

#### 4. THE ECSTASY OF DANCING FLEAS: Humboldt's Hog-Nosed Skunk Flea

Signifying elements	Effects
<i>Design:</i> Backcloth is close-up of fur.	Perhaps it is the Flea the Rat was trying to get rid of seen up close? Maybe it is skunk fur?
<i>Music:</i> Syncopated. Interesting orchestration – strings and 'comedy' brass; maracas.	Humorous. Captures springy lightness of flea. Catchy tune that is always slightly ahead of the beat.
<i>Movement:</i> Skips, hops, vertical jumps. Flea ducks, jumps on men and dives between legs.	Attempting to mirror Flea's real-life jumping. Mischievous, but Flea is often ignored, or man is unaware of it. Only occasionally does it interact directly and then only briefly.
Flea squeaks and often faces audience.	Anthropomorphic qualities. Flea is somehow more aware than Morris Dancers, who carry on, oblivious.



Photo: Roy Smiljanic

#### 5. WHITE MISCHIEF: The Southern Cape Zebra

Signifying elements	Effects
<i>Design:</i> Backcloth sets scene – dawn on the Savannah. Zebra's costume accentuates athleticism. Zebra-print clothing for models. Skull headdresses.	Stunning setting, celebrating the beauty and majesty of the natural world. Zebra is a graceful and powerful creature. Any sacrifice is an acceptable one in the face of man's shallow desires. Death is present wherever they go, but it is hidden from their direct sight, perhaps saving them from any feelings of guilt? Perhaps also reminiscent of ancient tribal life, juxtaposed with the supposedly modern and sophisticated world they inhabit.
<i>Lighting:</i> Slowly brightens, but retains purple colour.	Adds to atmosphere; rich colour. Purple is traditionally a colour associated with royalty.
<i>Music:</i> Constant riff on marimba (later joined by violins and percussion). Long, smooth chords played by horns and piano.	Pulsing, calming, mesmerising. Reminiscent of African tribal music. Almost like a heartbeat. Majestic. Have a sorrowful sound from start, perhaps indicating that the piece's outcome will not be a happy one.
<i>Movement:</i> Zebra uses sinewy, organic, smooth and graceful movements. Always dignified. Movements require great strength and flexibility. Models' movements are taken from the catwalk. Strutting, sharp, looking bored and vain; 'dead' behind the eyes. Rapid arm movements.	Zebra is a magnificent creature. Quiet and proud, but also wild and strong. Paints models as lesser creatures than the Zebra. Models have a superficial view of the world. Stylised. Drawn from taking lipstick out of handbag, applying it and looking in mirror.

**Note:** A macabre view of the world of the fashion industry, which, for reasons of vanity and greed, perpetuates numerous senseless and brutal killings. The scene is filled with highly significant images that invite poignant comparisons of Zebra and Models. We are led to condemn the shooting and to view with disgust the Western world's obsession with the wearing of animal skins and furs. The costumes leave no doubt as to why the Zebra is shot.

It is interesting to note that the Zebra ranges, alone, across the whole stage, completely free, though he is almost totally

obscured by the Models just before he is shot. Ironically, the Models on the other hand, move together in a loose pack, as Zebra would in the wild. At no point do they interact with or even look at the Zebra. By doing so they can continue to delude themselves that it is not their problem; out of sight, out of mind. They are also dressed identically and mimic each other's actions as well as some of the Zebras.

At the end, the Great Auk stands over the dead Zebra, one extinct species observing the decline of another, and reiterates its warning: Look! See! Listen! Learn from this!