



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/Curated by Atopia Projects
Venue:	Peacock Visual Arts, Aberdeen
Title of Event:	Lifting – Theft in Art
Type of Event:	Exhibition
Date of Visit:	September 26 2007
Overall Rating:	Good - 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.)

The rating recognises the quality of the artistic content and the curatorial choice and skill used to present it within the limitations of the Peacock Visual Arts gallery space. It was a gradually engaging and important piece of work which is effective beyond the duration of the exhibition. While there was a programme of screenings and events built around the exhibition my experience was that there could have been a more pro-active and consistent engagement with the gallery goer.

Name: _____ Jane Jeffrey _____ Date: 9th ___ / ___ October ___ / ___ 2007 _____

Specialist Adviser

Scottish Arts Council Officer

Please circle the relevant

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.	4	The exhibition included or documented the work of 9 artists who have –or claim to have – committed theft in the name of art. Each of the artists' pieces brought something different to the complex range of ideas and significances behind the initial concept of appropriation. The quality and density of ideas in each piece was engaging and gradually raised many complex moral and political questions and reflections. The execution whether as artwork or documentation of action seemed sufficient to the conveyance of each work and was interesting in its own right. The visual impact of the work was generally low key and slow burn and required time and effort on the part of the viewer. The effects were far reaching.
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.	4	The exhibition was curated by Atopia Projects. The choice of artists and work was effective in creating many layers of meaning and interrogation out of a relatively small exhibition in an intimate space. In terms of Peacock Visual Arts programme of exhibitions this exhibition is consistent with an apparent commitment to art as activism, and the aspiration to engage people with ideas through a visual language.
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	3	The exhibition and publication rewarded perseverance and required the viewer's time to communicate the themes. It's difficult to assess whether a casual attendee would have been drawn in sufficiently by the quite dense but unobtrusive printed material to give that time. There was no one in the gallery to answer questions or discuss it with when I was there. There could possibly have been a more active and immediate engagement with the individual gallery goer. The programme advertised a free panel discussion event on the opening day (August 25 th) with the curators and 3 of the exhibiting artists, a 2 hour 'Bootleg Workshop' with DJ Dunproofin on September 8 th , and a series of film screenings on Thursday evenings which would all provide further opportunities to explore the theme.
All	Performers/tutors - technical standard, performance skills and ability to communicate and engage. Where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments.		Not Known
Dance, Theatre	Choreography/Use of choreography - originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc		

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 – 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> <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	<p>Given that the gallery had no human welcome, the sitting of the video projection piece 'Bootlegs' by Jon Routson directly in front of the entrance was a helpfully engaging visual permission to the new visitor to step into the space and then size up the task of looking at the whole. The initial impression was that it was a mix of the more dynamic pieces that were the 'theft' act in themselves or were the 'stolen' objects, interspersed with a slightly disappointing and sparse documentation of apparent 'theft' (happening in another time and place) which were 'fillers' in the space. This superficial impression gave way to a quickening interest in the juxtaposition of the pieces and led back to the less obtrusive ones. The layout was quietly effective in that it led the viewer round and back and forth in the small space and pieces were easily revisited in relation to the ideas and questions unfolding in the viewer's consciousness.</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 an hour and a half in what is a relatively small exhibition and found it to be of slow burn and long term compelling interest. I was alone for the whole period, no staff, and no other visitors. (I did go across the alley to the other building afterwards and make myself known and discuss, but I'm not sure that most visitors would do that as its connection to the exhibition space is not entirely clear and there is no explicit invitation to enter). There was no visitors' book. (I hoped it had been stolen but not so!)</p>

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
All	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.	3	The programme advertised a free panel discussion event on the opening day (August 25 th) with the curators and 3 of the exhibiting artists, a 2 hour ‘Bootleg Workshop’ with DJ Dunproofin on September 8 th , and a series of film screenings on Thursday evenings which would all have provided further opportunities to explore the theme. I understand there was no specific engagement with children, young people, or schools in these.
All	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)?		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?

Criteria	Comment
Suitability of the venue for the event	The gallery space was appropriate for this exhibition, though it is small.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	Printed programmes on shelf at door, printed interpretative panels and bios beside each work were quite low key but dense and took time to orientate to but ultimately very useful. Simple bookshelf holding titles expanding on the socio-political themes of the exhibition was rewarding in terms of signposting to further exploration. I had pen and paper to note titles, other visitors might not. A reading list to take could have been useful alongside the books or in the programme.
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.	I had received e-mail publicity as someone on the mailing list. The website is clear and easy to use. It gave considerable background to the exhibition and a downsized pdf version of the exhibition publication which I am still referring to.
Ease of booking and payment	n/a
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	The venue location is a problem. In the centre of Aberdeen off a pedestrian square but hidden down an unprepossessing alleyway.
External signage and signposting	Sign over alley entrance says 'Peacock Visual Arts'. Its not clear what this is or that that it is a public space. Had the impression that it might be a small commercial company of some sort. I would certainly not have gone looking for an exhibition down the alley had I not known where it was. The alley was deserted and slightly intimidating to enter. Rough and uneven cobbles would make access difficult for some people. I drove round Aberdeen for a while without seeing any road signage on my in.
Internal directional signage	Faced with two buildings to choose from, the gallery space is apparent and is small enough to need little internal signage once inside. Was not aware of seeing toilets signposted or indications that it is OK to go across the courtyard into the other building
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	As above – rough cobbles, toilet facilities not obvious. There is a ramp to the entrance and a handrail.
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	Length of exhibition was appropriate.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	Staff notable in their absence in the gallery, once in the other building found staff very friendly and forthcoming.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ²	Appears on all printed material and the website.

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

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.