



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:**

**Venue: Gallery 1, Project Ability Studios & Gallery, Glasgow**

**Title of Event: Jamaican Intuitives**

**Type of Event:** (e.g. performance, exhibition, informal showing, work-in-progress, workshop, screening, lecture etc)

**Exhibition**

**Date of Visit: 16 October 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.)*

Name: Stephen Beddoe      Date: 28/10/2008

Specialist Advisor

Scottish Arts Council Officer

*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	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.	3	<p>The exhibition comprised paintings, drawings and sculptures by eight Jamaican self-taught 'Intuitive' artists (generally termed Outsider Art elsewhere). The works are from the private collection of Charlotte Mortensson, a long-time supporter of such work. The approaches taken by each artist differ extensively in subject matter and execution. They are unified in their 'intuitive' and self-taught approach to making work that reflects or addresses with personal, social and cultural traditions.</p> <p>The diversity of styles and approach differ wildly in the eight artists exhibiting: ranging from the abstract/surrealist paintings of Leonard Daley; the bold, colourful, expressive and layered narrative paintings of Ras Dizzy and the wood carvings and sculptures of William 'Woody' Joseph. What connects the work of the eight is the uninhibited approach to 'stories', be they autobiographical, magical or realist. Many of the subjects chosen and depicted are highly autobiographical (particularly Kingsley Thomas' self-portraits), highlighting sometimes personal trauma and daily challenges.</p> <p>Moreover, the works shown have a connectedness with the culture and community from which they have emerged. African influences and motifs abound; whether in the use of colour and line or in the depiction of animals and people.</p> <p>By all accounts the work of these artists, and this collection in particular, have been exhibited widely since the now much referenced Intuitive Eye exhibition at the National Gallery of Jamaica (1979).</p> <p>The body of work shown in Jamaican Intuitives is, in the context of outsider art, accomplished, but breaks no new ground in contemporary practice or issues. These works follow traditional forms and approaches, are interesting and engaging to a certain degree but do not move beyond the well defined boundaries of folk and self-taught visual art practice.</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</p>	3	<p>The Jamaican Intuitives exhibition has been mounted to coincide with the UK's established Black History Month, celebrating Black and minority ethnic history and culture in this country.</p> <p>It's not clear whether the works exhibited have been especially selected for this exhibition or whether the show is a pre-packaged touring show. Moreover, it</p>

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
	the overall programme.		<p>is also unclear from the gallery show how this exhibition has been integrated into other related events or exhibitions in Glasgow/Scotland to celebrate BHM.</p> <p>The work exhibited fits clearly into the exhibiting policy and organisational remit of Project Ability, as many of the artists shown were addressing a range of personal challenges such as mental illness and physical disability. For example, at least one artist (Ras Dizzy) remained homeless during most of his artistic life, whilst sculptor Woody Joseph only began making carvings after a serious leg injury.</p>
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 <sup>1</sup>below for guidance</p>	3	<p>The (presumed) aims of the exhibition were to showcase work which related to the aims of Project Ability, set within the context of Black History month. This is successful and brought a body of work and practice to a wider audience, or at least the audience that frequents Project Ability's gallery. While the genre of outsider art may be known to many artists and members of the public there is no doubt that Jamaican Intuitives will add to people's knowledge of this type of practice.</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>		Not applicable – see Quality of Presentation/Engagement question below.
Dance, Theatre	Choreography/Use of choreography - originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc		Not applicable
Theatre	Script – particularly in relation to new work or second productions. Relevant to classics where the original has been substantially changed.		Not applicable
Theatre, Dance	Direction - Concerns issues of interpretation, casting and presentation.		Not applicable
Dance, Theatre	Use of music – appropriateness and effect of sound or music (whole/part, live/recorded) to the production.		Not applicable

<sup>1</sup> 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
Dance, Theatre	<p><b>Design</b> — costume, set, lighting. Take into account how appropriate the design is in relation to the venue and, where appropriate, the touring schedule.</p>		Not applicable
All	<p><b>Quality of Presentation/Engagement</b></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>This visual art exhibition was presented to a good standard. The works were displayed sympathetically and professionally. The exhibited works were well lit and the sculptures placed on wall shelves and a plinth to give proper room to view.</p> <p>All works were accompanied by proper labelling.</p> <p>Organisers of outsider art or intuitive art exhibitions have a tendency to display too many artworks, something which has been resisted in this case, offering a better visitor experience. Given the restrictions of the Project Ability Space and building, it is (ironically) always an enjoyable gallery space to actually view work.</p>
All	<p><b>Audience</b></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 approximately 45 minutes visiting this exhibition, reading the accompanying pamphlet and viewing the comments book. I also had a short discussion with staff, who were helpful and informative. The discussion related to how the exhibition can/would fit into the wider programme (in Glasgow) around Black History Month (see below). There were no other visitors to the exhibition during my visit. There were only three (albeit positive) comments in the comments book.</p>
All	<p><b>Additional Interpretative activity</b> — what activities were available to enhance the experience of the event eg workshops, artist's talks, discussion groups? Please indicate age-groups targeted.</p>	2	<p>As far as I could ascertain from my discussion with staff, the only activity relating to the exhibition is a talk by owner/collector Charlotte Mortensson on 3/11/08 (although the exhibition closes on 3/10/08).</p> <p>It was disappointing to learn that there were no related educational or outreach activity to this exhibition, given that it coincided with the Black History Month. This was a lost opportunity. Moreover, given the increase of refugees from the African subcontinent now living in Glasgow (particularly clustered nearby in Sighthill), this exhibition could have presented a perfect opportunity to reach out to this community. Again, this seems like a lost opportunity.</p>

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
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)?	2	As far as I am aware from the short discussion with staff, no additional education or outreach workshops accompanied this exhibition so no outcomes were addressed or achieved.

## 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 is set within Project Ability's offices and workshops space, itself set on the 1 <sup>st</sup> . floor of a Glasgow City Council Social Services department building. The entrance is not well signposted and is not welcoming, presenting an ongoing challenge for the organisation. There is no real indication through décor or signage that a gallery of creative space can be visited or accessed on the first floor. You would require prior knowledge to know it exists in the first place. The space is perfectly adequate for workshop delivery but will always present challenges for public profile and access when it comes to the exhibition programme. No doubt the tenacy is related to Project Ability's links and support by GCC, but this organisation and its gallery deserve greater public exposure to showcase their work.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	The exhibition was supplemented by an A5 eight-page colour pamphlet. The works were displayed, lit and labelled professionally. There was a comments book available and vinyl lettering for the exhibition title and sponsors logos.
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.	A eight-page full colour A5 pamphlet, entitled Jamaican Intuitives, was freely available for visitors to the exhibition. This included an introduction by the collector who owns the work (Charlotte Mortensson) and included profiles on each of the eight exhibiting artists.  The project Ability website provides all the necessary information needed for current and future exhibitions and workshops and has been redesigned since last year. However, it still lacks any semblance of interactivity or good design. It no doubt addresses all issues of accessibility but this is still no excuse for a lack of engagement, user driven content and other current web tools.
Ease of booking and payment	Not applicable.
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	Project Ability is located in Glasgow's Merchant City. The gallery and resources are relatively easy to find, but is hampered by the fact it is located on the upper floors of a city council building used for other client services.
External signage and signposting	Project Ability is housed in a city council building in the Merchant City. The gallery is situated on the upper floors of the building so it's marketing profile is hampered by its lack of

Criteria	Comment
	<p>'shopfront' visibility to the public. This does the exhibited work and the commitment of the staff a real disservice, and is an ongoing challenge for the organisation. The access corridor, lifts and stairs are poorly maintained and decorated, and smell strongly of cigarettes. Social Services clients congregate at the entrance smoking which, along with the lack of shopfront, (perhaps) dissuades general members of the public from making a spontaneous visit to the gallery. All in all not a very welcoming and open invitation. Project Ability deserves better, given the quality of work they produce in this environment.</p>
Internal directional signage	Internal signage is average, given the challenges vis a vis the location of the gallery (see above).
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	Project Ability is an organisation dedicated to access issues and so addresses these needs more than adequately. A lift can take visitors with mobility problems up to the gallery and space and other interpretive materials and staff support is available if required.
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	This was a visual arts exhibition. The event was open at the advertised time during my visit.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	Upon arrival, two members of staff introduced themselves and offered to provide additional help and explanation if I required it. Staff were helpful and on-hand to answer any questions.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding <sup>2</sup>	Scottish Arts Council was credited as a funder in the exhibition and the SAC logo appears in the related exhibition pamphlet.

<sup>2</sup> 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.