



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: Peacock Visual Arts

Venue: Peacock Visual Arts

Title of Event: Brian Ross – painting live at Peacock

Type of Event: (e.g. performance, exhibition, informal showing, work-in-progress, workshop, screening, lecture etc) The artist Brian Ross spent the period 15 January – 2nd Feb 2008 painting a mural on the gallery walls. The 'event' was the opportunity to see Ross in action.

Date of Visit: 31 January 2008

Overall Rating: 5

(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.)

The 'exhibition' was more of an 'event' because it was possible for visitors to speak to the artist as he produced a mural on the gallery walls over the duration of the exhibition period. The artist was articulate, friendly and open. Although a relatively simple idea, the fact that visitors could talk to the artist as he produced the work felt innovative.

Peacock, is clearly changing gear as it pursues its ambitious development plans for a new centre. The website reflects this. It is clear, professional, informative and articulate about the organisation's role and function.

Name: Kate Tregaskis

Date: 4/ 2/ 2008

Specialist Advisor

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	<p>Brian Ross graduated from Gray's School of Art in 2005. He spent the period 15 Jan – 2nd Feb in the gallery painting a mural on the gallery walls. The 'event' enabled visitors to speak to the artist as he made the work. The painting was made up of bold black on white semi-abstract designs which seemed to reference the art of cultures such as the Aztecs or the Aborigines, whilst remaining fresh and original. The artist was very relaxed about what he was doing – describing it as a journey during which 'he would see where he got to'. It is the 'creation of each individual shape and its effect on each shape that follows' that he finds 'compelling', rather than being solely focused on the final image.</p> <p>Some paintings on paper by the artist were displayed and were for sale in the shop, and a special limited addition print, also for sale, had also been produced.</p> <p>Some of the artist's earlier work was on show at Café Lan in Aberdeen. It was interesting to see how the work has developed over a relatively short period. The works on paper in the café contained more figurative elements and seemed self-conscious. The mural on the other hand was bold, sophisticated, intriguing and energetic. It feels like Brian Ross, though only 24, is at an important stage in his career. Brian was as much part of the 'exhibition' as his work. He was friendly, unassuming, articulate, open and generous in talking to visitors.</p>
All (if relevant)	<p>Curatorial/ programming vision/ selection Please indicate how the event originated eg from the exhibiting/ producing organisation, artist-led or commissioned.</p> <p>If the event is part of a Festival, please say how it contributes to the overall programme.</p>	5	Brian submitted a proposal to the curator to produce a mural in the gallery – the proposal was then accepted.
All	<p>Success of event against stated aims - in the programme or other printed material, including how well it communicated the artistic themes.</p> <p>Education events – see ¹below for guidance</p>	5	There were no specific aims officially stated for the show itself, other than the obvious -that it would take place within a set period, that the artist would be working in the gallery for the duration, that he would produce a mural. However, Peacock itself seems to be exceptionally articulate about its aims and purpose as an organisation, even, commendably, publishing its exhibition policy on the website. The exhibition fits with these declared aims

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
			<p>to support local artists within the context of an international programme. In addition, having the artists there in-situ, to talk to visitors, seemed to be particularly appropriate to the organisation's aims to 'increase understanding', 'improve communication' and 'increase participation' – which it achieved by inviting visitors to become involved in a dialogue with the artist.</p> <p>I wasn't aware of anything that was billed as a separate 'education event', but having the artist on hand for the duration of the opening hours was about as good an 'education event' as could be hoped for – it was visitor-centred (in that visitors could have the undivided attention of the artist, and ask whatever they liked – one visitor was asking him where the nearest art shop was!) and it was on every day the gallery was open, throughout the opening hours.</p>
All	<p>Performers/tutors - technical standard, performance skills and ability to communicate and engage.</p> <p>Where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments.</p>	5	The artist was open, articulate and engaging in discussion about his work.
Dance, Theatre	Choreography/Use of choreography - originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc		
Theatre	Script – particularly in relation to new work or second productions. Relevant to classics where the original has been substantially changed.		
Theatre, Dance	Direction - Concerns issues of interpretation, casting and presentation.		
Dance, Theatre	Use of music – appropriateness and effect of sound or music (whole/part, live/recorded) to the production.		
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.		
All	<p>Quality of Presentation/Engagement</p> <p>Performing Arts - technical presentation of the production (eg lighting and sound cues, etc).</p>	5	The exhibition was a 'work-in-progress' and the way the mural 'fitted' the space was what was being developed by the artists during the course of the show. As it happens the artist had not managed to cover more than 25% of the gallery wall when I

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
	<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>		<p>visited (the day before the show ended) – although he had been hoping to cover most of the wall space, I think. However, this did not matter as the show was about the ‘journey’ and ‘what might happen’ rather than having a fixed goal (– such as intending to cover the whole space).</p> <p>The ‘education event’ – having the artist there for visitors to talk to – was relevant to the relaxed, ‘in-progress’ nature of the show.</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>I spent about 30 mins in the main gallery, looking at the mural and talking to the artist and a further twenty minutes looking at the artists paintings in the shop/reception space, plus a few minutes at Café Lan looking at the artist’s previous work.</p> <p>There was one other visitor in the gallery during my visit.</p> <p>There was a visitors book, in which the few very short comments were positive.</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>	4	<p>The fact that the artist was present meant that he could provide interpretation for the work. The work in the shop also created a context for what was being produced in the gallery. I would have liked to have seen documentation of the artist’s previous mural work available in the gallery. However, images of this work were available via a link from Peacock’s website to the artist’s own website.</p>
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>	5.	<p>In terms of the ‘educational’ element of having the artist there to talk to, I think people who chose to speak to him would have taken away an interesting perspective on the way that artists work. They were also free to ask him any questions they wanted. The artist was relaxed, friendly and open which hopefully made this possible.</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 work was made for the space.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	The handout was concise and clear. I felt it could have contained more information about the work – something about how the artist arrived at his very particular way of working. On the other hand, the minimal amount of information, possibly, meant that people were more inclined to ask questions themselves.
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.	Peacocks website is very clear, informative and easy to use. The website provided a link to the artist's own website. There were information cards about the exhibition in various cafes. The Tourist Information centre didn't have any leaflets or publicity to take away (there was a poster) but a member of staff was able to tell me about the show.
Ease of booking and payment	N/A
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	Yes, easy to find in the centre of the city.
External signage and signposting	<p>The main signage is easy to see. The sign is at one end of a short ally way that the visitor has to go down before they come to the reception/shop in one building and the gallery in another. The sign says 'Peacock Visual Arts'. It occurred to me that a visitor who did not know what 'Peacock Visual Arts' was could mistake it for a design or other organisation that wasn't open to the public. It may be worth considering improving the signage so that it is clear, before visitors walk down the ally way, that there is a gallery and shop - and also an indication of the fact that they are open and that admission is free. The ally itself is a little dark and drab and so brightening this up, possibly with more signage visible from the main square could help inform people as to what is on offer.</p> <p>The reception/ shop door has a punch keypad on it which makes it look as if you need to know the code to enter. I don't recall seeing an 'Open' sign on the door which would have helped indicate that people were encouraged to enter.</p> <p>I know Peacock have major development plans in connection with another site. However, improving the 'communication' of their signage at this site could help raise attendance levels and awareness of what they are and what they do prior to any move.</p>
Internal directional signage	Once inside the reception/shop and gallery internal directional signage is not required.
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	The ally way is cobbled so may present some difficulties for wheelchair users. There is a concrete slope leading up the small step to the gallery space.

Criteria	Comment
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	The gallery opening hours are very good – Tuesday to Saturday 9.30 – 5.30.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	The reception staff were friendly and helpful.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ²	SAC is credited on the website but not on the handout or the display board (as you enter the gallery). The lack of acknowledgement of SAC (or other support) gives a slight sense of Peacock being a commercial space rather than a publicly funded one.

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.