

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:	Scottish Traditions of Dance Trust
Venue:	Castle Campbell, Dollar
Title of Event:	Castle Campbell Creative Celebration
Type of Event:	Dance workshops, story telling and exhibitions
Date of Visit:	19 July 2008
Overall Rating:	4 - Good

The day did not get off to a good start with torrential rain set to blight the event. Gradually the clouds dispersed allowing the public the make fuller use of the grounds of Castle Campbell.

On entering the castle, the public were met at the gates by Mary Queen of Scots and James Stewart, the 5th Earl of Argyll (both stayed in character throughout the day, with the Earl giving an excellent performance).

The overall public response to the day's event was not high (regardless of the weather improving).

Castle Campbell is not accessible in attracting a 'passing trade'. It requires a brisk walk up Dollar Glen if you don't have transport. I passed only two people making the journey by foot to the castle. I wondered why STDT decided on Castle Campbell. Alloa Tower may have been more accessible possibly.

The level of instruction was very good. All the tutors make the workshops accessible and fun.

Name: Patricia Eckersley

Date: 20/07/2008

Specialist Advisor

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.	Good	I felt a great deal of effort had gone into the planning of Castle Campbell's Creative Celebration. The weather plays such a big part in getting the public to respond. Castle Campbell offered an impressive location but less opportunity in attracting large numbers due to transport restrictions. The partnership between STDT and Historic Scotland in holding such events needs to be encouraged as both can gain from this collaboration.
All (if relevant)	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.	Good	The event is part of the ongoing partnership between the different organisations involved.
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 ¹ below for guidance	Competent	Castle Campbell is stunning but not accessible. I stopped at the museum at the bottom of Dollar Glen and spoke to the staff. They knew nothing about the event and had no publicity to pass onto visitors coming into the museum. The same applied on going into two shops in Dollar, both knew nothing about the day. A missed opportunity in directing more people to the celebration. No sign of posters either in Dollar itself.
All	Performers/tutors - technical standard, performance skills and ability to communicate and engage. Where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments.	Good	Robert Lambie instructed the historic dance sessions, Lisa Kennedy the ceilidh dance, Gregor Wood music and story telling and Kirsten Wood and Kathleen O'Neill visual arts; -all excellent tutors. Some workshops were busier than others with the public drifting between workshops. It was good to see families and younger children joining in the workshops. Reach Out , is an arts organisation based in Alloa who invited artists to work in the castle prior to the event and then exhibited their work. There was not a great deal of work on display, but it was of a good standard.
Dance, Theatre	Choreography/Use of choreography - originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc	-	N/A

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	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.	Competent	The Historic Dance and ceilidh workshop both used a tape/cassette player. Douglas Wood (who played the Earl of Argyll) played a small bagpipes, similar to the Northumbrian pipes.
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 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>	Good	<p>The inclusion of Step Dancing might have enhanced the day and increased participating from younger people.</p> <p>One of the historic dances demonstrated in the workshops which dating back to 1150, involved hugging your partner. This was a definite turn off to the younger members present.</p>
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>		
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>	Good	Workshops, discussion groups and informal chats with tutors. The day attracted a range of age groups, which was encouraging.
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>	Competent	<p>Some children seemed a little self-conscious in participating in the dance workshops and wandered off.</p> <p>Having information (in addition to the STDT leaflet) on dance classes available in the region would have been helpful to build on the taster sessions.</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
Suitability of the venue for the event	See above.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	The archive display in the upper hall was difficult to read because the lighting was poor. The exhibition might have been better placed in the lower hall with better natural lighting available.
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.	Publicity leaflet forwarded with ticket. See above on comments on the lack of publicity in Dollar and Dollar Museum.
Ease of booking and payment	Phoned and tickets forwarded very efficiently.
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	Without transport to the castle, access involves a walk up through Dollar Glen. This might put elderly people off and families with children in buggies.
External signage and signposting	Good
Internal directional signage	Good
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	No wheelchair access or suitability for people with physical disabilities at the castle. No coach or bus access to Castle Campbell.
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	Event lasted all day, with repeated workshops throughout the day.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	Friendly and helpful staff.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ²	SAC acknowledgement given.

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.