



Scottish Arts Council

ARTISTIC EVALUATION – MUSIC

Organisation/Venue: Lyceum Theatre

Title of Event: Curlew River

Type of Event: Contemporary chamber opera

Date of Visit: Sunday 28th August

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. NB: for multiple performances or festivals, or if you prefer please feel free to use headings for a more extensive commentary. Please note the artistic assessment according to the rating detailed below)

5 An extremely well executed and imaginative performance. Programme could have let down this rating as not user friendly for quick referral at the start and during the performance

Name: __Tamsin Mendelsohn__

Date: __29__/08__/05__

Advisor Scottish Arts Council Music Officer

Please circle the relevant title

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	Comment and key reasons for rating
Quality of production – was the event successful overall in relation to any stated aims (e.g. in the programme or other printed material)	4	This was a chamber opera by Benjamin Britten, described as a parable for church performance. While the quality of presentation and performance of this contemporary piece was excellent and merited a rating of 5, the programme was very difficult to navigate to find quick information on the performers and synopsis before and during the performance(see below).
Vision and imagination	5	This was my first experience of the work in live performance and all aspects of music and staging (including moving stage parts with musicians!) were excellent, making the performance exciting and atmospheric, as well as drawing out the interesting cultural and religious themes.
Performers – where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments	5	The production included an interesting mix of professional, student and NYCoS performers, and all were excellent, particularly Toby Spence and the other main parts. This was also an opportunity for newcomers to performing at EIF – notably the 2 NYCoS members acting the role of the child. Garry Walker also aptly led the musicians, which also featured an interesting mix of young and seasoned talent.
Quality of Presentation – was the professionally presented from a technical point of view	5	See vision and imagination
Audience – assess the appropriateness of the production for the audience, estimate the size and reaction	5	The production held the attention and was very well received by of the capacity audience

Educational Value – comment where appropriate	NA	
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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.

Criteria	Rating	Comment and key reasons for rating
Suitability of the venue for the event	5	The Lyceum was a good size for the work, and enabled some imaginative staging using different levels in the style of a Noh play stage.
Information/ interpretive material at venue ¹	3-4	While the programme information on the work, including themes of culture and religion were interesting, there was not a short, clear synopsis of the plot which was distressful and confusing at the start of the production
Publicity/ pre-publicity ²	5	I saw the concert advertised in the festival programme well in advance, as well as newspaper previews
Ease of booking and payment	5	Hub Tickets – no difficulties
Location of venue	5	Well known venue – easy to find
External signage and signposting	5	Very good
Internal directional signage	5	With very helpful staff
Access and provision for disabled people	5	Ramps, toilets and lifts – easy to see in advance on website
Timing of the event	5	8pm start, but ended at reasonable time
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g., box office, front of house and bar/catering)	5	Very helpful, especially when I rushed in at the last minute!

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

² 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

Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council funding ³	5	Clear in listings of funders
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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.