



Updated June 2007

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: Kathrin Hohne & B Gismarvik
Venue: Peacock Visual Arts, Aberdeen
Title of Event: Bycatch
Type of Event: (e.g. performance, exhibition, informal showing, work-in-progress, workshop, screening, lecture etc) EXHIBITION
Date of Visit: 18 September 2008
Overall Rating: 3

(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 artists' work produced to be used as fish and chip wrappers is engaging and interesting. However, the exhibition itself felt undeveloped and didn't really open up the complex subject matter further.

The audience response appears to be good and Peacock is a valuable venue in the city. The organisation provides an energetic and alterative voice amongst other arts institutions in Aberdeen, which is people orientated and developmental.

Name: Kirsteen Macdonald

Date: 20 September 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	<p>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.</p>	3	<p>Didn't know the artists' work and didn't get a sense of their wider practice from the visit to the gallery. The exhibition information explains that they have collaborated for 5 years and have a long-term interest in fishing. Although the subject matter was interesting and complex, the work in the exhibition itself was fairly conventional, and the photographs and video work didn't really open up the issues. The strongest work were the fish and chip wrappers (a series of six A2 black and white single sided sheets), containing a vast amount of information presented in a fairly random order, mimicking the layout of broadsheet newspaper. The material in these is gleaned from a wide variety of sources – excerpts from literature (Ernest Hemingway and Jules Verne), and from non-fiction books (Charles Clover), internet sourced definitions, the artists own reportage, their interview dialogues, articles about fishing songs, recipes, short prose. The small typeface and diversity of this material was a bit too much to digest within the time spent at the exhibition; the disparate voices and non-linear editorial approach had the potential to engage, but the density of the information could also make these easy to ignore.</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>	4	<p>The theme is relevant and pertinent on local and global levels. Taking the work into chip shops and producing critically engaged work fits into the venue's diverse programme.</p>

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
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>	3	<p>The exhibition aimed to engage with the “social, political, environmental and economical issues of fishing” with the artists investigating “the declining fishing industry in Aberdeen and the North East”.</p> <p>Apart from the material printed in the fish and chip wrappers, the work in the exhibition didn't expand these issues further. The events programme may have been more effective in initiating dialogue with visitors.</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>	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>	3	<p>A sofa provided a much-needed place to sit and read the wrappers. The exhibition contained three main works: a series of colour photographs, two video projections, the series of fish and chip wrappers, alongside a monitor showing video documentation of a cookery workshop using bycatch.</p> <p>There were some nice touches in the installation such as video monitor mounted on a fridge and a fish crate covering the projector. Otherwise, the exhibition was fairly ordinary in terms of the overall use of the space and the hanging of works.</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>	4	<p>The visitors' book was filled with positive comments. Visitors came from the local area and much further afield. The day of my visit there had been around 100 visits to the venue including new art students from Gray's School of Art.</p> <p>The venue has a varied events programme that encourages new visits to exhibitions and the wider programme.</p> <p>The artist's process of research allowed them to engage with a wide range of people contributing to the making of the work.</p>

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
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.	4	The cookery workshop was a busy event, using food as a shared social context for instigating discussion about the ideas in the exhibition. The distribution of fish and chip wrappers through local chip shops takes the work to new audiences in a light-hearted and accessible way. A screening programme at the Belmont Picturehouse and the gallery adds to the range of contextual work around the exhibition.
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	Unable to answer as I did not attend any events.

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	More use could have been made of the space for the exhibition. A relevant piece of programming for the venue.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	Good. An A4 handout at the venue gave a useful overview of the project. The gallery leaflet had a simple intro and links to the events 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.	Good. The design and print of leaflets, handouts, etc is of good quality and information is easy to follow. The website is excellent. It has a clear and attractive design, and offers extensive information such as press coverage of the exhibition.
Ease of booking and payment	N/a. Opposite the gallery, the reception/shop assistant is able to take payments for prints, books, etc.
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	City centre location close to other arts centres which is good, but the venue is hidden down a cobbled alleyway. The organisation is currently in the planning process for a new, more prominent location in the city.
External signage and signposting	Good. Recently upgraded signage at the entrance to the alleyway and outside each of the 2 buildings that make up the venue. Clear and visible.

Criteria	Comment
Internal directional signage	The signage outside each of the 2 buildings acts as directional signage for the gallery, reception/shop and public facilities.
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	The entrance to the gallery has a narrow ramp that looks a little awkward to navigate. The cobbled street outside may be an issue for those with walking aids. Print material and vinyl lettering is clear and easy to read. The soundtrack on the video projection in the gallery was a bit loud.
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	Good. Gallery opening hours Tues-Sat 9.30-5.30 and events held regularly in the evening.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	Excellent. Staff are approachable, considerate and well informed about the programme.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ²	Mono logo on gallery leaflet and handout. Website homepage has colour logo.

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.