



Scottish Arts Council

## ARTISTIC EVALUATION – DANCE

**Artist/Company:** Dance Base

**Venue:** Dance Base

**Title of Event:** Scottish Dance Theatre

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

**Date of Visit:** 13/08/04

**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).

5-Excellent A very strong programme of works, performed by excellent dancers

Name: Susan Hay

Date: 16/08/04

Specialist Advisor

Scottish Arts Council Officer ✓

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	5	This was a double bill with two high energy pieces.
Clarity of communication	5	The dancers used the whole body to express the choreography well, including their faces.
Quality of production – production's success in relation to stated aims i.e., in the programme or other printed material)	4	Good quality production, exploring themes of self within crowds.

## 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	Both pieces explored similar themes – the individual in the relation to him/herself and the rest of the world. Sean Feldman's <i>Moment</i> and Didy Veldman's <i>Track</i> . Having seen this piece on its premier night, I was more taken with both pieces this time. Perhaps it was being closer to the performers, or just that the dancers were more comfortable with the movements, thereby more clearly defining the two contrasting styles of choreography.
Performers - technical standard, performance skills, and ability to communicate	5	All the dancers are technically excellent – engaging with the audience fully
Sound – appropriateness and effect of sound or music (whole/part, live/ recorded) to the production.	4	All pre-recorded sound tracks – good quality sound.
Design – costume, set, lighting	5	The costume design was appropriate for each piece with interesting skirt backs to the mens' costumes in <i>Moment</i> , allowing for interesting flow of movement. In <i>Track</i> costumes were colourful, reflecting the lighter-hearted choreography. The set was simple but effective – masking tape

Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
Technical standards – technical presentation of the production (e.g. lighting and sound cues, etc)	4	There seemed to be no technical hitches.
Audience – appropriateness of the production for the audience, estimate the size and reaction	5	Full house @60. A positive response from the audience.

### 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	5	Dance Base provides an ideal focal point for quality Scottish and international dance on the Fringe. The performance area works well for solo/duet work.
Information/ interpretive material at venue <sup>1</sup>	4	Posters were prolific in the entrance to Dance Base informing the public about shows and workshops. On the notice board outside the theatre, there was a listing of all the shows with notes of which were sold out. This was not very prominent and could easily be missed. Perhaps something to put on the downstairs notice board too.
Publicity/ pre-publicity <sup>2</sup>	4	I was aware of the Dance Base Festival programme from the brochure I received by direct mail, which was informative and easy to read, and included a discount if booking all 4 shows. I did not notice any promotional materials on display at usual outlets, but this is a notoriously difficult period for leaflets and other print materials to be effective given the vast number of productions being promoted across the city. The Dance Base website did not seem to be functioning very well saying the programme would be up June 28, but there is still no listing of events.
Ease of booking and payment	3	I tried to book over the telephone before I went on holiday, to be told that booking did not start till the following week. This meant I had to get someone else to make the booking on my behalf. Mentioning when the box office opened at Dance Base within the leaflet would have been helpful. Booking on the website was not possible – instead there is a message advising people to book by telephone.
Location of venue	5	Well situated in the heart of the Old Town within easy walking distance of Princes Street.

<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

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Comment and key reasons for rating</b>
External signage and signposting	3	A large vertical banner makes Dance Base quiet visible when approaching from the east, but it's very easy to miss when approaching from other directions.
Internal directional signage	3	Internal signage not obvious for first time users.
Access and provision for disabled people	3	Dance Base is fully accessible for people with limited mobility, although street level signage could be improved to make the location of the lift more obvious. I'm not sure what provision is made for people with visual or hearing impairments. The temporary theatre seating fit out did not appear to make any provision for wheelchair users. This had been highlighted last year and should have been addressed.
Timing of the event	5	The rotating schedule is excellent – it treats the companies equally and makes it possible to see all four programmes of work even if you are only available at certain times each day.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	4	Friendly and helpful front of house staff. The café is a good addition, but only one person manning the café, so difficult to purchase and consume a beverage during the interval.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding <sup>3</sup>	4	The Scottish Arts Council is acknowledged on the Dance Base website (if you search) and in the brochure. There was no mention of either Dance Base or Scottish Arts Council on the programme, which is a bit lax as we fund both organisations.

<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.