



Scottish Arts Council

ARTISTIC EVALUATION – DANCE

Artist/Company: Edinburgh International Festival

Venue: King's Theatre

Title of Event: Nikolais Dance Theatre (Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company)
Crucible, Lythic from Prism, Blank on Blank, Tensile Involvement, Noumenon Mobilus, Finale from Liturgies, Mechanical Organ

Type of Event: (e.g. performance, informal showing, work-in-progress, etc)
performance

Date of Visit: 1/09/04

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).

5 – Excellent. The programme of works captured the audience from the start to the end, with stunning visuals, clarity of movement and humour.

Name: Susan Hay Date: 06/09/04

Specialist Advisor Scottish Arts Council Officer ✓

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

Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
Vision and imagination	5	Nikolais is one of the renowned choreographers of the 20 th century. This programme highlights some of his most memorable pieces, which successfully blend movement, design and theatrical lighting, with avant garde music.
Clarity of communication	5	There was an immediate positive response from the audience to the first piece. The works were easy to engage with and were performed well and with character by the dancers.
Quality of production – production's success in relation to stated aims i.e., in the programme or other printed material)	5	The production lives up to its pre-publicity – 'weaving magic through original choreography, sound scores and costumes, dazzling audiences and shaping the future of contemporary dance'.

2. Strengths and Weakness

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

Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
Choreography - originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc	5	There was variation in the pieces, using between three to eight dancers. Pieces were kept quite short, exploring a theme to its full. Choreography was extremely clever, exploring time and space. It seemed to unravel the mechanics of movement, by using bits of the body, or unusual costumes.
Performers - technical standard, performance skills, and ability to communicate	4	All the dancers were finely tuned and well balanced.
Sound – appropriateness and effect of sound or music (whole/part, live/ recorded) to the production.	4	Recorded music was used throughout the performance.
Design – costume, set, lighting	3	Stunning. The lighting design was extremely clever and effective. Costumes were colourful, but simple, showing the clean lines of the body to best advantage.
Technical standards – technical presentation of the production (e.g. lighting and sound cues, etc)	4	The technical support was to a high standard, especially as the lighting was very intricate design.

Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
Audience – appropriateness of the production for the audience, estimate the size and reaction	5	About 80% in the dress circle. The audience seemed highly appreciative of the show and contained young people as well as their parents.

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.

Criteria	Rating	Comment and key reasons for rating
Suitability of the venue for the event	4	King's is an intimate feeling venue, with a good sized stage suitable for dance productions.
Information/ interpretive material at venue ¹	4	Posters were on the front of the venue and the name of the show on the title board
Publicity/ pre-publicity ²	5	I was aware of the Festival programme from the brochure I received by direct mail, which was informative and easy to read. Leaflets were available throughout the city in most venues. The website was easy to use.
Ease of booking and payment	5	Booking was made by telephone. Staff was informed and pleasant.
Location of venue	4	Located at the top of Lothian Road, easily accessible by bus.
External signage and signposting	5	Large external signage makes the venue easy to spot.
Internal directional signage	4	Internal signage clear.
Access and provision for disabled people	3	Wheelchair users need to enter via the box office, as there are steps leading into the foyer and to all levels. Did not notice a lift. I'm not sure what provision is made for people with visual or hearing impairments.
Timing of the event	4	7.30pm is a good time for a two hour show
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	4	Friendly and helpful front of house staff.

¹ These include programmes, displays etc., assessing the range, quality and clarity

² Publicity/pre-publicity (leaflets, posters, etc), including the range, content, and when and where available. Please be alert to the publicity available prior to your visit to the event. Please also view and comment on the company's website where one is advertised. Comment on the ease of use, and quality of content and presentation, and currency of information

Criteria	Rating	Comment and key reasons for rating
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ³	4	The Scottish Arts Council is acknowledged on the Festival's website and in the brochure.

³ 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.