



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: All or Nothing
Venue: Traverse Theatre
Title of Event: Lifeline/ 1,2,3, here we go...
Type of Event: performance
Date of Visit: 13 October 2007
Overall Rating: Competent/Good

All or Nothing's work formed part of a double bill of aerial dance performance. For the purposes of this evaluation, I will focus on All or Nothing's work only. The presentation of the work was of good quality and Jennifer Paterson is a skilled aerial artist. There was a variety of pace to the work, but I did not get the sense of dancing with the rope as a partner, that I saw in the development phase, nor of Jen's ability as a dancer, as the piece turned out to be strictly aerial work, not a blend of dance and aerial, as funded through the Creative Development fund.

Name: Susan Hay

Date:30/10/07

Scottish Arts Council Officer

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.	3	This piece was a pure aerial dance work. The variety of the movements and pace of the piece were well conceived, but seemed to have lost the sense of the rope as the partner, rather than a tool. There was no pure dance within the work, so the contrast of flying on the ground and on the rope was not represented. While the work had developed from the work shown at Dance Base as a sharing, I felt that it lost some of its originality in this – not including the pure dance as part of the work. The development of the work was supported through a Choreographic Development grant.
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.	4	This formed part of a double bill with Matilda Leyser Dance company who presented the first piece <i>Lifeline</i> which was simple with a clear storyline and well presented. Overall the pieces worked well as a programme.
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 ¹ below for guidance	3	'All or Nothing aims to merge aerial skills with dance theatre. ...An aerial dance duet between performer and corde lisse rope'. 1,2,3, <i>here we go...</i> was primarily an aerial piece, with little dance theatre.
All	Performers/tutors - technical standard, performance skills and ability to communicate and engage. Where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments.	4	Jen Paterson is a highly skilled aerial artist and performer. The work largely held the audience's attention.
Dance, Theatre	Choreography/Use of choreography - originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc	3-4	Jen used the rope creatively, at one point it was drawn across the stage and anchored, giving a diagonal to work on rather than the usual two dimensions seen in most work. Jen did not leave the rope, only coming down to the floor once, and walking on the rope.
Theatre	Script – particularly in relation to new work or second productions. Relevant to classics where the original has been substantially changed.	-	n/a

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
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.	3	Recorded music was used throughout the piece, which was used well by the performer.
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.	4	The curtain opened to a dramatic set – lights strung around the backdrop, the performer balanced in the air. Halfway through the piece, when the rope's dimension was altered the lights were extinguished.
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>	4	Technically, this piece went well, with the rope being raised at the correct time, and lighting and sound cues hit.
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>		There was about 80% or more capacity. The audience was appreciative of the work.
All	<p>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.</p>	-	None
All	<p>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)?</p>	-	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	Traverse One has a good stage and height to present aerial performances.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	Posters and programmes were available at the venue.
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.	Pre-publicity seemed limited to the entry within the brochure and on the Traverse's web site. It was also included in Dance Base's dmail.
Ease of booking and payment	Tickets were pre-purchased by telephone and collected on the night.
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	The Traverse is centrally located within easy reach of both train and bus routes.
External signage and signposting	Good external signage.
Internal directional signage	Once into the foyer the internal theatre signage is good.
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	Information on the web - Level access, automatic doors at Cambridge Street entrance, lift with Braille signage and audible announcer, adapted toilets at ground and Traverse Bar Café levels, wheelchair spaces, assistance dogs welcome, infra red and induction loop systems (headsets available from the Box Office).
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	8pm start suitable for the audience. One hour twenty minutes running time.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	Staff were pleasant. There is a difficulty with bringing children to shows in the evening, as they aren't allowed into the bar space during the interval, and need to remain in the theatre space.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ²	Within the Traverse's brochure. On their website, there is no obvious Scottish Arts Council logo and the web address listed is www.sac.org.uk , not scottisharts.org.uk , albeit it ends up at the correct home page.

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.