



Assignment A: *Cave of the Heart* Discussion Questions

Now that you have seen the videotaped performance of *Caves of the Heart* discuss the following questions in your group.

Consider all points of view while considering each question.

Assign a recorder to take notes, as well as a group spokesperson.

1. Do the projections of each of the figures in the choreography match your perceptions?
 - If so, in what specific ways?
 - If not, why not?
2. Delineate specific ways the dancer in Medea's *Dance of Vengeance* externalizes, through movement, Medea's wrought state of mind.

Some possible responses:

- the intense quivering of her entire body;
 - her crawling along the floor , emulating the nonhuman writhing and frenzy of a serpent ready to attack; and
 - the body signals of indecision and decision.
3. Review the term metaphysical conceit. What in the *Dance of Vengeance* choreography could be perceived as a metaphysical conceit?

Possible response:

- The red snake she draws from her bosom and ingests into her mouth could be considered a metaphysical conceit — - a shocking, concrete image used to make an abstract point.

Note:

John Donne's poems, *The Flea* or *The Relic*, could serve as a good review of metaphysical conceit. So could several of Emily Dickinson's poems — *I Heard a Fly Buzz When I Died*; *I Felt a Funeral in my Brain*.

5. In what specific ways does Noguchi's set help build the choreography and supplement the projection of Euripides' narrative?
 - Are there aspects of the set design that could be viewed as metaphysical conceits?
 - Could the title *Cave of the Heart* also be considered to fall into this image category? Explain.

5. Encourage students to give particular attention to the symbolic uses of the landscape and the ambiguous purposes the wire structural frame serves as a:

- hiding place, perhaps a cage;
- part of her dress that becomes a cleansing instrument sent by the Sun-god; and
- chariot that helps effect her transformation back into her supernatural state.

Possible examples of metaphysical conceits:

- the green serpent, as a concrete image of deep jealousy; and
- the black aorta as a concrete symbol of a black heart turned evil in the drive for vengeance.