



## 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: Royal Lyceum Theatre Company**

**Venue:** Royal Lyceum Theatre

**Title of Event: Man of La Mancha**

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

Performance

**Date of Visit:** 18 May 2007

**Overall Rating** (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.)

Excellent

An accomplished production of a successful musical with high production and performance standards. This production could stand up in almost any context and does credit to the team at the Royal Lyceum.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ David Taylor \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 19 \_\_\_/05 \_\_\_/07 \_\_\_\_\_

Specialist Advisor  Scottish Arts Council Officer  *Please tick 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.	Excellent	This was an interesting choice of a musical which has meaty content, a strong narrative and an engaging score. The conception of the production was interesting and thoughtful. The direction (Martin Duncan) was witty and sensitive. I thought this production was much superior to the musical <i>Guys and Dolls</i> produced by the company in 2001.
All	Curatorial/ programming vision/ selection Please indicate how the event originated eg from the exhibiting/ producing organisation, artist-led or commissioned.  If the event is part of a Festival, please say how it contributes to the overall programme.	Excellent	A shrewd and imaginative choice of production and a good choice of artistic team.
All	Success of event against stated aims - in the programme or other printed material, including how well it communicated the artistic themes.  Education events – see <sup>1</sup> below for guidance	Excellent	The Artistic Director of the company describes the piece in the programme as a “classic comic tragedy”. The production lived up to this description, delivering comedy, pathos and universal meaning with ease.
All	Performers/tutors - technical standard, performance skills and ability to communicate and engage.  Where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments.	Excellent	There was a strong cast whose acting and musical skills were well balanced. Nicolas Pound's central performance was compelling and amount at times to a tour de force. The production as well presented technically with a demanding moved staircase that was well managed.
Dance, Theatre	Choreography/Use of choreography - originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc	Good	The choreography was integral to the plot and action and worked well.
Theatre	Script – particularly in relation to new work or second productions. Relevant to classics where the original has been substantially changed.	Excellent	The script uses the device of introducing the author who then transforms into the eponymous hero to good effect. The universal application of the themes of the narrative is well brought out in the dialogue.

<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.

<b>Artform</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Comments and key reasons for rating</b>
Theatre, Dance	Direction - Concerns issues of interpretation, casting and presentation.	Excellent	The direction knitted the action and the music together seamlessly. There was a real ensemble feel to the production. There was good use of the depth of the stage and the action flowed smoothly from scene to scene.
Dance, Theatre	Use of music – appropriateness and effect of sound or music (whole/part, live/recorded) to the production.	Excellent	As a musical this was clearly a key element in the production. The standard of performance was good with strong voices and instrumental ability evident across the cast.
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.	Excellent	The set (Francis O'Connor) was attractive and successfully set the scene and supported the various scenes. I thought that the overhead prison-like gallery and moveable stairway was a little over-done but did provide a link from the early 17 <sup>th</sup> century and the a twentieth century milieu. Costumes were good and the lighting design supported the production well with one or two enchanting visual moments.
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 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>	Excellent	All technical aspects were well presented.
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>		The house looked around two thirds full. The audience response at the interval and at the final curtain was very enthusiastic. The audience seemed totally tuned in to the production.
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>		

<b>Artform</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Comments and key reasons for rating</b>
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)?		No comment- not assessed

## 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?*

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Suitability of the venue for the event	Good
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	The programme was informative with a helpful essay on the context of Cervantes' creation of Don Quixote and his life.
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.	The image used did not, I thought, serve the production well. The photograph image of the lead actor in close-up in costume and wig and beard conjured up a rather hammy perception of a musical which was at odds with the production itself.
Ease of booking and payment	Good
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	Access to the venue from Lothian Road is currently compromised to some extent by the building works at the Usher Hall.
External signage and signposting	Fair
Internal directional signage	Good
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	Good
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	Good
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	Good
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding <sup>2</sup>	Appropriate

<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.