



Scottish **Arts** Council

ARTISTIC EVALUATION – DANCE

Artist/company: Big Art Group at New Territories (New Moves International)

Venue: Tramway 1

Title of Event: Flicker

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

Date of Visit: 12 March 2004

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:

Very Poor – standard falls well below what is acceptable.

Poor – not attaining acceptable standards of conception or presentation.

Competent – routine rather than especially interesting.

Good – well conceived and executed

Excellent – conceived and executed to a high standard.

1. **Artistic Assessment** - please evaluate the **artistic quality** of the event taking account of the following:

1.1 **Vision and imagination**

Rating for this section <i>(Please tick)</i>		Comments and key reasons for rating:
Very Poor		
Poor		
Competent		
Good		
Excellent	✓	

Highly imaginative production using real-time film technique. Although the two concurrent, and ultimately colliding, story lines were intentionally pastiche, the performers with interchanging costumes, characters, images and action across frames, created an extraordinary, totally engaging event.

1.2 **Clarity of communication**

Rating for this section <i>(Please tick)</i>		Comments and key reasons for rating:
Very Poor		
Poor		
Competent		
Good		
Excellent	✓	

This production worked on many levels – the spoken text and sound effects could have stood alone. Then there was compelling live action, with 9 performers moving rapidly from scene to scene. And finally the film projected on three conjoined screens at the front of the stage.

1.3 **Quality of production**

Rating for this section <i>(Please tick)</i>		Comments and key reasons for rating:
Very Poor		
Poor		
Competent		
Good		
Excellent	✓	

This was a highly-accomplished production at all levels – from concept, to design, through to live performance and use of technology.

You are also asked to **assess the strengths and weaknesses** of the event with specific reference to the following:

1.4 Choreography (including originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc)

Rating for this section (Please tick)		Comments and key reasons for rating:
Very Poor		This was a truly multimedia/cross-artform piece, with choreography being only one aspect, together with an excellent script, tight direction and a well-rehearsed ensemble.
Poor		
Competent		
Good		
Excellent	✓	

1.5 Performers – including technical standard, performance skills, and ability to communicate.

Rating for this section (Please tick)		Comments and key reasons for rating:
Very Poor		The range of skills required for this production to work were vast – the ability to act with conviction and flare whilst moving in relation to three cameras, projectors and screens; changing costumes, sets and characters; and even lip-synching.
Poor		
Competent		
Good		
Excellent	✓	

1.6 Sound – appropriateness of sound/music to the production. Please also indicate whether the music was performed live or recorded, in whole or in part, and what effect this had on the quality of the production.

Rating for this section (Please tick)		Comments and key reasons for rating:
Very Poor		The sound, including incidental music, was key to achieving the rapid pace and quality necessary to create the live film.
Poor		
Competent		
Good		
Excellent	✓	

1.7 Design – including costume, set, lighting design.

Rating for this section <i>(Please tick)</i>		Comments and key reasons for rating:
Very Poor		
Poor		
Competent		
Good		
Excellent	✓	

Impressive use of costume, especially wigs, across the nine performers, particularly in scenes requiring 2 or 3 performers to play one role. Clean/simple set and lighting design.

1.8 Technical standards – comment on the whether the production was technically well presented (e.g. lighting and sound cues, etc)

Rating for this section <i>(Please tick)</i>		Comments and key reasons for rating:
Very Poor		
Poor		
Competent		
Good		
Excellent	✓	

This was a technically complex show, not just in terms of sound and lighting cues, but also the performance skills required for the split-second scene changes across three screens. One performer lost microphone connection for a while, and although this was mildly distracting and broke the illusion of the film, she projected well enough to keep it moving.

1.9 Overall production – assess the success of the production in relation to any stated aims (e.g. in the programme or other printed material)

Rating for this section <i>(Please tick)</i>		Comments and key reasons for rating:
Very Poor		
Poor		
Competent		
Good		
Excellent	✓	

The promotional materials I saw (New Territories brochure) didn't present aims as such, but rather described some of the action and themes of the show. In all these respects, this production lived up to, and indeed exceeded, expectations.

1.10 Audience – assess the appropriateness of the production for the audience, estimate the size of the audience and record their reaction.

Rating for this section <i>(Please tick)</i>		Comments and key reasons for rating:
Very Poor		
Poor		
Competent	✓	
Good		
Excellent		

The size of the audience was very disappointing for such a high calibre piece – there were only about 50 people, which seem lost in Tramway 1. This production was not only appropriate to a New Territories/Tramway audience; it should have attracted a wide theatre/film/visual art audience as well. Despite its small size, the audience response was tremendous.

2. Management of Event

Please evaluate the way the event was presented/organised by the organisation and by the venue. Please answer, where relevant, with reference to the checklist below adding any other comments/observations you may have.

2.1 Suitability of the venue for the event.

Excellent – this is ideal work for Tramway and sits very comfortably within its international performance programme.

2.2 Information/interpretive material provided at the venue (e.g. programmes, displays etc), including the range of materials, quantity and clarity.

No obvious displays for any of the work being presented at Tramway. A free programme, produced by New Moves, was actively handed out upon entering the theatre space.

2.3 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.*

I first saw the production promoted in the New Territories brochure. I then spotted it in the Tramway season brochure. Good visibility through posters, brochures and preview articles for New Territories as a whole, although I was not aware of any promotion of this programme specifically.

2.4 Accessibility of the venue, including:

- *Ease of booking and payment* – easy to book by phone. Tramway box office service has noticeably improved in recent months.
- *location of venue* – good (easy to get to than the folklore would have one believe).
- *external signposting and signage* – Competent. Tramway would benefit from clearer external signage.
- *internal directional signage* – Competent. Signage is evident, but not obvious. Tramway would benefit from clearer internal signage.
- *access and provision for disabled people* – Competent. Again, like signage, it is there but could be more evident.
- *timing of the event* – Good.

2.5 Customer service, including: quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering).

Competent – front of house staff were friendly and helpful.

3. Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding (if applicable)

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.

The Scottish Arts Council is acknowledged alongside Glasgow City Council on the inside front cover of the New Territories brochure. Although this is clearly displayed, the design gives greater prominence to a range of other supporters (e.g. Visiting Arts, Esmee Fairbairn, Canadian High Commission etc) whose individual and collective contributions are much lower than the Scottish Arts Council's. There is reference to the Scottish Arts Council on the New Moves international website, but you really have to be looking for it (almost at the very bottom of the "About New Moves" page). New Moves International should take action to address these issues.

4. Scoring

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.

Excellent – an outstanding production on all levels.

Name: Cindy Sughrue, Head of Dance, Scottish Arts Council

Date: 30 March 2004

Advisor

Scottish Arts Council Officer

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