



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: Andrew Printer
Venue: Street Level
Title of Event: Beyond the Surface
Type of Event: Exhibition of photographs by US based artist Andrew Printer
Date of Visit: 17 October 2007
Overall Rating: **3 - Competent**

(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 is a relatively modest solo exhibition – a series of four pairs of photographs, and an installation of 16. It's well presented, though there's little contextual material, except for the artist's own text. Although it's on for two weeks only, as part of Glasgay 2007, and given likely economic restraints, I nevertheless think the opportunity for something a bit more challenging has been missed, perhaps by showing something that's less literally a 'gay' show, or by showing the work alongside that of a more established artist. There could have been more contextual and interpretative material. While there's nothing particularly remiss, it's just a bit underwhelming.

Name: _____ Gary Thomas _____ Date: 5 November 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.	3	This is a relatively modest but pertinent exhibition, presented as part of Glasgay 2007. Californian based artist Andrew Pinter's work challenges media representations of gay men. The work is somewhat literal in its approach, and there isn't much of it, but the artist's statements are disarmingly sincere and engaging, and in turn, encourage engagement with the work. The artist doesn't have an extensive exhibition record and his website says he's starting an MFA this autumn. The installation is at a high standard, and the arrangement is well considered.
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.	3	The exhibition is part of Glasgay, and they've taken a literal approach – selecting a gay artist, whose work deals in representations of gay men. It's not an especially sophisticated or provocative offer, but that may be a result of its being collaboration between Street Level and Q Gallery. The selection of works, and the presentation, is considered and effective. Glasgay is a confident, celebratory and assertive festival, and the exhibition feels like an ok contribution to that.
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	3	I don't think the work itself is as radical as the artist thinks it is, though this may be that it comes from a particular US perspective. From the gallery's side, I think there's a crucial lack of curatorial input. While I may not think the work itself is particularly strong, it does have merit, it does have art historical context (Robert Mapplethorpe and Nan Goldin are the obvious big gun references), and just a brief contextual/curatorial text would have greatly enhanced the offer.
All	Performers/tutors - technical standard, performance skills and ability to communicate and engage. Where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments.		n/a
Dance, Theatre	Choreography/Use of choreography - originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc		n/a
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

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
Dance, Theatre	Use of music – appropriateness and effect of sound or music (whole/part, live/recorded) to the production.		n/a
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>	4	The hang is well considered, and the work is very well installed.
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>	3	<p>I was invited to comment in the visitors' book when I arrived – it was empty, so either they remove pages as they're filled, or no one had written anything yet (this was the second day of the show). A file about the previous show did include comments pages.</p> <p>There was no one else there when I was (a Wednesday afternoon).</p>
All	<p>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</p>	3	An artist's talk was listed for the opening Saturday afternoon. No other information.
All	<p>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)?</p>		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	The gallery is an attractive, well proportioned, well maintained space, with large windows. The installation was at a high standard.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	Only brief texts by the artist about the works were available (2 sided A4 photocopy), and it's not credited. The artist's own webpage address isn't listed, and there's no biographical information, though the artist did study in Scotland, which seems relevant to mention. There were some leaflets for other events and initiatives (eg Trongate 103 information), but I didn't see any Glasgay leaflets.
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 exhibition has a page in the Street Level brochure, with two images and some copy. This is drawn from the artist's own writing, but it isn't in quotation marks or credited. The Glasgay website carries information, including dates and opening times. On the Street Level website I couldn't find the gallery's opening days and times, but otherwise it's clearly designed. It has plentiful images of work, and information about previous exhibitions is more extensive than for this one.
Ease of booking and payment	n/a
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	The gallery is on the first floor of premises with other occupants, including studios, and it doesn't announce its presence. You'd need to know its exact address to find it, and even then you might not be sure. I think this would be off putting for many. Moving to Trongate 103 should sort this out.
External signage and signposting	I couldn't see any – just a front door, crowded with buzzer/entry information – and amongst these, one labelled Street Level.
Internal directional signage	I was met at the door.
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	You have to buzz to get in, the door is a struggle, and the gallery is along a corridor and up a couple of flights of stairs. There is a lift, but I didn't note whether there was level access to it.
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	Gallery hours are 12 – 5, Wednesday to Saturday. It might be an idea to see whether opening from, say, 2 – 7 on a Thursday, draws more/different people.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	Having been buzzed in, I was welcomed at the door, offered information, invited to write in the comments book, and left alone, which all felt just right.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ²	The Street Level booklet carries the logo.

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.