



Scottish Arts Council

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:	Project Ability
Venue:	Project Ability, Gallery 1, 18 Albion Street
Title of Event:	Spectrum
Type of Event:	<i>(e.g. performance, exhibition, informal showing, work-in-progress, workshop, screening, lecture etc)</i>
Date of Visit:	12th July 2007
Overall Rating:	4.5 <i>(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.)</i>
A most impressive example of how the products, as well as the process and documentation, of an 'education' project can be presented in an exhibition that is itself entirely gratifying.	
Name: Kirstie Skinner	Date: 13/07/07
<u>Specialist Advisor</u>	Scottish Arts Council Officer <i>Please circle the relevant title</i>

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>	4	<p>There were effectively two sets of works shown in this exhibition – the works by the children with autism and asperger's syndrome, and the photographs taken by the lead artist, Janetka Platun, during her 15 month residency – which were successfully integrated in terms of display.</p> <p>The children's works were remarkable. Although not in any conventional sense 'accomplished', they were full of wit and invention. With their clever visual puns and frequent incorporation of text, and their exploration of different mediums, these works offered a genuinely interesting perspective on the materiality of language, as well as a compelling image of the artists' struggles to negotiate their environment. Although the project was geared towards gaining a greater understanding of the creativity of children with autism - and the experience of such children is clearly highly unusual – there was an extraordinary amount of existential, and ultimately empathetic, insight in the works produced. This may of course have been projection on my part, but such surprising scope made it a very gratifying exhibition.</p> <p>I felt, too, that the arrangement of the photographs (of children's works, the children themselves, and other details) served to enhance the feeling that this was an analytical, rather than simply a representational display. Individually amusing and atmospheric, the photos were also carefully assembled to draw out formal and thematic connections. Overall, the photo-wall seemed to me to reference the processes of observation and connection used, firstly, by the children themselves in order to make meaning; and secondly, as part of the residency's research remit.</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	<p>Janetka Platun was invited to be Project Ability's artist in residence in March 2006, to work with three autism units in Ruchill, Toryglen and St Vincents' primary schools in Glasgow. The idea was to work in a more intensive way than was usually possible, over a longer period than usual. The residency culminated in this exhibition, Spectrum, which she curated, selecting a small number of works made by the children during the 16 week period of workshops. What was gratifying about the selection was that, as well as conveying a sense of the children's achievements (a traditional display of the 'best bits'), the works spoke to each other in terms of their form and content, and built up, to my mind, quite a sophisticated thesis. In addition, the photographs, which might have been seen as merely additional 'context', were, by virtue of their clever arrangement and their own artistic</p>

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
			resonance, well integrated into the show.
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 ¹ below for guidance</p>	5	A most impressive example of how the documentation, process and products of an 'education' project can be presented in an exhibition that is itself entirely gratifying.
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	
Dance, Theatre	Choreography/Use of choreography - originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc	n/a	
Theatre	Script – particularly in relation to new work or second productions. Relevant to classics where the original has been substantially changed.	n/a	
Theatre, Dance	Direction - Concerns issues of interpretation, casting and presentation.	n/a	
Dance, Theatre	Use of music – appropriateness and effect of sound or music (whole/part, live/recorded) to the production.	n/a	
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.	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</p>	5	The selection was clearly made with the space in mind, as it fitted elegantly – prints, paintings and collages were framed consistently and therefore sat very well together; the photographs, printed on A4 paper were arranged, simply but effectively, in grids on an internal wall; and the sculptures each had their own custom-made shelf on the other side of

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>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>		that wall.
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>	3	One group of young people were leaving as I arrived, and a mother and young daughter also came in as I was there – they seemed excited to be there, and set about reading – I wondered if were either involved in the project, or knew someone who was. Very positive comments in the book.
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	Commentary in the form of a colour leaflet was very clear and offered key findings from the residency, as well as some images from the exhibition. There was also a beautifully produced book available for £5, which was launched at a free seminar at which Jan Platun discussed the residency.
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	A large part of the residency's aims was to research the creative needs of the children, which appears to have been done very effectively, and the outcomes are explored in the book. Platun's use of quotes - from the children, their teachers and parents - records how the research findings were relayed to those groups throughout the process.

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	Gallery attached to Project Ability studios. Very suitable.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	Thankfully the exhibition was not overburdened with commentary. Everything the audience needed to know was sited at the entrance to the exhibition – on a wall panel and in a leaflet.
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.	Nice striking image used for the poster. Good, clear information on the website.
Ease of booking and payment	N/A
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	Central Glasgow. Although the building is striking, the entrance is innocuous, and map on the website does not show where to find the entrance.
External signage and signposting	Posters sited outside, and again in the doorway of 18 Albion Street (this time saying '3 rd floor - all welcome') which was encouraging, as visitors need to take the lift.
Internal directional signage	Arrows to both galleries as the lift opens.
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	Lift to the third floor.
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	Opening hours were fine.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	Good customer service – a member of staff came out of the office to offer discussion when I arrived, and later asked me to fill out a form.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ²	Yes, on website, posters, leaflet and book.

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.

Re: audience

Due to our fairly poor location and limited open hours we consider that we have relatively low attendance at exhibitions – although this fluctuates with the time of year and external factors such as the Glasgow Art Fair and when we have resources to develop interpretation and workshop events.

We had a record attendance at the opening of Spectrum with 130 people attending. A seminar to coincide with the launch of the Spectrum publication attracted 50 people representing arts, education, social care and health professionals as well as interested members of the public.

In total 340 people attended Project Ability to visit this exhibition.

We have a regular loyal audience who regularly attend our exhibitions and while we work to attract new visitors our average audiences are around 200. Visitors to the building are much higher and when we factor them in the attendance is much higher. The 340 recorded visitors came to Gallery specifically to see the exhibition.