



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:	Stellar Quines
Venue:	TRON
Title of Event:	The UNCONQUERED
Type of Event:	PERFORMANCE
Date of Visit:	10/04/08
Overall Rating:	EXCELLENT

A fine marriage of form and content; both the whole and its constituent parts are filled with sheer theatrical delights. It would be wrong to concentrate wholly on Torben Betts delightfully audacious and hilarious text as all the design elements of this production-including playing style and text-perfectly compliment each other.

Name: **Stewart Ennis** Date: **11/04/08**
Specialist Advisor

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.	Excellent	This is a prime example of a fine marriage of form and content. All design elements - and in that I would include performance style decisions-perfectly compliment each other. Both the parts and the whole are a delight.
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.	Excellent	This is a re-tour of a successful run last year when the play won the Scottish critics award for best script. It seems entirely appropriate that such a popular piece of theatre should wish to reach out to new audiences.
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	Excellent	The programme and flyers etc offer a brief narrative breakdown together with some clues about theme, style and use of language. The performance itself meets and exceeds expectations.
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	All the performers gave remarkably tight and focused, but also delightfully theatrical performances. They rarely missing a beat in what must have been an extremely difficult text to learn and deliver at such a pace. The broad characterizations and rhythms worked well against one another and again seemed entirely at one with the whole concept.
Dance, Theatre	Choreography/Use of choreography - originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc	Excellent	No choreography as such but the carefully stylized movement of the performers were an important part of the entire design concept.
Theatre	Script – particularly in relation to new work or second productions. Relevant to classics where the original has been substantially changed.	Excellent	The script by Torben Betts was relentlessly exciting, furious, poetic and hilarious. It was intelligent and thought provoking but more importantly it was full of the sheer pleasure and delight of live theatre.
Theatre, Dance	Direction - Concerns issues of interpretation, casting and presentation.	Excellent	Muriel Romanes direction was tight, bold and exciting. The style of the performances were simultaneously funny and frightening; the pace and the use of space went hand in glove with the text. Together with all other design elements the result was a fine fusion of form and content.

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
Dance, Theatre	Use of music – appropriateness and effect of sound or music (whole/part, live/recorded) to the production.	Excellent	Sound design by Peter Vilks worked extremely well. It was angular, layered and disturbing and again perfectly complimented the other elements of the production.
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	Designer and Visual Artist Keith McIntyre's off kilter black and white line drawn was beautiful, sinister and quirky. Together with Catriona Maddocks' costume and pasty faced make up design, this almost (Edward) Gorey-esque combination perfectly compliments the text and heightened playing style.
All	Quality of Presentation/Engagement Performing Arts - technical presentation of the production (eg lighting and sound cues, etc).	Excellent	Technically the piece appeared faultless with lighting, sound and effects seamless and entirely in keeping with the mood of the piece. Even the scene changes were performed with style.
All	Audience Performing Arts - appropriateness of the production for the audience/participants; estimate the size and reaction		The Tron main stage was full and the audience response was extremely enthusiastic .
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.	Good	After show discussion was open, frank and interesting.
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)?	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 venue perfectly suited this production.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	Programmes, posters and press reviews were all helpful and informative.
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.	Tron website offered info good on the show as did Stellar Quines own web site and both easy to negotiate.
Ease of booking and payment	No problems.
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	On good local transport routes.
External signage and signposting	Adequate.
Internal directional signage	Adequate and with good usher assistance.
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	Adequate.
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	Yes, quite appropriate.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	Box office and front of house very friendly and helpful.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ²	SAC acknowledged where appropriate.

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.