



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.

**Artist/Company: Melanie Gilligan**

**Venue: Transmission Gallery, 45 King Street, Glasgow G1 5RA**

**Title of Event: Prison for Objects**

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

**Date of Visit: May 2<sup>nd</sup> 2008**

**Overall Rating: 3**

*(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.)*

The overall rating reflects the balance of the scores in the artistic evaluation. This is not easy work to view/hear/assess in fragments and the screening I saw, while interesting for me as an intro to the artist, needed the context of the installation and performance work to give it substance. My feeling is that the event was stretched too far by running the screening alone in the gallery beyond the end of the artist's installation and performance work for the festival.

Name: Jane Jeffrey Date: 23 / 05 / 2008

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:*

	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
	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	On May 2 <sup>nd</sup> I saw a continuous screening of <i>'The Miner's Object'</i> , by Melanie Gilligan, in the Transmission Gallery. This is a performance in which an actress portrays a storyteller and recites a text scripted by the artist. The actress tells a series of stories within stories which she reads from a pair of conspicuously placed teleprompters designed to give the impression that the speaker is making a direct connection with the audience. The work unfolds a debate about the social and material qualities of knowledge. In another work, <i>Prairial, year 215</i> , 2007 shown on April 27 <sup>th</sup> Gilligan examined relations between politics, aesthetics and their political economy. Neither of these pieces were new, but are both recent. An installation and related 20 minute performances took place across the road from Transmission Gallery during the Glasgow International Festival. I have not seen the work of this artist before but was intrigued by what was shown and motivated to explore further. The ideas are complex and connect abstraction and material concepts in both verbal and visual form. I can only comment on the execution of the video piece I saw. The performance within this was effective and the piece was either marred or made by the variable sound quality of the recording.
ant)	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.	4	The event was programmed to partly coincide with the Glasgow International Festival. Melanie Gilligan had previously shown some of the work at Tate Britain in Sept 2007 and for Media Art Bath in Nov. 2007 but some new work was presented through the installation and performances during the Glasgow Festival period and provided an opportunity for the public to experience the progression of this artist's work over a period and as live work.
	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	3	The presentation of this work in the context of the festival with an installation and live performances as well as the screening in the gallery presented a portal to the range of Melanie Gilligans work. The remaining screening in the gallery for 2 further weeks after the festival ended was perhaps not as effective out of context.
	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 performance within the video screening was effective. The technical aspects of the sound recording were variably distracting but had their own quality and texture. (Was this intentional? May have been part of the artistic concept. I just don't know!)
	Choreography/Use of		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 gallery was suitable for the screening.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	There was printed material about the artist and printed copies of her essay: Notes on Art, Finance and the Un-Productive Forces to read and take away.
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.	Good publicity as part of the Festival, in The List, and on the website. Information was clear and easy to understand. The gallery has a user friendly website which is easy to navigate.
Ease of booking and payment	n/a
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	On busy Glasgow street with shop front and easy to find.
External signage and signposting	A bit anonymous and looked closed from the outside. Not very inviting until one is actually in.
Internal directional signage	Not really necessary for this show.
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	Level access from street. Was not aware of any provision for hearing disabled or visually impaired visitors.
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	n/a
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	Staff were friendly and helpful
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding <sup>2</sup>	On printed information and website.

### 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.