



Updated June 2007

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: | |
| Venue: | Scottish Sculpture Workshop, Lumsden |
| Title of Event: | Assessment of Residency Scheme |
| Type of Event: | Residency |
| Date of Visit: | 22 May 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> | |
| <p>My overall rating was based on an assessment of the current, ongoing residential scheme at the Scottish Sculpture Workshop. In my comments outlined in this report I have concluded that the residential scheme is exemplary. At the time of my visit, I interviewed five of the current outgoing residency holders. I have incorporated their comments into this report.</p> <p>There is now, however, and urgent need to invest in the fabric of the Scottish Sculpture Workshop and also to strategise in regards to ongoing funding to maintain this excellent scheme. I have reflected this in a score of '2' in the section on quality of presentation and this mark reflects simply this need for investment in the fabric (studio provision in particular).</p> | |
| Name: Wendy McMurdo | Date:23/05/08 |
| Specialist Advisor | 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 | Looking at printed cards of work produced over the last 3 years of the residency scheme in the Scottish Sculpture Workshop's small on-site library, I realised that many of the artists whose work is now receiving wider attention have in fact developed or fabricated this work at the Scottish Sculpture Workshop. Their casting facilities in particular are very highly valued and continue to assist in the production of experimental and ambitious sculptural work as part of the successful residency scheme. |
| 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 | The Scottish Sculpture Workshop residency scheme has apparently gone from strength to strength over the last three years. The number and quality of applications (national and international) continues to rise and Scottish Sculpture Workshop are now in the position where they are receiving approx. 100 applications for their various residency schemes and the internship. The vast bulk of this scheme is funded by a grant from the Esme Fairbairn Foundation with a contribution also from Scottish Arts Council. In addition to the residency scheme (12 one-month residencies this year) there is a year-round series of 3-month internships for recent graduates. |
| 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 artists included in the scheme are carefully selected to include as wide a range of experiences as possible per group. (7 artists in May and 5 in August 2008). On my visit I interviewed 4 residents; an Iranian artist based in London, two Russian artists based in Germany, a British Artist based in London and a recent graduate from Edinburgh College of Art, who was the current Scottish Sculpture Workshop intern. |
| 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 | All four of these artists had been recipients of residency awards in the past, either in Europe (British School at Rome, etc) or the UK. Of the four residents interviewed, all rated Scottish Sculpture Workshop most highly of all these comparable residential schemes. In particular, residents appreciated the "overwhelming support that they received from all of the Scottish Sculpture Workshop staff," the high |

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 |
|----------------|--|--------|--|
| | | | quality of the technical support, the thorough and ongoing health and safety procedures and also the very organized nature of all of their communications from Scottish Sculpture Workshop staff. |
| 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. | | |
| 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> | 2 | The facilities at Scottish Sculpture Workshop are now badly in need of upgrading. The main studio building is insufficiently heated and has structural issues, which will eventually necessitate the replacement of the current roof. The communal kitchen facilities are in the process of being upgraded but also require disabled access. Accommodation is functional but basic. A wonderful location with really good well-maintained workshops facilities. Workshop facilities open all year round and there is 24-hour studio access or all residents, some of who live on-site and some off-site but nearby. A good meeting space which doubles as an IT suite and a small library/reading room. A generally welcoming and friendly atmosphere. |
| 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> | 5 | At the end of the residential period, all residents are invited to complete a feedback form for the Scottish Sculpture Workshop on various aspects of the residency. This feedback is then incorporated back into future planning. All interviewed residents were keen to make a return visit to Scottish Sculpture Workshop. Return visits are something that in the past Scottish Sculpture Workshop has encouraged, with many |

| Artform | Criteria | Rating | Comments and key reasons for rating |
|---------|--|--------|--|
| | Education/learning – pre-event involvement, participants/schoolteachers reaction, understanding, commitment, enthusiasm, number involved, etc | | applicants using a first visit for primary research and a second for fabrication or related projects. Because of the remoteness of the Scottish Sculpture Workshop, typically this one-month period is characterized by an intense period of research and or production free from the distractions of more central located facilities. This in general was much appreciated by the residents. |
| 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. | 5 | The summer residents this year (August 2008) will benefit from the presence and development of an artists-led project called Ganghut, which they will be invited to participate in during their tenure. All residents actively involve themselves in an ongoing dialogue with the group on their work during the residency period and often beyond. Vital too is the emphasis on (and supporting of) a time for pure experimentation for artists. |
| 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)? | 5 | In summation, this is a very well run residency scheme, which frankly, on its own terms, couldn't be bettered. It has fully succeeded in its stated aims to nurture and support development in contemporary sculpture in a national and international context. Whilst, as I have noted, the facilities are in definite need of renovation, this did not impact on any way on the benefit of this residency scheme for the participating artists. All of those interviewed could not praise the Scottish Sculpture Workshop highly enough. In my opinion, they are providing and developing a valuable resource and scheme. |

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 location is remote. In general, the location was greatly valued by the artist residents ("its remoteness is necessary in order to explore and reflect...") |
| Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc. | The re-developed Scottish Sculpture Workshop website, as well as advertising all the various schemes available, is used as a forum for discussion, with all the residency members encouraged to upload their own pages to the site and contribute to an ongoing blog on their work. The residencies themselves are advertised on this site and also on a variety of widely used artists sites such as Artquest, Scottish Arts Council bulletins, Artists Newsletter e-digest etc.. |
| 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. | A set of cards is produced annually by Scottish Sculpture Workshop featuring the work of each resident placed that year. This work is also available on their website. |

| Criteria | Comment |
|--|---|
| Ease of booking and payment | |
| Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route? | Not easily accessible by public transport. Buses to Lumsden from nearby towns are infrequent. |
| External signage and signposting | Large painted sign on side of Scottish Sculpture Workshop building on Lumsden High Street. Hard to miss in Lumsden. |
| Internal directional signage | n/a |
| Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see? | The outbuildings are not modified for disabled access. |
| Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience? | Residency period is one month. This seems to work well. |
| Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering) | n/a |
| Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ² | Good – logo on all of Scottish Sculpture Workshop's printed materials and website. |

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.