



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: North Lands Creative Glass**

**Venue: Lybster Community Hall**

**Title of Event: 'Sources of Inspiration'**

**Type of Event:** International Conference

**Date of Visit: 6 & 7 September 2008**

**Overall Rating: Excellent**

*(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.)*

- Very well organised and friendly event,
- Well designed programme following an important theme,
- Good balance of speakers and high quality content of presentations.

Name:     Clare Hanna     Date: 15 / 09 / 08

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:

<b>Artform</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Comments and key reasons for rating</b>
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	This is the 12 <sup>th</sup> International Conference North Lands has run. It maintains it's position on the international stage as a key event in the calendar for both practising artists and curators. The theme 'Sources of inspiration' was well conceived and delivered. The selection of speakers was excellent and the running order ensured a good momentum was maintained. Each speakers' unique voice made for captivating listening and stimulated discussions and debate throughout the weekend.
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	The conference is timely as it allows for artists' leading the master classes to engage in the conference as speakers. This is key to the dynamic of the conference and of great benefit to delegates.
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 <sup>1</sup> below for guidance	5	'Sources of Inspiration' was central to each speakers' presentation, some more directly outlining their journey from source to realisation. The structure was well conceived to involve keynote speakers from a curatorial perspective as well as individual practitioners working in other disciplines (ceramics & architecture).
All	Performers/tutors - technical standard, performance skills and ability to communicate and engage.  Where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments.	4	All speakers presented their ideas well. Their styles were very different which added to the lively and engaging discussions and debates. The visuals were strong and in the case when English was not a speakers first language it enabled a greater understanding for the delegate.
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	

<sup>1</sup> 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><b>Quality of Presentation/Engagement</b></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>	3/4	<p>The venue served its purpose, and every effort had been made to present the community hall in a professional and welcoming manner for the purpose of the conference. The display of glass works and paintings helped enhance the space.</p> <p>The seating was somewhat uncomfortable but perhaps this encouraged people to get up and stroll around between sessions and interact with fellow delegates. This was the only compromise made and did not match the quality of the conference and its' careful delivery. The location of the hall to the hotel/B&amp;B's and NLCG office ensures no time is wasted in additional travel.</p>
All	<p><b>Audience</b></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>	5	<p>The opportunity to view the Pilkington Studio and watch demonstrations by some of the master class leaders was an excellent way to engage participants providing an informal/natural process of debate and discussion between the group members. Overall the engagement level was high and well sustained throughout the event. The questions and areas of discussion were both appropriate to the theme of the conference and stimulated a good level of discussion.</p>
All	<p><b>Additional Interpretative activity</b> – 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><b>Outcomes of education activity</b> – 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>	n/a	

## 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?*

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Suitability of the venue for the event	As above
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	The information provided at registration in the conference pack includes local open studios, events, other arts venues and facilities in the surrounding area. It was also available in the hall throughout the event.
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 NLCG website is an excellent resource for the promotion and distribution of information on the event. Prior to the event in early spring a well designed, comprehensive brochure is circulated to their extensive international mailing list which includes appropriate educational institutions.
Ease of booking and payment	Straightforward and effective
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	Lybster is easily located on the main road to Wick and clear maps and detailed information is presented in the conference pack. Public transport is available and details are provided by NLCG when booking.
External signage and signposting	With maps provided in the conference pack for all the facilities used during the conference there is no need for additional signage.
Internal directional signage	Not required
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	The visuals and sound were clear and people were asked if volume levels were sufficient throughout the event. The close by parking and ground level location of the community hall would all be beneficial for those with mobility issues.
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	It is strategically sandwiched between both master classes enabling class leaders to participate as speakers and participants to engage with a wider audience of curators and educators and other practising artists. This is a successful format and has proven to work very well.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	NLCG staff provided a high level of customer care to all throughout the event. Board members who participated also extended warm welcomes and paid careful consideration to individuals needs.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding <sup>2</sup>	Acknowledgement was clearly given verbally at the event, on the website and in all printed material.

<sup>2</sup> 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.