



Scottish Arts Council

ARTISTIC EVALUATION – DRAMA

Organisation/Venue: Scottish Youth Theatre at the Citizens'

Title of Event: Sweeney Todd

Type of Event: Theatre performance

Date of Visit: Saturday 24th 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.)

Good. This was a strong production with some very good key performances. The production was well designed, and directed with understanding. Musically a challenging piece that allowed for real development. A good choice for this age group.

Name: Sally Hobson **Date:** 3rd August 2004

Advisor

Scottish Arts Council Officer

Please tick 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:

1.	Criteria	Rating	Comment and key reasons for rating
1.1	Vision and imagination	Good	Clear and competent vision and for the production. The director's vision and designer's concept worked well together and integrated in final outcome. Musically very strong. All performers were clearly up to their parts and a lot of hard work had gone into the production.
1.2	Clarity of Communication	Good	Good. The Ideas and theatrical images worked through production coherently to present a cogent and clear overall effect.

2. Strengths and Weaknesses

Assess the strengths and weaknesses of the event with reference to the following:

2.	Criteria	Rating	Comment and key reasons for rating
2.1	Script – particularly in relation to new work or second productions	Good	Libretto more than script. One of Sondheim's better scripts and text.
2.2	Direction	Good	Directed with a strong commitment to allowing young performers to shine. Clear and uncluttered. Limited space for such a large cast, but the set/design helped to bring in different levels and texture.
2.3	Standard of Performers – where performers are not trained, please reflect this in you comments	Good	The young people were all cast very well for their part, full of enthusiasm and passion. Some very able performances emerged, and "Mrs Lovett" was brilliantly well pitched and played. All key players shone, with a lovely performance from "Joanna" and a menacing presence from "Sweeney"
2.4	Use of Music ¹	Good	Established musical of some strength and vigour.

¹ 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 parts, and what effect this has on the quality of the production.

2.5	Use of Movement/ Choreography	Good	Limited space, but movement was integrated where possible to add dimension to the performances.
2.6	Design ² – including set, costume and lighting design	Excellent	Very good use of limited space. Great costumes. Perfect for a young ensemble cast. Use of traditional mixed with modern iconography.
2.7	Technical Standards – was the production professionally presented from a technical point of view	Good	Good standard presented.
2.8	Audience Response – appropriateness of the production for the audience, estimate the size and reaction	Good	Good. It was a small audience. A matinee. But the audience really enjoyed the work of the young people, and were very appreciative of the performance.

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.

3.	Criteria	Comments
3.1	Suitability of the venue for the event	Good
3.2	Information/ interpretive material at venue ³	Good. Programme neglected to provide a useful synopsis. Not a difficult show here that require much information to understand. Still part of the trend in Scottish Theatre when programmes are used as opportunities for self-aggrandisement and not as a useful tool to educate the audience about the work they are seeing, and the background to the artistic process.
3.3	Publicity/ pre-publicity ⁴	Good

² Take into account how appropriate the design is in relation to the venue and, where appropriate, the touring schedule

³ These include programmes, displays etc., including the range, quality and clarity.

⁴ 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

3.4	Ease of booking and payment	Good
3.5	External signage and signposting	Good
3.6	Internal directional signage	Good
3.7	Access and provision for disabled people	Good
3.8	Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	Good. It is a long piece. SYT not afraid to programme a piece that requires going the distance.
3.9	Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g., box office, front of house and bar/catering)	Good
3.10	Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council funding ⁵	Good

⁵ 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.