



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: Scottish Community Drama Association
Venue: Bowhouse Community Centre, Grangemouth
Title of Event: Eastern Division Final
Type of Event: Amateur One-Act Play Festival
Date of Visit: 27th March 2010
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.)

This was a good event that engaged a large number of people in the presentation of a wide variety of work from drama to comedy to a Spanish classic.

Nine amateur theatre companies from across East Scotland participated in the Eastern Division Final where a winner was chosen to perform in the National competition to be held at the Pitlochry Festival Theatre, 22nd - 24th April 2010.

The event was primarily for the amateur companies and their supporters and an opportunity for them to present their work to each other. But it was also a competition, which added a touch of tension to the evening. The standards were quite high. The three groups I saw were; Aberdour Players with 'A kind of Vesuvius' by Gillian Ploughman, Fintry Amateur Dramatic Society with 'The Love of Don Perlimplin and Belisa In the Garden' by Federico Garcia Lorca and Killin Drama Club with 'Albert Nobbs' by Gordon Steel.

It was a great, old fashioned, community event with lots of people thoroughly enjoying themselves. Apart from the plays, we were entertained by a raffle, tea and homemade cakes with an amusing master of ceremonies and an insightful adjudicator.

The acting was of generally of high standard and although the settings were a little basic, the audiences laughed at the comedy and connected emotionally to the drama in a great example of people 'loving what they do and sharing it with like minded people'.

Name: Alan Lyddiard
Specialist Advisor

Date: 29th March 2010

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 	Good	This was an event that felt like it had not changed in many years, like an enjoyable old-fashioned institution. I make no judgement on that.
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. 	Good	The choice of the programme with the different plays, the community style event (tea and cakes) and the contribution of the Adjudicator all integrated well together
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	Good	It is what it is. Performances of amateur drama societies competing against each other. All the material contained in the programme and web site explained the event exactly. The artistic themes were clearly communicated. This is an annual event that I imagine has been going on for many years.
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? 	Good	The performers were all amateur but the standard was high. Most of the performers had a real connection with the audience. They performed with authority to an audience that was eager to engage and who were extremely supportive. Gordon Hibbert as Albert Nobbs was particularly good, with great comedy timing.
Dance, Theatre	Choreography/Use of choreography <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was the work original? How was the space used? How many dancers were there and how were they used? How long was the piece? 	Satisfactory	Not much choreography in the performances but there was stylish movement quality in the Lorca play, which was very successful.
Theatre	Script Please comment on this for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> new work second productions classics where the original has been substantially changed 	Good	'A Kind Of Vesuvius' by Gillian Plowman was an adequate piece of writing but felt a little clichéd. 'Albert Nobbs' was funny and touching and the Lorca piece was beautifully poetic. This was a brave and interesting choice of play by Fintry Amateur Dramatic Society.

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
Theatre, Dance	Direction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was the work well interpreted? • Was it well cast? • Was it well presented? 	Good	'A Kind of Vesuvius' was adequately cast and delivered by the director. "Albert Nobbs" was very well cast and directed. The Lorca play was full of interesting and poetic ideas and was well conceived and directed.
Dance, Theatre	Use of music <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the music/ sound used enhance the production? • Is it live or recorded? 	Good	Music was well used throughout the evening. It was all recorded except for three delightful unaccompanied songs in the Lorca play.
Dance, Theatre	Design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How were the costumes, set and lighting? • How did it work in the venue? • Was it technically proficient? (eg lighting and sound cues, etc). 	Satisfactory	Design, on the whole, was not good. The costumes in 'Albert Nobbs' were among the best whilst the Lorca play was a bit hit and miss but with a lot of style. "Vesuvius" was just ok. The evening was technically proficient.
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 	Satisfactory	<p>The event was targeted to people who enjoy amateur dramatics and was completely appropriate for them.</p> <p>I enjoyed the evening because I was surrounded by people enjoying themselves and I got caught up in that atmosphere.</p> <p>The audience was about 250 people most of whom where middle-aged and Caucasian. There were a few young people.</p> <p>The Adjudicator gave a very interesting and informed critique of each play at the end of the evening. An audience member near me turned to her companion and said very loudly, 'That was soooooo useful' as he finished his observations.</p> <p>The evening felt like it was a club night for members and I was not sure how much the general public were engaged with it.</p> <p>My instinct is that amateur theatre is flourishing in Scotland but it also feels slightly stuck in a different time</p> <p>I believe more needs to be done to widen the audience base of these events and initiate some training and development programmes to continue to improve standards.</p>

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
	choices help inform the structure and content of the project? Crafts/Visual Arts Use of equipment, space and overall layout/hang?		

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								
Location and suitability of the venue for the event <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? 	<p>The venue was quite easy to find on the internet. It is on a bus route. The community centre was clean but needs a bit of a face-lift. Certainly the outside of the building is not customer friendly and a little foreboding. The hall itself was good with a stage at one end and adequate facilities.</p>								
Information/ interpretive material at venue– <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there programmes, posters and displays about the event? Is there information on the venue's website? 	<p>Not much material at the venue. I was not aware of much going on at the centre. The SCDA organisation has its own web site, which is not very dynamic. The venue is mentioned on Falkirk District website</p>								
Publicity/ pre-publicity – <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>	<p>The publicity material was minimal. I assumed the audience was there because they were connected to the Drama Clubs involved in the event.</p> <p>I could not see that much effort was made to attract members of the general public. The event was held in a Community Centre on a housing estate and I assumed that not many local people, living in the vicinity, were attracted to the event.</p> <p>There was acknowledgement of The Scottish Arts Council in the programme</p>								
Ease of booking and payment	<p>Not easy for a general member of the public if you are not a member of any of the clubs involved</p>								
Timing of the event <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience? Was the length appropriate? 	<p>Timings seemed appropriate and although it was a long evening (over four hours) in theatre terms, it didn't seem to worry anybody.</p>								
Signage and signposting <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? 	<p>Signage and sign postings seemed appropriate but minimal.</p>								
Access and provision for disabled people <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</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						
BSL interpretation	No	Audio description of performances	No						

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			
comments below the table <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many BSL/captioned/audio described performances are there at the venue? 	Captioning	No	Lift/ramp	No
	Accessible toilets	Yes	Accessible marketing materials eg website or alternative formats eg large print, Plain English	No
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? 	Customer service at Bowhouse Community Centre was helpful and friendly. I was not aware of any disabled customers but it seemed responsive to their needs.			

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.