



Scottish Arts Council

ARTISTIC EVALUATION – MUSIC

Organisation/Venue:

Title of Event: The Scottish Ensemble and The Prince's Trust

Type of Event: Concert

Date of Visit: 8 July 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. NB: for multiple performances or festivals, or if you prefer please feel free to use headings for a more extensive commentary. Please note the artistic assessment according to the rating detailed below)

Overall Rating: **5**

The Scottish Ensemble is a consistently high quality performing group of musicians, which has set itself extremely high standards and has made every effort to be successful in maintaining these standards throughout every aspect of its work.

The City Chambers summer concert, while not part of a public season, was demonstrative of the Scottish Ensemble's capability and willingness to turn its hand to a wide range of performance opportunities, so long as they are in pursuit of its overall aims and objectives.

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.

Name: Carol Main

Date: 12/11/2004

Advisor **X**

Scottish Arts Council Officer

Please circle the relevant title

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	Comment and key reasons for rating
Quality of production – was the event successful overall in relation to any stated aims (e.g. in the programme or other printed material)	5	This was a very well devised programme, combining Spring from Vivaldi's Four Seasons with Summer in Buenos Aires by Piazzolla. Inbetween was Elgar's Serenade for Strings (in full). The seasons theme is one that the Ensemble has already included as part of their mainstream programming. It was characteristically clever of the Ensemble to extract a movement from each to work as part of a shorter programme with the Elgar sandwiched between them.
Vision and imagination	5	<p>The concert, in Glasgow City Chambers, was the tangible interim result of a partnership between the Scottish Ensemble and The Prince's Trust. Both organisations are looking to raise substantial funds and rather than seeing each other as possible competitors, they are working together in a high profile collaboration to open fundraising doors. One of their common threads is a desire to combine in projects for young people.</p> <p>With BT's long term sponsorship having ended, the Ensemble is in a financially vulnerable position. This prestigious event allowed prominent and influential Glasgow/Scottish business community representatives and politicians the opportunity of hearing at first hand the high quality of the Ensemble's playing, programming and presentation.</p> <p>By involving Glasgow City Council and the Lord Provost, the collaboration got off to an excellent and potentially mutually beneficial start.</p> <p>However, even with the vision and imagination of the Scottish Ensemble, initiatives such as this take time – even a few years – to mature, and their financial need is one which may be considered as extraneous to normal circumstances, especially at a time of change.</p>
Performers – where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments	4	Jonathan Morton assumed the role of leader of the Ensemble, a position he has subsequently adopted as Clio Gould's successor. The acoustic of the assigned chamber was not good for music, attractive and inspirational though its murals were in their own civic way. The Vivaldi, a piece which is long established in the Ensemble's repertoire, was simply beautiful, stylish and musical, but the Elgar was less successful, being weakened by the viola section, which was missing its regular principal. This demonstrated how vital individual players are to sustaining the quality of a small ensemble.

Quality of Presentation – was the professionally presented from a technical point of view	5	<p>This was a completely professionally presented evening. Drinks and canapés were served prior to the performance (Glasgow must surely be the only local authority to offer Irn Bru alongside Chardonnay) offering business, arts, civic, media, parliamentary and charity representatives the opportunity to mingle before the performance.</p> <p>The performance itself was expertly presented by Clio Gould and Jonathan Morton, and, given that it was already known by the Ensemble that he was to take over from Clio as Artistic Director, this was an ideal easing in opportunity.</p>
Audience – assess the appropriateness of the production for the audience, estimate the size and reaction	5	This was mainly an invited audience and it would be worth asking the Scottish Ensemble how they have followed through guests' interests etc. Everyone present was very enthusiastic in their applause and enthusiasm afterwards.
Educational Value – comment where appropriate	5	In terms of educating the audience about the work of the Scottish Ensemble and The Prince's Trust, the speeches were informative and appropriate in length and content.

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	3	The acoustics were not good in the room the concert was held in, but worked reasonably well for the occasion.
Information/ interpretive material at venue ¹	4	The programme was a simple A4 page, printed on higher than usual quality bonded paper. It was all that was needed at a minimum, but more information would probably have been appreciated.
Publicity/ pre-publicity ²	n/a	This was an event for invited guests.

¹ These include programmes, displays etc., including the range, quality and clarity.

² 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

Ease of booking and payment	n/a	
Location of venue	5	Central Glasgow, near to bus/train stations.
External signage and signposting	5	Can't miss it.
Internal directional signage	5	City Council personnel were on hand at every turn.
Access and provision for disabled people	5	There is full disabled access.
Timing of the event	5	Thursday evening
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g., box office, front of house and bar/catering)	5	City Council staff - excellent
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council funding ³	0	The A4 programme was only able to list the music, the players and give acknowledgement to Glasgow City Council/Lord Provost.

³ 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.