



Scottish Arts Council

**ARTISTIC EVALUATION – VISUAL ARTS**

**Organisation/Venue:** Edinburgh Printmakers

**Title of Event:** *A Printer's Miscellany- Alfons Bytautas: 25 Years in Print (Also showing: Hilary Paynter- From the Rivers to the Sea & Graham Flack)*

**Type of Event:** Exhibition

**Date of Visit:** 9 October 2004

**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). **4**

Works by a range of Scottish and international artists provide an overview to printmaking over the past 25 years in Scotland, and within Edinburgh Printmakers specifically. The inclusion of other curios from Bytautas' own collection such as banknotes, illustrations, invitations and letters provides an additional context to the work of the master-printer. An exhibition of wide-ranging interest, nicely offset by the solo presentations by two artists of detailed and accomplished new work in the parallel exhibitions in Gallery 1.

**Name:** Kirsteen Macdonald **Date:** 10/10/04

**Specialist Advisor**

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, with particular reference to the strengths and weaknesses of the following:

Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
Vision and imagination of artist's work <sup>1</sup>	4	Many established Scottish artists – e.g. figurative works by John Bellany and Peter Howson alongside abstract works by Alan Johnson and Alan Davie, alongside other prolific artists, illustrators and historical curios such as banknotes and letters. Works are accomplished and printed to the highest quality.
Curatorial vision/ selection – also indicate if the event has originated from the exhibiting organisation, part of a festival, artist-led, or commissioned	4	Although limited to Bytautas' personal collection – it's a coherent range of recent works with the additional intrigue of historical pieces. The exhibition is accessible to a wide audience and provides an interesting contrast to the two solo exhibitions in Gallery 1 and the quality range of contemporary works for sale.
Events available/ groups targeted – workshops, artist's talks, discussion groups, pre-school/ primary/ secondary students, >18, >60 etc	3	Nothing advertised at venue outwith the ongoing print courses programme. Two of the current season's classes are taught by Alfons Bytautas, but no special events with him are advertised e.g. a talk. (There was a talk and demo with Hilary Paynter to coincide with the opening of both exhibitions)
Standard of Presentation – use of equipment, space and overall layout/hang	3	Classic installation of framed works and pieces in vitrines throughout the gallery space. Nice balance between the range of different pieces in the Bytautas exhibition and in the solo series of prints downstairs in Gallery 1.
Foot Traffic – number of visitors/ participants at the time of visit	1	No visitors at time of my visit
Audience Reaction – time spent, interest, activity, and visitors' books comments	3	Visitors' book with positive responses and many of the works in Gallery 1 were sold.

<sup>1</sup> Quality of ideas, skills in execution, if you've seen the work of this artist(s) before – particularly in relation to new work or second productions

## 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	4	The exhibition makes public the work of the venue as a production centre. The three contrasting exhibitions make good use of the space and provide an overview of very recent work by young artists juxtaposed with established names.
Information/ interpretive material at venue <sup>2</sup>	4	Good, clear and informative - wall panels, free handouts on quality paper, labels beside all works and vinyl text in gallery. Folders of info available to browse at entrance.
Publicity/ pre-publicity <sup>3</sup>	3	Invitation card by direct mail. Venue included in main gallery & listings guides, and with Tourist Information (rated 3 star attraction). Website- good layout and easy to use, but information about exhibition only updated shortly before it opened.
Ease of booking and payment	3	No entry fee. Easy to ask assistant in gallery about purchasing work.
Location of venue	3	Close to main train stations and bus routes in city centre, but slightly off main roads.
External signage and signposting	4	Gallery clearly visible from end of street and well signposted outside. Good clear road sign from main thoroughfare.
Internal directional signage	4	Signs on stairwell indicate that there is more upstairs. Other signage about buying work also visible and clear. Toilet, etc also signed.
Access and provision for disabled people	3	On a hill and the gallery entrance is up a step, so not wheelchair accessible and doorbell too high to reach. Main gallery upstairs. Large print information available but no induction loop indicated. No notes about access provision on publicity material
Opening times/ timing of the event	3	Usual gallery opening hours.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. welcoming/ informed)	4	Welcomed on entry- staff were friendly, helpful and informed.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding <sup>4</sup>	3	SAC logo and SAC lottery logo on all print associated with the exhibition and on website.

<sup>2</sup> These include wall panels, labels, catalogues, leaflets, artists CVs etc., assessing the range, quality and clarity

<sup>3</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>4</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.