



Scottish Arts Council

ARTISTIC EVALUATION – DRAMA

Organisation/Venue: Mull Theatre at the Brunton

Title of Event: Kidnapped

Type of Event: Performance

Date of Visit: 30/10/2003

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.)

Good A very enjoyable, accessible play with strong production standards and obvious artistic ambition.

Name: Jaine Lumsden

Date:

Advisor
relevant title

Scottish Arts Council Officer

Please tick the

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:

1.	Criteria	Rating	Comment and key reasons for rating
1.1	Vision and imagination	Good	A faithful portrayal of the story, with the right mix of old-fashioned romantic adventure with a rites of passage story.
1.2	Clarity of Communication	Good	A quite complicated story that was communicated clearly.

2. Strengths and Weaknesses

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

2.	Criteria	Rating	Comment and key reasons for rating
2.1	Script – particularly in relation to new work or second productions	Good	Adaptation by Alasdair McCrone and Robert Patterson. This seemed true to the original and told the story well. There were lots of small scenes, reflecting the episodic of the book, which kept the action fairly brisk, which worked given the nature of the story. It could have benefited from some cuts (though it is difficult to envisage where) – it seemed as if the adaptors wanted to include absolutely everything in the book.
2.2	Direction	Good	By Alasdair McCrone. Good use of the stage and set to reflect the changing environments and to keep the action going. The relationship between Balfour and Breck was well developed throughout the play and ensured that the thread of the story remained coherent (the episodic nature of the script meant this could have been lost.) The pace of the play was slow at times in the first half – this was possibly the consequence of including a lot of background in the script.
2.3	Standard of Performers – where performers are not trained, please reflect this in you comments	Good	Andrew Clark as Breck shone as a swaggering romantic hero, only hinting at a more vulnerable side at the end of the piece. David Fitzgerald as Balfour developed his character convincingly throughout the play – a real rite of passage was portrayed. Otherwise the cast delivered strong ensemble playing, relating well to each other and achieving the doubling required effectively.

2.4	Use of Music ¹	Good	By John Davison (playing fiddle live onstage.) Beautiful composition that worked well within the piece adding atmosphere. That Davison played live onstage was very well integrated into the production.
2.5	Use of Movement/ Choreography	N/A	No choreography as such – see under direction
2.6	Design ² – including set, costume and lighting design	Good	Set design by Robin Peoples. This was a complicated set that transformed into ship/house etc. This was imaginative and created strong visual images but the necessity for the actors to transform the set so often during the piece slowed the action down too much, while interesting to watch in itself this had a deleterious effect on the pace of the piece Costumes were well-designed and worked well in the context of the production. Lighting was appropriate for a touring show.
2.7	Technical Standards – was the production professionally presented from a technical point of view	Competent	On the whole professionally presented, though there were a few problems with lighting qs/actors finding lights. (As this was at the start of the run I assume this would have been resolved?)
2.8	Audience Response – appropriateness of the production for the audience, estimate the size and reaction	Good	A good reaction. C. 75% full?

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.

3.	Criteria	Comments
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¹ In particular, please comment on the quality and appropriateness of any original music composed for the production. Please indicate whether the music was performed live or recorded, in whole or in parts, and what effect this has on the quality of the production.

² Take into account how appropriate the design is in relation to the venue and, where appropriate, the touring schedule

3.1	Suitability of the venue for the event	Entirely appropriate.
3.2	Information/ interpretive material at venue ³	Clear programme.
3.3	Publicity/ pre-publicity ⁴	Flyers with an image that reflected the nature of the play well, listings.
3.4	Ease of booking and payment	Fine
3.5	External signage and signposting	Fine
3.6	Internal directional signage	Fine
3.7	Access and provision for disabled people	Fine
3.8	Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	Fine
3.9	Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g., box office, front of house and bar/catering)	Very friendly and efficient (as is usual for the Brunton.)
3.10	Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council funding ⁵	Fine

³ These include programmes, displays etc., including the range, quality and clarity.

⁴ 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

⁵ 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.