



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:	Portfolio
Venue:	n/a
Title of Event :	Portfolio Issue 49
Type of Event:	Publication
Date of Visit:	June 2009
Overall Rating:	Very Good
Name: Daniel Brown	Date: 09/06/09
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	Vision and imagination of work <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 	4	Featuring the work of sixteen photographers with a relatively diverse range of approaches and thematic concerns, which is a fair reflection of the scope of contemporary art photography. From Sze Tsung Leongs's juxtaposed, globalised landscapes through to Becky Beyon's tightly controlled domestic interventions, via Trish Morrissey's narrative, portraiture; the high quality of the publication supports and showcases artists at various stages of their careers, from emerging to established. A very minor criticism would be that all the artists featured are working within the traditional parameters of a high end, gallery context and there is very little innovative use of the medium featured. There is a good selection of critical writing, which ranges in tone from Ashley Givens' report on Veronica Bailey's recent work to Stella Santacatterina's more in depth analysis of Guedalina Salini's praxis, which was the highlight.
All (if relevant)	Curatorial/ programming vision/ selection <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. 	4	On the whole the content is excellent featuring a broad selection of national and international photographers. It is a balanced, coherent selection of work, which works particularly well in the first half of the publication where there are supporting essays; the work of the artists in the second half is mentioned briefly, by the editor, in the introduction and this provides some context for their selection. However, an accompanying text, providing an overview of these photographers would have drawn this section together more tightly. The layout closely replicates a white cube experience in a magazine format. This neutrality alongside the quality of the printing displays the work to the optimum; giving each image the space it deserves. This is a format that has served portfolio well and is generous to the artists although there could be some development within this framework without sacrificing the continuity.
All	Success of event against stated aims of project and/or performance <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? Education events – see ¹ below for definition	4	Portfolio provides a snapshot of contemporary photography rather than an overview. Although the work of the artists featured is diverse in content there is a uniformity of approach and almost no examination of photographers using the medium beyond the glossy, large format print in a gallery context.

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	Performers/tutors <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? 	5	The technical and artistic standards, from the printing to the writing are uniformly excellent.
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 produced by the participants? • 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? Crafts/Visual Arts Use of equipment, space and overall layout/hang?	5	The publication relatively specialised and is aimed at a literate art/photography public. There is no way of assessing the demographic of Portfolio's readership

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? 	N.A.																
<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? 	The website is functional, providing an archive of past issues and an introductory editorial which provides a broad framework for Portfolio's practice. This is an essential portal for Portfolio and could be developed. Portfolio is only published twice a year and the website could be more a fluid way of keeping in touch with the readership and a means of developing a new audience.																
<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>	S.A.C acknowledged at the bottom of the contents page. Portfolio is widely available.																
Ease of booking and payment	N.A.																
<p>Timing of the event</p> <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.																
<p>Signage and signposting</p> <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? 	N.A.																
<p>Access and provision for disabled people</p> <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"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Yes/No</th> <th></th> <th>Yes/No</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>BSL interpretation</td> <td></td> <td>Audio description of performances</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Captioning</td> <td></td> <td>Lift/ramp</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Accessible toilets</td> <td></td> <td>Accessible marketing materials eg website or alternative</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Yes/No		Yes/No	BSL interpretation		Audio description of performances		Captioning		Lift/ramp		Accessible toilets		Accessible marketing materials eg website or alternative	
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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			
			formats eg large print, Plain English	
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? 	N.A.			

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.