



### 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:** Promote YT - Arts & Theatre Trust Fife - Lochgelly Centre

**Venue:** Lochgelly Centre

**Title of Event:** Youth Theatre in Fife 2009

**Type of Event:** Youth Theatre Event

**Date of Visit:** 30th and 31st October 2009

**Overall Rating:** Good

*(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.)*

A good event that engaged young people in the presentation of a wide variety of work from the songs of 'Oliver' to cutting edge drama and film from Kinetic to a play by Judith Johnson from Carnegie College and a devised theatre piece by a newly emerging youth theatre company called Re:Generation

The event was primarily for the young people and their supporters and an opportunity for them to present their work for each other. The standards varied considerably from the bad to the very good. The final performance piece created by Kinetic was outstanding. It was a heartfelt story of love, sex and death in small town Fife. Beautifully shot film combined with well-conceived live drama with a strong visual style.

It was hoped to attract youth theatre participants in Fife to take part in a range of workshops on 31st October but this was cancelled due to a small response.

The major downfall of the event was the technical presentation of the performance pieces, presented on a large barn like stage it was, at times, difficult to hear and, with some poor lighting, difficult to see.

I question the choice of venue for these particular pieces of work. The pieces were lost in such a big venue and would have benefitted from a more intimate setting.

**Name:** Alan Lyddiard  
Specialist Advisor

**Date:** 1st November 2009

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"> <li>Quality of ideas</li> <li>if you have seen other work of this artist(s)/ company before, please comment on any relevant comparisons</li> </ul>	Good	There was a full range of quality. We were subjected to some bad singing from the musical 'Oliver' to some really first class performance with exceptional ideas fro Kinetic Youth Theatre. Kinetic produced something very special with a brilliant mixture of live drama and recorded video imagery.
All (if relevant)	<p>Curatorial/ programming vision/ selection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How does it fit within the artistic vision of the organisation?</li> <li>If the event is part of a Festival, please say how it contributes to the overall programme.</li> </ul>	Good	The programme fitted the artistic vision of all the organisations. The work was about participation, engagement and artistic excellence. It was a good chance for young people to learn from each other.
All	<p>Success of event against stated aims of project and/or performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How does it relate to information contained in the programme, the website or other printed material?</li> <li>How well did it communicate the artistic themes?</li> <li>How did the event originate eg from the exhibiting/ producing organisation, from the artist or from commission?</li> </ul> <p>Education events – see <sup>1</sup>below for definition</p>	Satisfactory	<p>The success was mixed in that the programme of workshops was cancelled due to little to no take up.</p> <p>The workshop programme was not well conceived. No mention of who the tutors were on the handbill, for example. People where being charged £5 per person for the day or £3 for individual performances but didn't really know what they were getting.</p> <p>The performances however went ahead and there seemed good response from the audience. The tickets were free.</p>
All	<p>Performers/tutors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the expertise of the performers? Where performers are amateur, please reflect this in your comments.</li> <li>How successfully did the performer(s) communicate with and engage the audience?</li> <li>In your view, was an artist as a tutor key to the success of the workshop?</li> </ul>	Good	<p>The performers were all amateur youth theatre members.</p> <p>There was a lot of talent amongst the groups. Kinetic Youth Theatre were all very strong performers. However it was very difficult to hear most of the performances through bad projection. The space felt like a barn.</p>
Dance, Theatre	<p>Choreography/Use of choreography</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Was the work original?</li> <li>How was the space used?</li> <li>How many dancers were there and how were they used?</li> <li>How long was the piece?</li> </ul>	Satisfactory	The choreography for the 'Oliver' medley was satisfactory but rather dull. The use of choreography throughout the other performances was minimal.
Theatre	<p>Script</p> <p>Please comment on this for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>new work</li> <li>second productions</li> <li>classics where the original has been substantially changed</li> </ul>	Good	Scripts were good. Judith Johnson wrote the script for Carnegie College's 'Scary Play' originally for the New Connections scheme. There was a well devised piece by a new group calling themselves Re:Generation and the amazing performance piece by Kinetic.

<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
Theatre, Dance	<b>Direction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Was the work well interpreted?</li> <li>Was it well cast?</li> <li>Was it well presented?</li> </ul>	Good	The best work was from Kinetic. Andrew Cumming as the writer and film director is a young talent to watch. Very well and bravely performed by a young cast dealing with difficult topics like sex and death. Fantastic use of video projections. But the acting style was hard to hear on such a large stage. The other performances were satisfactory on the whole.
Dance, Theatre	<b>Use of music</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did the music/ sound used enhance the production?</li> <li>Is it live or recorded?</li> </ul>	Good	Kinetic use music brilliantly. Sometimes the music was the prime emotional driver in a scene. Sometimes it was supportive. The Carnegie College piece did not use music well it was very cliché.
Dance, Theatre	<b>Design</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How were the costumes, set and lighting?</li> <li>How did it work in the venue?</li> <li>Was it technically proficient? (eg lighting and sound cues, etc).</li> </ul>	Satisfactory	Again Kinetic had the most flair in regards to stage design but I think the venue was unsuitable for the styles of all the performances. They required a much more intimate setting. The only show that was well conceived in lighting and sound was Kinetic. The "Scary Play" from Carnegie had particularly bad lighting.
All	<b>Quality of Public Engagement</b> Performing Arts/Education - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Was the production/event targeted at a particular audience?</li> <li>Was the production /event appropriate for the audience/participants?</li> <li>Were you/ engaged/inspired?</li> <li>Did the audience/ participants appear to be engaged/inspired?</li> <li>What was their response?</li> <li>Approximately how many people were there?</li> <li>Did there appear to be a broad mix of people – age, cultural diversity or disabled?</li> <li>Are BSL/captioned/audio described performances offered as part of the run/tour/? If so how many?</li> <li>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?</li> <li>Were these targeted at specific age groups?</li> </ul> Education/learning events: In addition, please provide comments on the following (if appropriate): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How was it taught/led eg one to one, group, child centred?</li> <li>What was the composition of the participant group – age range, gender mix?</li> <li>Is it strategically linked to the curriculum or national policy areas e.g. Early Years, Community Learning &amp; Development</li> <li>What learning/skills</li> </ul>	Good	The performances were aimed at a youth theatre audience made up of friends and families and people interested in youth theatre. The performances could not have been seen in their present form. However I believe that in a more intimate setting the Kinetic piece could be of interest to general audiences. It will be interesting to see the development of the piece. <p>I was engaged and inspired by Kinetic but bored by most of the other work.</p> <p>The audience enjoyed the performances but that was not surprising as they were made up of friends and families and teachers.</p> <p>I believe there were about 100 local people at most of the performances from a range of cultural backgrounds and mixed abilities.</p> <p>The proposed workshops and discussions did not happen but there was opportunity for people to discuss the performances and youth theatre in general after the first performance.</p> <p>The ages seem to range from 10 to 25.</p> <p>There seemed to be no special connection with education institutions other than Carnegie College, who were one of the organising partners. The sharing of work by different groups and the peer learning process seemed very good. Kinetic were influential in the creation of the piece by the Re: Generation group</p>

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
	<p>development took place?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What was the quality of the art produced by the participants?</li> <li>• Did the workshop tutor have a teaching plan for the session and/or project?</li> <li>• How were participants recruited?</li> <li>• Did participants' views and choices help inform the structure and content of the project?</li> </ul> <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"> <li>Is it easy to find?</li> <li>Is it on a main transport route?</li> <li>Are the spaces clean?</li> <li>What were the sight lines like?</li> <li>How big was it?</li> </ul>	Lochgelly Centre was in theory a great place to hold an event of this nature. Well know locally with good facilities. It is easy to find and on reasonable transport routes. But the stage was too big for the young people to handle. Most of the dialogue was lost. A more intimate setting would have been much better.								
<p>Information/ interpretive material at venue–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there programmes, posters and displays about the event?</li> <li>Is there information on the venue's website?</li> </ul>	The poster/handbill I saw was satisfactory but not brilliant. It certainly did not attract people to the event. I thought that the web site was a little dull. This seems to be a very important tool in communicating events to people. They only have 87 fans on facebook.								
<p>Publicity/ pre-publicity –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What leaflets, posters, websites, did you see the event listed in?</li> <li>What publicity materials are produced?</li> <li>Is it easy to understand?</li> <li>Where can you get the information?</li> <li>Is there Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding <sup>2</sup>?</li> </ul> <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>The publicity material was minimal and not very effective.</p> <p>There was however acknowledgement of The Scottish Arts Council</p>								
Ease of booking and payment	Satisfactory								
<p>Timing of the event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?</li> <li>Was the length appropriate?</li> </ul>	Timings seemed appropriate								
<p>Signage and signposting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the entrance clearly marked?</li> <li>Is there clear internal directional signage?</li> <li>Is there Braille signage or signage for audio loops?</li> </ul>	Signage and signposting seemed appropriate								
<p>Access and provision for disabled people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please insert yes/no in the boxes to reflect what you notice about the venue/event</li> </ul> <p>Please add in any additional</p>	<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>No</td> <td>Audio description of performances</td> <td>No</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Yes/No		Yes/No	BSL interpretation	No	Audio description of performances	No
	Yes/No		Yes/No						
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<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.

Criteria	Comment			
comments below the table <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How many BSL/captioned/audio described performances are there at the venue?</li> </ul>	Captioning	No	Lift/ramp	No
	Accessible toilets	Yes	Accessible marketing materials eg website or alternative formats eg large print, Plain English	No
<b>Customer service</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How was the quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)</li> <li>If possible, comment on how responsive they were to the needs of disabled customers?</li> </ul>	Customer service at Lochgelly was very good			

### 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.

Promote YT thanks the Scottish Arts Council and Alan Lyddiard for this Artistic Evaluation and is pleased that event was considered to be well conceived and executed.

The core purpose of the Youth Theatre in Fife event 2009 was to showcase, in a community setting, the conclusion of RE:GENERATION which was a youth theatre outreach project funded principally by the Scottish Community Foundation. Since May of this year RE:GENERATION has been providing an ongoing and free opportunity to local disadvantaged young people from Lochgelly to participate in Youth Theatre.

The event was designed to offer these young people a chance to showcase the progress of their work to friends and family, whilst at the same time engage the young people and the staff of all the partners who have collaborated to make RE:GENERATION.

Promote YT therefore wishes to express disappointment that the Artistic Evaluation focuses very much on the varying standard of the performances without taking into account the background of the groups performing and, as such, falls short of providing constructive feedback on the wider aims and objectives of the project – which have been to regionally develop youth theatre through providing opportunity and creating partnerships.

The comments on the shortcomings of the performance space are accepted but this was the local community venue accessible to groups, parents and friends and it would therefore not of been in the spirit of the event to stage the event elsewhere.

We also note the comments on the cancellation of the Workshop Programme and were disappointed that there was not the hoped uptake from other regional groups. However, the critical partners were engaged and the event was adapted to a free showing of work to take account of this. The SAC was made aware of this in advance and we would of hoped the assessor would have been briefed as such.

Promote YT strongly takes exception to our website being evaluated as 'dull'. The website is principally designed to serve the key stakeholders of the youth theatre sector and provide an ongoing asset to the youth theatre sector. Our feedback is that it does this very successfully. It advertises forthcoming events but is not intended as purely a slick marketing tool to promote individual events.

Although the performance groups and the performance venue may find the feedback useful, Promote YT does not consider this evaluation particularity helpful as it fails to measure the event / wider project against the aims and objectives of our core work, in other words how successful was the project in engendering the concept of youth theatre and even theatre itself in an area where there has been little or no access to theatre.

Promote YT would respectfully request that future evaluations of our output be more attuned to the wider remit of our development work and not just concentrate on the standard of the individual performances.