**Contemporary British Theatre: New Trends**

**2017/18**

**Task 3**

***Europe* (1994) and *The Events* (2013)**

Please remember you may write 350 words max. per question, in the box provided.

Please type your answers in Times New Roman 12 and use double spacing.

Plagiarism is unacceptable and will lead to automatic failure.

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| Student’s Space |  |
| Name and surname(s) |  |
| Date |  |
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**Question 1**

In “Performing Europe: Identity Formation for a ‘New’ Europe”, Janelle Reinelt argues that David Greig, like David Edgar, is also “a wordsmith” but of a “totally different register: Edgar argues a case; Greig implies an image” (p. 383). What is the central image in *Europe* and how does it ‘work’? In order to answer this question, please trace the references to this central image throughout the play.

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| Answer |

**Question 2**

Bearing in mind that *Europe* was written in the wake of the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989) and in the midst of the Bosnian War (1992-1995), what visions of Europe are inscribed in the play? How do scenes 19 (“Wolves”) and 20 (“Europe”) work in this respect? What about scenes 6 (“A Quiet Talk”) and 13 (“Community Issues”)?

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| Answer |

**Question 3**

Please read the reviews of the 2007 revival of *Europe* and extract from them (a) the reviewers’ comments on the topical relevance of the revival to the UK/Europe/the world in 2007, and (b) their observations on the interplay between realistic/naturalistic and poetic/expressionistic elements in the production. In connection with (b), what do you think is the function and significance of scenes 2 (“The First Chorus”) and 9 (“The Second Chorus”), as well as of Berlin’s address to the audience at the end of the play?

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| Answer |

**Question 4**

Marc Augé defines ‘non-places’ as “space[s] which cannot be defined as relational, or historical, or concerned with identity” (63), including, in his view, hotels, supermarkets and transit spaces such as airports or train stations among others. In the light of this and of Fiona Wilkie’s discussion of travel and mobility, how would you say the motifs of place/space, travel and mobility work in *Europe*?

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| Answer |

**Question 5**

In *The Events*, what do you think is the significance of the epigraph, “This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine” (from Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*)? How does it link *The Events* back to *Europe*?

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| Answer |

**Question 6**

Drawing on Jacques Rancière’s notion of ‘dissensus’, Clare Wallace has argued that Greig’s theatre displaces the conventions of dramatic conflict and its resolution through an emphasis on forms of dissonance (see 2016: 34). Do you think this description applies to *The Events* and, if so, in what ways?

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| Answer |

**Question 7**

The Boy puts any naturalistic assumption of unified character under considerable strain. How so, and what is the significance of this, in your view? As you answer this question, please try and suggests possible reasons why, in your view, two non-white actors were chosen to play the role in the first production at the Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh in 2013 (Rudi Dharmalingam) and in the 2014 tour production (Clifford Samuel).

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| Answer |

**Question 8**

In his online manifesto *2083: A European Declaration of Independence*, Anders Breivik justified the massacre he perpetrated in Oslo and on Utøya on 22 July 2011 by claiming that his victims (69 members of the youth division of the Norwegian Labour Party in the case of Utøya) represented multiculturalism, an “anti-European hate ideology […] that facilitates Islamization and Islamic demographic warfare”. Kenan Malik notes that Breivik is just a particularly extreme manifestation of “the belief that multiculturalism is undermining Western civilization” (3), which currently finds widespread hearing in Europe. What evidence does Malik’s essay provide for this? And how does his discussion of multiculturalism and its discontents resonate with *The Events*?

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| Answer |

**Question 9**

Each performance of *The Events* includes a local community choir. What do you think is the significance of this? Generally, what is the role of the Choir in *The Events*? Listening to the brief conversation between John Browne, composer, and Ramin Gray, director of the ATC’s premiere production of the play, might give you some ideas to start with (scene 15 at bottom of http://www.atctheatre.com/productions/the-events). Two other interesting places to go are https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yEz0J3fIMrA (*The Events* at the Southbank Centre, London) and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PsBCR1d\_OmU&list=PL-ieBTWRUfslRH6li\_ jfxD0cCIgRzJm\_k&index=5 (actor Rudi Dharmalingam, The Boy, discussing choirs).

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| Answer |

**Question 10**

In *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, Derrida suggests that, paradoxically, the concept of forgiveness is bound to the unforgivable: “Is [the unforgivable] not, in truth, the only thing to forgive? The only thing that calls for forgiveness? If one is only prepared to forgive what appears forgivable […] then the very idea of forgiveness would disappear. If there is something to forgive, it would be what in religious language is called mortal sin, the worst, the unforgivable crime or harm. From which comes the aporia, which can be described in its dry and implacable formality, without mercy: forgiveness forgives only the unforgivable. […] That is to say that forgiveness must announce itself as impossibility itself. It can only be possible in doing the impossible” (32-33). How does this resonate with *The Events*, particularly with the play’s final moments, when Claire invites “everyone”, spectators included, to join the Choir?

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| Answer |

**Question 11**

How does Jill Dolan’s discussion of ‘utopian performatives’ and of the concept of ‘utopia’ itself resonate with *Europe* and *The Events*?

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| Answer |

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| Works Cited  Please follow the format used in the list below |

**Selected Further Reading**

Abrams, Anna 2016: “Solidarity and Moral Imagination in David Greig’s *The Events*: Ethics in Conversation with Performance”. *Contemporary Theatre Review* Special Issue on David Greig 26.1: 82-87.

Bolton, Jacqueline and Janes Hudson 2016: “Introduction”. *Contemporary Theatre Review* Special Issue on David Greig. 26.1: 3-8.

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--- *Front Step*. <http://www.front-step.co.uk/>.

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--- 2016: “Local Hero: The Places of David Greig”. *Contemporary Theatre Review* Special Issue on David Greig. 26.1: 9-18.

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Robson, Mark 2016: “David Greig’s Other Heading”. *Contemporary Theatre Review* Special Issue on David Greig. 26.1: 39-48.

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Rodríguez, Verónica 2016: “Zāhir and Bātin: An Interview with David Greig”. *Contemporary Theatre Review* Special Issue on David Greig. 26.1: 88-96.

Soncini, Sara 2007: “New Order, New Borders: Post-Cold War Europe on the British Stage”. *Myths of Europe*. Eds. Richard Littlejohns and Sara Soncini. Amsterdam/New York: Rodopi. 247-61.

Svich, Caridad 2007: “Physical Poetry: David Greig in conversation with Caridad Svich”. *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art* 29.2: 51-58.

Titley, Gavan 2013: “They Called a War, and Someone Came: The Communicative Politics of Breivik’s Ideoscape”. *Nordic Journal of Migration Research* 3.4: 216-24.

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Reviews of *Europe* 1994: *Theatre Record* 14: 1302.

Reviews of *Europe* 2007: *Theatre Record* 27.6: 322-25.

Reviews of *The Events* 2013: *Theatre Record* 33.21: 956-59.