



**ARTISTIC EVALUATION: Visual Art and Crafts**

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: Uist Arts Association**

**Venue: Taigh Chearsabhagh**

**Title of Event : Coast**

**Type of Event: Exhibition**

**Date of Visit: 29 Jan 10**

**Overall Rating: Very Good**

*(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.)*

Name: Arabella Harvey

Date: 30 Jan 2010

Scottish Arts Council Officer

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:

Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
<p>Vision and imagination of work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality of ideas, execution of work and installation</li> <li>if you have seen other work of this artist(s) before, please comment on any relevant comparisons</li> </ul>	Good	<p>The Uist Arts Association's annual exhibition at Taigh Chearsabhagh is being held in the café, stairwell and Gallery 1 within the building. The exhibition is a themed, mixed show displaying work by several artists from the Uists.</p> <p>The work was all wall based, primarily paintings and some photography. I understand some of the work had sold by the time I visited.</p> <p>The exhibition contained some excellent paintings and really interesting drawings, some very traditional and clearly amateur, and some more accomplished which reflected more of an engagement with the overall standard of programming at Taigh Chearsabhagh.</p>
<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>	Excellent	<p>The programming ethos within the organisation is heavily located within primarily environmental concerns. The UAA show entitled 'COAST' was themed in relation to the geographical peculiarities of the location of the building and the prevalent coastal landscape on Uist. The UAA, who were involved in the founding of Taigh Chearsabhagh have regular opportunities to show in the space. The importance of the organisation to the local area was clear even from a very short visit, and the contribution to the programme in terms of community involvement and engagement with the space by local practitioners is significant - the exhibition was perfectly pitched in this respect. The exhibition was partnered in the second gallery by a small exhibition of paintings, prints, sculpture and video by Ganghut - which was an interesting show and which provided a slightly more anarchic counterfoil to the UAA exhibition.</p>
<p>Success of event against stated aims of exhibition</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>The exhibition represented work by members of the UAA and the theme of the show referenced consistent concerns evident in the wider programming ethos of the organisation. Printed material included price lists and a leaflet about the UAA and it's relationship to Taigh Chearsabhagh. The overall theme of the exhibition was communicated primarily through wall based work, mainly painting and some photography.</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.

Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
<p>Quality of Public Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of space and overall layout/hang?</li> <li>• What interpretation or support materials were available?</li> <li>• Were labels/maps available and how appropriate were they?</li> <li>• Was a Visitor Book available or opportunities for audiences to comment/interact? What were the comments like overall?</li> <li>• What activities were available to enhance the experience of the event eg workshops, artist's talks, discussion groups programmes, on line info?</li> </ul>	<p>Very Good</p>	<p>Price lists and a visitors book were available, along with a pamphlet about UAA. Works were numbered and could be referenced with the price lists, which was an appropriate and easy to read form of labelling for the exhibition.</p> <p>Comments in the visitors book were very positive and supportive of the exhibition, and visitors from the local area were extremely supportive of the venue itself.</p> <p>I was not aware of an education programme specifically for the exhibition (and would have thought it unusual for there to be one for this kind of exhibition), but saw a great deal of evidence of creative activity and opportunity to engage with artists through the degree course run from the building.</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"> <li>Is it easy to find?</li> <li>Is it on a main transport route?</li> <li>Are the spaces clean?</li> <li>How suitable was it for the exhibition?</li> </ul>	<p>The building was very easy to find, near the ferry terminal and very easy to locate from the airport. The spaces were in good order and were perfectly suitable for displaying the exhibition.</p>																
<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>	<p>There was a range of art related literature on the entrance desk including information about UAA, a sculpture trail instigated by Taigh Chearsabhagh, and other exhibitions and opportunities for involvement.</p> <p>The website did not contain information about the exhibition programme although I was informed this was because it is currently not possible to update it for technical reasons.</p>																
<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/appropriate to the intended audience?</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>	<p>The SAC logo is displayed prominently within the building, and the exhibition is advertised within the space. I was not aware of external publicity for the exhibition such as newspaper articles or advertising but would not expect that national advertising coverage would be appropriate for a local arts association show.</p> <p>All of the printed material I saw during my visit was very clear to understand and easy to access.</p>																
<p>Signage and signposting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the entrance clearly marked?</li> <li>Is there clear internal directional signage?</li> <li>Is there Braille signage or signage for audio loops?</li> </ul>	<p>The venue is clearly identifiable by exterior signage.</p> <p>Yes</p>																
<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>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Yes/No</th> <th></th> <th>Yes/No</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>BSL interpretation</td> <td></td> <td>Audio description</td> <td>x</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Captioning</td> <td>x</td> <td>Lift/ramp</td> <td>x</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Accessible toilets</td> <td>x</td> <td>Accessible marketing materials eg website or alternative formats eg large print, Plain English</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Yes/No		Yes/No	BSL interpretation		Audio description	x	Captioning	x	Lift/ramp	x	Accessible toilets	x	Accessible marketing materials eg website or alternative formats eg large print, Plain English	
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<p>Customer service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How was the quality and efficiency of staff (invigilators etc)</li> <li>If possible, comment on how responsive they were to the needs of disabled customers?</li> </ul>	<p>The quality of staff was very high, everybody was very welcoming and informative and the organisation clearly has an extremely high value for the local community and for visitors to the island. I was also able to meet students on the degree course and was shown around the fantastic studio spaces used by the students and by workshop groups.</p>																

<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

### **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.