



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:	Phil Collins/Bruce Nauman
Venue:	Tramway Glasgow
Title of Event :	the world won't listen/Artist Rooms
Type of Event:	Exhibitions
Date of Visit:	22 May 2009
Overall Rating:	Excellent
Both exhibitions were of high quality work, exceptionally well-presented, appropriate to the strengths of the gallery and clearly of interest to an arts-related and broader public (particularly in the case of Collins, who may well have attracted a new and vibrant audience). Interpretation was on the whole of a high standard. The curatorial partnerships represented in both exhibitions are to be commended.	
Name: Maureen Finn	Date:2/7/09
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"> Quality of ideas, execution of work and installation if you have seen other work of this artist(s) before, please comment on any relevant comparisons 	<p>Collins: Very Good</p> <p>Nauman: Excellent</p>	<p>Phil Collins: The artist's work has an immediacy and accessibility that has become quite distinctive. The obvious humour and affection does hint at certain social pathologies and obsessions just below the surface. This is, naturally, even more evident in the works inspired by the artist's firsthand awareness of the former Yugoslavia. The mixture of amateurism and highly considered formal presentation was a striking element to the exhibition's realisation. The projects are clearly research-intensive and subtle in their conceptualisation, though are not heavy handed in their final presentation.</p> <p>Having seen <i>the world won't listen</i> in more modest presentations, this highly architectural installation with purposely high volume soundtrack was impressive.</p> <p>Bruce Nauman: Nauman has had a virtually iconic status in contemporary art for many years. This has been particularly accentuated in recent years with new generations of students discovering his film and video work, in particular. (Indeed a group of students were in attendance when this visit took place.) There is a diversity, lightness of touch and deep experimentalism in Nauman's practice over the years which offers much inspiration to students and other professionals in the visual arts.</p> <p>The exhibition should be commended in bringing some major and seminal pieces into a non-museum space (such as <i>Raw Material Washing Hands, Normal and Untitled Hand Circle</i>). It was particularly welcome to see <i>Enforced Perspective</i> – not only because it is highly unlikely to have been seen before (unlike the other works) but the heavy industrial feel of the piece seemed perfectly suited to Tramway's context. The fact that the work is bronze only added further layers.</p>
<p>Curatorial/ programming vision/ selection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does it fit within the artistic vision of the organisation? If the event is part of a Festival, please say how it contributes to the overall programme. 	<p>Collins: Excellent</p> <p>Nauman: Very Good</p>	<p>Phil Collins: The selection of this artist, with his first solo exhibition in Scotland, was very apposite. As an artist with a high international profile, now based in the city, it was good to see such an ambitiously scaled presentation of <i>the world won't listen</i>. Given the context of Tramway as a performance venue, the performative theme of this piece makes it highly suitable as a selection. Similarly, the multicultural reach of the project gives it an additional level of possible engagement, particularly welcome in an area of local diversity such as south Glasgow.</p>

Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
		<p>Bruce Nauman: The showing of major works by Nauman within Tramway clearly addresses the programming strand that highlights international work. Also, the partnership with Artist Rooms/National Galleries of Scotland is a welcome extension of their programming.</p>
<p>Success of event against stated aims of exhibition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does it relate to information contained in the programme, the website or other printed material? • How well did it communicate the artistic themes? • How did the event originate eg from the exhibiting/ producing organisation, from the artist or from commission? <p>Education events – see ¹below for definition</p>	<p>Collins: Good</p> <p>Nauman: Excellent</p>	<p>Phil Collins: The exhibition matched the claims made for it in the associated material, although it is a matter of judgement in Collins work whether the interpretation along ‘media studies as art’ is, in reality, what most people find engaging about the work. The insightful essay that accompanies the show does import some complex notions around media, celebrity and community engagement. Sometimes the abject humour and home movie quality of the work (such as <i>he who laughs last laughs longest</i> or in photographic series <i>britney</i>) seems slightly at odds with the large claims made for it. But this is less a criticism of the work than of its mediation within the professional realm.</p> <p>Bruce Nauman: The installation related well to its aims and should be applauded as such. The exhibition guide was readable and informative. Nauman is an artist of the highest quality so unsurprisingly the sense of communication and engagement with interesting and creative ideas came across strongly.</p>
<p>Quality of Public Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of space and overall layout/hang? • What interpretation or support materials were available? • Were labels/maps available and how appropriate were they? • Was a Visitor Book available or opportunities for audiences to comment/interact? What were the comments like overall? • What activities were available to enhance the experience of the event eg workshops, artist’s talks, discussion groups programmes, on line info? 	<p>Collins: Excellent</p> <p>Nauman: Very good</p>	<p>Phil Collins: The installation was particularly ambitious and successful, given the challenges of displaying work of various scale in the huge main gallery. The poster wall, spot-lit individual pieces and the walk-through video loop films were collectively well designed.</p> <p>Bruce Nauman: The Nauman exhibition involved each of the pieces being shown close to each other in one modestly sized single space. This was relatively conventional and did not need to address any particularly challenging installation issues. The neon works visible through the front window provided a strong visual connection between the roadside exterior and internal gallery spaces.</p> <p>Both exhibitions had informative interpretative panels which contextualised the artists and their work. The small fold-out information guides were</p>

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.

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		<p>welcome though the text was of too long a length to be particularly useful in the gallery for information. They were, however very well-designed, providing a good floor plan mapped to images of some of the key works. They provided an excellent take home resource.</p> <p>Although Tramway has a loyal family audience who regularly use the facilities (garden, café) these exhibitions were more geared towards Tramway's art audiences (students, artists, professionals). The accompanying Shady Lane Film Club programme also reflected and supported this known audience.</p> <p>The visitors' book was fairly well used with mainly positive comments.</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"> Is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route? Are the spaces clean? How suitable was it for the exhibition? 	<p>Tramway is easily accessible from Glasgow City Centre by bus or a short train journey. It is on the doorstep of the train station. There is on-street parking outside the venue.</p> <p>In the past Tramway has sometimes struggled with exhibition layout due to the scale of its proportions. Both of these exhibitions were well accommodated in their spaces, particularly the Collins films, which it would be difficult to imagine in many other Scottish venues.</p>																
<p>Information/ interpretive material at venue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there programmes, posters and displays about the event? Is there information on the venue's website? 	<p>There was information on the entrance walls. The venue website gave general exhibition information, events listings, location and contact details.</p>																
<p>Publicity/ pre-publicity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What leaflets, posters, websites, did you see the event listed in? What publicity materials are produced? Is it easy to understand/appropriate to the intended audience? Where can you get the information? Is there Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding²? <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>I hadn't seen any printed promotional material before arriving at the venue but do not live in Glasgow.</p> <p>The website is well-designed and interesting. I enjoyed looking through past and future programmes which would also help visitors contextualise the work in term of the overall programme. There was useful information on the artists, the exhibitions and the accompanying events.</p> <p>SAC was acknowledged on the website and interpretative and promotional material.</p>																
<p>Signage and signposting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the entrance clearly marked? Is there clear internal directional signage? Is there Braille signage or signage for audio loops? 	<p>The venue is signposted from the nearest main road. Internal signage is well-designed and clear.</p>																
<p>Access and provision for disabled people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please insert yes/no in the boxes to reflect what you notice about the venue/event <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></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Captioning</td> <td></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		Captioning		Lift/ramp	X	Accessible toilets	X	Accessible marketing materials eg website or alternative formats eg large print, Plain English	
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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.

Criteria	Comment
Customer service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the quality and efficiency of staff (invigilators etc) • If possible, comment on how responsive they were to the needs of disabled customers? 	I only had contact with café staff, who were really friendly.

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.