Bunjil Place



Dance Education Resource
Years 7–10

AGITATO

Choreography by Jo Lloyd

"In making Agitato, I considered Fanny Mendelssohn's experience as a woman composer and pianist, the work looks at history in terms of female authorship and representation in the early 1088's and now. It considers how this particular piece of music (Allegro molto agitato in D Minor' 1823), is expressive of her rigour, motivation and what she was expressing as a young teenage composer before being told she should not play/ perform or produce her music and her role was in the home."

Jo Lloyd

Years 7–8:

Exploring and Responding — AC9ADA8E01
Investigate ways that dance works, performers and/or choreographers across cultures, times, places and/or other contexts use the elements of dance, choreographic devices and/or production elements to communicate ideas, perspectives and/or meaning.

Developing practices and skills — AC9ADA8D02
Reflect on own and others' dance works and/or practices to inform choreographic choices and use of technical and expressive skills

Creating and Making— AC9ADA8C01
Choreograph dance by selecting and manipulating elements of dance and choreographic devices to communicate ideas, perspectives and/or meaning

General Capabilities - Critical and Creative Thinking
Create possibilities, put ideas into action, interpret concepts and problems, draw conclusions and provide reasons, evaluate actions and outcomes.

Years 9–10

Exploring and Responding — AC9ADA10E01
Students investigate how choreographers use the elements of dance, choreographic devices, techniques and production elements to communicate and/or challenge ideas, perspectives and meaning.

Developing practices and skills — AC9ADA10D02
Reflect on own and others' use of the elements of dance, choreographic devices, structure, genre- or style-specific techniques and/or technical and expressive skills to inform their choreographic or performance choices

Creating and making — AC9ADA10C01
Choreograph dance that communicates ideas, perspectives and/or meaning by selecting and manipulating elements of dance, choreographic devices and/or structure

General Capabilities — Critical and Creative Thinking
Create possibilities, put ideas into action, interpret concepts and problems, draw conclusions and provide reasons, evaluate actions and outcomes.

Cover image: Jo Lloyd, photo by Peter Rosetzky

Years 7–8:

Explore and Express Ideas
Use safe dance practice, elements of dance, body actions and improvisations to explore ways of making literal movements into abstract movements **(VCADAE033)**

Develop their choreographic intent by applying the elements of dance to select and organise movement **(VCADAE034)**

Dance Practices
Structure dances using choreographic devices and form **(VCADAD036)**

Present and Perform
Rehearse and perform focusing on technical and expressive skills appropriate to style and/or choreographic intent **(VCADAP037)**

Respond and Interpret
Analyse how choreographers use elements of dance and production elements to communicate intent **(VCADAR038)**

Years 9–10

Explore and Express Ideas
Explore personal movement style by combining elements of dance and using improvisation and safe dance practice to develop new movement possibilities **(VCADAE040)**

Manipulate combinations of the elements of dance and choreographic devices to communicate their choreographic intent **(VCADAE041)**

Dance Practices
Structure dances using movement motifs, choreographic devices and form **(VCADAD043)**

Present and Perform
Perform dances using genre-and style specific techniques, expressive skills and productions elements to communicate a choreographer's intent **(VCADAP044)**

Respond and Interpret
Evaluate their own choreography and performance, and that of others, to inform and refine future work **(VCADAR045)**

Cover image: Jo Lloyd, photo by Peter Rosetzky

CONTENTS

6. Meet the Choreographer —
Jo Lloyd

7. Meet the Work —
Agitato

8. The Story Behind the Sound —
Fanny Mendelssohn

9. Watch Like a Choreographer —
Elements of Dance

15. Choreographic Devices —
Repetition, Contrast, Augmentation

18. Production Elements —
Costume, Lighting, Space and Sound

20. Create Your Own —
From Music to Movement

22. Final Reflection

24. Key Vocabulary

1. MEET THE CHOREOGRAPHER — JO LLOYD

Who is Jo Lloyd?

Jo Lloyd is a dance artist based in Melbourne/Naarm. She is an award-winning choreographer and performer whose practice explores choreography as a social encounter, revealing behaviour across different durations and contexts.

Her practice seeks to find a movement language that refuses the limits of history, form and aesthetic.

A graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts, Lloyd has performed and toured nationally and internationally with artists and companies including Chunky Move, Shelley Lasica and Sandra Parker.

She is a Sidney Myer Fellowship recipient and has presented and performed her work in galleries, theatres and festivals.

Her work has been commissioned, supported or presented by organisations including:

- New Zealand Dance Company
- Nibroll Japan
- RISING
- Chunky Move
- ACCA
- Keri Choreographic Award
- Dancenorth
- Tasdance
- Liveworks
- Bundanon
- National Gallery of Australia
- National Gallery of Victoria

Her major works include:

- *LIVE JUNK*
- *Agitato*
- *Post Hoc*
- *FM Air*
- *Out of Theatre*
- *Handsome*
- *Death Role*
- *Archive the archive*
- *OVERTURE*

Since 2022, Lloyd has been in residence at the Abbotsford Convent, running Studio 24 with Michaela Coventry.

Think like a choreographer

A choreographer does not simply "make up dance steps".

A choreographer makes choices about:

movement + space + time + energy + dancers + relationships + sound + structure + production elements + audience experience

Student question

What do you think a choreographer needs to consider when creating a dance work?

Sentence starters

- A choreographer needs to consider...
- One important choreographic decision is...
- Choreographers can communicate ideas through...
- Jo Lloyd's interest in _____ may influence her choreography because...

Creative team

Choreographer: Jo Lloyd

Dancers: Rebecca Jensen, Jo Lloyd, Louie Wisby, Thomas Woodman

Composer: Duane Morrison

Costume Designer: Andrew Treloar

Lighting Designer: Shiv Geaney

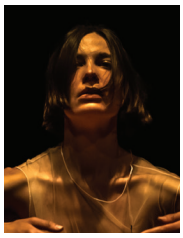
Dramaturg: Anny Mokotow

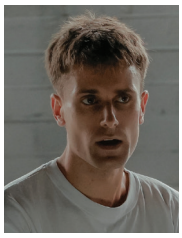
Dancers in original production: Harrison Ritchie-Jones, Lee Serle

Producer of original production: Michaela Coventry — Sage Arts


JO LLOYD


REBECCA JENSEN


LOUIE WISBY


THOMAS WOODMAN


DUANE MORRISON


SHIV GEANEY


ANDREW TRELOAR


ANNY MOKOTOW

What is *Agitato*?

Agitato is an encounter with Fanny Mendelssohn's largely unknown; 'Allegro molto agitato in D Minor' (1823), that she described as a 'virtuosic whirlwind', a small jewel buried in the truncated past of a musical career obscured by conventions.

Delivering a corporeal rather than a historical reflection on the music, Agitato uses every piano key in the manuscript as choreographic control in the agitated space. Its form becomes a whirlwind of confrontation between Fanny's perfection in musicality and Lloyd's impulse to provide a counterbalance that tackles formalism. Lloyd's choreography is rich with sustained hesitation and restraint, set within a chaotic undercurrent. Agitato is an understanding between centuries, from one to another across time.

A useful way to think about the work

Agitato is a contemporary dance work inspired by Fanny Mendelssohn's ***Allegro molto agitato in D minor*** (1823).

The work does not attempt to recreate Fanny Mendelssohn's life or tell her story literally.

Instead, Jo Lloyd creates a physical/ corporeal* response to the music.

The music becomes a stimulus for movement.

1823
Fanny Mendelssohn creates the musical composition.

↓

More than 200 years later
Jo Lloyd encounters the music.

↓

Contemporary choreography
Lloyd transforms the music through bodies, movement, space, sound and performance while "tackling formalism" Jo Lloyd.

3. THE STORY BEHIND THE SOUND — FANNY MENDELSSOHN

Fanny Mendelssohn's Allegro molto agitato in D minor was composed in 1823. The composition provides the musical foundation for Jo Lloyd's *Agitato*.

Rather than creating a historical retelling of Fanny Mendelssohn's life, Lloyd responds to the music physically. The choreography can be understood as a corporeal rather than historical reflection on Mendelssohn's composition.

In other words, Lloyd asks:

What happens when music is experienced through the body rather than simply heard?

The music becomes something that can be:

- felt
- disrupted
- repeated
- stretched
- contracted
- fragmented
- translated into movement
- physically experienced.

From Musical Structure to Physical Movement

Mendelssohn's composition has a strong sense of musicality, structure and form. Lloyd does not simply reproduce this structure through dance. Instead, she creates a physical response that both connects with and pushes against the music.

The *Agitato* creative material describes the work as:

"a whirlwind of confrontation between Fanny's perfection in musicality and Lloyd's impulse to provide a counterbalance that tackles formalism."

This idea of confrontation is important. Throughout the work, we can observe moments of structure and control alongside disruption, chaos and unpredictability.

Key Idea

What does music look like when it is translated into the body?

This is an important question for students throughout the resource.



Photo by Darren Gill

4. WATCH LIKE A CHOREOGRAPHER — ELEMENTS OF DANCE

EXPLORING AND RESPONDING

WATCH → IDENTIFY → DESCRIBE → EXPLAIN

For Years 7–8, students should first learn to notice what they are seeing before attempting to interpret it.

For Years 9–10, students can move from observation towards analysis and interpretation.

SPACE

When watching *Agitato*, students can look for:

- dimension
- levels
- direction
- pathways
- proximity
- personal space
- spatial relationships between dancers.

What can we see in *Agitato*?

The choreography frequently uses a medium to large dimension.

The dancers quickly occupy and command the performance space.

There are frequent changes of:

- direction
- pathway
- level
- proximity (the state of being near or close to someone or something in space, time, or relationship).
- spatial focus.

We see:

- diagonal pathways
- circular pathways
- side-to-side movement
- forward and backward movement
- dancers travelling around one another.

The shapes are often:

- angular
- curved
- extended
- asymmetrical.

Levels

Medium and high levels are particularly noticeable.

There is comparatively little low-level floor work during the early sections.

This makes the moments when dancers eventually descend towards the floor more noticeable.

Sample answer — Year 7–8

Jo Lloyd uses a large dimension of space in Agitato. The dancers travel across the stage using diagonal, circular and changing pathways. They also use medium and high levels. This makes the movement appear expansive and allows the dancers to create a strong physical presence.

Year 9–10 sample answer

Lloyd's use of large spatial dimensions creates a sense of constant physical momentum. The dancers frequently change direction and travel through diagonal and circular pathways, preventing the space from appearing static. The limited use of low levels early in the work also makes later descents towards the floor more visually significant.

Sentence starters

Identify

- I noticed that the dancers…
- The dancers use…
- A noticeable spatial feature is…

Describe

- The dancers move through the space by…
- The pathways are…
- The dancers primarily use…

Explain

- This creates…
- This draws the audience's attention to…
- The effect of this spatial choice is…

Analyse

- Lloyd manipulates space by…
- The change from _____ to _____ creates…
- The contrast between _____ and _____ may suggest…

TIME

Students can investigate:

- Speed- fast or slow
- Sudden
- Duration- long or short
- Accents
- acceleration
- deceleration
- rhythm
- pauses
- stillness

What can we see?

The choreography frequently moves between:

fast → slow
slow → fast
movement → stillness
silence → sound
acceleration → pause

There are moments where the dancers appear to accelerate with the music.

At other times the movement seems to deliberately contrast the musical timing.

Why are the pauses important?

The sudden moments of stillness and silence interrupt the movement.

They allow the audience to:

- reset
- notice the next movement
- experience contrast
- anticipate what will happen next.

Sample answer

Jo Lloyd uses changes in time to create contrast and keep the audience engaged. The dancers move between fast and slow speeds, with some sections accelerating and building in intensity before suddenly changing to stillness or a pause. At other times, the dancers' timing contrasts with the music instead of simply following its rhythm. The changes from fast movement to stillness make the transitions feel sudden and draw the audience's attention to the next movement. The pauses also give the audience a moment to reset before the movement begins again.

Sentence starters

- The timing changes when...
- The dancers accelerate as...
- The sudden stillness...
- The contrast between fast and slow...
- The pause creates...
- By interrupting the movement with stillness, Lloyd...

ENERGY

Energy is one of the most significant elements in *Agitato*. The dancers respond to the intensity, accents, rhythm and changing qualities of the music, translating what we hear into physical energy.

Students may identify:

Percussive

Movement appears to strike or punctuate the space, responding to the strong accents in the music.

Forceful

The dancers use significant physical effort, matching the intensity of the music.

Swinging

Movement is carried by momentum, creating a sense of continuous motion.

Collapsing

The body releases or gives way, creating a contrast to stronger, more controlled movement.

Bound

Energy appears controlled or contained, creating tension within the body.

Sustained

Movement continues with controlled flow, allowing the dancers to stretch out the musical ideas.

Vibratory

Small, rapid or trembling movements create a physical response to moments of heightened musical energy.

Throwing

The body or body parts appear to be propelled through space, creating a sense of release and momentum.

Energy changes throughout the work

At the beginning, the dancers respond to the strong accents and intensity of Mendelssohn's music with forceful, percussive and athletic movement. Their angular shapes, sharp accents and powerful energy create a strong physical response to the music.

As the music changes, so does the energy of the dancers. We see shifts towards swinging, flowing, sustained and softer qualities, followed by moments of collapsing and release. These changes create a contrast between the intensity of the music and moments of restraint.

The energy then builds again as the music accelerates, with the dancers returning to strong, forceful and percussive movement.

Sample answer

The energy in Agitato changes in response to the changing qualities of the music. At the beginning, the dancers use strong, percussive and forceful energy to respond to the accents and intensity of Mendelssohn's music. As the music changes, the movement becomes more swinging, sustained and flowing before shifting again into stronger and more forceful movement. These changes create contrast and give the audience the feeling of a whirlwind of energy, where moments of control and restraint exist alongside chaos and intensity.

A useful question for students

How does the energy of the dancers respond to what you hear in the music?

This keeps bringing them back to the central idea of the resource:

What does the music look like when it is translated into the body?

Sentence starters

- The movement quality changes from _____ to _____.
- The dancers use forceful energy when...
- A contrasting energy quality is...
- The swinging quality creates...
- The collapsing movement may suggest...
- The change in energy affects the audience by...

MOVEMENT VOCABULARY

Students may identify:

- pedestrian walking
- hopping
- elevations
- free turns
- weight transfer
- rocking
- swinging
- contraction
- release
- collapsing
- rolling
- running
- balances
- lifting
- weight sharing
- travelling
- gesture
- bending
- release of the head
- angular shapes
- curved shapes.

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Students can also identify technical skills within the choreography.

Weight transfer

The dancers frequently transfer their weight:

- from one foot to another
- through the pelvis
- through travelling movements
- through partnering.

Alignment

Alignment is particularly important during:

- balances
- elevations
- weight sharing
- lifts
- landings.

Strength

Strength is required when dancers:

- support another dancer's weight
- lift
- stabilise their own body
- control landings
- maintain positions.

Control

Control can be observed when dancers:

- stop suddenly
- hold balances
- change direction
- move into or out of the floor
- maintain precision during fast movement.

Stamina

The work places significant physical demands on the dancers.

As the work continues, the dancers must maintain:

- coordination
- timing
- energy
- alignment
- focus
- technical control.

Student question

How can you tell that a dancer has good stamina?

Sample answer

Strong stamina can be seen when dancers maintain their technical control and timing even after performing physically demanding movement for an extended period. Their alignment, balance, coordination and precision remain controlled despite the physical demands of the choreography.

A NOTE ABOUT EXHAUSTION

As the work progresses, there are moments where dancers appear:

- exhausted
- physically depleted
- dependent on one another
- collapsing
- leaning
- being carried or swung.

Question

The dancers appear increasingly physically exhausted. Could the physical exhaustion contribute to the meaning of the work?

Possible interpretation

precision ↔ imperfection

control ↔ exhaustion

perfection ↔ human limitation

individual effort ↔ collective support

RELATIONSHIPS

At the beginning of *Agitato*, the dancers often appear to be working independently, each performing their own phrases and movement qualities. Although they share the same musical environment, they are not yet strongly connected physically.

This creates the sense of individual movement within a larger musical structure.

As the music develops and becomes increasingly layered, the relationships between the dancers also change. We begin to see:

- duos
- trios
- moments of unison
- contrasting movement
- weight sharing
- lifts
- leaning
- physical contact
- whispering gestures
- hugging
- dancers supporting one another.

The dancers do not simply move together because the music is together. Instead, Lloyd creates different relationships between the dancers that respond to the changing energy, rhythm and structure of the music.

At times, dancers move independently, creating different layers within the musical texture. At other moments, they come together in unison or shared movement, creating a stronger sense of connection. The shifts between individual and collective movement mirror the changing structure and intensity of the music.

Music + Relationships

Think about the relationship between:

individual dancer → individual musical idea

multiple dancers → layers within the music

unison → shared musical rhythm

contrast → different musical ideas happening together

stillness → a pause within the musical structure

physical contact → connection within the larger choreographic structure

This means the dancers can appear to be **individual voices within one larger musical composition.**

As the work develops

The increasing physical connection between the dancers may also be significant.

As the physical demands of the work increase, we see moments where dancers:

- lean against one another
- share weight
- lift one another
- swing another dancer's body
- hold one another
- appear to support one another.

This can be interpreted in different ways. It might suggest support, dependence, exhaustion or connection, but the work does not provide a conventional narrative that gives us one definite answer.

Important question

How do the relationships between the dancers respond to the changing music and choreographic structure?

Possible interpretations

The changing relationships may communicate:

- individual identity within a group
- different movement "voices" within one musical work
- the layering of musical ideas
- the gradual formation of a collective
- physical dependence and support
- connection without conventional narrative
- the physical effects of endurance and exhaustion

Sample answer

At the beginning of *Agitato*, the dancers work mainly as individuals, performing their own movement phrases within the same musical environment. As the music develops, the dancers increasingly connect through duos, trios, unison, weight sharing and lifts. This creates a contrast between individual and collective movement. The dancers can be viewed as individual voices within Mendelssohn's musical composition, sometimes working independently like separate musical ideas and sometimes coming together to create a unified physical response. As the work becomes increasingly physically demanding, the dancers also begin to support and share weight with one another, which may suggest connection, dependence or exhaustion.

FOCUS

An interesting feature of the work is the dancers' internal focus.

They frequently do not look directly at the audience.

They are often focused on:

- their own movement
- the space
- another dancer
- a task
- physical sensation.

Question

How does internal focus change the way we experience a dance compared with direct eye contact with the audience?

5. CHOREOGRAPHIC DEVICES

REPETITION

Repetition occurs when a movement, phrase, motif or structure returns.

One of the clearest recurring motifs is the downward-dog position.

The movement becomes recognisable because it returns throughout the work.

Why use repetition?

Repetition can:

- create recognition
- establish a motif
- create structure
- create expectation
- emphasise an idea
- allow the audience to compare different versions of a movement.

Sample Year 7–8 answer

Repetition is used when the downward-dog movement returns throughout the dance. Because we have seen the movement before, the audience recognises it when it appears again. This helps create a movement vocabulary for the work.

Year 9–10 answer

Lloyd uses repetition to establish recognisable movement motifs within a choreography that is otherwise constantly changing. The recurrence of the downward-dog position allows the audience to recognise and remember movement material. When the motif appears in a different choreographic context, the audience can compare its new function with its earlier appearances.

Sentence starters

- Lloyd uses repetition when...
- A recurring motif is...
- The audience recognises this movement because...
- Repeating the movement allows...
- When the motif returns...
- The repetition may contribute to the idea of...

CONTRAST

Contrast is everywhere in *Agitato*.

Students can identify:

One quality	Contrasting quality
Fast	Slow
Loud	Silence
Forceful	Soft
Percussive	Sustained
Chaos	Stillness
Large	Small
High	Low
Individual	Group
Angular	Curved
Movement	Stillness
Control	Release

Sample answer

Lloyd uses contrast by moving rapidly between chaotic, forceful movement and moments of stillness. The sudden change in energy and timing interrupts the audience's expectations and makes the stillness feel particularly significant.

Sentence starters

- A clear contrast can be seen between...
- Lloyd contrasts _____ with _____.
- The sudden change from...
- This contrast creates...
- This makes the audience...
- The contrast may suggest...

AUGMENTATION

Augmentation occurs when a movement or phrase is recognisable but is changed.

It may become:

- larger
- smaller
- faster
- slower
- more forceful
- more sustained
- extended
- compressed.

Your observations identify this particularly strongly when familiar phrases return later in the work but become larger, more forceful or differently timed.

Sample answer

Lloyd uses augmentation when familiar movement material returns but is altered in its size, timing, energy or relationship to other dancers. For example, the movement of a dancer placing their forehead near another dancer's chin and the gesture of whispering into another dancer's ear are repeated throughout the work. The rocking movement, where the dancers shift their weight through their feet as the pelvis moves backwards and forwards, and the release of the upper body also return as recognisable movement ideas. When these movements reappear, they can be changed through timing, energy, size or the dancers' relationships, creating a different physical effect while still allowing the audience to recognise the original movement.

Sentence starters

- The original phrase can be recognised because...
- Lloyd augments the phrase by...
- The movement becomes larger when...
- The timing changes by...
- The energy becomes...
- Although the movement is recognisable, the change causes...

VARIATION

Variation occurs when recognisable movement material is changed.

For example:

same movement → different timing

same movement → different energy

same movement → different level

same movement → different direction

same movement → different dancer/ group structure

Student question

Why might a choreographer want the audience to recognise a movement but experience it differently each time?

REPETITION + VARIATION + AUGMENTATION

This is an important distinction for students.

Repetition

It returns.

Variation

It returns differently.

Augmentation

It returns with a specific change in size, timing, duration or intensity.

A VERY IMPORTANT CHOREOGRAPHIC IDEA

The choreography is not simply "repeating movements."

The dancers build a movement vocabulary.

The audience begins to recognise:

- motifs
- phrases
- gestures
- pathways
- relationships
- movement qualities.

The choreographer can then manipulate these familiar ideas.

That means the audience begins to develop a memory of the movement.

OTHER MOTIFS

Your observations identify several recurring gestures/motifs that would be useful for students to track:

Forehead/chin relationship

A dancer places their forehead near another dancer's chin.

Whispering

A dancer whispers into another dancer's ear.

Downward dog

A recurring physical motif.

Walking

Pedestrian walking returns in altered contexts.

Head release

The release/throwing of the head becomes a recognisable quality.

Rocking

Rocking backwards and forwards through the feet and pelvis.

Student challenge

Choose one motif. Track how it changes throughout the work.



Photo by Darren Gill

6. PRODUCTION ELEMENTS

COSTUME

The dancers wear:

- black polo-style tops
- black slacks/trousers
- black runners.

The black costume creates visual uniformity.

However, although the dancers are visually similar, their movement qualities are different.

Question

If the dancers all wear similar costumes, how does the choreography allow us to distinguish between them?

Possible answer

The dancers are visually unified by their black costumes, but their individual movement qualities, phrases, energy and physicality allow the audience to distinguish between them.

LIGHTING

The work uses:

- warm lighting
- backlighting
- wash lighting
- darkness/shadow.

Questions

What does the lighting make you notice?

Does the lighting create a particular mood?

How would the work change under bright, colourful lighting?

Sample answer

The restrained lighting keeps the focus on the dancers' bodies and movement rather than creating a highly decorative visual environment. Backlighting and shadow can also make the dancers appear less like individual characters and more like moving shapes within the space.

SPACE / PERFORMANCE ENVIRONMENT

The work is performed in a relatively minimal environment.

The black floor, walls and curtains create a unified visual field.

This means the audience's attention is directed towards:

body + movement + sound + space.

Student question

How might *Agitato* change if it were performed on a stage filled with scenery?

SOUND

Sound is fundamental to *Agitato*.

The starting point is Fanny Mendelssohn's Allegro molto agitato in D minor.

Duane Morrison's treatment of the music allows the original musical material to be deconstructed and transformed.

Observations identify:

- strong accents
- changing rhythms
- acceleration
- broad piano notes
- silence
- later vocal sounds
- changes in musical intensity.

Key question

Is the movement following the music, or is the movement having a conversation with the music?

MUSIC + MOVEMENT

Students can compare:

MUSIC

- accent
- rhythm
- tempo
- dynamics
- silence
- acceleration
- repetition
- musical texture.

MOVEMENT

- accent
- rhythm
- tempo
- energy
- stillness
- acceleration
- repetition
- movement texture.

Sample answer

The choreography responds to the musical accents through percussive and forceful movement. However, Lloyd does not always simply copy the music. At times the movement contrasts with the musical quality, creating tension between what the audience hears and what they see.



Photo by Darren Gill

7. CREATE YOUR OWN — FROM MUSIC TO MOVEMENT

CREATING AND MAKING

Choreographic task

Choose a short piece of instrumental music.

Select one musical feature:

- rhythm
- accent
- repetition
- silence
- acceleration
- deceleration
- dynamics
- melody
- texture.

Create an 8-count movement phrase responding to that feature.

Challenge 1 — Change the energy

Perform the phrase:

1. softly
2. forcefully
3. percussively
4. sustained
5. swinging
6. bound.

Question

How does changing the energy change the meaning of the movement?

Challenge 2 — Change the space

Perform the same phrase:

- at a low level
- at a medium level
- at a high level
- using a small dimension
- using a large dimension
- travelling diagonally
- travelling in a circle.

Question

Is it still the same phrase?

Challenge 3 — Repetition

Perform the phrase three times.

First time

Original.

Second time

Change the timing.

Third time

Make the movement larger and more forceful.

Question

How has the phrase changed?

Challenge 4 — Contrast

Create a phrase containing:

fast → still

strong → soft

large → small

high → low

individual → group

Students then explain why they chose each contrast.

Challenge 5 —
Create An *Agitato*-Inspired Study

In groups, create a 30–60 second contemporary dance study containing:

- ☐ one repeated motif
- ☐ one clear contrast
- ☐ one augmented phrase
- ☐ one moment of stillness
- ☐ a change in energy
- ☐ a change in level
- ☐ a change in direction
- ☐ a relationship between movement and sound
- ☐ one moment where dancers work individually
- ☐ one moment where dancers work collectively.



Photo by Darren Gill

8. FINAL REFLECTION

EXPLORING AND RESPONDING

Years 7–8

WATCH → IDENTIFY → DESCRIBE → EXPLAIN

Question

How does Jo Lloyd use the elements of dance and choreographic devices in *Agitato* to communicate ideas or meaning?

Students should refer to:

- one element of dance
- one choreographic device
- one specific example from the work.

Sentence starter

Jo Lloyd uses _____ to...

An example of this can be seen when...

This creates...

This may communicate...

SAMPLE FULL YEAR 7–8 RESPONSE

Jo Lloyd uses energy and the choreographic device of augmentation to communicate ideas in Agitato. An example of this can be seen when the dancers use strong, percussive and forceful energy in response to the accents and intensity of Mendelssohn's music. Lloyd also uses augmentation when familiar movements, such as the forehead-to-chin gesture and the whispering gesture, return later in the work but are changed through their timing, energy or relationship to the other dancers. This creates contrast and makes the movement feel unpredictable. This may communicate a sense of tension between control and chaos, reflecting the idea of a physical "whirlwind" within the choreography.

YEARS 9–10

WATCH → ANALYSE → INTERPRET → JUSTIFY

Question

Analyse how Jo Lloyd manipulates the elements of dance and choreographic devices in *Agitato* to communicate or challenge ideas, perspectives and/or meaning.

Students should consider:

- space
- time
- energy
- relationships
- repetition
- contrast
- augmentation
- music
- production elements.

Stronger sentence starters

Lloyd manipulates the element of _____ by...

This is particularly evident when...

Rather than simply _____, Lloyd...

The contrast between _____ and _____ creates...

The repetition of _____ establishes...

When this motif returns, it has been altered through...

This could be interpreted as...

One possible reading of this moment is...

This interpretation is supported by...

The production element of _____ reinforces this because...

SAMPLE FULL YEAR 9–10 RESPONSE

Jo Lloyd uses repetition and contrast throughout Agitato to create a constantly changing movement vocabulary. A recurring motif is the downward-dog position, which becomes recognisable to the audience when it returns throughout the work. Although the movement itself is familiar, it occurs within different choreographic contexts, allowing the audience to reconsider its function.

Lloyd also creates strong contrasts between fast and slow movement, forceful and softer energy, and energetic movement and stillness. These changes are particularly noticeable when a highly physical phrase is suddenly interrupted by silence or a sustained pause. This creates tension and redirects the audience's attention.

The choreography also responds closely to Fanny Mendelssohn's music. However, the movement does not simply illustrate the musical score. Instead, Lloyd appears to physically interpret its accents, rhythms and energy while also creating moments of contrast. The result is a contemporary physical response to historical music.

The dancers' black costumes and minimal performance environment further focus the audience's attention on the movement. As the work progresses, physical exhaustion, weight sharing and increasing interaction between dancers can also be interpreted as a shift from individual physical experiences towards greater collective dependence. These choices demonstrate how Lloyd can use movement, structure, sound and production elements to create meaning without relying on a literal narrative.

9. KEY VOCABULARY

Term	Meaning
Element of dance	A fundamental component of dance such as space, time or energy
Space	Where movement occurs. Levels, dimension, direction, shape– curved or angular.
Level	High, medium or low position in space
Dimension	The size or scale of movement, small, medium or large
Time	How quickly, slowly or rhythmically movement occurs, accents, duration of the movement.
Energy / dynamics	The quality or force/flow of movement. percussive, sustained, fluid, bound, sustained, swinging, suspension, percussive, collapsing, vibrative.
Motif	A short movement idea that can be repeated and developed
Repetition	Repeating a movement, phrase or idea
Variation	Changing an existing movement or motif
Contrast	Using opposing qualities or ideas
Unison	Two or more dancers performing the same movement at the same time
Percussive	Sharp, accented or striking movement
Sustained	Smooth movement that continues over time
Fluid	Continuous, flowing movement
Bound	Controlled or restricted movement
Direction	The route the body travels through space, forward, backwards, side to side, diagonally, circular.
Production elements	Elements such as lighting, sound, costume, set and AV
Perspective	A particular way of seeing or understanding an idea


Bunjil
Place

City of
Casey

SYDNEY
DANCE
COMPANY

Australian Government

Creative
Australia


DANCEHOUSE