



Scottish **Arts** Council

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: SUMMER RESIDENCY PROGRAMME

Venue: SCOTTISH SCULPTURE WORKSHOP

Date of Visit: 16th August 2009

Overall Rating: Good

Artists at different career stages have a month of supported time at SSW to focus exclusively on developing their own professional practice during August each year.

Selected artists for 2009 programme had differing approaches, in terms of their own practice and what they wanted to achieve from the residency at SSW.

The way in which the residency programme has been structured and managed (with artists giving talks about their work, a group dinner hosted on arrival, intense peer group interaction & walkabout critiques) has been fine-tuned and developed over the years to allow the wider membership of SSW to actively engage with the summer resident artists. SSW's Board and staff have the opportunity to connect with the artists informally, enabling the residents to absorb and engage with the broader aims & ethos of SSW.

The majority of the artists on site during the assessment visit had found the experience of working with technical support and having access to casting techniques a fulfilling one. Having a specific objective prior to arriving at the workshop enabled a number of the artists to maximise their experience.

SSW staff members were efficient in their management of the programme.

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Specialist Advisor

Date: 28.03.10

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.

- 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	Good	<p>SSW-run programme of funded Research and Production Residencies over the summer. This provides visual artists from the UK and further afield with time, space and support to explore new ideas and experiment with new techniques and processes.</p> <p>Current structure involved approx 12 artists participating in these residencies every year. Director indicated that this may be reduced in the future and possibly be more firmly imbedded into their funding.</p> <p>International and UK-based visual artists are invited to apply for a programme of 1 month long visual arts residencies hosted by SSW during August.</p> <p>The aim of these particular residencies was to allow artists at different career stages to have a month of supported time to focus exclusively on developing their own professional practice.</p> <p>These were open-ended and provided visual artists from the UK and further afield with time, space and support to explore new ideas and experiment with new techniques and processes.</p>
All (if relevant)	Curatorial/ programming vision/ selection	Good	<p>Artists involved in the residency programme were a mix of invited, and selected from a large open submission. Artists based at the workshop during this residency programme spanned a wide spectrum of media and arts practice, and included Ruth Claxton, S.Mark Gubb, Hayley Tomkins, Julika Gittner, Aoife Collins & Jonathan Baldock.</p> <p>Notable that several of the resident artists had a painting background and appropriated objects in their work. The workshop and residency provided a space and resources to further extend and experiment with the 3-d side of their work, and enabled them to develop their practical skills in a supportive and challenging environment.</p> <p>Successful melding of the spectrum of artists seemed to work well – number were highly focused in terms of what they wanted to achieve with casting techniques, whilst others were more playful, sociable and/or had a more fluid sense of what they were hoping to do during the residency.</p>

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
All	Success of event against stated aims	Good	<p>The way in which the residency programme has been structured with artists giving talks about their work, a group dinner hosted on arrival, intense peer group interaction, walkabout critiques, etc has been fine-tuned and developed over the years to allow for wider membership of SSW to actively engage with the new residents. Members of the Board and staff had the opportunity to connect informally at the start of the programme enabling artists from outwith the country to absorb SSW's aims & ethos.</p> <p>The social dimension offered a relaxed counterpoint to the intensity of the practical aspects of the residency.</p> <p>The majority of the artists on site during my visit had found the experience of working with casting techniques a fulfilling one. In particular, two artists (Collins & Baldock) who shared interests and have different backgrounds had opted to apply together and used the time to drive themselves technically, to undertake shared research and to explore ways of working collaboratively. They had not originally envisaged using the time to physically make work but this had been an added positive end result. They had applied with the joint aim of moving away from solitary studio-based practice and were highly enthused about their experience at Lumsden.</p> <p>Having a specific objective prior to arriving at the workshop enabled these artists to maximise their time and get a lot out of the experience.</p> <p>One of the other resident artists felt that the relaxed and open atmosphere of SSW was a key strength – having schools groups shown round during the residency, for example – and gave a sense of connectedness to the wider community.</p> <p>Another issue which was flagged up during the discussions was the value of connecting and interacting with galleries in other parts of Scotland (i.e. Embassy, Limousine Bull). It was felt that this was particularly useful for artists coming over from Europe.</p> <p>Note - not all artists were present during my visit – some had left earlier.</p>
All	Performers/tutors	Good	<p>Direct technical support provided to the artists is crucial to the experience and allowed the artists new to casting a valuable opportunity to experiment.</p> <p>Artists have identified the value of having technical assistance. Outside of the art school environment, there are limited opportunities for this level of supported practical experimentation.</p>

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
			Two artists who opted to work together during their residency – Jonathon Baldock & Aoife Collins – identified this aspect of the process as being especially valuable and they appeared to relish being in a position where they were able to readily access technical advice.
Dance, Theatre	Choreography/Use of choreography		N/A
Theatre	Script		N/A
Theatre, Dance	Direction		N/A
Dance, Theatre	Use of music		N/A
Dance, Theatre	Design		N/A
All	Quality of Presentation/Engagement		N/A
All	Audience		N/A
All	Additional Interpretative		N/A
All	Outcomes of education activity		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	Venue was suitable for the scope of the residency programme.
Information/ interpretive material at venue	Monthly e-newsletters are produced and exhibition events are
Publicity/ pre-publicity	Not aware of any publicity other than the SSW website.
Ease of booking and payment	N/A
Location of venue	Venue is well established and known to a wide arts audience.
External signage and signposting	Some external signage.
Internal directional signage	Internal signage is not a particular issue given the nature of the space and layout of the workshop.
Access and provision for disabled people	SSW is embarking on an extensive building programme and the facility will be fully accessible once the refurbishment is complete. An access audit has been carried out and factored into the new building plans.
Timing of the event	Timing fits with the organisation's schedule.
Customer service	Staff are consistently helpful and respond quickly & efficiently to customer visits, follow-up queries, phonecalls, etc.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ¹	SAC is clearly acknowledged on print and on their website.

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.

¹ 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.

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.