



ARTISTIC EVALUATION

This evaluation is intended to represent an objective aesthetic judgement. **Specialist advisors and officers should avoid making judgements based on their own personal tastes and preferences wherever possible.**

Artist/Company:	Birmingham Repertory Theatre and Traverse Theatre Company in association with Paines Plough
Venue:	Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh
Title of Event:	Orphans by Dennis Kelly
Type of Event:	Play
Date of Visit:	22nd August 2009
Overall Rating:	Good <i>(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.)</i>
This new play by Dennis Kelly is a chilling contemporary urban story about a brother and sister and the sister's husband confronting some home truths about themselves and the world outside their front door.	
Brilliant dialogue, good performances and well crafted.	
Could have been tighter and lost 15 minutes of the script but well done piece of standard small scale drama	
Name:	Alan Lyddiard
Scottish Arts Specialist Advisor	Date: 23rd August 2009

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 on 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 future 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:

Very poor- standard falls well below what is acceptable.

Poor - not well conceived and executed

Satisfactory

Good - well conceived and executed

Very Good – well conceived and executed to a very good standard

Excellent – Inspiring and executed to an exceptionally 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	<p>Vision and imagination of work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of ideas if you have seen other work of this artist(s)/ company before, please comment on any relevant comparisons 	Good	Very interesting play, full of invention and snappy dialogue that presented a dystopian world of urban violence just outside our front doors.
All (if relevant)	<p>Curatorial/ programming vision/ selection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does it fit within the artistic vision of the organisation? If the event is part of a Festival, please say how it contributes to the overall programme. 	Good	<p>Very good choice for the Festival. A writer with a proven reputation working with a company of quality.</p> <p>I had not seen any of their previous work.</p>
All	<p>Success of event against stated aims of project and/or performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does it relate to information contained in the programme, the website or other printed material? How well did it communicate the artistic themes? How did the event originate eg from the exhibiting/ producing organisation, from the artist or from commission? <p>Education events – see ¹below for definition</p>	Good	<p>The event was exactly what I expected it to be. The information was clear and the show reflected the information I had read about it in all media outlets.</p> <p>It expressed the artistic themes within the play very succinctly.</p>
All	<p>Performers/tutors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the expertise of the performers? Where performers are amateur, please reflect this in your comments. How successfully did the performer(s) communicate with and engage the audience? In your view, was an artist as a tutor key to the success of the workshop? 	Very Good	<p>The performers were first class professional actors.</p> <p>They were extremely engaging characters and were integral to the success of the production.</p> <p>It was an actors' play.</p>
Dance, Theatre	<p>Choreography/Use of choreography</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was the work original? How was the space used? How many dancers were there and how were they used? How long was the piece? 	n/a	No choreography.
Theatre	<p>Script</p> <p>Please comment on this for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> new work second productions classics where the original has been substantially changed 	Excellent	An excellent new play by Dennis Kelly with real energy and flair. However I think the first half was a little too long in coming to its climax. This made the attention of the audience wane a little.

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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was the work well interpreted? • Was it well cast? • Was it well presented? 	Very good	The work was extremely well interpreted by the director. It was very well cast and extremely well presented. Sound and light was used very effectively
Dance, Theatre	Use of music <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the music/ sound used enhance the production? • Is it live or recorded? 	Very Good	The music was supportive of the action and atmosphere. It was very well used during moments of stillness or tension.
Dance, Theatre	Design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How were the costumes, set and lighting? • How did it work in the venue? • Was it technically proficient? (eg lighting and sound cues, etc). 	Good	The design was good. Settings, costumes and lighting all of very high standard. It was extremely proficient in its technical delivery.
All	Quality of Public Engagement <p>Performing Arts/Education -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was the production/event targeted at a particular audience? • Was the production /event appropriate for the audience/participants? • Were you/ engaged/inspired? • Did the audience/ participants appear to be engaged/inspired? • What was their response? • Approximately how many people were there? • Did there appear to be a broad mix of people – age, cultural diversity or disabled? • Are BSL/captioned/audio described performances offered as part of the run/tour/? If so how many? • What activities or supporting materials were available to enhance the experience of the event eg workshops, artist's talks, discussion groups programmes, on line info? • Were these targeted at specific age groups? <p>Education/learning events: In addition, please provide comments on the following (if appropriate):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was it taught/led eg one to one, group, child centred? • What was the composition of the participant group – age range, gender mix? • Is it strategically linked to the curriculum or national policy areas e.g. Early Years, Community Learning & Development • What learning/skills development took place? • What was the quality of the art produced by the participants? • Did the workshop tutor have a teaching plan for the session and/or project? • How were participants recruited? • Did participants' views and choices help inform the 	Good	<p>I think the production was targeted to a theatre going public. It was a 'traditional' new, studio style play in the form that is very recognisable. Audiences knew what to expect and entered the story as willing listeners.</p> <p>I think the audience was certainly engaged but I don't think they were inspired. They clapped politely at the interval and at the end. A well-made play for a well behaved audience.</p> <p>The theatre (Theatre 1) was completely sold out.</p> <p>There was a mixture of different ages and cultures in the audience. I was unaware of anybody with disability except for one person on a crutch who did express her concern of the facilities to the house manager.</p> <p>There is one BSL and audio described performance within the run of the production.</p> <p>The Traverse runs an extensive Outreach and Education programme</p>

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
	structure and content of the project? Crafts/Visual Arts Use of equipment, space and overall layout/hang?		

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
Location and suitability of the venue for the event <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route? Are the spaces clean? What were the sight lines like? How big was it? 	The venue is a major venue for Edinburgh. It is easy to find. It is on the main transport routes the space is clean and the sightlines are good. It is a middle scale theatre space
Information/ interpretive material at venue— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there programmes, posters and displays about the event? Is there information on the venue's website? 	All the marketing and publicity is first rate on all media outlets
Publicity/ pre-publicity – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What leaflets, posters, websites, did you see the event listed in? What publicity materials are produced? Is it easy to understand? Where can you get the information? Is there Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ²? <p>Please be alert to the publicity available prior to your visit to the event and comment on the company/organisation's website.</p>	All the marketing and publicity is first rate and The Scottish Arts Council's funding is credited extensively
Ease of booking and payment	Easy to book. Very helpful staff
Timing of the event <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience? Was the length appropriate? 	The event is timed perfectly
Signage and signposting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the entrance clearly marked? Is there clear internal directional signage? Is there Braille signage or 	The entrance is clear and good internal signage.

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.

Criteria	Comment																
signage for audio loops?																	
<p>Access and provision for disabled people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please insert yes/no in the boxes to reflect what you notice about the venue/event <p>Please add in any additional comments below the table</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many BSL/captioned/audio described performances are there at the venue? 	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="571 226 823 293"></th> <th data-bbox="828 226 916 293">Yes/ No</th> <th data-bbox="920 226 1165 293"></th> <th data-bbox="1169 226 1257 293">Yes/ No</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="571 300 823 394">BSL interpretation</td> <td data-bbox="828 300 916 394">Yes</td> <td data-bbox="920 300 1165 394">Audio description of performances</td> <td data-bbox="1169 300 1257 394">Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="571 400 823 472">Captioning</td> <td data-bbox="828 400 916 472">No</td> <td data-bbox="920 400 1165 472">Lift/ramp</td> <td data-bbox="1169 400 1257 472">Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="571 479 823 748">Accessible toilets</td> <td data-bbox="828 479 916 748">Yes</td> <td data-bbox="920 479 1165 748">Accessible marketing materials eg website or alternative formats eg large print, Plain English</td> <td data-bbox="1169 479 1257 748">Yes</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Yes/ No		Yes/ No	BSL interpretation	Yes	Audio description of performances	Yes	Captioning	No	Lift/ramp	Yes	Accessible toilets	Yes	Accessible marketing materials eg website or alternative formats eg large print, Plain English	Yes
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Captioning	No	Lift/ramp	Yes														
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<p>Customer service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How was the quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering) If possible, comment on how responsive they were to the needs of disabled customers? 	<p>I found the staff fantastic, friendly and very helpful. I did observe, however, one woman who had some problems with the seating plan as she had been injured and was walking with a crutch. The Performance was sold out and she had problems finding a seat. She was complaining that nobody helped her before the show went up. I think the seating is not ideal in the main space when there is a full house.</p>																

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.