



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 Ensemble
Venue:	Glasgow City Halls
Title of Event:	Old Friends and New
Type of Event:	Concert Performance (part of a subscription series of concerts throughout Scotland)
Date of Visit:	8 February 2008
Overall Rating:	5
	This was an excellent, challenging and engaging concert experience which covered a wide variety of repertoire including commissioned work all performed at the very highest artistic standards and presented in an exemplary manner.
Name:	Ian Smith
Date:	12 February 2008
	Scottish Arts Council Officer (Head of Music)

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.	5	An innovative programme juxtaposing new commissioned work (Steve Martland) with established contemporary repertoire (Stravinsky) with less familiar work (Francaix) and an acknowledged gem of the classical genre (Mozart's clarinet concerto)
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.	5	As above, but worth noting that the Martland performance was one of the undoubted highlights of the evening, for both ensemble and audience. Mention should also be made of the use by Michael Collins of the Stadler Basset Clarinet which he used in the Mozart to great effect with a sonority and beauty of tone that was immediately evident.
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	5	The combination of the Ensemble with Michael Collin's London Winds worked extremely well in both the Francaix and of course, the Mozart. The title of this concert series 'Old Friends and New' was particularly appropriate for the chosen repertoire and the obvious synergy of the relationship between Collins and Scottish Ensemble artistic director, Jonathan Morton.
All	Performers/tutors - technical standard, performance skills and ability to communicate and engage. Where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments.	5	It was really hard to fault any element of this performance other than some small balance problems mostly from the horns, but overall the performance, especially of the ensemble in the Martland and of Michael Collins in the Mozart was exemplary.
Dance, Theatre	Choreography/Use of choreography - originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc		
Theatre	Script – particularly in relation to new work or second productions. Relevant to classics where the original has been substantially changed.		
Theatre, Dance	Direction - Concerns issues of interpretation, casting and presentation.		

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
Dance, Theatre	Use of music – appropriateness and effect of sound or music (whole/part, live/recorded) to the production.		
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.		
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>	4	The ensemble always stand to play and I am not sure this worked in the Mozart Clarinet Concerto as well as in all other works performed, but that is a minor and personal observation. Again I must cite the Martland, which was not only a technical and rhythmical tour de force for the players, but demonstrated the highest quality of leadership from Jonathan Morton.
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>		There was a healthy audience number with the main auditorium of the City Halls well filled. The audience response was excellent and again their response to the Martland was evident when the composer acknowledged their support following the performance of Eternity's Sunrise.
All	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.	4	Steve Martland gave a pre-concert talk, which I did not attend, but was apparently most informative and engaging.
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)?	4	See above.

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 refurbished City Halls is one of the finest natural acoustic performance spaces in Europe.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	Good.
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.	Good.
Ease of booking and payment	N/A
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	Good.
External signage and signposting	Good.
Internal directional signage	Good.
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	Excellent with full disabled access at the front and rear of the hall.
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 ²	Good.

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.