



Scottish Arts Council

ARTISTIC EVALUATION – DRAMA

Organisation/Venue: TOSG / Stornoway Town Hall, Isle of Lewis

Title of Event: Coille Na Ceilp

Type of Event: (e.g. performance, work-in-progress, open rehearsal etc.) Performance (Pantomime)

Date of Visit: Wednesday 15th December 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.)

Competent

Name: Nan S Macleod

Date: 16/12/2004

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:

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	Excellent	Vivid storm effect - light and sound; effective representation of waves; wondrous undersea atmosphere and clever amusing (tongue-in -cheek?) costume for the denizens of the ocean.
1.2	Clarity of Communication	Good	Three of the players could be heard distinctly. One who does not command the same register and whose speech may have been muffled by her costume was less audible. Due to the restricted stage area the front of stage clarsach music at times masked dialogue.

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	Competent	Good in itself, a worthy message conveyed in mellifluous Gaelic. But given the fact that it was for children, some pre-school, it was too wordy. Adults were more appreciative.
2.2	Direction	Competent	Not sufficiently alive to young audiences' expectations; concentration was most intense during moments of snappy dialogue and brisk movement. Longer dialogue failed to retain it. More of a storytelling atmosphere could have been created to surround the legend of the sealskin belt. I felt it lacked the verve to elicit enthusiastic audience participation.
2.3	Standard of Performers – where performers are not trained, please reflect this in you comments	Good	Good. One player in particular raised this rating from competent level.
2.4	Use of Music ¹	Good	Chorus songs - lyrics written for the play set to familiar Gaelic tunes. The clarsach player accompanied her own singing of traditional Gaelic songs; her playing was also used to enhance atmosphere.

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	Competent	Movement within a set on the already small stage here is of necessity restricted. Within these limitations there was some good assured movement which added to the audiences enjoyment.
2.6	Design ² – including set, costume and lighting design	Good	Eye-catching atmospheric costume and set; quick scene change achieved by reversing props. Lighting design and sound effects were excellent, particularly in such a venue.
2.7	Technical Standards – was the production professionally presented from a technical point of view	Good	Good in difficult circumstances.
2.8	Audience Response – appropriateness of the production for the audience, estimate the size and reaction		<p>Was the performance appropriate for the audience? Not wholly. See comment re appropriateness of script.</p> <p>Estimated size of audience and reaction to the production.</p> <p>150</p> <p>Most of the children seemed to enjoy it. The adults praised it; the message was more accessible to them.</p>

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	<p>Was the venue suitable for the event?</p> <p>Yes. Better the only available venue than no performance.</p>
3.2	Information/ interpretive material at venue ³	none

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.

3.3	Publicity/ pre-publicity ⁴	None I made a point of looking for posters, for advertisements in the local press and on local radio. None. All schools had prior notice but the performances were open to the public who were not aware of the performance.
3.4	Ease of booking and payment	simple
3.5	External signage and signposting	None
3.6	Internal directional signage	not necessary
3.7	Access and provision for disabled people	no disabled parking available
3.8	Timing of the event – was the length appropriate? Did the start and finish time seem to be appropriate for the audience?	suitable for school parties, not for the working population
3.9	Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g., box office, front of house and bar/catering)	Not necessary
3.10	Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council funding ⁵	SAC logo on print material

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

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.