



### 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>	<b>V.amp</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>The Tron Theatre, Glasgow</b>
<b>Title of Event:</b>	<b>Fleeto</b>
<b>Type of Event:</b>	<i>(e.g. performance, exhibition, informal showing, work-in-progress, workshop, screening, lecture etc)</i> <b>Theatre Performance</b>
<b>Date of Visit:</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup> September 2008</b>
<b>Overall Rating:</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>It was a very different theatre experience with a very young teenage audience all of whom were clearly engaged by the subject matter and by the play. The most remarkable and impressive thing for me was the use of language. As with Greek theatre there was little action that happened in front of the audience all of it was accounted through poetry that was brutal and dynamic and gripped a young audience unused to hearing verse.</b>	
<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>	
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Stephen Stenning</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>24/09/08</b>
<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.	<b>Excellent</b>	The idea of using classic Greek theatre combined with very raw language to look at the current issue of knife crime is a bold and imaginative idea and one that works particularly well because of the level of skill in the execution.
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.	<b>Excellent</b>	A great deal of care has gone into developing a piece to look at the issue of knife violence. The production has been developed with Strathclyde police's violence reduction unit, the director has been involved in a workshop programme that has resulted in young performers appearing in the play. An impressive project for V Amp and an impressive play.
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	<b>Excellent</b>	V Amp was created to produce diverse challenging collaborative work. Fleeto is the result of a number of collaborations – with Strathclyde Police's Violence Reduction Unit – with young performing projects and in the way that the piece itself was worked up for "A Play, A Pie and A Pint". Fleeto definitely challenges its audience, impressively using classic theatre to dramatise, expose and explore knife crime in Glasgow in a brutal, theatrical and very immediate way.
All	Performers/tutors - technical standard, performance skills and ability to communicate and engage.  Where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments.	<b>Good</b>	The four professional actors are extremely strong. Stewart Porter is an authoritative presence throughout as policeman/chorus and Alison Peebles gives a beautifully weighted performance as the victim's mother. The two younger actors, Neil Leiper and Jordan McCurrach give powerful performances as vengeful street warriors and Jordan McCurrach as Mackie combines adrenalin fuelled fury with the pathos of guilt-ridden tragic hero. 'Local young performers' make a brief performance as Kenzie's Fleeto, the blocking of their scene exposes them as inexperienced performers and some of them looked a little exposed.
Dance, Theatre	Choreography/Use of choreography - originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc	<b>N/A</b>	

<sup>1</sup> 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	Script – particularly in relation to new work or second productions. Relevant to classics where the original has been substantially changed.	<b>Excellent</b>	In the programme no writer is credited. For me the script was one of the most impressive elements of the production. The language is necessarily strong and graphic but the verse structure and the heightened sense of poetry work beautifully to distance the audience. The effect of the dramatic, poetic, brutal language is that the audience are always able to consider and contemplate what they are hearing.
Theatre, Dance	Direction - Concerns issues of interpretation, casting and presentation.	<b>Good</b>	The production is extremely well cast and the script is very carefully and clearly interpreted. Paddy Cunneen had done an extraordinarily good job of managing the very direct relationship between and using the chorus to ensure that the story is clear and the issues behind that story are put very directly to the audience. When it comes to the cast of young people then they looked as if they would have benefited from being given business to be involved in rather than being exposed by standing and performing direct to the audience.
Dance, Theatre	Use of music – appropriateness and effect of sound or music (whole/part, live/recorded) to the production.	<b>Good</b>	The music and sound was effective and atmospheric.
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.	<b>Competent</b>	A lighting designer (Michael Straun) is credited in the programme along with original design by Paddy McGurn. The play is performed in a black box and there is no set. The costumes were all appropriate but nothing more and the lighting was effective.
All	<p><b>Quality of Presentation/Engagement</b></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>	<b>Good</b>	The technical presentation was good. It is sometimes easier for cues to be exposed when it is a black box devoid of set but all the cues worked and the production was smooth.
All	<p><b>Audience</b></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,</p>		I think the auditorium was completely full. It was a very unusual audience in that the majority appeared to be teenagers. There were some unexpected reactions (revealing that quite a lot of the audience were not regular theatre goers) and although some of the swearing prompted giggles it was very noticeable that the audience as a whole accepted completely the verse and the role of the chorus. The audience clearly really enjoyed the place and were raucously appreciative at the end.

Artform	Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
	enthusiasm, number involved, etc		
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.	<b>Good</b>	It is clear that all the performances on the tour have been accompanied by a programme of workshops.
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)?	Good	There has clearly been a well thought out education and community programme alongside this production. The guest performers in the production that I saw were from Coatbridge College and it was clear that the groups of young people in the audience were inspired by the production and it appeared that they had been prepared for the production by education activity.

## 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	It appeared to be the ideal venue both in terms of the intimacy that the theatre provides and the size of the stage.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	The programme was very good and extremely informative containing a short piece provided by the Violence Reduction unit of Strathclyde police and a good and very relevant article about the history of political theatre that explains how the traditions of the theatre of Aeschylus and Sophocles were used in the structuring of Fleeto.
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 production has a reasonably prominent position in the Tron's brochure. All the information is well presented in order to give you a good sense of what you are coming to.
Ease of booking and payment	Very straight-forward. I booked by telephone through the box-office.
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	The venue is a fairly prominent building on Trongate which is central and easy to find.
External signage and signposting	There are signs but not that many and if you are not familiar with Glasgow I imagine it could be a little confusing.
Internal directional signage	There have been some changes in the Tron since I last attended a performance and they work well making it slightly easier to navigate around now that the box office is in the foyer.
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	There is obvious disabled access to the building although the exit from the auditorium directly into a bar area makes it a little cramped.
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	The eight o' clock start seemed about right for a short play without an interval.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	Very good indeed. The front of house staff and the bar staff were very impressive. I particularly liked the fact that there was a variety of snacks available front of house including curly-wurlies.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding <sup>2</sup>	As well as appearing in the venue and on leaflets, the logo is also on the front page of the in the 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.

**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.