



ARTISTIC EVALUATION

This evaluation is intended to represent an objective aesthetic judgement. **Specialist advisors and officers should avoid making judgements based on their own personal tastes and preferences wherever possible.**

Artist/Company:	Shetland Arts	
Venue:	Isleburgh Community Centre, Lerwick, Shetland.	
Title of Event :	Wordplay 09	
Type of Event:	Book Festival	
Date of Visit:	04/09/09	
Overall Rating:	Very Good / Excellent.	
<i>(Please rate the event overall, taking into account your ratings for each section. Please state the key reasons for your overall ratings – ie 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>		
Name:	Emma Turnbull	Date: 09/09/09
Scottish Arts Council Officer	x	Specialist Advisor

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 on 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 future 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:

- Very poor**- standard falls well below what is acceptable.
- Poor** - not well conceived and executed
- Satisfactory**
- Good** - well conceived and executed
- Very Good** – well conceived and executed to a very good standard
- Excellent** – Inspiring and executed to an exceptionally 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	<p>Vision and imagination of work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of ideas if you have seen other work of this artist(s)/ company before, please comment on any relevant comparisons 	Excellent	The overall vision of the programmers was clear and well executed. They had devised a well balanced programme that would appeal to book lovers as well as incorporating elements for non traditional readers. The cross over elements of the programme were especially imaginative: Screen and page crossover, music and words as well as a joint event between a crime writer and a real life crime scene investigator.
All (if relevant)	<p>Curatorial/ programming vision/ selection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does it fit within the artistic vision of the organisation? If the event is part of a Festival, please say how it contributes to the overall programme. 	Very Good	The festival provided an excellent showcasing opportunity for writers which fits with Shetland Arts vision to "Support creative people" The events featuring local writers met the aim of "empowering our communities, groups and individuals to fulfill their creative potential."
All	<p>Success of event against stated aims of project and/or performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does it relate to information contained in the programme, the website or other printed material? How well did it communicate the artistic themes? How did the event originate eg from the exhibiting/ producing organisation, from the artist or from commission? <p>Education events – see ¹below for definition</p>	Very Good	<p>The events delivered exactly what was outlined in the programme.</p> <p>The events I attended were highly successful, the crossover themes were evident in the way events were constructed (eg a poetry reading with some poems set to music, the festival club evening with folk music and the film events with panel discussions about translating stories from the page to the screen. The other themes of the local and the national were well represented in the selection of writers present at both wordplay and the sister film festival Screenplay.</p> <p>An accompanying education programme enabled a production of 'The man who planted trees' to tour schools in Shetland. There were several children's events throughout the festival for children up to the age of 10, these included animation workshops and a Gruffalo party. Gerry Cambridge was employed as the writer in residence for the festival and ran workshops with local school children.</p>
All	<p>Performers/tutors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the expertise of the performers? Where performers are amateur, please reflect this in your comments. How successfully did the performer(s) communicate with and engage the audience? In your view, was an artist as a tutor key to the success of the 	Excellent	All of the events featured established writers from a variety of genres. Three events featured local writers / performers who were less well established but all of them were published. There were several very high profile authors such as Louis de Bernieres, Anne Cleaves and Julia Donaldson. The programming incorporated poets, novelists, screen writers and writers of literary non fiction.

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
	workshop?		Every event I attended was exemplary, authors engaged with audiences via delivery and interactive Q and A sessions. The workshop strand featured very experienced writers who delivered well crafted, hugely engaging sessions. The success of the workshop strand lay in the enlightened choice of tutors (Gerry Cambridge, Keith Brumpton, John Fardell) as well as the interesting topics selected for workshops: for example one strand focussed on advice for writers and featured high calibre writers such as Mark McCrum and Steven Appleby.
Dance, Theatre	Choreography/Use of choreography <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was the work original? • How was the space used? • How many dancers were there and how were they used? • How long was the piece? 		N / A
Theatre	Script Please comment on this for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new work • second productions • classics where the original has been substantially changed 		N / A
Theatre, Dance	Direction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was the work well interpreted? • Was it well cast? • Was it well presented? 		N / A
Dance, Theatre	Use of music <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the music/ sound used enhance the production? • Is it live or recorded? 		N / A
Dance, Theatre	Design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How were the costumes, set and lighting? • How did it work in the venue? • Was it technically proficient? (eg lighting and sound cues, etc). 		N / A
All	Quality of Public Engagement Performing Arts/Education - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was the production/event targeted at a particular audience? • Was the production /event appropriate for the audience/participants? • Were you/ engaged/inspired? • Did the audience/ participants appear to be engaged/inspired? • What was their response? • Approximately how many people were there? • Did there appear to be a broad mix of people – age, cultural diversity or disabled? • Are BSL/captioned/audio described performances offered as part of the run/tour/? If so how many? • What activities or supporting materials were available to enhance the experience of the 	Very Good	<p>The festival was targeted at readers and writers of all ages. The programme was diverse enough to attract a wide audience.</p> <p>The festival was appropriate to audience, audiences were engaged and entertained, This is evidenced by the quality of dialogue in the Q & A sessions.</p> <p>As well as participating in Q&A sessions, audience members bought books and talked to authors / hosts afterwards about the events. They also attended the festival club social event in the evening.</p> <p>Attendance at the festival broke all records: over 1000 people attended ticketed events. (Last year 600 attended)</p> <p>There was a mixture of ages, some mixed demographic and one or two people with additional needs. In the events I attended I not observe a</p>

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
	<p>event eg workshops, artist's talks, discussion groups programmes, on line info?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were these targeted at specific age groups? <p>Education/learning events: In addition, please provide comments on the following (if appropriate):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How was it taught/led eg one to one, group, child centred? What was the composition of the participant group – age range, gender mix? Is it strategically linked to the curriculum or national policy areas e.g. Early Years, Community Learning & Development What learning/skills development took place? What was the quality of the art produced by the participants? Did the workshop tutor have a teaching plan for the session and/or project? How were participants recruited? Did participants' views and choices help inform the structure and content of the project? <p>Crafts/Visual Arts Use of equipment, space and overall layout/hang?</p>		<p>huge cultural mixture of people which may reflect the demographic make up of Shetland??</p> <p>Additional activities to support events included panel discussions on book / film cross-overs and the education programme.</p> <p>The education programme comprised a poet in residence, touring theatre/ storytelling event to schools and children's strand of events at the festival.</p> <p>Events were principally aimed at Primary school children. Events delivered would contribute towards the four capacities from a Curriculum for Excellence.</p> <p>In the two young people's events I attended the learning which took place comprised writing and animation skills as well as the opportunity to gain confidence in reading ones work to a group.</p> <p>Workshop tutors were very well prepared with plenty of materials and tasks for participants. The schools programme was designed by the poet in residence who has a vast amount of experience in delivering workshops to young people, his work incorporates photography and creative writing.</p>

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
<p>Location and suitability of the venue for the event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route? Are the spaces clean? What were the sight lines like? How big was it? 	<p>Very good, the location was very central. It was a well known venue and therefore could be easily identified by locals and visitors. The spaces were clean and extremely light with excellent acoustics and a range of different sized spaces to accommodate different types of event.</p> <p>There were some display materials in the form of a libraries exhibition and a series of nature photographs by the writer in residence. These were well displayed and enhanced related sessions very well. The spaces were used very well, interactive workshops took place in smaller venues and large scale author events took place in the larger auditorium. There were opportunities for audiences to interact via the question and answer sessions at each event and informally at book signings afterwards. In addition the festival club provided a</p>

Criteria	Comment
	nice social platform which encouraged engagement between writers and audiences.
Information/ interpretive material at venue– <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there programmes, posters and displays about the event? • Is there information on the venue's website? 	Excellent. Publicity materials were widespread in Lerwick, programmes, posters, fliers were all available in local shops and other arts venues (e.g. Garrison theatre) as well as information on Shetland arts website (including a downloadable pdf of the programme)
Publicity/ pre-publicity – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What leaflets, posters, websites, did you see the event listed in? • What publicity materials are produced? • Is it easy to understand? • Where can you get the information? • Is there Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ²? <p>Please be alert to the publicity available prior to your visit to the event and comment on the company/organisation's website.</p>	<p>Very Good. Shetland Arts ran adverts for 3 weeks ahead of the festival in the Shetland Times. They issued numerous press releases and collaborated with the local media on promoting the festival. The Shetland Times ran a series of interviews and features on visiting writers.</p> <p>Publicity material is appropriate to the intended audience e.g. local radio adverts, posters in local shops and Bed and breakfasts. Pre publicity material is well targeted via the press, Shetland Arts website, 'Book festivals Scotland' calendar and through targeted mailing and emailing bulletins. The festival is jointly promoted with 'Screenplay' so that film and book audiences are targeted for both festivals. There had been some discussion of separating the festivals, but record ticket sales this year demonstrate that neither festival is suffering from concurrent timing.</p> <p>There was excellent acknowledgement of SAC funding on all printed materials as well as verbal thanks in every session.</p>
Ease of booking and payment	Very straightforward, box office available at the venue, tickets available via Shetland Arts and Wordplay box office.
Timing of the event <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience? • Was the length appropriate? 	Events were standard length, approximately one hour for an author event and one and a half to two hours for an interactive workshop. Appropriate breaks were taken during workshop sessions.
Signage and signposting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the entrance clearly marked? • Is there clear internal directional signage? • Is there Braille signage or signage for audio loops? 	Very good. The venue was clearly signposted and there was an information desk immediately inside the entrance way. The desk was staffed at all times and there were additional 'floating' 'volunteers' on hand to direct visitors to events.

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.

Criteria	Comment																
	<p>There were no Braille signs however the staff at the information desk who greeted visitors upon arrival accommodated individual needs. One visitor was blind/ partially sighted; he was accompanied to events by staff and assisted with seating etc when required.</p>																
<p>Access and provision for disabled people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please insert yes/no in the boxes to reflect what you notice about the venue/event <p>Please add in any additional comments below the table</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many BSL/captioned/audio described performances are there at the venue? 	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="571 421 821 488"></th> <th data-bbox="826 421 917 488">Yes/ No</th> <th data-bbox="922 421 1161 488"></th> <th data-bbox="1166 421 1257 488">Yes/ No</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="571 488 821 589">BSL interpretation</td> <td data-bbox="826 488 917 589">No</td> <td data-bbox="922 488 1161 589">Audio description of performances</td> <td data-bbox="1166 488 1257 589">No</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="571 589 821 674">Captioning</td> <td data-bbox="826 589 917 674">No</td> <td data-bbox="922 589 1161 674">Lift/ramp</td> <td data-bbox="1166 589 1257 674">Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="571 674 821 943">Accessible toilets</td> <td data-bbox="826 674 917 943">Yes</td> <td data-bbox="922 674 1161 943">Accessible marketing materials eg website or alternative formats eg large print, Plain English</td> <td data-bbox="1166 674 1257 943">Upon request.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Yes/ No		Yes/ No	BSL interpretation	No	Audio description of performances	No	Captioning	No	Lift/ramp	Yes	Accessible toilets	Yes	Accessible marketing materials eg website or alternative formats eg large print, Plain English	Upon request.
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<p>Customer service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How was the quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering) If possible, comment on how responsive they were to the needs of disabled customers? 	<p>Excellent. Staff were friendly, warm, open and helpful. They directed guests to events, welcomed all kinds of visitor with equal cheerfulness and enthusiasm. (all ages etc)</p> <p>The staff were extremely responsive to the needs of visitors with additional needs, in particular mobility issues and visually impaired visitors. I was very impressed with the level of support offered by volunteers to all visitors, guests and writers.</p>																

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.