



Motionhouse

CHARGE

ELECTRIFYING DANCE CIRCUS

SCENE 4: LIGHTNING STORM

Questions

What happens to the man who was hauled up to the roof?

Is he moving or still?

What happens to the female dancers when they contact the silks?

What shapes do they make in the air?

Who are they circling?

How would you describe their energy as they fly around?

What sound and lighting effects can you see and hear?

What colour are the silks?

SIGNIFIERS	DESCRIPTION	EFFECTS
VISUALS	Flashes of white light	Sinister, ominous, dangerous
SOUND	Thunder and lightning sound effects A syncopated (off-beat) melodic motif repeats on strings ascending and descending using harmonics, before fading to percussive 'rim taps' then to silence	A surge of energy. A dramatic electrical storm
MOVEMENT	2 men swing the hanging man down from the roof. He drops to the floor and is still. Dancers swing and fly with exhilarating speed and jagged shapes around and over his body.	Maltreatment, abuse Lightning strikes. Witches. A sense of evil

Summary of meaning, mood and significance

Crashes of thunder and flashes of lightning accompany the male dancer's descent from the roof. He drops in stages, tangled in the silks that are being wildly swung from side to side by two men (is this the mad scientist Frankenstein and his laboratory assistant?) and collapses to the floor, as though lifeless. The electrical storm ties together two story threads; one historical (Galvani's frogs), one fictional (Shelley's *Frankenstein*): it was by funneling the electricity from an electrical storm into his laboratory that Galvani realized the nerves in his frog specimens were contracting in response to electrical impulses; and it was by harnessing the electricity from a lightning storm that Mary Shelley's scientist brings his monster to life.

The exhilarating swinging jumps, propelled through the air on the silks, conjure several ideas: first, they resemble flashes of lightning; second, they look as though they have been struck by lightning (a strike causes *all* the muscles in the body to contract at once, throwing a body violently into the air; and thirdly, the wildness of their flight suggests unnatural forces are at work: they could be witches casting electrical spells to wake the dead.