



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:	City Halls
Title of Event:	Red
Type of Event: (e.g. performance, exhibition, informal showing, work-in-progress, workshop, screening, lecture etc)	Performance
Date of Visit:	3 October 2008
Overall Rating:	5 (Excellent)
<i>(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.)</i>	
This programme was so enjoyable that I tried to attend the London performance being held in the Wigmore Hall, which was (unfortunately for me) sold out. This demonstrates that the Scottish Ensemble are absolutely on top of their game, highly in demand and playing concerts of an exceptional artistic quality. This concert was a magnificent start to the new season.	
Name: Caroline Winn	Date: 21/10/08
Scottish Arts Council Officer	<i>Please circle the relevant title</i>

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	<p>The Scottish Ensemble continues to programme highly innovatively, playing to their strengths and to the demands of audiences. This concert brought together music from disparate ends of chamber music repertoire, bringing together a Baroque and post-Romantic programme that was fresh, exciting and stimulating.</p> <p>The company continues to push boundaries and explore new ways of presenting chamber music in an innovative way and this diverse programme demonstrates this clearly.</p> <p>The Scottish Ensemble maintains the highest quality work and, if possible, continues to get better with each programme.</p>
All (if relevant)	<p>Curatorial/ programming vision/ selection</p> <p>Please indicate how the event originated eg from the exhibiting/ producing organisation, artist-led or commissioned.</p> <p>If the event is part of a Festival, please say how it contributes to the overall programme.</p>	5	<p>The Scottish Ensemble worked with soloists to develop a highly compelling programme. The transposition of the Albinoni concerto, originally for violin, by Alison Balsam was exquisite.</p> <p>This was a concert that travelled through the elegance and composure of the Baroque era, through to the solemn and sublime and finale of sheer excitement and hysteria of the Shostakovich concerto. A true rollercoaster ride of emotion.</p>
All	<p>Success of event against stated aims - in the programme or other printed material, including how well it communicated the artistic themes.</p> <p>Education events – see ¹below for guidance</p>	5	<p>The performance was exactly what was stated within the festival programme.</p> <p>The Scottish Ensemble play to their strengths in terms of their programming, but are also not afraid of risk taking as seen in this seasons schedule as well as in past programmes.</p>
All	<p>Performers/tutors - technical standard, performance skills and ability to communicate and engage.</p> <p>Where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments.</p>	5	<p>Scotland should be proud of the calibre of musicians that are involved with the ensemble who are truly world class.</p> <p>The two young soloists were masters of their instruments and complimented the wider ensemble as well as each other.</p>
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.	n/a	
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>	5	Slick production.
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>		<p>The audience evidently enjoyed the performance.</p> <p>The hall was approximately 80% full, which is very good generally. However, when performances of the SE sell out before the concert in London, it is a shame that the group are not playing to full audiences on their home turf. (despite a very strong and convincing marketing plot from the team at SE).</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>	5	There were no additional activities that I was aware of, however the soloists and Artistic Director both spoke to the audience about the programme. Both came across very well and added value by doing so.
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>	n/a	

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	Very suitable.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	<p>I thoroughly enjoyed the programme notes, which were not only historically informative but were also written in a highly captivating style.</p> <p>Each part of the programme painted the historical context in which the composers were working, which gave a real insight into the musical perspectives in which the pieces were written.</p> <p>The programme notes also gave the background of the soloists and ensemble players with a charisma that matched the quality of the players.</p>
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.	<p>The Scottish Arts Council is recognised in all appropriate places; web, banners, programme, etc.</p> <p>All marketing and publicity materials are of a high standard and very well designed.</p> <p>The Scottish Ensemble also makes very good use of internet marketing, using social networking and e-fliers.</p>
Ease of booking and payment	n/a – complimentary tickets.
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	Yes
External signage and signposting	Yes – there was external signage.
Internal directional signage	Yes
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	City Halls have full access for disabled people.
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	Yes
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	Staff at the City Halls are always very helpful.

Criteria	Comment
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ²	Yes. The logo appeared in all appropriate places.

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.