



ARTISTIC EVALUATION

It should be noted the views expressed in this evaluation are intended to represent, as far as possible, an objective aesthetic judgement. Specialist advisors and officers should avoid making judgements based on their own personal tastes and preferences.

Artist/Company: Kirkcaldy Choral Union/ Making Music Scotland

Venue: St Bryce Kirk, Kirkcaldy

Title of Event: Christmas Concert

Type of Event: (e.g. performance, exhibition, informal showing, work-in-progress, workshop, screening, lecture etc)
Concert

Date of Visit: 7 December 2008

Overall Rating: 4

(Please rate the event overall, taking into account your ratings for each section. Please state the key reasons for your overall ratings – i.e. the particular strengths and weaknesses. If the management of the event affects the overall enjoyment of the event, please comment, but the overall rating should be based on the artistic merit of the event.)

Kirkcaldy Choral Union has been performing since 1866 and has around 60 members. They specialise in Choral and Secular works, performing two concerts annually. This particular event featured West Primary School Choir as well as Kathryn Gallagher (soprano) and organist Morley Whitehead. The performances and presentation was professional, atmospheric and received well by the huge audience. The programme flowed well with contrasting styles, solos and a very able conductor, who really kept the whole evening together. The accompanist was of a high standard and enhanced the evening greatly. A successful evening of festive entertainment.

Name: Marie Fielding Date: 08/01/2009

Specialist Advisor ~~Scottish Arts Council Officer~~ *Please circle the relevant title*

This report has been commissioned by the Scottish Arts Council to evaluate the artistic quality of the production named above. It has been prepared by either a specialist Advisor, or an officer of the Scottish Arts Council, as indicated at the end of the form. The report will be circulated to the organisation which produced the work and to the management of the venue, if the venue is core funded by the Scottish Arts Council.

The report will form evidence for the Artistic Leadership and Public Engagement sections of the Quality Framework and be taken into account in assessing the work of the producing company in relation to applications for funding to the Scottish Arts Council. It may also be used by the Joint Board to report on the overall performance of its funded organisations.

Evaluators should enter their rating under each section, explaining briefly their reason for the rating with reference to their comments under each section. Ratings should be given in accordance with the following:

- 1 - **Very Poor** – standard falls well below what is acceptable.
- 2 - **Poor** – not attaining acceptable standards of conception or presentation.
- 3 - **Competent** – routine rather than especially interesting.
- 4 - **Good** – well conceived and executed
- 5 - **Excellent** – conceived and executed to a high standard.

1. Artistic Assessment

Please evaluate the artistic quality of the event, with particular reference to the strengths and weaknesses of the following:

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
All	Vision and imagination of work - Quality of ideas, skills in execution; if you've seen the work of this artist(s)/ company before, please comment on the comparison.	5	The concert was varied and had a good balance of 'light and heavier' works. As well as being inclusive, inviting the audience to sing, the conductor was confident and really got the choirs inspired to perform with passion and precision. The children added hugely to the concert.
All (if relevant)	Curatorial/ programming vision/ selection Please indicate how the event originated eg from the exhibiting/ producing organisation, artist-led or commissioned. If the event is part of a Festival, please say how it contributes to the overall programme.	5	Kirkcaldy Choral Union performs two concerts per year. The web site clearly states that they specialise in choral and secular works. The soloist was a guest, as were the children. This makes the programme more varied especially for those who regularly support the concerts as well as making it more of a challenge for the conductor and choir.
All	Success of event against stated aims - in the programme or other printed material, including how well it communicated the artistic themes. Education events – see ¹ below for guidance	4	The concert was of a high standard and the programme was adhered to. The choir certainly reached the audience with their singing and created a mesmerising effect at times. It was dramatic and yet at times humorous with the children making actions to one of their pieces.
All	Performers/tutors - technical standard, performance skills and ability to communicate and engage. Where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments.	5	Again, with a very able conductor, all the pieces were performed to a high standard with good intonation, dynamics and excitement. There was a look of enjoyment and achievement throughout the evening. As some singers will be self taught, this in no way detracted from the overall standard produced.
Dance, Theatre	Choreography/Use of choreography - originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc		N/A
Theatre	Script – particularly in relation to new work or second productions. Relevant to classics where the original has been substantially changed.		N/A
Theatre, Dance	Direction - Concerns issues of interpretation, casting and presentation.		N/A

¹ Education is a bridge between artform excellence and increased access and participation, and it is people centred. Providing opportunities for learning and progressing in an artform or using an artform to address other, non-artistic, outcomes are equally valid; in either case a high quality strategic approach is required in order to benefit the participants and the organisation. Delivery can be through workshops, post/pre-show discussions, outreach work, etc aimed at any age group.

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
Dance, Theatre	Use of music – appropriateness and effect of sound or music (whole/part, live/recorded) to the production.		N/A
Dance, Theatre	Design – costume, set, lighting. Take into account how appropriate the design is in relation to the venue and, where appropriate, the touring schedule.		N/A
All	<p>Quality of Presentation/Engagement</p> <p>Performing Arts - technical presentation of the production (eg lighting and sound cues, etc).</p> <p>Crafts/Visual Arts - Use of equipment, space and overall layout/hang</p> <p>Education events - relevance/ appropriateness of presentation and teaching methodology (one to one, group, child centred); details of participant group and activity, including genre.</p>	4	<p>The natural acoustics of the building carried the singing voices and instruments. As I was quite near the front and heard others comment, it was a little obvious that announcements were difficult to hear and a microphone would have been appropriate on this occasion.</p> <p>The lighting remained the same but was appropriate for the event.</p>
All	<p>Audience</p> <p>Performing Arts - appropriateness of the production for the audience/participants; estimate the size and reaction</p> <p>Crafts/Visual Arts – time spent, interest, activity, and visitors' books comments, number of visitors/ participants at the time of visit</p> <p>Education/learning – pre-event involvement, participants/ schoolteachers reaction, understanding, commitment, enthusiasm, number involved, etc</p>		<p>The audience were able to participate in the concert, singing carols, with words supplied. This made a huge difference to the overall programme and created a more intimate atmosphere. Clearly, there were families attending of the children's choir, as well as locals and church members. The church was full with around 250 people.</p> <p>The musical content was appropriate for the time of year, with old and more modern choral works being performed.</p> <p>The audience were enthusiastic in their response throughout.</p>
All	<p>Additional Interpretative activity – what activities were available to enhance the experience of the event eg workshops, artist's talks, discussion groups? Please indicate age-groups targeted.</p>		N/A
All	<p>Outcomes of education activity – what learning/skills development took place? What did participants take away with them? Are education resources being provided for follow up work? Is it strategically linked to the curriculum (formal or informal)?</p>	4	<p>West Primary School Choir were very much part of the first half of the concert. They were well rehearsed and their presentation was excellent, showing commitment, dedication and hard work as well as enjoyment.</p> <p>This was a great experience for the choir, sharing the stage and at times, singing with the adult choir. The children's singing was of a particularly high standard. Great talent!</p>

2. Management of Event

Please evaluate the way the event was presented/organised by the organisation and the venue, with reference to the checklist below, including additional comments/observations. Please try to view the venue and the services, and interpretative material as though you had never visited it before eg if you did not know the venue's location, how easy would it be to find your way there, and to find your way around once you had arrived?

Criteria	Comment
Suitability of the venue for the event	The venue was lovely and suitable for the event. Lighting and seating was good and it was warm.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	Yes, there was a full programme of the event available.
Publicity/ pre-publicity – leaflets, posters, websites, etc. What is produced, is it easy to understand and where can you get the information? Please be alert to the publicity available prior to your visit to the event and comment on the company/organisation's website.	The web site is up to date with extensive details of the concert programme and soloist/s. Dates, cost and venue were also included with past and future dates. It also has up to date reports of concerts, giving honest feedback. There are also links to others sites.
Ease of booking and payment	I paid at the door without a problem. Tickets can be bought by phone, online or at the door.
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	Yes, it is on a main route and easy to find.
External signage and signposting	Church has its own sign.
Internal directional signage	There were signs for toilets and fire escapes.
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	Car park and access for disabled as well as a toilet and a lift.
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	Event started on time. Due to a road accident earlier, I was slightly late arriving and the concert had already started. The audience seemed happy with the length of the event.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	Lady at the desk was very pleasant and helpful. No catering.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ²	Yes, on web site of Choral Union.

² In press releases, at launches, on all published materials (including leaflets, brochures, programmes, posters, company's website, notices display, exhibition materials, websites and advertising, recordings, publications, video, broadcasts, computer programmes etc.) Where the event is publicised in the programme brochure of another organisation (eg venue, gallery, etc) then SAC acknowledgement should appear against the particular programme entry for this event.

3. Organisation's Comments (optional)

This is the organisation's opportunity to respond to points raised within this assessment. Please do not feel obliged to fill this section in. In the spirit of the Quality Framework, we would ask that any comments are self-evaluating, providing an insight as to why, if there is, a major disagreement of response between the organisation and the evaluation, in a constructive way.

This will not alter the rating given by the assessment, but will allow the organisation the opportunity to give their opinion/feedback. The Scottish Arts Council reserves the right to edit comments if they are deemed to be libellous or defamatory.

As the Scottish Arts Council implements the Quality Framework internally, we intend to publish artistic evaluations on organisations that we support regularly on our website. The final artistic evaluation, including the organisation's response will be published on a quarterly basis on our website.

Please keep your response to max 500 words. If we do not hear from you in 15 days, we will assume that you do not want to respond.