



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.

Artist/Company: The artists featured in this Event were: Cath Campbell, Donna Conlon, Will Duke, Matthew Houlding, Toby Paterson and Susie Wright. Mandy McIntosh designed and created the artwork for the outside of the bus.

Venue: Travelling Gallery

Title of Event: 'Build It And They Will Come'

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

Date of Visit: Friday, 29th June, 2007

Overall Rating: 5

(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.)

Overall, the art presented in the Show provoked an immediate and profound response. Sometimes, intellectual, sometimes emotional, so that I began to question my relationship with the common-place built environment and my response to it.

Name: _____ Rosita McKenzie_____ Date: Wednesday, 01 August 2007

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:

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.	4/5	<p>All of the artists taking part in this Event were new to me. Some of the artwork presented seemed vaguely familiar in concept whilst other pieces had a more cutting-edge quality. Nonetheless, all the work was provocative and engaging, so that I left the Exhibition feeling challenged and thoughtful.</p> <p>Pieces I found particularly visionary were:</p> <p>* Will Duke's computer-generated artwork. The Artist is inspired by Science Fiction and these virtual-reality pieces were dark, dramatic and chilling. His imaginative animations were based on photographs he had taken to illustrate the harshness that is often urban existence. One piece depicts for instance, a deserted play park in Glasgow. A seesaw is seen coming up out of the ground against the stark contrast of nearby roaring traffic speeding along the M8 motorway. It incorporated surround-sound where the visitor hears the ghostly squeaking of a rusty swing or seesaw. The audio track enhanced the experience of such a desolate scene that is devoid of children but is concerned only with adult pre-occupations. Another piece showed dilapidated and lifeless high-rise flats, growing oddly out of the ground. This image presented a reverse and shocking experience in that ordinarily old buildings die and collapse whilst new buildings rise from the ground and are born with the anticipation of life and community. The sound track for this piece was recorded from building sites. Children responded in various ways to this piece. If they were personally familiar with such buildings, they became excited. However, some children were confused because the images showed no signs of life.</p> <p>* 2 sculptural pieces created by Matthew Houlding. These were doll's house size models. One was a block of flats. His work is made out of recycled material e.g. floor tiles and polystyrene, recovered from skips etc. These were excellent futuristic sculptures, inspired by the people of East Africa who can't afford to waste anything. Instead, they make new things out of old and discarded items. The message of these artworks was profound and stated quite simply that nothing should be wasted but with careful and skilled use, can be given new life and purpose.</p> <p>* 2 pieces by Susie Wright. These were long, flat, digital artworks, inspired by photographic images of Highland landscapes e.g. snowy mountains with large digital images of her models, superimposed upon them. In this way, the Artist plays with the</p>

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
			idea of what is real and what is not real. The artwork also seemed to question urban development with the suggestion that our natural environment is greatly at risk because people desire beautiful surroundings to build homes and comfortable, convenient civic environments.
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>	5	<p>I believe the original works in this Exhibition were selected by the Travelling Gallery to celebrate the re-launch of the service.</p> <p>If the event is part of a Festival, please say how it contributes to the overall programme.</p>
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 ¹ below for guidance</p>	4/5	In my opinion, the exhibits in this Exhibition lived up to the architectural theme exactly and stimulated visitor reaction as to our relationship to natural and built environments - what are they for and are we using them negatively?
All	Performers/tutors - technical standard, performance skills and ability to communicate and engage. Where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments.		n/a
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
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>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>	4	Although limited, the space was very well used for this Event. I was also pleasantly surprised to find that the vehicle was reasonably sound-proofed, which meant my enjoyment of the Show was not disturbed by extraneous street noise and I could concentrate on the art on display. I was especially delighted that this Exhibition used various technology to enhance the visitor experience, either

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.

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
	<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>		<p>as part of the artistic design of pieces or as part of the Gallery's own facilities.</p> <p>Although the Travelling Gallery tours to many different communities, this was very much a young person's/child-centred event. For instance, the Show had been taken to quite a few schools with disabled pupils, especially within the Edinburgh area. Nevertheless, the theme of the Show held an appeal for adults too.</p>
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>	5	<p>This was a very well attended exhibition and widely enjoyed by adults and children alike. Visitor numbers exceeded 10,000 by the end of the Tour. 900 people, in fact, visited on one day alone which set a new record for the TG.</p> <p>Visitor comments:</p> <p>"A bit like wondering into an alternative dimension...I liked the building movie, rather hypnotising" Visitor, Falcon Square, Inverness</p> <p>"It makes your eyes think" Pupil, Bent Primary School</p> <p>"The varied exhibits offered something for every pupil to take away and think about - hopefully they will be inspired" Teacher, Turriff Academy</p> <p>"Very thought provoking, covering contemporary issues." Teacher, Gordon Schools</p> <p>"Glad we got to see this, Cath Campbell's work is beautiful" Visitor, City Art Centre</p> <p>"Lots of textures, sizes, media - I enjoyed this immensely" Visitor, City Art Centre</p> <p>Generally, groups of young people and children viewed the Exhibition for half an hour or so at a time.</p> <p>Younger children especially loved Toby Paterson's work. These were 3 relief pieces created out of Perspex and in different sizes. One piece was based on a skateboard park, seen from a bird's eye view. Another resembled a children's game or puzzle made of transparent Perspex that the children could almost see shadows in. All the pieces were very tactile and had abstract patterns through them. However, older children were not so keen because they considered these pieces to be too simple looking.</p> <p>The children also liked the display of 3-dimensional deer models. These pieces were made of paper and strengthened with bees' wax. The Artist first produced abstract drawings that were then screen-printed onto paper to create textured designs.</p>

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
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.	5	Artist led workshops were held weekly. These were based on what the children had seen and experienced. The artists who were chosen to facilitate the workshops were either connected with the Show or their methods and practice were relevant to the Exhibition. They were all good communicators and skilled in working with children. In particular, the children were encouraged to discuss different ways of making animation.
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)?	5	Information packs were sent out to each school in advance of the event, so that teachers could prepare the children for the project work they would undertake before and after seeing the exhibition. In addition, everyone who visited the Show was given a catalogue and other information. This was to help reinforce the learning experience.

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	This venue was highly suitable for the Event. It also allowed many more adults and children to experience contemporary and meaningful artwork.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	Large print and Braille editions of the information packs were available. In fact, it is TG policy to produce information in a range of alternative formats for all its exhibitions. Interpretation was also greatly assisted by the mixed media used in the artworks e.g. sound pieces and sculpture which made the Exhibition far more accessible. Personally, I was helped by information being sent to me by E-mail in advance of my visit. My enjoyment was also greatly enhanced by the skill and professionalism of my Exhibition guide.
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.	I was not aware of advanced publicity for this Event before making contact with the Gallery. However, the TG web site has been thoughtfully designed to accommodate people who use voice screen-readers. So, when I investigated further, I found information easy to gather and would now recommend the web site as a good source for current or advanced information.
Ease of booking and payment	As usual, I simply made a telephone call to book my visit. Also, there was no charge for admission.
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	The Travelling Gallery is based at the City Art Centre, 2 Market Street, Edinburgh EH1 1DE. Parking is not easy at this location, although taxis are permitted to collect and drop visitors off. The Waverly Railway Station and bus routes are close by. Also, when the TG visits other locations, it is situated close to the school/community centre in question.
External signage and signposting	The TG is identified by a very unique and distinctive design created by Mandy McIntosh. Her design is based on textiles. It is abstract, very colourful and vibrant.

Criteria	Comment
Internal directional signage	As the TG provides only one gallery space, internal directional signage is not required.
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	<p>Physical access is very good.</p> <p>There is a ramp into the vehicle and a wide passageway down the bus to accommodate wheelchair users - a few at a time.</p> <p>There is a good level of sound-proofing and the bus is equipped with remote control shutters so that the environment can be made darker or lighter to accommodate anyone who has difficulty seeing the artworks under normal lighting conditions.</p> <p>Sound levels of film pieces etc. can also be adjusted similarly.</p>
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	This Event was only available in Edinburgh to visit for a very short time when I was asked to evaluate it. However, the length of time I spent there, was sufficient to enjoy the experience thoroughly.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	<p>The customer service provided by the TG staff was superb and very welcoming. My guide was well informed, helpful and took time to describe or explain all the exhibits on display. I was also encouraged to feel many of the artworks.</p> <p>In addition, staff are keen to provide the best possible service and welcome comments and guidance that will enable them to do so.</p>
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ²	Scottish Arts Council funding is widely acknowledged including the TG website.

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.

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.