



## 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: YDance**

**Venue:** Castle Douglas Primary School

**Title of Event:** In Service Workshop: Glasgow University Postgraduate Certificate in Primary Physical Education

**Type of Event:** (e.g. performance, exhibition, informal showing, work-in-progress, workshop, screening, lecture etc) Workshop

**Date of Visit:** Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2008

**Overall Rating: 5**

*(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.)*

A very well conceived and executed workshop session for a mixed group of teachers with little prior experience of working in dance. The balance between support and challenge was excellent, and a wide range of different approaches and ideas were packed into an energetic three-hour workshop, with the tasks sequenced and scaffolded appropriately. As an introduction for non-specialists it was exemplary: with an accessible, friendly but challenging approach which the teachers, a few of whom were initially sceptical, found motivating, exciting and highly relevant for their professional development.

**Name:** Graham Jeffery

**Date:** 28/01/2007

**Specialist Advisor**

Scottish Arts Council Officer

*Please circle the relevant title*

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.	4	The session was well prepared, drawing on key elements of choreography and improvisation, and enabled the teachers to make links with their prior experience, but at the same time it introduced them to a range of unfamiliar approaches in an accessible, cumulative but nonetheless challenging way.
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.		N/A
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 <sup>1</sup> below for guidance	5	The session was very well prepared with a clear sequence of activities, which left space for creativity and improvisation. The content was highly relevant and carefully tailored to the needs of the group. Consultation and advance planning had clearly taken place and the workshop leader had an excellent working relationship with the course team – this was reflected in the confidence and excitement of the participants
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	Highly appropriate approach – energetic, exciting but also inclusive and sensitive to the needs of individuals in the group. At times the pace was a little overwhelming for some participants but this did not affect their engagement overall as the activities were carefully structured to enable differentiation.
Dance, Theatre	Choreography/Use of choreography - originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc	5	Fast-paced, challenging sequence of choreographic exercises that had been carefully constructed to enable participants to learn how to build their own dance workshops. The tasks were cumulative and linked, building on straightforward movement material that did not require any special technique. Excellent integration of formative vocabulary, introducing key words and ideas through a mix of improvisation and pre-devised material
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.	5	Highly appropriate approach for a group of this type – encouraging and inspiring leadership, which was fun, involving, challenging and accessible.

<sup>1</sup> 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.	5	Good selection of music from a wide range of sources, some of which (e.g. Gotan Project) might have been largely unfamiliar. The links between dance education and music education were mentioned and teachers were encouraged to make use of diverse musical sources
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	See above. A wide range of different approaches was packed into a three-hour workshop, from whole-group warm-up and cool-down games and exercises, to improvisation (contact and non-contact), work in duets and trios. The teachers were also taught a simple dance sequence which they were encouraged to adapt and which formed a refrain for a large group performance improvisation. Occasionally the pace was too fast for all participants, but the activity was reinforced with a clear written plan breaking down the tasks and suggestions for further research/follow up. As an introduction to dance workshop leading it was inspiring and exciting.
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>		Highly appropriate – see below. 19 participants aged approximately between 22 – 50. 1 man, 18 women (I suspect that this may reflect the gender balance of primary teaching workforce rather than any particular aversion to dance teaching).
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	Good range of materials available to follow up – including details of further resources available, information about YDance's work and lots of informal encouragement and support for the use of dance across the curriculum. Some wider bibliography might have been helpful, although there were pointers given to YDance's CD-ROMs
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	The whole session was focussed on the needs of the teachers, as non-specialist primary educators. The workshop leader constantly suggested different ways in which the materials and tasks could be adapted to different groups of children. The group were buzzing with enthusiasm about what might be possible by the end of the session.

## 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	Absolutely fine – although had the group been any larger the space might have been on the small side.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	No special interpretative material other than Ydance brochures but this was fine given the context of the workshop, as part of a course.
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.	The event was not publicised as it was not open to the general public. There was no mention of it on the organisation's website, but presumably this was because it was not a public event.
Ease of booking and payment	N/A
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	Straightforward and easy to find by car.
External signage and signposting	N/A
Internal directional signage	N/A
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	The venue was accessible for wheelchair users, with flat access. No-one in the group had a visible disability, although some had minor injuries which required activities to be adapted. The facilitator was very sensitive to everyone's needs. The activities undertaken were highly appropriate for an inclusive group and easily could include people with disabilities.
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	Well timed; kept to schedule. The session started and finished punctually.
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 <sup>2</sup>	Acknowledged on brochures and in publicity materials given out to the group, although no acknowledgement on the main YDance folder in which the materials were contained.

<sup>2</sup> 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.