



Scottish Arts Council

**ARTISTIC EVALUATION – DANCE**

**Artist/Company:** Scottish Ballet

**Venue:** Playhouse, Edinburgh

**Title of Event:** SB Dances Balanchine

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

**Date of Visit:** 25 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).

An evening full of talent and class. The weakness were not on stage, rather in the programme and the theatre itself. But the strength of the company, its commitment to (and choice of) Balanchine and the way they presented him were a real joy.

Marks 5

Name: Julian Forrester

Date: 28 / 8 / 05

Specialist Advisor

Scottish Arts Council 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 | Comments and key reasons for rating  |
|---|--------|--|
| Vision and imagination  | 4+     | Balanchine had both, but Scottish Ballet had the good sense to chose him and the skills to present him almost perfectly            |
| Clarity of communication  | 4      | Very unfussy, spare, abstract - as Balanchine would have wanted  |
| Quality of production – production's success in relation to stated aims i.e., in the programme or other printed material) | 3      | Such a pleasant surprise that a company so poorly presented in the printed programme could come up with such wonders on the stage. |

## 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      | I do not think a comment here is necessary....   |
| Performers - technical standard, performance skills, and ability to communicate                      | 5      | Quality and commitment all through the company. Someone has done a lot of work to raise standards so fast .....  |
| Sound – appropriateness and effect of sound or music (whole/part, live/ recorded) to the production. | 5      | I would hate to comment on the obvious – that Stravinsky and Balanchine were rather good together. Scottish Chamber Orchestra sounded in really good form. |
| Design – costume, set, lighting  | 5      | Immaculate   |
| Technical standards – technical presentation of the production (e.g. lighting and sound cues, etc)   | 5      | Top marks. Could scarcely find a glitch....  |
| Audience – appropriateness of the production for the audience, estimate the size and reaction        | 4      | Had the feel of a big occasion and a turn-around for S Ballet. They can build a committed audience from this if they do not have one already...            |

### 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  | 3      | Suited to dance but it is a dinosaur...not what an audience expects any more.                               |
| Information/ interpretive material at venue <sup>1</sup>  | 2      | Some was in evidence, but all rather routine. Little sense of festival excitement.                          |
| Publicity/ pre-publicity <sup>2</sup>   | 3      | From what I saw, adequate   |
| Ease of booking and payment   | 3      | No problems   |
| Location of venue   | 3      | Fine  |
| External signage and signposting  | 3      | No difficulty finding the theatre. <del>No sign</del> <sup>Cafe</sup> of what was going on inside, however. |
| Internal directional signage  | 2      | Theatre not easy – cannot deal with a full house very well.   |
| Access and provision for disabled people  | 4      | I saw plenty of wheelchair spaces and for an unreformed building, quite disabled friendly.                  |
| Timing of the event   | 3      | Normal  |
| Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering) | 4      | All staff friendly and helpful.   |
| Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding <sup>3</sup>   | 3      | OK, routine.  |

<sup>1</sup> These include programmes, displays etc., assessing the range, quality and clarity

<sup>2</sup> 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

<sup>3</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.