



**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.**

<b>Artist/Company:</b>	<b>Colette Sadler / Stammer Productions</b>	
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Linbury Studio at Royal Opera House</b>	
<b>Title of Event :</b>	<b>The Making of Doubt</b>	
<b>Type of Event:</b>	<b>Dance</b>	
<b>Date of Visit:</b>	<b>27 November 2009</b>	
<b>Overall Rating:</b>	<b>Very good</b>	
<p><i>The making of doubt</i> is a mature well crafted work which successfully communicates its concept of challenging audiences' understanding of the human form. However it was misplaced within the programme of the ROH2's <i>Firsts</i> season and deserving of a more engaged audience.</p>		
<b>Name:</b>	Jennifer McLachlan	<b>Date:</b> 7 January 2010
<del>Scottish Arts Council Officer</del>		<b>Specialist Advisor</b>

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"> <li>Quality of ideas</li> <li>if you have seen other work of this artist(s)/ company before, please comment on any relevant comparisons</li> </ul>	Very good	<p>Conceptually clear and rigorously investigated, this is a smart and intelligent piece of work by Colette Sadler, the first production I've seen by Stammer Productions.</p> <p>The work is situated within current practice of live and interdisciplinary arts practice. Outside of the ROH2 season the rest of the touring schedule reflects a strong standing on this circuit.</p>
All (if relevant)	<p>Curatorial/ programming vision/ selection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How does it fit within the artistic vision of the organisation?</li> <li>If the event is part of a Festival, please say how it contributes to the overall programme.</li> </ul>	Poor	<p><i>The Making of Doubt</i> sat within ROH2's season of <i>Firsts</i> which aims to produce showcases of emerging talent across a range of performing disciplines. This programme featured four stage works and two bands in the foyer, before and after the performance.</p> <p><i>The Making of Doubt</i> did not sit well within this programme of <i>Firsts</i> which featured an aerial theatre work for children, a male hip hop work and an excruciating second life 'work'. Whilst <i>Firsts</i> has a history of programming live art / interdisciplinary work, <i>The Making of Doubt</i> was a more mature and challenging work than other productions on the bill, and would have sat better within an interdisciplinary or live art context.</p>
All	<p>Success of event against stated aims of project and/or performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How does it relate to information contained in the programme, the website or other printed material?</li> <li>How well did it communicate the artistic themes?</li> <li>How did the event originate eg from the exhibiting/ producing organisation, from the artist or from commission?</li> </ul> <p>Education events – see <sup>1</sup> below for definition</p>	Very good	<p><i>'The Making of Doubt takes the human doll as an emblem of representation and places it within the real and impossible condition of its words and actions. How authentic does something have to seem in order for us to construct a system of belief around it; how far does one have to go?'</i></p> <p>Sadler and her collaborators have rigorously investigated the above concept which came across clearly through the work.</p>
All	<p>Performers/tutors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the expertise of the performers? Where performers are amateur, please reflect this in your comments.</li> <li>How successfully did the performer(s) communicate with and engage the audience?</li> <li>In your view, was an artist as a tutor key to the success of the workshop?</li> </ul>	Very good	<p>Four performers, two male and two female, showed their astonishing attempts to negotiate the terrain of an additional limb. This concluded with a mass pile up with costumes and dummy limbs being discarded to leave the dancers continuing to negotiate disjointed movement bound in flesh coloured trappings.</p>

<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	Choreography/Use of choreography <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Was the work original?</li> <li>How was the space used?</li> <li>How many dancers were there and how were they used?</li> <li>How long was the piece?</li> </ul>	Very good	Choreographically and conceptually highly original, <i>The making of doubt</i> successfully confused the viewer as to the makeup of the human forms on stage.  Aside from an overlong opening involving cardboard boxes moving 'mysteriously' around the space occasionally leaving behind a human or chair, the 25 minutes of the work were tightly structured and well crafted.
Theatre	Script Please comment on this for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>new work</li> <li>second productions</li> <li>classics where the original has been substantially changed</li> </ul>	na	
Theatre, Dance	Direction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Was the work well interpreted?</li> <li>Was it well cast?</li> <li>Was it well presented?</li> </ul>	Very good	Strong artistic direction had ensured committed performances from the cast. The clarity of concept, highly crafted content and considered design highlights strong directorial skill.
Dance, Theatre	Use of music <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did the music/ sound used enhance the production?</li> <li>Is it live or recorded?</li> </ul>	Very good	A sound score by Zoviet France accompanied much of the work moving into silence towards the end. The subtlety of this score, followed by the silence served to heighten the extraordinariness of the dancers.
Dance, Theatre	Design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How were the costumes, set and lighting?</li> <li>How did it work in the venue?</li> <li>Was it technically proficient? (eg lighting and sound cues, etc).</li> </ul>	Very good	Set design elements supporting this work included material dummies, large cardboard boxes, multicoloured costumes and additional dummy body limbs. Starting from a lightly littered space by the end of the work the dancers had discarded costumes, limbs and boxes leaving a stage strewn with debris.  Simple but effective lighting states including pools of light.
All	Quality of Public Engagement  Performing Arts/Education - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Was the production/event targeted at a particular audience?</li> <li>Was the production /event appropriate for the audience/participants?</li> <li>Were you/ engaged/inspired?</li> <li>Did the audience/ participants appear to be engaged/inspired?</li> <li>What was their response?</li> <li>Approximately how many people were there?</li> <li>Did there appear to be a broad mix of people – age, cultural diversity or disabled?</li> <li>Are BSL/captioned/audio described performances offered as part of the run/tour/? If so how many?</li> <li>What activities or supporting materials were available to</li> </ul>	Poor	As mentioned above this work was mis-programmed within the more 'accessible' emerging works on the bill. Whilst welcoming the inclusion of high quality live art within the <i>Firsts</i> programme there needs to be greater consideration within the curation of the bills to ensure justice is served to the work.  Having experienced a short sweet aerial work, followed by a three hander hip hop work the audience shifted restlessly from early on in their viewing of <i>the making of doubt</i> , definitely not buying into the concept of magically moving cardboard boxes. Immediate comments around me following the end of the work included 'thank god' and 'good grief'.  <i>Firsts</i> audiences are primarily made up of family and friends supporters from the programmed live works and foyer bands, but also attracts first time

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
	<p>enhance the experience of the event eg workshops, artist's talks, discussion groups programmes, on line info?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were these targeted at specific age groups?</li> </ul>		and adventurous audience members through its £5 ticket price. There was little diversity evident in the audience although there was a large school party contributing to the range of ages.

## 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"> <li>Is it easy to find?</li> <li>Is it on a main transport route?</li> <li>Are the spaces clean?</li> <li>What were the sight lines like?</li> <li>How big was it?</li> </ul>	The Linbury Theatre is located within the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden, easily accessible on all forms of London transport. As expected a beautifully appointed space with particularly good sightlines across the 400 seater auditorium.
<p>Information/ interpretive material at venue—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there programmes, posters and displays about the event?</li> <li>Is there information on the venue's website?</li> </ul>	Numerous posters on display throughout the Linbury Theatre for the ROH Firsts season. Clear, detailed information on the ROH website. Programme folders for the ROH2 <i>Firsts</i> season were distributed which included A4 paper programmes for each work on the programme.
<p>Publicity/ pre-publicity –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What leaflets, posters, websites, did you see the event listed in?</li> <li>What publicity materials are produced?</li> <li>Is it easy to understand?</li> <li>Where can you get the information?</li> <li>Is there Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding<sup>2</sup>?</li> </ul> <p>Please be alert to the publicity available prior to your visit to the event and comment on the company/organisation's website.</p>	Scottish Arts Council funding was acknowledged on Stammer Productions paper programme. <i>The making of doubt</i> was not individually publicised in the wide range of publicity for the ROH2 <i>Firsts</i> season.
Ease of booking and payment	The ROH has a high quality interactive website with easy choice of seats including point of view photographs of the stage from the seat selection. ROH Firsts is fantastically priced at £5.00 with no additional booking fee.
<p>Timing of the event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?</li> <li>Was the length appropriate?</li> </ul>	The event started on time but ran for 2 ½ hours with two intervals. With a band before and after the performance the evening is billed as more than a theatre performance.
<p>Signage and signposting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the entrance clearly marked?</li> </ul>	Entrance to the Opera House theatres is by ticket only and ushers easily guide patrons between the

<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.

Criteria	Comment																
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there clear internal directional signage?</li> <li>Is there Braille signage or signage for audio loops?</li> </ul>	different theatre entrances.																
<p>Access and provision for disabled people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please insert yes/no in the boxes to reflect what you notice about the venue/event</li> </ul> <p>Please add in any additional comments below the table</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How many BSL/captioned/audio described performances are there at the venue?</li> </ul>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="571 297 823 365"></th> <th data-bbox="828 297 916 365">Yes/ No</th> <th data-bbox="920 297 1163 365"></th> <th data-bbox="1168 297 1256 365">Yes/ No</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="571 371 823 468">BSL interpretation</td> <td data-bbox="828 371 916 468">No</td> <td data-bbox="920 371 1163 468">Audio description of performances</td> <td data-bbox="1168 371 1256 468">No</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="571 474 823 542">Captioning</td> <td data-bbox="828 474 916 542">No</td> <td data-bbox="920 474 1163 542">Lift/ramp</td> <td data-bbox="1168 474 1256 542">Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="571 548 823 819">Accessible toilets</td> <td data-bbox="828 548 916 819">Yes</td> <td data-bbox="920 548 1163 819">Accessible marketing materials eg website or alternative formats eg large print, Plain English</td> <td data-bbox="1168 548 1256 819">Yes</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	Yes
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<p>Customer service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How was the quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)</li> <li>If possible, comment on how responsive they were to the needs of disabled customers?</li> </ul>	Friendly, efficient bar and ticketstaff.																

**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.