



ARTISTIC EVALUATION

This evaluation is intended to represent an objective aesthetic judgement. **Specialist advisors and officers should avoid making judgements based on their own personal tastes and preferences wherever possible.**

Artist/Company:	Helensburgh Orchestral Society
Venue:	Victoria Hall, Helensburgh
Title of Event:	An Evening at the Ballet
Type of Event:	Orchestral Concert with members of Scottish Ballet Associate Programme
Date of Visit:	Saturday 5 December 2009
Overall Rating:	Very Good

A very enjoyable orchestral concert with a good standard of performance. The imaginative inclusion of dance in this event added much to the performance.

Name: Walter Blair

Date: 9 December 2009

Specialist Advisor

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 on 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 future 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:

Very poor- standard falls well below what is acceptable.

Poor - not well conceived and executed

Satisfactory

Good - well conceived and executed

Very Good – well conceived and executed to a very good standard

Excellent – Inspiring and executed to an exceptionally 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	<p>Vision and imagination of work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of ideas if you have seen other work of this artist(s)/ company before, please comment on any relevant comparisons 	Good	It was a very imaginative and interesting idea to present an orchestral concert of music from the ballet combining aural with the visual by using young dancers from Scottish Ballet Associate programme.
All (if relevant)	<p>Curatorial/ programming vision/ selection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does it fit within the artistic vision of the organisation? If the event is part of a Festival, please say how it contributes to the overall programme. 		Not relevant
All	<p>Success of event against stated aims of project and/or performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does it relate to information contained in the programme, the website or other printed material? How well did it communicate the artistic themes? How did the event originate eg from the exhibiting/ producing organisation, from the artist or from commission? <p>Education events – see ¹below for definition</p>	V Good	This was a very successful and enjoyable event which mainly related to programme information. The talented young dancers performed in the Coppelia excerpts and Shostakovich Ballet Suite No 1. Programme gave the Coppelia story but the Choreography, although impressive, did not illustrate any of this. However, in the Shostakovich, the character and style of the musical score was very well interpreted in the Choreography and by the expertise of the dancers. As far as I am aware, the event originated from the producing organisation, Helensburgh Orchestral Society.
All	<p>Performers/tutors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the expertise of the performers? Where performers are amateur, please reflect this in your comments. How successfully did the performer(s) communicate with and engage the audience? In your view, was an artist as a tutor key to the success of the workshop? 	V good	The Orchestra is an amateur group of players, led by a professional violinist and for this concert augmented by some professional players in various sections of the orchestra. The playing was of a good standard with the strings being consistently effective throughout the concert. Some uneven moments and intonation unease in some of the wind and brass but there was a good sense of ensemble and the style and character of the music was well communicated to the audience.
Dance, Theatre	<p>Choreography/Use of choreography</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was the work original? How was the space used? How many dancers were there and how were they used? How long was the piece? 		

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
Theatre	Script Please comment on this for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new work • second productions • classics where the original has been substantially changed 		
Theatre, Dance	Direction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was the work well interpreted? • Was it well cast? • Was it well presented? 		
Dance, Theatre	Use of music <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the music/ sound used enhance the production? • Is it live or recorded? 		
Dance, Theatre	Design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How were the costumes, set and lighting? • How did it work in the venue? • Was it technically proficient? (eg lighting and sound cues, etc). 		
All	Quality of Public Engagement Performing Arts/Education - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was the production targeted at a particular audience? • Was the production /event appropriate for the audience/participants? • Were you/ engaged/inspired? • Did the audience/ participants appear to be engaged/inspired? • What was their response? • Approximately how many people were there? • Did there appear to be a broad mix of people – age, cultural diversity or disabled? • Are BSL/captioned/audio described performances offered as part of the run/tour/? If so how many? • What activities or supporting materials were available to enhance the experience of the event eg workshops, artist's talks, discussion groups programmes, on line info? • Were these targeted at specific age groups? Education/learning events: In addition, please provide comments on the following (if appropriate): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was it taught/led eg one to one, group, child centred? • What was the composition of the participant group – age range, gender mix? • Is it strategically linked to the curriculum or national policy areas e.g. Early Years, Community Learning & Development • What learning/skills 	V Good	<p>This event did not seem to be targeted at any particular audience and I felt that the programme presented had a very wide appeal. The programme was appropriate for both the orchestra and the audience and the added contribution of the dancers was very effective in engaging the audience. There was an excellent, appreciative response from the audience (very enthusiastic, there was applause after every single movement) The hall was full to capacity (around 350 people) and there was a wide mix of people present representing all age ranges. I would imagine that the inclusion of Scottish Ballet dancers did attract a number of the audience. The printed programme was well produced and gave appropriate information concerning the works to be performed, Biographies of leader and conductor, orchestral personnel details and information re the Associate programme at Scottish Ballet. I felt that the names of all the talented young dancers should have been listed particularly as they made an important contribution to the concert.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Not relevant</p>

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
	<p>development took place?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the quality of the art produced by the participants? • Did the workshop tutor have a teaching plan for the session and/or project? • How were participants recruited? • Did participants' views and choices help inform the structure and content of the project? <p>Crafts/Visual Arts Use of equipment, space and overall layout/hang?</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
<p>Location and suitability of the venue for the event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it easy to find? • Is it on a main transport route? • Are the spaces clean? • What were the sight lines like? • How big was it? 	<p>The Hall is on a main road in the centre of Helensburgh and is easy to locate. It is well maintained and holds around 350 people. In this concert the orchestra performed on the floor on the same level as the audience with the dancers performing on the stage. Sight lines were reasonably good.</p>
<p>Information/ interpretive material at venue—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there programmes, posters and displays about the event? • Is there information on the venue's website? 	<p>Posters had been on display in the town and I understand advertisements appeared in the local press. I have no information re the venue's website.</p>
<p>Publicity/ pre-publicity –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What leaflets, posters, websites, did you see the event listed in? • What publicity materials are produced? • Is it easy to understand? • Where can you get the information? • Is there Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ²? <p>Please be alert to the publicity available prior to your visit to the event and comment on the company/organisation's website.</p>	<p>I saw information re the event in the events list on the Making Music website.</p> <p>Making Music support was acknowledged on the programme.</p>

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.

Criteria	Comment																
Ease of booking and payment	Ticket was purchased at one of the ticket outlets.																
Timing of the event <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience? • Was the length appropriate? 	Advertised start time was 7.45pm. It began at 7.50 and finished at 9.45pm. There was a 20 minute interval. The duration of the event was appropriate.																
Signage and signposting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the entrance clearly marked? • Is there clear internal directional signage? • Is there Braille signage or signage for audio loops? 	The entrance is easy to locate. Directional signage is clear. I was not aware of any Braille signage or audio loops information.																
Access and provision for disabled people <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please insert yes/no in the boxes to reflect what you notice about the venue/event Please add in any additional comments below the table <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many BSL/captioned/audio described performances are there at the venue? 	<table border="1" data-bbox="571 622 1251 1167"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="571 622 820 689"></th> <th data-bbox="825 622 914 689">Yes/No</th> <th data-bbox="919 622 1161 689"></th> <th data-bbox="1166 622 1251 689">Yes/No</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="571 696 820 790">BSL interpretation</td> <td data-bbox="825 696 914 790">No</td> <td data-bbox="919 696 1161 790">Audio description of performances</td> <td data-bbox="1166 696 1251 790">No</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="571 797 820 891">Captioning</td> <td data-bbox="825 797 914 891">No</td> <td data-bbox="919 797 1161 891">Lift/ramp (Ramp available)</td> <td data-bbox="1166 797 1251 891">Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="571 898 820 1167">Accessible toilets</td> <td data-bbox="825 898 914 1167">Yes</td> <td data-bbox="919 898 1161 1167">Accessible marketing materials eg website or alternative formats eg large print, Plain English</td> <td data-bbox="1166 898 1251 1167"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p data-bbox="571 1200 1126 1234">No information re BSL or Website formats</p>		Yes/No		Yes/No	BSL interpretation	No	Audio description of performances	No	Captioning	No	Lift/ramp (Ramp available)	Yes	Accessible toilets	Yes	Accessible marketing materials eg website or alternative formats eg large print, Plain English	
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BSL interpretation	No	Audio description of performances	No														
Captioning	No	Lift/ramp (Ramp available)	Yes														
Accessible toilets	Yes	Accessible marketing materials eg website or alternative formats eg large print, Plain English															
Customer service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering) • If possible, comment on how responsive they were to the needs of disabled customers? 	<p data-bbox="571 1308 1246 1402">Box Office staffed by members of the Society. They were friendly and efficient as were the programme sellers</p> <p data-bbox="571 1469 906 1503">Not possible to comment.</p>																

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.