



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:

Venue: Pier Arts Centre, Stromness, Orkney

Title of Event: *A Discipline of the Mind*
The drawings of Wilhelmina Barns-Graham

Type of Event: Exhibition

Date of Visit: Saturday May 30, 2009

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 – ie 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.)

This exhibition presented itself as a rewarding experience as a standalone exhibition and also complemented the permanent displays in neighbouring rooms. The subject matter alone was enough to satisfy however the sensitive artistic skill of Barnes-Graham's work pulled you closer to works to the point that you didn't want to leave.

Name: Jason Williamson

Date: Saturday 6 June, 2009

Scottish Arts Council Officer

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 	5	Barnes-Graham's work is common knowledge throughout the visual art sector however for me I have generally seen her work only in retrospective groupings of paintings or as a single work amongst municipal collections. The idea of isolating her drawings from her other bodies of work helped focus the viewer on the journey the artist would have taken in order to generate this body of work.
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. 	5	The Pier Arts Centre and the W Barns-Graham Trust appointed Mel Gooding to curate this exhibition. The Pier's website refers Gooding's work as a survey. Use of the word <i>survey</i> is very appropriate as the navigation through the rooms emphasises her journeys and there are thematically assisted interpretation panels.
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>	4	Exhibition has been generated with a national tour planned and currently in development via the W Barns-Graham Trust.
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? 		N/A
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? 		N/A

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 		N/A
Theatre, Dance	Direction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was the work well interpreted? • Was it well cast? • Was it well presented? 		N/A
Dance, Theatre	Use of music <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the music/ sound used enhance the production? • Is it live or recorded? 		N/A
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). 		N/A
All	Quality of Public Engagement Performing Arts/Education - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was the production/event 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 development took place? • What was the quality of the art 	4	<p>In the lead up to my visit to the Pier Arts Centre, I consulted their website and also phoned to confirmed, if there would be any educational activities. The website has a scheduled list of educational activities but they were all from last winter's season and there were no forth coming activities posted. I was informed that nothing was scheduled for my weekend visit but self directed sheets for children and adults are available.</p> <p>Upon arrival an in-depth introduction was given as there were activity sheets available for the collection but also specific sheets directed to not only the Barnes Graham exhibition but also its specific works. The front desk staff did apologies for the bad reproduction of some of the images relating to the works on the activity sheets but was willing to help answers questions from my three children should difficulties arise.</p>

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
	<p>produced by the participants?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 Pier Arts Centre is well respected in Orkney so if verbal guidance was required it wouldn't be hard to find. There are numerous directional signs within the town and being on the main street does avoid any difficult route finding. The conversation restrictions of the town do prevent obtrusive signs being used so you have to be on your lookout for the entrance as it could be missed even with its flagship window reception.</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>In the reception area, in line of sight with arrival is a comprehensive information panel which gives an overview of what is on display and also the forthcoming exhibition programme. You could easily read this if you were waiting to speak to reception.</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>Since Stromness generally has one street I had regular opportunities to observe the building during closed hours. The foyer had an exhibition poster attached to its window from the inside so you can become aware of the exhibition if you were passing on foot, bicycle or car within or out-with operational hours.</p> <p>The opening hours, funders and awards are clearly visible from the main street.</p>
<p>Ease of booking and payment</p>	<p>N/A</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																
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? 	N/A																
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? 	As I mentioned earlier the building could have conservation restrictions on perpendicular signage but this didn't in anyway make finding the venue awkward. The internal signage is used in moderation and strategically placed.																
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 <p>Please add in any additional comments below the table</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many BSL/captioned/audio described performances are there at the venue? 	<table border="1" data-bbox="571 535 1251 1055"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Yes/No</th> <th></th> <th>Yes/No</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>BSL interpretation</td> <td>N</td> <td>Audio description of performances</td> <td>NA</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Captioning</td> <td>N</td> <td>Lift/ramp</td> <td>Y</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Accessible toilets</td> <td>Y</td> <td>Accessible marketing materials eg website or alternative formats eg large print, Plain English</td> <td>Y</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Yes/No		Yes/No	BSL interpretation	N	Audio description of performances	NA	Captioning	N	Lift/ramp	Y	Accessible toilets	Y	Accessible marketing materials eg website or alternative formats eg large print, Plain English	Y
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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>Front of house of staff were very able and very keen to spend time with children. They were able to deal with multiple arrivals and departure of visitors including provision of local information.</p> <p>The strategic signage was evident should disabled customers arrive and progress without aid from the reception staff.</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.