



Scottish Arts Council

## 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>Artists:</b>	David Bomberg, Brian Calvin, George Condo, André Derain, Armen Eloyan, Marianne Greated, Alexander Guy, Alex Katz, Dana Schutz, Walter Sickert
<b>Venue:</b>	Transmission Gallery, Glasgow
<b>Title of Event:</b>	<i>Live Undead</i>
<b>Type of Event:</b>	Exhibition
<b>Date of Visit:</b>	9 February 2008
<b>Overall Rating:</b>	4 - Good

An intimate, well curated exhibition that succeeded in terms of its principle objective i.e. *to see the links that can be drawn between artists and paintings, separated by generations if not mindsets* in respect of the theme of portraiture.

In a temporary not especially welcoming gallery space, ten paintings completed between 1929 and 2007 by ten artists, were carefully positioned within a basic but adequate space. This enabled an evaluation and comparison of formal and conceptual issues/references between 'older' works by for example David Bomberg and Andre Dérain with recent works by (present day) contemporary artists.

The exhibition was curated by Michael Hill Johnston and presented works loaned from private collectors and galleries in London, Zurich, New York, Glasgow Museums and Scottish National Galleries.

Name: Alastair Snow Date: 28.02.2008

**Specialist Advisor, Scottish Arts Council**

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.	Good	It was good to see some fine examples of twentieth century portraiture by major artists David Bomberg, Walter Sickert and André Derain in association with and to compare with more contemporary present day artist's paintings albeit in a somewhat difficult temporary space.
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.	Good	The exhibition was curated by Michael Hill Johnston. It was very well conceived and selected; giving good opportunity to make comparison across art historical time periods: to appreciate lesser known works and their respective status when considered with other perhaps better known 'historic' works with more contemporary works by present-day artists.  It complemented well Transmission Gallery's exhibition programme for the current year and also promoted and encouraged people (with the aid of accompanying information) to visit and see <i>some nearby figure paintings</i> at the Hunterian Art Gallery, University of Glasgow and also at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh.
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	Good	It was a quiet but very 'eloquent' collection of works with good background information and powerful placement to enable visitors to understand and compare different contexts and reference points of the works together in a relatively confined space.
All dance/theatre?	Performers/tutors - technical standard, performance skills and ability to communicate and engage.  Where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments.		
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.		

<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, 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>	Good	<p>The quality of the works as selected made up for the limiting environmental quality of the space as used to present this intimate exhibition of paintings. It is of course a temporary space, in use until Transmission can move into new space across the road in 2008/09.</p> <p>As a presentation space it may be rather constrained for presenting more 'historical' paintings but at the very least it does enable the Gallery to continue its' exhibition programme in this transition period.</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>Circa 700 visitors attended the exhibition between the 29<sup>th</sup> January and 23 February 2008. Comments as received were very positive and in some instances a degree of surprise was indicated in terms of the (unexpected) quality of the works on exhibition and the effectiveness of the curatorial intention of a specific number of works as selected and presented together.</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>	Good	<p>The curator of the exhibition gave two talks to accompany the exhibition to students from Glasgow and Edinburgh colleges of art. About fifty people attended a talk by artist Marianne Greated joined by Glasgow based artist George Ziffo held at Transmission on 31 January.</p>
All	<p><b>Outcomes of education activity</b> – 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>		

## 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?*

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Suitability of the venue for the event	Basic and just about adequate but which didn't necessarily limit too much the visitor's engagement with the works on exhibition.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	A concise, well written information leaflet was available both in the gallery and on the website. It enhanced visitor engagement with respective works and understanding of the issues associated with main themes of the exhibition.
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 exhibition received favourable reviews and critical interest in MAP, the List and Metro. An illustrated two page information statement appeared on the Transmission website to give a good introduction as background and to promote the exhibition.
Ease of booking and payment	
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	Easy to find on King Street in Glasgow city centre.
External signage and signposting	Visible and high profile.
Internal directional signage	Not required within what is a small ground-floor gallery space, accessible directly off King Street.
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	Ground floor access directly off King Street to an exhibition presented on one level, with invigilation/support staff present at all times, in a brightly (fluorescent) lit gallery space.
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	The exhibition space was invigilated with information available on request.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding <sup>2</sup>	Visible on all main exhibition leaflets 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.