

THE SCOTTISH ARTS COUNCIL

Assessment Report

Organisation/venue: Theatre of the Imagination
at the Arches Theatre Festival
Title of event: Brazil by Ronan O'Donnell
Type of event: performance
Date of visit: 09/04/2003

1. Artistic assessment

Please evaluate the **artistic quality** of the event - its vision and imagination; ability to communicate; and quality of production

A one man show set in the future where there is an unspecified war going on (opportune timing – but presumably coincidental.)

1.1 Script

A monologue that meandered between the central character's internal thoughts, reflections on his family and life on a harsh housing scheme, and action (shoplifting, the attack on the scheme by the U.S.) O'Donnell uses the vernacular and the language of the play is appropriately harsh and unremitting. This was a powerful script which painted a bleak future scenario. Of course, the real power of it was the fact that it also reflected aspects of contemporary life.

The relentless pace of the script became somewhat wearing and lessened the impact of the production overall.

1.2 Direction

By Graeme Maley. Maley got the best out of his performer, and it was apparent that he had tried to emphasise what small variations in tone and mood the script contained.

Standard of Performers

Antony Strachan gave a very strong performance. The audience was almost enthralled by him.

Design

Effective lighting design by Maria Bechaalani.

A minimalist set by Louise Anderson – a hanging plaque of a cross which was illuminated at points, which worked well – various place names (e.g. “dump”) chalked on floor and walls which were entirely superfluous.

Music by Scientific Support Dept. was moody and worked well within the performance.

Technical Standards

Fine

Overall Production

The production was obviously well rehearsed and professionally delivered. It possibly needed further development work (perhaps this could have involved some rewrites of the script to introduce some variety of pace/mood?) to fully realise its potential.

Appropriateness of production for the audience

Seemed appropriate.

Approximate size of audience and reaction to the programme of work

Nearly full. A good reaction.

2. Management of event

- 2.1 Please evaluate the way the event was presented/organised by the organisation and by the venue. Please answer, where relevant, with reference to the checklist below adding any other comments/observations you may have.

2.2 Suitability of the venue for the event:

Ideal.

2.3 Information/interpretative material provided at the venue (e.g. programmes, displays etc.

range, quantity and clarity

Free programme

2.4 Publicity/pre publicity for the event (leaflets, posters, etc.):

range, content and when and where available.

Theatre Festival programme, reasonable quality and layout.

2.5 Accessibility of the venue:

Ease of payment Impossible to get through to box office (phone fault.)

Resorted to emailing a staff member with a request to reserve tickets.

(How would the general public cope with this?)

Location Fine

Direction ?

Access for disabled people unclear

Customer service:

Quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)

Friendly – but very difficult to work out who the front of house staff are

3. Background to your visit

- 3.1 Have you seen the work of this artist/company before? No

3.2 Is this your first visit to this venue? No