



Updated June 2007

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: Andy Goldsworthy

Venue: Taigh Chearsabhagh Museum and Arts Centre

Title of Event: Andy Goldsworthy North Uist Works

Type of Event: exhibition

Date of Visit: 22.11.08

Overall Rating: 4

(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.)

My overall rating is a 4. It was well conceived that Taigh Chearsabhagh created this opportunity for Andy Goldsworthy to come and make new work during a weeklong residency on North Uist. Although a short time, the artist has been highly productive, creating three suites of photographs. From comments in the comments book the audience had very much enjoyed discovering this calibre of exhibition. It was also commendable that Taigh Chearsabhagh was able to produce a small publication of the works made, as this will distribute the organisation's work to a larger audience.

There was no introductory interpretation sheet in the gallery on my visit. Although the interpretive material available was strong, including a DVD of the artist speaking about his practice in general, and a diary specific to his time in North Uist, it would have been good to have a short introduction by Taigh Chearsabhagh to the exhibition available. This could have been an expanded text from website information.

Running for 12 weeks this exhibition seems to have taken up a larger time slot than other exhibitions Taigh Chearsabhagh has staged in this gallery (I looked at past exhibition timescales on their website). I was not able to find out if there had been any events such as talks or workshops linked to this exhibition from the information available in the gallery, or from asking the staff member present that day. Given the length of the exhibition, it could have been appropriate to have an event that linked to this exhibition. There were children's worksheets available in the gallery but it could have been good to use an educational event to target another audiences.

I would also like to mention that Gallery One, with 12 interpretation panels entitled 'Western Islands Biodiversity Plan' felt a bit stranded to me, primarily in terms of its presentation, more an information-providing venture than an exhibition. As this presentation, according to the website, runs into March 2009, it may have been appropriate, to have found ways of introducing a link between Galleries One and Two- for example how Gallery One's themes, of understanding the nature of North Uist, linked to Goldsworthy's themes of using the natural environment as a source to his work.

Name: Jenny Brownrigg Date: 20 / 12 / 08

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.	4	Three suites of photographs are on show at Taigh Chearsabhagh, the result of a weeklong residency Goldsworthy spent in Uist, working on Baile Sear beach. The work is trademark Goldsworthy, working with elements from the environment around him to create surprising, temporal works that nature, in this case the tide, ultimately destroys. A further interest for the audience is how Goldsworthy has reacted to the local context. A departure in Goldsworthy's modus operandi was hinted at in the 'diary' presented as interpretation material in the gallery. Two images show him concealed in the environment, in one image, with just a hand showing.
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.	5	From the back of another invitation available as gallery information, I gathered that Taigh Chearsabhagh, in July 2007 had hosted a Southbank Centre Hayward Touring exhibition including the work of Andy Goldsworthy. It therefore shows cohesive programming that the venue originated a weeklong residency for Andy Goldsworthy in Uist, in March 2008, the results of which are shown in Gallery Two. The exhibition tours to An Lanntair 5 Dec-31 Jan 2009.

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
All	<p>Success of event against stated aims - in the programme or other printed material, including how well it communicated the artistic themes.</p> <p>Education events – see ¹ below for guidance</p>	4	<p>The interpretation in the gallery was a general release DVD giving an overview of Andy Goldsworthy's practice; several publications on the artist; a 'diary' from his time in North Uist; and a copy of the new concertina artist book produced to accompany the exhibition. There was not an interpretation sheet available in the gallery on the day I visited so I have used the information on the gallery's website to assess the success of the exhibition against stated aims.</p> <p>The artist's week in North Uist was a highly productive one given the output. The three suites of photographs exhibited do illustrate the artist's aims to 'create works that offer the viewer a heightened experience of the energy and patterning of the natural world.'</p>
All	<p>Performers/tutors - technical standard, performance skills and ability to communicate and engage.</p> <p>Where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments.</p>		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
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

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
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	<p>The three sequences of framed photographs are presented in Gallery Two, in a traditional harmonious hang that shows them in a block, one suite to each wall.</p> <p>There was an information area in the gallery space, housing a monitor with a DVD on Goldsworthy, books and a children's worksheet.</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>Education/learning – pre-event involvement, participants/ schoolteachers reaction, understanding, commitment, enthusiasm, number involved, etc</p>		<p>During my visit between 10am and noon on Sat 22 Nov there were 10 visitors in the gallery space, of all ages including a young family. Each visitor spent a good amount of the time in the space looking at the work. Many also spent on average ten minutes looking at the DVD and information present. The comments book was full of favourable comments. Many mention that it was a 'great surprise' for them to see an exhibition this highly acclaimed artist in North Uist. Many had enjoyed his artistic process, with one perceptive comment stating that '[this work] was more visceral than his early stuff but fantastic'.</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	<p>From looking at the information available I could find no evidence of any related events. I also asked the staff member present but they were not able to give me any further information.</p>
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	This venue is highly suitable for the exhibition as Andy Goldsworthy's exhibition is a result of a week residency in North Uist.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	The interpretation available in the gallery was good: a DVD giving an overview of Andy Goldsworthy's practice; several publications on the artist; a 'diary' from his time in North Uist; and a copy of the new concertina artist book produced to accompany the exhibition.

Criteria	Comment
	<p>There was not an interpretation sheet in the gallery. Whilst the artist was able to give insight into his practice through the DVD being available in the space, and his diary, it could have been appropriate to have an interpretation sheet available with a short overview by Taigh Chearsabhagh. This could have been an expanded text from the website information provided. For example, I would like to have found out more about the Andy Goldsworthy quote they use on the website information: 'Photographs often provide the only lasting evidence of the artist's reworking of nature, preserving "the optimum moment, the moment when I had not just made the piece, but understood the piece".' Also Taigh Chearsabhagh could have capitalised here by stating their reasons for inviting him, after having had him in a touring show the year before. I had to sift through earlier invitation material available in the gallery space to find this out. If the touring exhibition was in place by this stage to An Lanntair, this could have been mentioned here as well.</p> <p>As it was, the interpretation provided was mostly focused on the artist making statements on his own work.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>There were posters and also an external banner at the venue.</p> <p>The organisation's website prior to my visit was not fully up to date with information about current and forthcoming exhibitions.</p>
<p>Ease of booking and payment</p>	<p>n/a</p>
<p>Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?</p>	<p>The venue is very well placed, located nearby the ferry terminal.</p>
<p>External signage and signposting</p>	<p>There is clear external signage on the building and Taigh Chearsabhagh is very well signposted on the island.</p>
<p>Internal directional signage</p>	<p>Internal directional signage in the building is good.</p>
<p>Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?</p>	<p>There is a disabled toilet in the building. All but Gallery 1 are on the ground floor.</p>
<p>Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?</p>	<p>The exhibition took place 6 Sept – 29 Nov 2008.</p>
<p>Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)</p>	<p>The reception staff member was friendly but unable to answer a couple of my questions relating to the Goldsworthy exhibition, relating to if there had been any events linked to</p>

Criteria	Comment
	this exhibition.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ²	SAC funding was acknowledged on all print, including publication.

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.