



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: **Stammer Productions** (Colette Sadler)

Venue: Tramway, Glasgow

Title of Event: **The Making of Doubt**

Type of Event: performance

Date of Visit: 10 May 2008

Overall Rating: excellent

Overall Rating (*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.*)

This was a fascinating, entertaining show that delivered what it advertised. The choreography was intelligent and visually interesting and the performers were all highly skilled and worked well as a group.

Name: Susan Hay

Date: 12/5/08

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. | 5 | Colette Sadler, Artistic Director of Stammer Productions, has worked extensively in trying to trick the audience as to what it sees and what is reality, blurring the boundaries between performer and prop. This piece is the first group piece that she has developed along this theme. |
| 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 ¹ below for guidance | 5 | The publicity states that 'The Making of Doubt is a dance performance that plays on our perceptions of reality.' The work clearly articulated this. |
| 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 | The performers were strong both technically and in their performance skills. |
| Dance, Theatre | Choreography/Use of choreography - originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc | 5 | The choreography used four dancers and two dummies. It was in three sections, each clearly exploring a different 'reality' idea, the first with the dummies, the second with additional appendages and the third with cardboard boxes. The piece started simply with all performers sitting with their backs to the audience wearing hooded tops. It was only when they moved that you were aware that two were dummies. The piece developed well exploring how to use the dummies as performers and trying to mimic their movements. The second section tricked the eye further with dancers having additional appendages, either an arm or leg, which distorted the line of the body and created some stunning images. The final section, where the dancers 'danced' with boxes was visually fluid. |

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 |
|----------------|--|--------|--|
| 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. | n/a | |
| Dance, Theatre | Use of music – appropriateness and effect of sound or music (whole/part, live/recorded) to the production. | 4 | Recorded music was specially created for the piece and worked well with the movements. |
| 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. | 4 | <p>A variety of costumes were used to enhance the choreographic ideas. For example, hoodies were used in the first section to mask who was real and who was a dummy.</p> <p>Some of the intricate lighting sections (pulsing lights in one section) were not obvious, as the background lighting was quite high at the time.</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> | 4 | All technical aspects of the show seemed to work smoothly. |
| 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> | | There was about 90+ in the audience who seemed appreciative of the show. I hear the words 'fascinating and entertaining' used. |
| 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. | 3 | A photocopied programme was handed out. There was no obvious additional information to that. |

| Artform | Criteria | Rating | Comments and key reasons for rating |
|----------------|--|---------------|--|
| 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 |

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 | Tramway 1 provides a large stage space for dance work. The theatre is well integrated for its users. |
| Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc. | There were posters and flyers inside the 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. | Information was available on the websites of Tramway and Colette (Stammer). There were flyers circulated by email about two weeks before the event. |
| Ease of booking and payment | Ticket was booked by telephone and collected on the night of the performance. |
| Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route? | Tramway is on main transport routes, but is not clearly signposted if approaching by road. |
| External signage and signposting | Reasonable. |
| Internal directional signage | Good signage. |
| Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see? | Wheelchair access visible, no information about audio loops. |
| Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience? | The performance lasted just under an hour with a starting time of 8pm which seemed to suit the audience. |
| Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering) | Approachable, helpful staff. |
| Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ² | Yes on all printed materials. |

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.