

**THE SCOTTISH ARTS COUNCIL**

**ARTISTIC EVALUATION - DRAMA**

**Organisation/Venue:** Scottish Youth Theatre at Citizens Stalls Studio

**Title of Event:** Summer Festival - Waking Shadows

**Type of Event:** Performance

**Date of Visit:** 7 August 2003

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 a Council Officer, as indicated at the end of the form. The report will be circulated to the organisation which produced the work, 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

**1.1 Vision and Imagination.**

Rating for this section <i>(Please tick)</i>		Comments and key reasons for rating:
Very Poor		This production arose out of SYT's summer festival training programme for young people.

Poor		This was a devised piece of theatre based on the ideas of the cast members. Their theme was an exploration of the horror/suspense genre. The production also touched on dark social issues such as child abuse. A range of mediums were used to portray the work - video, dance, live song, lighting effects. The effectiveness of the production in achieving its aims relied heavily on the creation of a sinister atmosphere – a difficult challenge - which the company rose to with skill and maturity.
Competent		
Good	<b>x</b>	
Excellent		

### 1.2 Clarity of Communication.

Rating for this section (Please tick)		Comments and key reasons for rating:
Very Poor		As outlined the company successfully produced a convincing atmosphere for the piece. However, given that there were various strands to the overall storyline, and communication of ideas was often presented through symbolism, I sometimes found it difficult to follow the plot. Having said that, it was good to be presented with a piece of theatre that encouraged the audience to work hard and use their imaginations.
Poor		
Competent	<b>x</b>	
Good		
Excellent		

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

### 1.3 Script (particularly in relation to new work, or second productions).

Rating for this section (Please tick)		Comments and key reasons for rating:
Very Poor		While some individual scenes were sometimes difficult to follow, the dialogue (or alternative means of expression) was interesting and effective in terms of portraying the overall dark theme.
Poor		
Competent	<b>x</b>	I had a slight issue about the plot for the character who was blind. I was informed that the actress playing the role was not blind therefore it appeared that the piece had introduced this particular character to use their blindness as a device to add an extra layer of fear and suspense (by portraying her as a particularly vulnerable victim). The overall effect was, in my view, a perpetuation of negative stereotypes about being blind.
Good		
Excellent		

### 1.4 Direction

Rating for this section (Please tick)	Comments and key reasons for rating:

Very Poor		While some aspects of the production lacked a clear focus, overall the direction was good. There were some crowded scenes, such as the choreographed piece with umbrellas, which coped well in a small space.
Poor		
Competent		The use of a range of devises such as the talking doll and lighting effects successfully enabled the audience to engage with the theme on a deep level.
Good	<b>x</b>	
Excellent		The characterisation of the twins (portrayed like an eerie version of Tweedle-dee and Tweedle-dum) was skillfull and imaginative.

**1.5 Standard of performers- where performers are not trained, please reflect this in your comments.**

Rating for this section <i>(Please tick)</i>		Comments and key reasons for rating:
Very Poor		Overall the standard of performers was good. The highlight for me was the portrayal of the psychic twins by Kerry Munro and Janie Avril.
Poor		
Competent		
Good	<b>x</b>	
Excellent		

**1.6 Use of music** – 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 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		The use of live song was effective and of a good quality.
Poor		
Competent		
Good	<b>x</b>	
Excellent		

**1.7 Use of Movement or Choreography**

Rating for this section	Comments and key reasons for rating:

<i>(Please tick)</i>		The dance scenes were skilfully handled. One particular scene reminded me of the Michael Jackson "Thriller" video and was therefore in keeping with the horror aspects of the theme.
Very Poor		
Poor		
Competent		
Good	<b>x</b>	
Excellent		

**1.8 Design** – including set, costume and lighting design. Please take into account how appropriate the design is in relation to the venue, and, where appropriate, the touring schedule.

<b>Rating for this section</b> <i>(Please tick)</i>		<b>Comments and key reasons for rating:</b>
Very Poor		The design was appropriate to the theme and small theatre space. The lighting was very good and cleverly used to add an extra layer of tension and effect.
Poor		
Competent		
Good	<b>x</b>	
Excellent		

**1.9 Technical Standards** – please comment on whether the production was professionally presented from a technical point of view.

<b>Rating for this section</b> <i>(Please tick)</i>		<b>Comments and key reasons for rating:</b>
Very Poor		The production was well supported by technical aspects.
Poor		
Competent		
Good	<b>x</b>	
Excellent		

**1.10 Overall production** – was the production successful overall in relation to any stated aims (e.g. in the programme or other printed material, and stated aims and objectives)

<b>Rating for this section</b> <i>(Please tick)</i>	<b>Comments and key reasons for rating:</b>
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Very Poor		This was an interesting piece of theatre which provided an entertaining and thought provoking experience. The production did not disappoint in terms of its description within the programme.
Poor		
Competent		The production was part of SYT's summer festival in residence at the Citizens theatre. Young people efficiently took on various roles within the theatre as well as performance (from backstage to front of house etc).  This created a positive atmosphere of young participants being empowered and receiving real life work experience.
Good	x	
Excellent		

**1.11 Was the performance appropriate for the audience?**

Yes.

**1.12 Estimated size of audience and reaction to the production.**

Full house. Good response.

**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 Was the venue suitable for the event?**

Yes.

**2.2 Information/Interpretive material provided at the venue (e.g. programmes, displays etc)**

**range, quantity and clarity.**

Programme clearly stated production process and theme.

**2.3 Publicity/Pre-Publicity for the Event (leaflets, posters, etc)**

- **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.**

SYT provided a range of sources clearly advertising the overall festival and

individual events.

**2.4 Accessibility of the venue**

- ease of payment
- location
- external signposting
- internal directional signing
- access and provision for disabled people
- timing of event

Fine.

**2.5 Customer service**

- quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering).

Fine.

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

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 and 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, and computer programmes etc. "*

**Please comment on whether the above conditions of grant were met, including use and prominence of the Scottish Arts Council logo on the company's website.**

Scottish Arts Council funding adequately acknowledged.

**Name:** Angela Hogg

**Date:** 3 May 2004.

**Advisor**

**Scottish Arts Council Officer**

**x**

*(Please tick above as appropriate)*