



### 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>	<b>Theatre Cryptic</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Tramway</b>
<b>Title of Event:</b>	<b>An Ocean of Rain</b>
<b>Type of Event:</b> (e.g. performance, exhibition, informal showing, work-in-progress, workshop, screening, lecture etc)	<b>Chamber Opera</b>
<b>Date of Visit:</b>	<b>10 October 2008</b>
<b>Overall Rating:</b>	<b>4</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>	
<i>Strengths:</i> Quality of production - staging and lighting Quality of performance Appropriateness of musical score Successful international collaboration Appropriate venue - welcoming staff and good interpretative material	
<i>Weaknesses:</i> Some weaknesses in delivery of the plot, leading to possible confusion	
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Specialist Advisor	<del>Scottish Arts Council Officer</del> <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	This was a thought-provoking piece of work and I found it quite affecting. The story was imaginatively set and the score worked well. I was interested in the gestation of the work (discussed during pre-performance talk) and believe that international collaborations of this kind have an important role in Scotland's arts scene. It must have been inspiring for the Scottish artists to work closely with their European counterparts.
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.		
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	Cryptic's production values are always very high and this was no exception. Their strap-line reads - 'Ravishing the senses' and I think they came close to achieving this with this production - it was certainly powerful and memorable.  I thought the staging and lighting were extremely effective - as was the musical score and the general ambiance it created. It was well directed and confidently presented.  It was useful to have a) visited the website b) browsed the programme and c) attended the illuminating, though rather poorly attended, pre-performance talk. This helped a lot in understanding the plot, although I was still a little confused about elements of the drama and I suspect others were too as some left before the end, which was a pity.
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 of performance was uniformly high, singers coping amazingly with some very high vocal parts. I did sometimes struggle to follow what the Kiev character was saying and felt that this central character could have been even more convincing.
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.	4	I thought the new score was effective and was interested in the juxtaposition of electronics with the live musicians
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	As mentioned above, the technical presentation was very high.
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>I felt that the audience should have been bigger - I guessed about 80-100 on the night I attended (Friday). A few of these left before the end. The reaction of the audience was enthusiastic - one person who was attending the pre-performance talk mentioned having already seen the show the night before!</p> <p>The turnout for the pre-concert talk was poor - approximately 10 people. This was a great pity - I shed a lot of light on the production and the initial collaboration at Cove Park between the Director and librettist. It was also interesting to hear about the experience from the perspective of the Europeans - one of the players and the conductor. Might it have been better running this <i>after</i> the performance?</p>
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.		

<b>Artform</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Comments and key reasons for rating</b>
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)?		

## 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	Good venue but needed a larger audience to create the right atmosphere.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	Pre-concert talk, video and programme all contributed to my enjoyment and understanding of the production.
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 Theatre Cryptic website was extremely informative. I am not aware of having seen any other publicity, but I hadn't been looking out for it!
Ease of booking and payment	Very easy and efficient.
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	I took a taxi from Queen Street station to save time, but I understand there are buses.
External signage and signposting	Not obvious.
Internal directional signage	Staff very helpful in directing audience to venue.
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	I wasn't aware of particular facilities, but assume it is well equipped.
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	It was a pity that there was a gap of one hour between the pre-performance talk and the start of the show, but this may have been scheduled to allow the musicians time to prepare before the performance.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	Very good, except as far as catering was concerned: I had been told that the café would not be serving food in the period between the pre-performance talk and the start of the show and had made other arrangements - but this turned out not to be the case. Confused information.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding <sup>2</sup>	Clearly shown on programme and 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.

#### Publicity/pre publicity

The full tour dates are detailed on the tour section of the Ocean of Rain micro website. The initial entry page of the website highlighted the next performance dates which in this case would have been the Dutch performances which took place after Glasgow.

#### Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding

The SAC logo is carried at the end of the Making of Documentary which is on the ocean of rain micro site and was screened prior to each performance at the tour venues.

The SAC is listed on [www.cryptic.org.uk](http://www.cryptic.org.uk) as a main funder under funders and supporters. An easy link is provided at the bottom of the ocean of rain micro site to the [www.cryptic.org.uk](http://www.cryptic.org.uk)

