



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.

<b>Artist/Company:</b>	Enrico David
<b>Venue:</b>	Talbot Rice Gallery
<b>Title of Event:</b>	Ultra Paste
<b>Type of Event:</b>	Exhibition
<b>Date of Visit:</b>	11 April 2008
<b>Overall Rating:</b>	<b>4 - Good</b>
<i>(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.)</i>	
Name: Stephen Beddoe	Date:05/05/2008
<b>Specialist Advisor</b>	Scottish Arts Council Officer <i>Please circle the relevant title</i>

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.	5	<p>I have followed the work of Enrico David since his degree show at Central St Martin's in the mid-1990's. Then his inclusion in the group show New Labour at Saatchi Gallery, as well as work exhibited at the Cabinet Gallery, London. This exhibition was originally shown at ICA in 2007 where it was critically well received, although I did not see the exhibition.</p> <p>The upper gallery at Talbot Rice Gallery showed a series of 20 exceptionally executed gouache drawings, reminiscent of Picabia, Picasso and other early modern masters. These wall pieces were complemented by theatrical style masks, phantasmagorical/ machine-age constructs, sculptural assemblages, beautifully-made, rendered and wall-mounted painted fans.</p> <p>The lower gallery showed a number of large scale works, dominated by a specially constructed room (Ultra Paste of the exhibition title), a 're-imagined facsimile of the artist's childhood bedroom'. The work of Dora Maar is directly referenced and attributed to this work. This work is atmospheric and challenging but gives enough to engage. It is a three dimensional portrait of the artist.</p> <p>Ultra Paste is complemented by a smaller work on the lower gallery, Sweet Seizure, which delves further back into the 19th. Century and the Victorians' interest in automata, memento mori and shadow cabinets.</p> <p>Other impressive work on the lower gallery included a canvas diptych (using pencil, charcoal and ink) again representing machine-age mannequins and a large-scale gouache and graph paper montage, again utilising the mannequin motif.</p> <p>The artists work has matured and developed in the ten or so years since graduating. Whilst the core interests of drawing, painting and refined craft techniques have been retained throughout, the aesthetic and influences have broadened to incorporate many other influences. This includes references to early 20th. Century European avant garde theatre design and performance; Dada constructs and performance; Arte Provera and post war Italian interior, furniture and fashion.</p> <p>The work is immediately engaging, disturbing, familiar (yet unfamiliar) in its reference points and execution. The composition, draftsmanship and craftsmanship of the assembled 2D and 3D work are refreshingly contemporary but overt in their historical references.</p> <p>I thoroughly enjoyed this contemporary art exhibition. The artist deserves a major solo exhibition at this point in his career, and the Talbot</p>

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
			Rice Gallery should be applauded for bringing this exhibition to Scotland. This is exactly the type of venue that this work deserves and should be a platform for the development of future work and success for this artist.
All (if relevant)	<p>Curatorial/ programming vision/ selection Please indicate how the event originated eg from the exhibiting/ producing organisation, artist-led or commissioned.</p> <p>If the event is part of a Festival, please say how it contributes to the overall programme.</p>	4	As I understand, this show originated at the ICA in 2007. Talbot Rice Gallery is an appropriate venue for work such as this and complements other shows by emerging British artists shown here in recent years. I reviewed Katie Dove at Talbot Rice Gallery in 2007 and there are definite aesthetic interests and interplays continued here by the curator. Work that is refreshingly 'new' but has both a solid grounding in craftsmanship and an interest in the 20th. Century European avant garde.
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 <sup>1</sup>below for guidance</p>	4	This exhibition successfully meets the stated aims and objectives of the Talbot Rice Gallery, that of “presenting the work of contemporary Scottish and International artists through solo, retrospective, and thematic exhibitions.”
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>	4	The Enrico David work on show was exhibited and contextualised to high professional standards.
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

<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
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><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	<p>In the context of the restrictions of the building, this exhibition was presented to very high professional standards.</p> <p>The layout of the work, in the upper and lower galleries, provided the visitor with a contextualisation of the 2D, large scale and 3D small scale and large constructions, allowing an interesting visual narrative to take place.</p>
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>		<p>I spent 1 hour and 15 minutes at the exhibition and revisited the works in each of the galleries a number of times. The exhibition was well laid out. There was appropriate labelling of work and a free information sheet provided for visitors explain the genesis and focus of the exhibition.</p> <p>There were no other visitors to the gallery during my visit, although I did visit at 10am on a Friday morning (the gallery opened promptly at 10am as advertised).</p> <p>A comments book was available in the upper gallery. The comments were wide ranging, interesting and candid, with a proportion being negative.</p> <p>Next to the comments book, a table was provided for visitors to view related catalogues by both the exhibiting artist and others.</p>
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>	3	<p>As far as I am aware, the only related educational activity related to the event was lunchtime 'curator's talk'. I could not find any information relating to an artist's talk.</p> <p>It was not mentioned whether the 'Musical Moments' event, where Talbot Rice Gallery partnered the Italian Consulate in an evening of Italian classical music, was related to the Enrico David exhibition, given the artists nationality. I presume this is the case.</p> <p>Given the artists clear interest in 20th. Century European avant garde art, design and theatre, it would have been interesting to have had some related activity, such as historical films etc.</p> <p>Artform Criteria Rating Comments and key reasons for rating</p> <p>Widening Participation, via a tour, workshops and discussions are scheduled and advertised both on the Enrico David leaflet and the website. No information is available about the content of these workshops and whether they related to the work of</p>

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
			the exhibiting artist.
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, the only indication of educational activity during the exhibition is the Talbot Rice Gallery's established 'Secondary School Widening Participation' project where schools with 'historically low progression to HE' work with the gallery in workshops, discussions and a tour of the work.</p> <p>This is all standard 'education and outreach' work and lacks real innovation and fresh thinking.</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	The Talbot Rice Gallery, established in 1975, is a nationally recognised venue for contemporary visual art. The White Gallery space, hosting the Enrico David exhibition, has undergone some superficial refurbishment and the exhibition has been shown as well as can be expected in a space with the restrictions that one would expect of a building of this age. The staff member at the desk was very helpful and did mention that major refurbishment of the space is to take place soon.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	All works were labelled professionally. There was a free A5 gatefold leaflet available to visitors, which contextualised the exhibition in clear language, and promoted the related education and events programme. Related catalogues were available on a table on the upper gallery for the use of visitors, as was a comments book.
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.	Leaflets and posters promoting the exhibition were available and could also be seen in other locations and venues around Edinburgh. The exhibition was well signposted at the entrance to the University Quadrangle. The Gallery has a clear, simple and easy to navigate website. The Enrico David exhibition is clearly promoted on the website front page, as is the hyperlink to the education and events page. No great effort seems to be made to promote education and events with concurrent exhibitions, other than the previously mentioned 'Curator's Talk event and the 'Musical Moments' evening of Italian music.
Ease of booking and payment	n/a
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	Talbot Rice Gallery is part of University of Edinburgh and is sited in the corner building of the Quadrangle space. It is a 'destination' gallery, whereby most visitors will have visited before and know where to go. Signage is good, given the complexities of the building and the access issues.
External signage and signposting	The exhibition is clearly signposted via posters at the entrance to the Quadrangle building of the university.
Internal directional signage	Once inside, the gallery is accessed via an elevator and is easy to find. Internal directional signage in the elevator and elsewhere is adequate, given the age of the building.
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	This is an ongoing challenge for the Talbot Rice Gallery, given the fact that it is sited in a Georgian university building on an upper floor. People with mobility problems, especially wheelchairs users, would have difficulty accessing the building by its main entrance. When I asked the staff member manning the gallery desk, he apologised and said special arrangements can be made whereby visitors with mobility problems can gain access via

Criteria	Comment
	another entrance by appointment. This addresses the problem in the short term but, with current legislation, must be addressed comprehensively at some point in the future.
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	The exhibition was open at the advertised time when I visited.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	The staff member at the gallery desk was very friendly, helpful and knowledgeable, in particular when I enquired about access for visitors with mobility problems. I also introduced myself to Zoë Fothergill, the Education Officer. She was, again, friendly, helpful and knowledgeable regarding the current exhibition
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding <sup>2</sup>	The Scottish Arts Council logo was clearly visible in the gallery and on all printed and electronic publicity material.

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<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.