



Scottish Arts Council

**ARTISTIC EVALUATION – DRAMA**

**Organisation/Venue:** 7:84 at the Arches

**Title of Event:** Tipping Point

**Type of Event:** Performance

**Date of Visit:** 03/07/2005

**Overall Rating** (Please rate the production 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.)

Poor. The company aims to create political energising theatre. The issues of the piece were certainly relevant and of demonstrable public interest (e.g. given the Make Poverty History marches that had happened nationally the day before.) The company did not claim to be presenting a balanced or broad picture of the issues and the piece had an obvious political stance, which was clear throughout. While many people would agree with this stance, the production did not stimulate intellectually, it came across as a somewhat disjointed illustrated lecture. The audience discussion (the second part) was appropriate for the production but did not generate any real debate (though this could have been different for other performances.) Despite the inclusion of some very human stories the piece failed to engage emotionally and lacked any dramatic impact.

**Name:** Jaine Lumsden

**Date:** 06/09/05

**Advisor**  
relevant title

**Scottish Arts Council Officer**

*Please tick the*

This report has been commissioned by the Scottish Arts Council to evaluate the artistic quality of the production named below. 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 may be made available to Scottish Arts Council Officers, Council and Committee members, and specialist advisors as appropriate. It will 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 Council to report on the overall performance of its Core 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, taking account of the following:

1.	Criteria	Rating	Comment and key reasons for rating
1.1	Vision and imagination	Poor	The idea of bringing together a piece on the issues surrounding the G8 Summit was certainly pertinent. The idea of using real people's words to form the script this piece was a potentially interesting method that would seem to offer many creative opportunities. However, beyond this premise the production lacked coherence and was unimaginatively presented.
1.2	Clarity of Communication	Competent	The different stories from the individuals who provided the source material/script were all clearly communicated. At its most basic the message of this piece was a socialist view on G8 Summit and surrounding issues. This was clearly communicated with no sophistication and little consideration of the multi-layered and complex issues that are inevitably involved with questions of social justice.

## 2. Strengths and Weaknesses

Assess the strengths and weaknesses of the event with reference to the following:

2.	Criteria	Rating	Comment and key reasons for rating
2.1	Script – particularly in relation to new work or second productions	Poor	Constructing a script from real people's words creates a challenge to the playwright/dramaturg to create something that remains true to their stories but also works theatrically. While Davey Anderson's script often had a ring of authenticity it had no dramatic impact.
2.2	Direction	Poor	By Lorenzo Mele. The episodic nature of the script meant that this was a challenging piece to direct. Mele directed the cast in a straightforward manner, which was unimaginative and didn't take advantage of what little potential for action/movement the script had. This would have helped the production, which was (perhaps inevitably given its creation method) very dependent on words alone. There was little variation in pace and (with the exception of the humorous representations of politicians) little variation in mood.
2.3	Standard of Performers – where performers are not trained, please reflect this in you comments	Competent	The quality of acting varied considerably between actors The cast all had multiple parts that they coped with professionally. Due to the structure of the piece the cast had little time as each character (though some characters were revisited), which lead to the portrayals being two-dimensional. This made it difficult to empathise with any of them, despite the fact that some of individual stories were interesting.

2.4	Use of Music <sup>1</sup>	Competent	Appropriate to the production
2.5	Use of Movement/ Choreography	N/A	See under direction
2.6	Design <sup>2</sup> – including set, costume and lighting design	Competent	A very simple set which provided all that was required for the production. Lighting design and costume design were also simple and appropriate.
2.7	Technical Standards – was the production professionally presented from a technical point of view	Competent	Professionally presented with no obvious problems.
2.8	Audience Response – appropriateness of the production for the audience, estimate the size and reaction	Competent	c.75% capacity. Going by the discussion, which formed the second part of the evening, many of the audience had travelled to be in Scotland for G8 summit and as such the company was playing to an audience sympathetic to the views and stories told in the piece. It was interesting to hear from one woman who had been portrayed on stage.

### 3. 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.*

3.	Criteria	Comments
3.1	Suitability of the venue for the event	Entirely appropriate
3.2	Information/ interpretive material at venue <sup>3</sup>	Informative free programme.

<sup>1</sup> In particular, please comment on the quality and appropriateness of any original music composed for the production. Please indicate whether the music was performed live or recorded, in whole or in parts, and what effect this has on the quality of the production.

<sup>2</sup> Take into account how appropriate the design is in relation to the venue and, where appropriate, the touring schedule

<sup>3</sup> These include programmes, displays etc., including the range, quality and clarity.

3.3	Publicity/ pre-publicity <sup>4</sup>	Listings, flyers.
3.4	Ease of booking and payment	Fine
3.5	External signage and signposting	Fine
3.6	Internal directional signage	Fine
3.7	Access and provision for disabled people	Fine
3.8	Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	Seemed suitable. Ran to time.
3.9	Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g., box office, front of house and bar/catering)	Friendly and efficient
3.10	Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council funding <sup>5</sup>	Acknowledged

<sup>4</sup> Publicity/pre-publicity (leaflets, posters, etc), including the range, content, and when and where available. Be alert to the publicity available prior to your visit to the event. Also view and comment on the company's website where one is advertised, commenting on the ease of use, and quality of content and presentation, and currency of information

<sup>5</sup> The following is an extract from the Scottish Arts Council's conditions of grant for funded organisations:

"The company should acknowledge Scottish Arts Council funding in press releases, at launches, on all published materials (including leaflets, brochures, programmes, posters, notices display, exhibition materials, websites and advertising). Acknowledgement of the Scottish Arts Council grant must also be made in any secondary or indirect products arising from the revenue funding such as recordings, publications, video, broadcasts, computer programmes etc."

Please comment on whether these conditions of grant were met, including use and prominence of the Scottish Arts Council logo on the company's website.