



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:	X Factor Dance Company
Venue:	Cameo Cinema
Title of Event:	'Person or Persons Unknown'
Type of Event:	Dance Film
Date of Visit:	30 October 2007
Overall Rating:	Good

A short film which explored the bizarre world of dreams devised by Alan Greig in conjunction with his company of dancers, VBF Productions and Traveller Dance Company under the Artistic Directorship of Janice Parker. The collaborative project resulted in a dance film of high quality.

The desire is for the film to become a sustainable resource for X Factor to be used as a promotional opportunity to be sent to venues, promoters and festivals. It would be a lost opportunity for X Factor, if this is not actively pursued.

Name: Patricia Eckersley

Date: 05/11/2007

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	<p>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.</p>	Good	<p>The idea behind the film (exploring the bizarre world of dreams) had a long gestation period for its creator Alan Greig, who for a number of years, kept a diary of his dreams. This starting point gave birth to the film and dance collaboration working closely with Janice Parker and Brian English, the main creative team behind the project.</p>
All (if relevant)	<p>Curatorial/ programming vision/ selection Please indicate how the event originated eg from the exhibiting/ producing organisation, artist-led or commissioned.</p> <p>If the event is part of a Festival, please say how it contributes to the overall programme.</p>	Good	<p>The medium of film is a powerful tool for dance. This project gave a 'voice' to adults with learning disabilities who also participated in the project. The coming together of X Factor and Traveller Dance Company created new possibilities for both companies, which hopefully will continue. Members of Traveller Dance Company have expressed a wish to do more with X Factor, which is hoped will be possible.</p>
All	<p>Success of event against stated aims - in the programme or other printed material, including how well it communicated the artistic themes.</p> <p>Education events – see ¹below for guidance</p>	Excellent	<p>The end result of this project was a thought provoking insight into dance though the medium of film A short and powerful film which did not resort to the same old clichés of dance for people with disabilities in its choreographic style, which was so refreshing. Both professional and non-professional dancers made an equal and valid contribution to the making of the film.</p> <p>One of the personal aims for Alan Greig was to create something different from a live stage performance of X-Factor, which he achieved in this film.</p>
All	<p>Performers/tutors - technical standard, performance skills and ability to communicate and engage.</p> <p>Where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments.</p>	Good	<p>X Factor continues to work with a number of experienced dancers including Errol White and Davina Givan. Both perform with intensity and the ability lift a production with their attention to detail. Due to this level of experience, the artistic team was able to draw out the best in all the performers in this collaborative project.</p>

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.

Dance, Theatre	Choreography/Use of choreography - originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc	Good	Eight dancers took part in the project. The dancers initiated a lot of their own material within a structured improvisation setting. The choreography devised by the company played to the strength of the individual dancers resulted in some beautiful duets (the ballroom sequence especially).
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.	Excellent	VBF Productions used a range of camera shots in the different locations creating a vibrant flow to the dance devised by the company. Filming took place in a number of locations including a boxing ring, a disused hospital, old corridors, an empty warehouse and the splendour of the Edinburgh Assembly Rooms ballroom, all shot over a two-week period. On average about 50 minutes of material was shot by the company but they only used 2 or 3 minutes in the actually finished film. The editing was possibly one of the most challenging aspects of the whole process.
Dance, Theatre	Use of music – appropriateness and effect of sound or music (whole/part, live/recorded) to the production.	Excellent	Tom Murray devised the music for the film, which was excellent; interestingly most of the music came after the choreography process, Often the dancers rehearsed in silence without music, but it worked.
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.	Good	Simple and appropriate costumes.
All	Quality of Presentation/Engagement Performing Arts - technical presentation of the production (eg lighting and sound cues, etc). Crafts/Visual Arts - Use of equipment, space and overall layout/hang Education events - relevance/ appropriateness of presentation and teaching methodology (one to one, group, child centred); details of participant group and activity, including genre.	Good	A film of professional production quality created by the Film Director, Brian English (who had not worked on dance film before, but I hope he does more). The camera danced around the performers using close ups and mid shots to great affect. In the intimate setting of the Cameo Cinema, the production quality of the film was excellent.
All	Audience Performing Arts - appropriateness of the production for the audience/participants; estimate the size and reaction Crafts/Visual Arts – time spent, interest, activity, and visitors' books comments, number of		A small invited audience of about 30 people. The film is to have a second showing at the Filmhouse as part of the Dance Base film programme, which will be opened to the public.

	visitors/ participants at the time of visit Education/learning – pre-event involvement, participants/ schoolteachers reaction, understanding, commitment, 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.	-	N/a
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	Cameo 2 is ideal for small screen showings.
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	Information given to the audience on the production 'Person or Persons Unknown with details of the team involved. Two screenings of the film were shown, interspersed with a short discussion from Alan Greig, Janice Parker and Brian English.
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.	Not aware of any pre-publicity.
Ease of booking and payment	No booking required.
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	Central cinema location.
External signage and signposting	No external signage.
Internal directional signage	Public cinema in Tollcross.
Access and provision for disabled people – what can you see?	Good
Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	Mid-day, enabling some people to come along in their lunch hour.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	Met by company members prior to the showing.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ²	SAC acknowledge.

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.