



Scottish Arts Council

ARTISTIC EVALUATION – DRAMA

**Organisation/Venue:** TAG Theatre at the Tron

**Title of Event:** Knives In Hens

**Type of Event:** Performance

**Date of Visit:** 8 February 2005

**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**

A quality based, imaginative and accessible piece of theatre for young people and adults.

**Name:** Angela Hogg

**Date:** \_\_29 / 04 / 05\_\_

**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:**

**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.	Criteria	Rating	Comment and key reasons for rating
1.1	Vision and imagination	Good	An interesting, atmospheric and poetic piece which depicted dark and intense aspects of personal and social relationships within a rural setting. As an urban based audience member it was positive to experience a rural based piece which did not reflect a stereotypical image of rural life. The plot and mode of the piece played a huge part in achieving this result.
1.2	Clarity of Communication	Good	Very clearly communicated through words and gestures. The sentences were often sparse but very easy to listen to and understand.

## 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	Excellent	An extremely poetic piece of work. A strange and obscure piece with many potential meanings which enabled me to have my own personal journey with it. I loved the analogy of the woman being like the land and nature even though it suggested she was more like a possession than a free agent. This analogy enabled a heightened experience of her liberation at the end.
2.2	Direction	Excellent	A well directed piece by Guy Hollands. A very subtle and sophisticated approach which provided a quality based and challenging experience for young audiences. The choice of cast, language, set, design and visual imagery worked well together to give a sense of era (within a modern context), rural setting and human conflict. It was also very accessible given the clear delivery of text and symbolic gestures. Audiences were provided with a journey of the imagination through the subtle suggestions of place, time and events. The piece gave a clear sense of the young woman being trapped (but hopeful) and full of anguish (but determination) in equal measure.
2.3	Standard of Performers – where performers are not trained, please reflect this in you comments	Excellent	The cast (Rosalind Sydney, Sam Heughan, John Kazek) expertly handled their roles in portraying menace, conflict, sexual reference and ambiguity through gesture, expression and delivery of the text.

2.4	Use of Music <sup>1</sup>	Good	The music and sound effects were appropriately atmospheric.
2.5	Use of Movement/ Choreography		NA
2.6	Design <sup>2</sup> – including set, costume and lighting design	Good	A minimal and effective set which was also aesthetically pleasing. The design achieved a sense of era and flexibly portrayed various settings. The lighting added atmosphere and the costumes were authentic.
2.7	Technical Standards – was the production professionally presented from a technical point of view	Good	Well delivered.
2.8	Audience Response – appropriateness of the production for the audience, estimate the size and reaction	Good	A full house which responded well. As with many TAG shows the audience contained a lot of older people as well as young people.

### 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	Suitable.
3.2	Information/interpretive material at venue <sup>3</sup>	A simple programme which included background information on TAG and the writer David Harrower (and his aims in creating the piece).

<sup>1</sup> 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.

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

<sup>3</sup> These include programmes, displays etc., including the range, quality and clarity.

3.3	Publicity/ pre-publicity <sup>4</sup>	A range of hard copy and website information was provided.
3.4	Ease of booking and payment	Fine.
3.5	External signage and signposting	Fine.
3.6	Internal directional signage	Fine.
3.7	Access and provision for disabled people	Accessible.
3.8	Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	Suitable at 1hr 25 mins.
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 <sup>5</sup>	Appropriately acknowledged.

<sup>4</sup> 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

<sup>5</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.