) and swing above the head with right hand holding the left wrist. Throughout the motif, the dancer shifts his/her weight from one foot to another using pulsating/ accented dynamics.

Motif 2: Heavily walking forwards in a deep plie with undulated hips and spine.

- **Variations/ embellishments of motif 2:**
  - Hands on hips/ in the small of the back whilst swinging shoulders in time with the foot steps. They perform two steps of the motif then quickly perform one small hip circle and one torso roll.
  - The females shimmy with their arms out to the side and looking up to the ceiling.
  - Men isolate their shoulders up and down as they enter from stage right (during the female solo).
  - The females brush their arms from right to left

The male motif (motif 3)

- Facing stage left, perform 4 grounded walks in a deep second plié with alternating isolated shoulders (up and down)
  - The left arm lifts to a 90 degree bend, the right hand hits the left
  - The right arm swings out to the right (towards DS)
  - Swing both arms clockwise in parallel and over the head until the left arm is hooked/ hanging over the head.
– However the right arm continues to swing clockwise until the right hand can be placed on top the left hand

– In one swift action, explode hands up into a high V, drop both hands down and clap in front of the pelvis before placing both hands in the small of your back

– perform a 3/4 spin to face DS (ensure supporting leg is bent and the working leg is straight and tracing a circle on the floor)

– with cupped hands, point to your sternum

– drop the right hand then the left, clap twice, place hands in the small of your back

– 3 walks with alternating/isolating shoulders (forwards and backwards), one hip circle, one torso roll

– Lean over the left leg towards stage left (right leg is inverted and the left leg is straight)

– similar to a turning pas de bouree (cross feet towards SL, step to SL, step towards DS) to finish facing US in a lunge (with both hands reaching towards US)

– flap hands in parallel frantically to stand

– circle the left hand backwards 3/4 to finish with the arm extended in front of your chest

– 2 body ripples (head to pelvis)
– right hand touches right shoulder as the elbow circles over

– repeat with the left – end flopped over in a tabletop position

– slowly roll up the spine into a high release looking up

Section 2: Berimbau (female solo - 07:12)

Actions - reach, lunge, head-stand, squat, look, pull, parallel, demi-plie, back bend, stroke torso, rise, 3rd position, fan arm, lie on back

Dynamics - sustained, controlled, gradual

Space

● starts with one soloist; turns into a duet; turns into a trio; turns into a quartet; turns into an ensemble that eventually results in 7 dancers being on stage. All dancers are confined to a square of light which they never leave until the section has finished.

● 4 of the 7 dancers are on a diagonal pathway from DSR to USL; 2 dancers are on a diagonal pathway parallel to the other 4 dancers in the DSL corner

● The remaining dancer is on her own in the USR corner

● The routine starts and finishes facing DSL and the phrase constantly changes direction in an anti-clockwise circular pathway. The routine is performed on a medium level and mostly uses vertical planes and occasionally horizontal planes (during reaches and lunges).

● 5 dancers travel from SL to SR whilst on their back (low level) using a skateboard

Relationships

● Dancer to dancer
○ Solo, duet, trio, quartet, ensemble
○ Accumulation
○ Solos within a group (everyone performs a fragmented piece of the phrase on their own to create several mini-solos). However, some dancers make eye contact and perform a duet amongst the other solos
○ Eye contact
  ● Dancer to light
    ○ Each dancer remains in their square of light. The light dictates their placement, entrance and exit.
    ○ The dancers lying on their back are only revealed by passing through the light, almost in a flash of the eye.
  ● Dancer to physical setting
    ○ Several dancers enter from SR-SL creating a clear entrance and exit
  ● Dancer to music
    ○ During the accumulation/ensemble, all of the dancers danced in mutual co-existence with the music. They were both slow and sustained without a particular beat or pace but they complimented each other’s qualities.
    ○ Towards the end of the section, the accompaniment makes a series of vocal chants such as the sound of sharp breath, ‘zoom’ ‘duum’ etc. This signals the next section as the dynamics start to increase, solo dancers jump in time with the chants and the lighting patterns change to enable dancers to exit the stage subtly.

Section 3: Showing Off (07:12-09:45)

Motif 1: Rhythmically jump and thrust the pelvis forward into a grounded plié with hands behind the back before jumping the feet together and placing the hands in front of the knees. Perform this repetitively. This is developed by adding a pike jump or a ‘C jump’ when the men
shout ‘Hey, hey, hey!”. By leading with the pelvis, it certainly gives off the sense that they are showing off and flirting with the female

- This motif travels from upstage left to centre stage; it then travels backwards towards upstage right. The motif is performed facing the female soloist.

Motif 2: Walking smoothly whilst hunched over; their palms are resting on their thighs. It has a real ‘pack’ aesthetic.

- This motif is developed using embellishment. One man at a time maintains the hunchback position whilst another dancer jumps on/ off his back. The last man jumps over all the males potentially to show that he is the superior male or simply to break up the repetitive nature of the choreography.

Meanwhile the female is growing in confidence and is now starting to show off by performing increasingly technical movements such as curved arm lines whilst standing in retiré, wafting hand gestures, grande battements (high leg kicks), pirouettes into tilts, grande jété (split leap), assemblés.

Motif 3: Female motif:

- 4 walks with the right arm wafting in front and away from the body at hip height
- 2 steps into retiré as the right hand lifts up diagonally near her head
- She contracts with her leg still in retiré as she scoops/ ripples her arm towards DSL on a low diagonal.
- 2 steps with her hands behind her back
- 2 hops with the left leg straight and elevated off the floor
- The third hop lifts her into a grande jété facing stage right
- Lands the leap, hop once into croixé (right leg crossed and both hands are behind her back)
- Hop and swing the right leg towards stage left.
- Spin with a straight left leg as hands stroke the back of her head; land in a lunge in 4th position.
- Spin by closing the back leg to the front leg into 5th position
- Picqué the left foot as the hands lift into 5th position
- Forcefully drop the hands down to perform a side tilt.
- Land, chassé towards DSR, assemblé to face SR, chassé towards USL
- Leap into a roll to stand
- Look at the men once standing, perform a contraction whilst looking at the audience and lifting up her knee in parallel.
- Repeat facing the opposite direction

Section 4: Carnival 2 (initiated by the girls) - The best section to use when discussing space or repetition of motifs

Light - initially, there are just two parcans along the SL curtain shining downwards towards centre stage. No colour is used. Coloured lights are introduced once the motifs are developed into full unison. Diagonal and vertical lines are created to dictate placement.

Actions/ Motifs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motif</th>
<th>Motif Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The girls swing their lower arms in front of their pelvis as they walk in a deep bouncy plie</td>
<td>Direction: Usually the motif is performed facing DS but they develop this to travel and face SL Unison - The motif is performed in unison in small numbers but at one point all of the dancers do the motif together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The girls flap their hands above their heads</td>
<td>Pathway: The motif is developed into a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in parallel as they run towards US.</td>
<td>small circular pathway to help the dancer change direction and perform the motif above. Unison - The motif is usually performed by a small number of dancers but it is developed so that all of the dancers perform the motif running towards US.</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Motif from section 1</td>
<td>Repetition - dancers perform this in a linear formation US facing DS. Travel - Everytime they perform the motif, it travels from US towards DS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 2 movements and section 1 movements</td>
<td>Repetition - Three linear formations repeat the slow, sustained, controlled movements from Section 2. Once they have finished this phrase, they then repeat section 1.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Space**

- Centre stage
- Circular pathways
- Linear pathways
- 3 large linear formations facing DS - one towards SL, one centre stage, one towards SR.
- One linear formation running along the back of the stage from SL to SR.
- Proximity - equidistant spacing between the 3 linear lines, even when the space reduces in size between them to make a square-like formation/ cluster. They then exit via SL
- Dancers enter from SL towards SR; simultaneously, there is a linear formation traveling from DS towards US. They meet in the middle to create a cross-roads formation. As they pass eachother, another linear formation enters the stage to make a ‘H’ formation.
The second linear pathway detailed above, drops people off one at a time in order to create a diagonal formation from USL to DSR.

Dynamics

- Strong, energetic, masculine, accented, aggressive, bouncy vs sustained, controlled, soft, gentle.

Relationships

- Unison
- Contrast
- Canon
- Group 1 vs group 2

Section 5: Dance battles (solo/duet/group)

Actions/relationships

- 2 soloists - ripple, clapping, punching, spinning, jazz split, jump onto the shoulders of their duet partner to make them fall backwards into a bridge. These solos (ending in a duet lift) signals the start of the new section. The soloists are essentially having a dance battle to show which one is better.

- Solo vs group - The soloist appears to be showing off more technical styles of dance such as contemporary which is heavily underpinned by ballet and jazz technique. Actions include: plie, jazz split, retire, develope, arabesque, attitude turns, balance and pirouettes. The group generally use pedestrian movements such as walking, pushing, cheering, taunting.
● There is also evidence of capoeira in this section through the use of gingas, balanca, Au (cartwheels) and quiexada. A coffee grinder is also used from break dance which is also a stylistic feature of capoiera. - These are representative of the stimuli (Brazilian culture).

● Improvisation/ freestyle - strutting, illusions, spins and lift. The group of heckling men push one man out into the centre of the stage to join the other soloist where he makes up a camp and almost comical solo to undermine his dance opponent. Once his opponent exits the stage, he replicates from of the more technical moves demonstrated earlier in the section (contemporary dance)

● Duet - fouette a la second whilst his partner duck and tuck jumps under and over his leg.

Space - the heckling group of ‘lads’ usually remain in the corners walking to and from USL and USR. The dancers ‘showing off their skills’ usually remain centre stage. All three levels are used in these routines.

Light - white side lights from both wings; a square is projected centre stage from above; silhouettes are created by the lack of DS light - this shows people dancing into the night; 2 white parcan lights emerge from the ceiling along the SL curtain.

Section 6: Carnival 3

Actions:

● Repeat movements from section 1
● Repeat motif 1
● Repeat the mens motif
● Repeat flapping motif
● Repeat section 2 motif
- Strutting (like on a catwalk)
- Chants
- Kicking and jumping

Relationships - canon, unison

Space/ light
Revision checklist

● Can I name the type of stage used?
● Can I explain the choreographic approach used?
  ○ Can I state 2 motifs that show the theme/stimulus using action, space and dynamics?
  ○ What structure was used to create this piece?
  ○ What choreographic devices were used?
    ■ Motifs, motif developments, repetition, contrast, highlights, climax, manipulation of number, unison and canon
● Can I explain what the choreographic intent was behind the piece?
● Can I describe the set/staging referring to colour, features on stage and shape?
● Can I describe the lighting referring to colour, angles, direction, intensity and placement?
● Can I discuss the set, costumes and/or costume’s use or function?
● Can I describe costume referring to colour, material, texture, flow, shape, fit, weight?
● Can I state the costume’s purpose?
● Can I state how many dancers there are and their gender?
● Can I describe the aural setting referring to the song used, instruments used, spoken word, pitch, rhythm, silence, natural sound, body percussion, style structure etc?
● Can I state the similarities and differences between the characteristics listed above with other works in the anthology?
● Can I explain how the characteristics above help the audiences understanding of the work?
● Can I explain how the relationships between the choreography and production features work together to enhance the audience’s understanding of the work?
● Can I explain the purposes or significance of the performance environment?