



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 Youth Theatre (SYT)
Venue:	Scottish Youth Theatre/Old Sherriff Court
Title of Event:	Hero
Type of Event:	Performance
Date of Visit:	6 August 2008
Overall Rating:	Good
An entertaining and thought provoking piece devised and delivered by young people aged 15-21 in conjunction with SYT practitioners. Very good content was created and skilfully interpreted through text and physical theatre elements.	
Name: Angela Hogg	Date: 19/12/08
Scottish Arts Council Officer	

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.	Good	This project demonstrated that SYT works hard at ensuring the experiences young people receive are relevant and inspiring to them. The high calibre theatre skills provided through the process of <i>Heroes</i> was in keeping with the usual high standards of SYT.
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.	Good	This show was part of SYT's Summer Festival which provides workshops, classes and residencies for young people throughout Scotland to engage with theatre. The young participants worked with SYT practitioners to devise the final production as part of a Performance and Production Course.
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	Good	SYT aims to <i>give young people in Scotland the opportunity to explore and to reach their creative potential through a quality theatre arts experience.</i> The project demonstrated this aim extremely well.
All	Performers/tutors - technical standard, performance skills and ability to communicate and engage. Where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments.	Good	A confident and extremely articulate young cast aged between 15 and 21 years. Some insightful explorations of character and themes delivered by this committed cast. Physical theatre elements delivered well. Very accomplished piano-playing narrator.
Dance, Theatre	Choreography/Use of choreography - originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc	Good	Choreographer Diane Moran. Ensemble based physical elements were well delivered and added strong relevance to (and articulation of) the themes.
Theatre	Script – particularly in relation to new work or second productions. Relevant to classics where the original has been substantially changed.	Good	Written by the young cast (names unknown to me). <i>Heroes</i> provided an astute observation of society's obsession with fame and celebrity culture and the fleeting happiness it often brings. The piece also explored the idea that true heroism comes from within ourselves and that our flaws and limitations should not be feared.

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
			<p>This is a positive theme for young people to work with given the <i>X-Factor</i> based pressures they face within today's society. Words used were very clear in portraying ideas. Succinct and to the point.</p>
Theatre, Dance	<p>Direction - Concerns issues of interpretation, casting and presentation.</p>	Good	<p>Co-directors Kenny McGlashan and Kieran McLoughlin appear to have provided an in-depth process for the young participants involved in devising and presenting <i>Heroes</i>.</p> <p>The cast appeared to have strong ownership of the themes and their theatrical interpretations.</p> <p>Good pace and multi-layered use of space combined with complementary design elements to support the cast in providing an interesting and meaningful theatre experience.</p> <p>I really enjoyed the ensemble elements, particularly the vacuous, magazine flicking routine which effectively provided a comment on celebrity culture and how it can perpetuate a loss of individuality through a constant search for fame and <i>fitting in</i>.</p>
Dance, Theatre	<p>Use of music – appropriateness and effect of sound or music (whole/part, live/recorded) to the production.</p>	Good	<p>Sound effects/backing sounds and music had a contemporary feel in keeping with the culture of the piece. Composer: Robin Grace.</p>
Dance, Theatre	<p>Design – costume, set, lighting. Take into account how appropriate the design is in relation to the venue and, where appropriate, the touring schedule.</p>	Good	<p>Designed by Kenny McGlashan and Kieran McLoughlin.</p> <p>Simple design mainly through costume which fitted the themes and culture being depicted. I do not have a strong recollection of lighting elements.</p>
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>	Good	<p>Technical elements supported the action well.</p>
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>Very good reaction from an almost full house.</p>

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
	Education/learning – pre-event involvement, participants/ schoolteachers reaction, understanding, commitment, enthusiasm, number involved, etc		
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.	NA	Workshops were provided for participants however I was unable to attend.
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)?	N/A	While this is not being assessed I would say that the experience provided positive skills development and engagement with pertinent social issues.

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	Suitable.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	Well promoted in the SYT venue.
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 range of appropriate material in hard copy, email and website.
Ease of booking and payment	Guest ticket arranged.
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	Very central.
External signage and signposting	Fine.
Internal directional signage	Fine.
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	Accessible.
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	Appropriate.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	Very helpful and friendly.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ²	Suitably acknowledged.

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.