



Scottish Arts Council

## 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:** Martial Dance  
**Venue:** Macrobert, Stirling  
**Title of Event:** Yin & Yang and Action/Re-action  
**Type of Event:** Performance  
**Date of Visit:** 29/07/2007  
**Overall Rating :** Competent

(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.)

The performance by Martial Dance included beautiful, well-executed dancing from Artistic Director Martin Robinson. I really wanted to enjoy the performance as the dancers were of a good standard, however the production needed better lighting and music. Overall, the production would benefit from an 'outside eye' to give it greater coherence and direction. I left feeling underwhelmed despite having enjoyed some well executed dancing.

Name: Dawn Hartley Date: 05/08/07

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, particularly in relation to new work or second productions	Competent	This was the first performance I've seen from Martial Dance. The company have great skills and used a potentially interesting set design but the connection to the declared ideas in either of the works was not clearly communicated.
Sometimes relevant for all especially Festivals	Curatorial/ programming vision/ selection  Also indicate if the event has originated from the exhibiting/ producing organisation, part of a festival, artist-led, or commissioned	-	The performance was part of the Martial Dance Festival however as I did not attend any other aspects of this, I am unable to comment on how it contributed to overall programme.
Dance, Theatre, Music, Education <sup>1</sup> , Visual Arts - tutors	Quality of production/ teaching/ workshop – production/teaching/workshop's success in relation to stated aims i.e., in the programme or other printed material and how well the production/teaching/workshop communicated its artists' themes.	Competent	The performance was competently presented, but lacking in artistic coherence. The quality of the dancing was good but was let down by overall production and direction.
Dance, Theatre, Music, Education, Visual Arts – tutors	Performers/tutors - technical standard, performance skills and ability to communicate.  Where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments.  Education - presentation, details of teaching methodology (one to one, group, child centred), details of the class and what took place, genre and content	Competent	The dancers were good, skilled performers. However, I didn't feel they engaged me in the communication of ideas.
Dance, Theatre	Choreography/Use of choreography - originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc		The ensemble work included 2 male and 3 female dancers. The diverse choreography suited the dancers style. However, it was not well structured or pulled together to make coherent work.
Theatre	Script – particularly in relation to new work or second productions. Relevant to classics where the original has been substantially changed.		n/a

<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.

<b>Artform</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Comments and key reasons for rating</b>
Theatre, Dance	<b>Direction</b> - Concerns issues of interpretation, casting and presentation.	Competent	The evening's work begged for an outside eye, a director to bring it all together. There was no real sense of creating theatre, just a collection of fairly interesting and well-executed choreography in need of editing.
Dance, Theatre	<b>Use of music</b> – appropriateness and effect of sound or music (whole/part, live/recorded) to the production.	Poor	Interesting guitar playing from a performer. Other original music was un-credited and not of the highest quality.
Dance, Theatre	<b>Design</b> – costume, set, lighting. Take into account how appropriate the design is in relation to the venue and, where appropriate, the touring schedule.	Competent	The lighting design was not suited to show dance well and the screens used in the work were not well-lit. The sky-diving bit left me confused and unsure how it contributed to the overall artistic vision of the work.
All	<b>Quality of Presentation</b>  Performing Arts - technical presentation of the production (eg lighting and sound cues, etc).  Visual Arts - Use of equipment, space and overall layout/hang	Competent	Sound and lighting cues were good EXCEPT that at the start of the ensemble piece (Action/Reaction) the performers were still lining up the screens in a pre-set after the curtains had been pulled back.
All	<b>Audience</b>  Performing Arts - appropriateness of the production for the audience/participants, estimate the size and reaction  Visual Arts – time spent, interest, activity, and visitors' books comments, number of visitors/participants at the time of visit  Education/learning – participants/schoolteachers reaction, understanding, commitment, enthusiasm, number involved, etc	-	There was a good sized audience for this large venue on a Sunday night. The audience reaction was positive and included a number of young people (student's of Martin's) who were very enthusiastic.
All	<b>Events available/ groups targeted</b> – workshops, artist's talks, discussion groups, pre-school/ primary/ secondary students, >18,>60 etc		n/a
Education – any art form	<b>Outcomes</b> – what learning 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? Does it provide skills development?		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	Good
Information/ interpretive material at venue - programmes, displays etc.	Good
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.	Good programme
Ease of booking and payment	Good
Location of venue – eg is it easy to find? Is it on a main transport route?	Signage to Macrobert arts within the campus could be clearer and car park is confusing – do you use STAFF or a VISITOR...?
External signage and signposting	Good
Internal directional signage	Good
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?	Good
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	Good
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding - 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.	Yes