



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>Artist/Company:</b>	David Hughes Dance Company
<b>Venue:</b>	Traverse Theatre
<b>Title of Event:</b>	David Hughes Triple Bill
<b>Type of Event:</b>	Dance Performance
<b>Date of Visit:</b>	Friday 11 May 2007
<b>Overall Rating:</b>	
	Good
	A comprehensive evening of three diverse works performed to a high standard.
<b>Name:</b> Patricia Eckersley	<b>Date:</b> 16/05/2007
<b>Specialist Advisor</b>	<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.	Good	A well-balanced programme danced with skill and energy. I had not seen the company perform prior to this evening to make any comparison to previous work, but seen individual members perform (including David Hughes). Conclusion is of a strong company with vitality and ambition.
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	Artist-led project directed by David Hughes.
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	The company achieved their stated aim in 'working with a diverse range of technical dancers in creating an exciting contemporary repertoire'.
All	Performers/tutors - technical standard, performance skills and ability to communicate and engage.  Where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments.	Excellent	David Hughes has brought together a strong group of dancers with solid technique. The ensemble of performers and choreographers offer a wealth of experience to appeal to a wide range of audiences. Good to see the return of Errol White and Davina Givan touring in Scotland who have a dedicated following of fans from their days with Scottish Dance Theatre.
Dance, Theatre	Choreography/Use of choreography - originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc	Good	The lively mixed triple bill combining a new piece by David Hughes ( <b>Matt' Lost His Grove</b> ), a work already in the repertoire by Rafael Bonachela ( <b>4: Freeze-Frame</b> ) and a re-working of the historic Les Sylphides which inspired the choreographer Tanja Liedtke to create her new work. ( <b>Imploded:Une Reverie Romantique</b> ).  In all three works, the choreography was athletic and full on. I wondered if there was a significant history behind the piece <b>Matt's Lost His Grove</b> directed by David Hughes, complete with a Harley Davidson motorbike. The audience certainly sat up when the bike appeared on stage. The dramatic affect was somewhat lost, when the bike was noisily pushed off stage at the end. Found myself pondering the logistics of touring with the motorbike and why it was included but it looked good on stage.

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
			A well balanced programme showing the potential of this new company which I hope will continue to flourish.
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.	Good	All three pieces had a strong physicality demonstrating the ability of David Hughes in sourcing dancers and choreographers with talent to communicate to audiences. Inclusion of Matt Foster, making the transition from break-dancing to contemporary dance with such ease is delightful to see.
Dance, Theatre	Use of music – appropriateness and effect of sound or music (whole/part, live/recorded) to the production.	Excellent	A diverse and interesting source of recorded music used for each of the three pieces.
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.	Excellent	Simon Gane and Theo Clinkard's contribution in the design and lighting created striking stage image. With the Director, they created a rich atmosphere showing the diversity of contemporary dance. The sport themed costumes for Tanja Liedtke's piece with their quirky detail were fun.
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>	Good	It was the first night of the tour and remarkable without any cliches. Good overall presentation.
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>	Good	<p>The audience was about three quarters full at the Traverse Theatre. Mixed audience (not the usual dance audience) and a number of young people. The audience gave a very positive response to the evenings work.</p> <p>I took my daughter who was reluctant to join me, but by 10 minutes into the first piece she whispered 'this is really good mum'. Praise indeed!</p>

<b>Artform</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Comments and key reasons for rating</b>
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.		None
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)?		Not known

## 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	Good dance venue for small/medium scale work.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	Programmes on sale costing £1 with little information about the company other than a pull out slip listing performers.
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 company's website gave limited information. I found more details on Scottish Arts Council website.
Ease of booking and payment	Friendly and welcoming staff at the Traverse when I arrived to collect the tickets. Booked on-line with ease.
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	Easy to find venue and parking no problem in the evening in Edinburgh.
External signage and signposting	No signage seen other than above the venue.
Internal directional signage	Good.
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	Steps down into the theatre and auditorium. Lift available. Intended to ask the staff of the positioning of people in wheelchairs, if at the back or front of the auditorium.
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	Good with one interval.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	Excellent.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding <sup>2</sup>	Scottish Arts Council acknowledged on programme.

<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.