



Scottish Arts Council

## ARTISTIC EVALUATION – DANCE

**Artist/company:** STDT – Ceilidh Dance Night with DANNSA

**Venue:** St Andrews in the Square

**Title of Event:** Ceilidh Dance Night with DANNSA

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

**Ceilidh with dance show performance.**

**Date of Visit:** 30<sup>th</sup> of January, 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 (Please tick)		Comments and key reasons for rating:
Very Poor		
Poor		
Competent		
Good		
Excellent	<b>X</b>	

The performance in itself was as always extremely good and well put together, all the performers are extremely good at performing, interacting with the public and manage to look relaxed and at ease while performing.

The Ceilidh itself was most enjoyable the music was wonderful and everybody seemed to have a good time. People were out dancing from the word go.

1.2 **Clarity of communication**

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

DANNSA had one problem at this venue. As the venue was a church, and the floor was oak, it was very difficult for the performers to get the percussive feel of the performance over – the room ‘blurred’ the edge and beat of the music, and the floor to a certain extent absorbed the sound of the steps.

1.3 **Quality of production**

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

The singer was according to a professional singer sitting beside me exceptional – the young musicians from RSAMD were well rehearsed and played well with the regular musicians – and also looked as if they enjoyed the evening. Again DANNSA have a unique ability to make everyone feel welcome, which sets the tone for the evening very quickly.

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 <i>(Please tick)</i>		Comments and key reasons for rating:
Very Poor		
Poor		
Competent		
Good		
Excellent	<b>X</b>	

An excellent blend of performance and audience participation. The blend of music, song and dance is well thought out.

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

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

See all the above comments.

**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 <i>(Please tick)</i>		Comments and key reasons for rating:
Very Poor		
Poor		
Competent		
Good	<b>X</b>	
Excellent		

The musicians were excellent and very talented and the music fitted the event beautifully – it was played neither too fast nor too slow.

The music was excellent and appropriate for the ceilidh, however, due to the venue - a church - the sound was reverberated round the room, and somewhat 'blurred' – this made it difficult for the spectator to match the percussive dance performance to the beat of the music and must have made it difficult for the performer too.

**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	<b>X</b>	
Excellent		

The tables in the church were nicely decorate with white tablecloths and a stem of thistle on each table and the clothing for the performers were what befitted a modern, contemporary traditional dance example – the group is always very well turned out

**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	<b>x</b>	
Excellent		

See above comments re sound – although nobody can be apportioned blame for this. The venue would be excellent for other dance-forms and performances – the acoustics are wonderful, and the floor well suited for non-percussive dance.

**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 (Please tick)		Comments and key reasons for rating:
Very Poor		
Poor		
Competent		
Good		
Excellent	<b>X</b>	

There could have been more people there – the sound I felt could have been better for the show-part of the evening. But the mix of the evening was excellent, the performers very professional – and for people who was not supposed to be critical it surely was an evening to enjoy.

**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 (Please tick)		Comments and key reasons for rating:
Very Poor		
Poor		
Competent		
Good		
Excellent	<b>X</b>	

All who were there enjoyed themselves. There was 90-100 people in all, the church could house 150-200 it was said.  
The audience were a mixture of people – there were students, STDT-members, ceilidh-goers, foreigners, elderly and young, men in kilts, and elderly ladies in frocks, young girls in miniskirts and people in jeans. All interacted with each other on the dance floor and mingled quite happily.

**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.**

For the ceilidh the event was excellent – St Andrews in the Square is beautiful, it was a pleasure to dance there. For the percussive dancing, I felt it was the wrong venue – part of the attraction for me of being at a step-dance show, is that you can feel the beat all around you, and within you – this did not happen here – this was in no way DANNSA's fault, they worked hard to compensate for this throughout the night.

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

Information was displayed at all tables – all of STDT's material was put out so people could sit at their tables and read it if they wished or take it away with them.

- 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.*

**There was no information about it in Fife, if I hadn't know about the STDT web-site, and had been informed by SAC, and DANNSA that this was going on, I would have had no knowledge of the even, and therefore not been able to go. I did however, notice leaflets at the Concert Hall in Glasgow in the Celtic Connections area, which I imagine would have drawn people to the event. I understand that there was an expectation of having this event included in Celtic Connection's brochure, but that this did not happen for the second year running – perhaps this problem could be resolved in time for next years event. If this is not possible, is it time to start a 'Fringe'-show?.**

- 2.4 **Accessibility of the venue, including:**

- Ease of booking and payment

**Due to the mix-up with Celtic Connections, I did have problems booking, and ended up phoning STDT for tickets – payment was easy – I paid at the door.**

- location of venue  
**Easy to get to in Glasgow.**
- external signposting and signage

**Banners in the front of the Church.**

- internal directional signage  
**N/A**
- access and provision for disabled people  
**Ramps etc present.**
- timing of the event  
**Fine.**

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

Everybody was very helpful and friendly – the food in the Café was very good, the bar-prices a bit of a chock – I suppose this was Glasgow-prices :>)

**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.*

**Both Dannsa and STDT acknowledge support from SAC.**

**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.*

Good – I feel there could have been more people there. 90 – 100 people for a ceilidh in a place like Glasgow seem to me to be too small an audience – I do not know what other advertising has been done, except sending flyers to the STDT membership, web-site announcement, and a display of the flyers at the concert hall, but there should have been posters in all the students' unions throughout the Glasgow Universities. BBC's Take the Floor should have been notified, plus of course all the Glasgow local newspapers. As I am from out with Glasgow, I am not aware if this has already been done, but if so, I would have expected a better attendance.

**Name: Pia M K Walker**

**Date: 7<sup>th</sup> of February**

**Advisor** **X** **Scottish Arts Council Officer**