



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:

Venue: Talbot Rice

Title of Event: **Monika Sosnowska: Display**

Type of Event: (e.g. performance, exhibition, informal showing, work-in-progress, workshop, screening, lecture etc) Exhibition

Date of Visit: 4/12/07

Overall Rating: 5

(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 an impressive and informative exhibition by an important artist. The exhibition succeeded in providing a good introduction to the artist's work as well as presenting a new commission. The work was well presented and there was plenty of additional information available in the gallery (in the form of catalogues and press cuttings). The exhibition was supported by a number of education events for different participant groups including a workshop for children and a seminar involving the artist which made connections with the Roman Signer exhibition at the Fruitmarket.

Name: Kate Tregaskis Date: 19 / 12 / 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.	4	Monika Sosnowska is a major polish artist. She represented her country in the 2007 Venice Biennale and has had numerous international exhibitions including at MoMA in New York and at the Serpentine in London. A series of 27 scale architectural models of works in other galleries (most of which had been realised) were displayed on plinths in the downstairs gallery. Upstairs a new commissioned work was installed consisting of an upside-down forest of black rubber tentacles which the audience was encouraged to walk through. Sosnowska takes existing architectural spaces and subverts and disrupts them by introducing new elements into them or by creating new disorientating spaces within the original spaces. The architectural models provided a great introduction to her work. The commission upstairs was a little disappointing as it felt quite small scale - and a little compromised compared to her work elsewhere. Overall though it was clear that that Sosnowska is an important artist making original and exciting work.
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	It was great to see this work in Edinburgh and it made me hungry to see more. The exhibition received support from the Modern Institute (who showed her work in 2004), Galeria Gisela Capitain, Foksal Gallery Foundation and the Polish Cultural Institute amongst other organisations.
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	5	The gallery does not state on its publicity material or website aims beyond its commitment to show contemporary Scottish and international artists work. The gallery met this aim.
All	Performers/tutors - technical standard, performance skills and ability to communicate and engage. Where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments.	5	The work was of a high standard technically. The visceral nature of the new commission (the smell, feel and weight of the material that the audience was encouraged to walk through) made it particularly engaging.

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	Choreography/Use of choreography - originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc		
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>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>	5	Good use was made of the two floors in the gallery. The exhibition was professionally 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>		I spent about an hour in the gallery. There were three other visitors to the gallery during that time. The visitors book had been well used – there have clearly been lots of interest in the show by visual arts professionals (particularly curators).

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
All	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.	5	A number of diverse education events were organised to compliment the exhibition including a children's workshop for 6-10 year olds (as part of The Big Draw) and a seminar which made connections between this exhibition and the Roman Signer exhibition at the Fruitmarket and which involved Sosnowska as one of the speakers.
All	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)?		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 imposing historical building which contains the Talbot Rice's contemporary looking 'White Gallery' was extremely appropriate for the exhibition as Sosnowska's work plays with disrupting spaces and setting up dialogues between different kinds of architectural environments.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	In addition to wall text and a handout there were a number of artists catalogues on display and a full press cuttings book. This material was well displayed with a table and chairs creating a comfortable well resourced environment for visitors to find out more.
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 website is clear and informative. I was aware of the exhibition through pre-views and a review in The List.
Ease of booking and payment	
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	The gallery is centrally located, near to the National Museum of Scotland. It is near Edinburgh's main rail station and is well served by buses.
External signage and signposting	Although the University building which houses the Talbot Rice is imposing and perhaps off-putting to casual visitors, the gallery has made itself very visible with external signage and signposting.
Internal directional signage	Good.
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	I was not aware of any special provision made.
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	The gallery is open Tues-Sat 10am-5pm.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	I spoke briefly with the invigilator and he was helpful and polite.

Criteria	Comment
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ²	Yes.

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.

I was heartened by this intelligent and detailed evaluation, it got to the core of our intentions with this exhibition and attending education program. It gave acknowledgement to our aim of showcasing this important artist however the comment on the scale of the commission was perhaps, fairly made though it should be stated that TRG has no remit or direct funding to commission new work therefore achieving what we did was a financial struggle.

Pat Fisher

7/2/08