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Register Number:

Date:

**ST. JOSEPH’S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), BANGALORE – 27**

**II SEMESTER: OPEN ELECTIVE**

**END SEMESTER EXAMINATION: JULY-AUGUST 2022**

**TS OE 2 - Jhatak-Matak: Gender and Performance in Dance Numbers**

**Time- 2 hrs Max marks: 60**

**Instructions:**

1. **This paper is meant for the II semester students who have chosen Jhatak-Matak: Gender and Performance In Dance Numbers as their OPEN ELECTIVE.**
2. **This Question Paper has TWO printed pages and THREE sections.**
3. **You are allowed to use a dictionary.**
4. **Please stick to the word-limits suggested.**
5. **Read the following excerpt from an interview with filmmaker Paromita Vohra and answer the questions that fellow.**

**Q**: Why do you think that the song and dance is seen as a falling short on the path to modernity?

**A:** One answer is self-hate. These are all postcolonial convulsions in a way. When I was growing up, you didn’t admit to watching Hindi films, it is something that you told your friend in secret. There is a feeling that when you go out in the world, you have to be English-speaking. And it goes hand in hand with the idea of being a secular Indian, who has no identity marks. If middle-class people carry their regional identity with them, then they are not ‘modern’. So you edit and constrain your regional self, your emotional self, and then there’s the discomfort with pleasure for itself, and how it elicits an unbridled response from us.

Every single interview I ever read in the early part of this century had a filmmaker (or critic) saying, “This is a good film without the usual song and dance.” But, even so, in order to promote a film, you need a song. So lip-sync songs have now become removed from the film, except as item numbers, not central to the emotions of the film.

I think Sanjay Leela Bhansali is one practitioner of that Hindi film aesthetic. Melodrama, operatic, spectacular. Very emotional. Saroj Khan was also fluent in that aesthetic. She is saying “Mujhe gaana batao. I don’t care baaki film mein kya ho raha hai”. I am the auteur of the song. In a sense, one film accommodates many artistic voices, not that one (usually male) auteur notion. Our inability to recognise that this is one aesthetic and realism is also just another aesthetic, an artifice of filmmaking, pushes us towards homogeneity and the current fashion where films are critiqued on the basis of a woke toolkit. “This is about issues that are important, so that is good.” The world of emotion – less neat and politically correct – becomes too vulgar, too contradictory, too unsanitary, and is ironed into flatness.

It’s important to remember that Indian choreographers don’t only create the dance movement – they direct the picturisation and shot-taking too. The older name of “dance director” feels more accurate. Saroj Khan restored this work to professional importance by compelling Filmfare to institute an award for choreography, and we may now know dances by choreographer, not only by performer

1. **Answer ANY FOUR of the following questions in FIVE to SIX lines each. (4x5=20)**
2. Have you ever lied about not liking a song? Why do you think people are not open about the songs they like to listen to in private?
3. Do you agree with the view that we sometimes try to edit our regional selves to force-fit ourselves into the present times? Do you see it happening now more than before? Explain.
4. Do you remember dances by choreographer or performer? Explain with reference to one dance performance you remember fondly.
5. Is the writer’s distinction between a choreographer and dance director a valid one? Give reasons.
6. How do you understand the writer’s claim that self-hate becomes an obstacle to our own pleasures?

**II. Answer the following questions in 150-200 words each. (2x15=30)**

1. ‘Auteur theory’ is a way of looking at films that state that the director is the “author” of a film. Who do you think is the real author of a dance? The choreographer or the performer? If you have reasons to believe that neither of them is the author, please state your reasons for saying so.
2. When dances/songs begin collecting an identity of their own, are they still viewed as a part of the film? Should they be? What is lost/gained when they are watched without knowledge of the film? Explain with an example.

**III. Answer ANY ONE of the following questions in 100-150 words. (10 marks)**

**8.** Write about a performer who you think has a strong screen/stage presence. Give reasons for your choice.

**9**. How are ‘item numbers’ featuring men different from those featuring women? Explain with reference to two songs.

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