



## 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  
**Title of Event:** Andy Goldsworthy  
**Type of Event:** Exhibition  
**Date of Visit:** Monday 30th July 2007

**Overall Rating: Good/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 was a touring exhibition generated by the Hayward Gallery National Touring Exhibitions (NTE) with minimal input from the host venue. The NTE scheme made it fairly easy for the venue to show this artist of international significance.

The show made a valuable contribution to Taigh Chearsabhagh overall programming vision in environmental art. In this case it showed photographs, a less well-recognised aspect of Goldsworthy's work. Usefully, it also pre-empts a future project with the artist in 2008.

There was a lack of activity around the exhibition. Due to staff shortages there was no accompanying education or access programmes, resulting in missed opportunities to target specific audiences. Such activity would have been of great benefit to the organisation given the planned project with Goldsworthy in 2008.

The host venue made a welcome decision to include a DVD on Goldsworthy and his way of working. Together with interpretative books provided by NTE education staff this offered general visitors a meaningful insight into the artist and his themes.

The exhibition appeared to be well received by visitors. There was a continuous flow of local people and tourists who engaged with the work and the DVD.

The exhibition was well presented and laid out. Careful consideration had been given to groupings, the impact of wall surface colour and texture, natural light and gallery furniture.

Name: Maureen Finn

Date: 20/08/2007

**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	Andy Goldsworthy is perhaps best known for creating sculpture in the landscape. He uses nature both as the subject and material of his work. This exhibition brings together 15 colour photographs made by the artist between 1977 and 1979. Importantly, they were the first of his photographic works to be printed professionally. Although the photographs are intended as artworks in their own right they also provide documentation of the artist's creative processes. In many ways the exhibition is also like a work in progress where some images relate directly to the development of sculptural, site-specific works. They provide the only lasting evidence of Goldsworthy's approach, for example where the subject is transient such as in 'Icicle Stack' or 'Hole in Snow'. The exhibition brings many of the themes of environmental art to the venue and in doing so complements the artistic programme, particularly some of the site-specific sculptures in the area and the residency programme.
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 was not selected or curated by the host organisation. It originated from the Hayward Gallery and tours the country through a programme of National Touring Exhibitions. The works were originally selected and purchased for the Arts Council Collection. (See below regarding relevance to programme).
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 <sup>1</sup> below for guidance	4	Andy Goldsworthy connects strongly with Taigh Chearsabhagh's overall vision to programme work that relates directly to the environment and it was good to see an exhibition of a well-established artist's work in the venue, clearly with the benefit of minimal budget implications. I have seen the works before and at first the exhibition appeared rather dated. However when I was informed that it had been programmed in the context of a forthcoming residency project and resulting exhibition with Andy Goldsworthy in 2008 it became much more vital. There was however, no written material to flag up the connection with the future project.
All	Performers/tutors - technical standard, performance skills and ability to communicate and engage.  Where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments.	4	The quality and execution of the prints was excellent.
Dance, Theatre	Choreography/Use of choreography - originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc		

<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
Theatre	Script – particularly in relation to new work or second productions. Relevant to classics where the original has been substantially changed.		
Theatre, Dance	Direction - Concerns issues of interpretation, casting and presentation.		
Dance, Theatre	Use of music – appropriateness and effect of sound or music (whole/part, live/recorded) to the production.		
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.		
All	<p><b>Quality of Presentation/Engagement</b></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	Such easily toured work that is the prime rationale of the NTE programme makes presentation relatively straightforward for any host venue. In this case, Gallery 2 accommodated the exhibition well. The hang was sensitive to the three white walls and one of natural stone. Works were grouped to gain maximum impact from the natural supporting background and flow of natural light. A DVD was presented on silver flat screen monitor supported on a clear Perspex base, all of which blended into the gallery identity. (see below for further comments on DVD). For such small photographic works, the hanging height was noticeably high which I felt might have raised issues for younger people and those in wheelchairs.
All	<p><b>Audience</b></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>	4	It was obvious that the Centre provides a much-valued and used community venue. The building was always busy with a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere. The exhibition was free and it appeared that all visitors to the building viewed it as part of the overall experience. During the two times that I visited there was a steady flow of visitors through the exhibition space, mainly comprising couples and families on holiday. They all appeared to be engaged with the work and spent a lot of time on the interpretative DVD. It was difficult to tell whether some of the comments in the visitors' book related directly to the exhibition - many appeared to be for the venue in general. One commentator was surprised and delighted to find Andy Goldsworthy in such a remote location while a local primary school voiced their appreciation for an organised visit.
All	<p><b>Additional Interpretative activity</b> – what activities were available to enhance the experience of the event eg workshops, artist's talks, discussion groups? Please indicate age-groups targeted.</p>	2	There was no organised interpretative activity to enhance the exhibition such as workshops or events. I felt that a fairly generic touring exhibition of this type would have benefited greatly from a programme of local speakers to generate its own local relevance and energy. However, I understand that the organisation was greatly understaffed at the time with two key posts in the process of being filled, in particular that of arts education officer. The host venue had made a welcome and important decision to include the DVD on Goldsworthy and his way of working. This seemed to be popular with visitors and offered an insight into his processes that was immediately engaging.

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
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>	3	<p>As mentioned above due to resource constraints there were no accompanying education programme. Assuming that the target audience was general interest visitors and tourists the DVD functioned well to give the audiences an easy route into the work. Additionally The Education Department at National Touring Exhibitions had compiled 2 information booklets to accompany the show. One offered biographical information and grouped the work into themes. The second 'Book of Day' compiled a collection of responses to the weather and countryside in Britain over 250 years. These excerpts were fascinating. They opened up the subject and provided inroads into other genre, subjects and historical periods. I did feel that these resources could have been made more accessible as only one person was able to read them at a time.</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
Suitability of the venue for the event	This C category NTE exhibition is ideal for the space. The artists and themes were relevant to the venue.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	Some of the information on the wall-based panels, which accompanied the show, was out-of-date.
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.	A poster was produced although unfortunately the main poster image, which had been forwarded by NTE, did not appear in the exhibition selection. There were fabric flags promoting the exhibition in a prominent position by the roadside outside the venue.
Ease of booking and payment	n/a
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	The venue is in an ideal position.
External signage and signposting	As well as the exhibition flags, road signs draw attention to the venue.
Internal directional signage	There was no internal signage and it wasn't clear where the exhibition was installed when I entered the building although it did not take long to find it.
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	The exhibition gallery was accessible.
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	Opening hours are good.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	Front of house could not have been more helpful. Although there was no educational activity surrounding this show they were able to describe other events that the venue had co-ordinated.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding <sup>2</sup>	Scottish Arts Council was acknowledged on the poster and the website.

<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.

### 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.