



Scottish Arts Council

ARTISTIC EVALUATION – DANCE

Artist/Company: Ariadone (Japanese contemporary dance company)/Spina (French industrial rock band)

Venue: Tramway 1, Glasgow

Title of Event: Togue

Type of Event: Public performance

Date of Visit: Friday 28th May 2004 at 8pm

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 (4)

This was a solid project, well presented, in an appropriate venue. It held the audience's interest effectively and was a worthwhile event to bring to Glasgow, particularly as a means to highlight cross-cultural collaboration.

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Date: 29/05/2004

Specialist Advisor, Dance Department

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	Comments and key reasons for rating
Vision and imagination	4	This was an interesting collaboration between a Japanese contemporary dance company and a French Industrial Rock band. This fusion created moments of lyrical beauty alongside violent outbursts of harder-edged movement and sound.
Clarity of communication	3	Very general emotional states were indicated in the production rather than detailed ideas. Ritualistic serenity alternated with raw sensuality. One was constantly reminded of the fine line between pleasure and pain. Beyond these broad-brush interpretations it was impossible to draw any further conclusions as to the detailed themes being tackled. The French band created an effective sound world and were well integrated within the production, but the diction of the singer was poor and vocals not well balanced alongside guitar and drums. Consequently it was not possible to hear the lyrics – which could have been either in English or French, so indistinct was the vocal performance! It was impossible to gain any sense of the ideas contained within the songs and therefore the basis of the choreographer's inspiration.
Quality of production – production's success in relation to stated aims i.e., in the programme or other printed material)	4	The excellent Tramway brochure provided a very accurate description of the production, fully realised in the performance: "Togue will at one moment attack your senses and the next lull you into a deep and melodic dream where the dancers move like ghosts of themselves."

2. Strengths and Weakness

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

Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
Choreography - originality, use of space, number and use of dancers, length of piece, etc	4	At one hour and ten minutes long, the piece was substantial and contained sufficient choreographic ideas to sustain the audience's interest. The fusion of rock band and dancers proved successful as the band played a major part in the choreography as well as dominating the rear of the stage, raised up on three large decorated cubes.
Performers - technical standard, performance skills, and ability to communicate	4	Communicative and distinctive style. Raw, ethnic, humorous.

Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
Sound – appropriateness and effect of sound or music (whole/part, live/ recorded) to the production.	4	The sound world created varied between a tenderly lyrical Japanese classical score and a vibrant industrial live rock band. There were problems of balance between instrumental and vocals in the band, but the sound world made a generally effective contribution to the performance.
Design – costume, set, lighting	4	Lighting and set design were effective in the immediacy of the Tramway 1 space, set up in the proscenium arch format. The dancers were very well lit, maximising the impact of a wide range of props and costumes. The sections of the piece involving topless performance amongst the five female dancers was handled very sensitively by the lighting designer.
Technical standards – technical presentation of the production (e.g. lighting and sound cues, etc)	4	Lighting and sound were effectively designed and well managed on the night, with the exception of sound balance referred to earlier.
Audience – appropriateness of the production for the audience, estimate the size and reaction	4	Around 100 people attended this performance, drawn from a specialist audience for world dance and music. The promotional campaign was well pitched to this niche audience. A very favourable reaction from the audience.

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	5	This was an ideal venue for this project both in terms of overall size, contemporary ambience and identity of the programming.
Information/ interpretive material at venue ¹	2	Very little information about the project at the venue as there was no programme to accompany the project. The season brochure did, however, contain a fair amount of information about what to expect in the production. A cast sheet was available to view on the auditorium door.
Publicity/ pre-publicity ²	4	Good pre- publicity, with advertising in the Herald newspaper and previews in its Going Out Thursday pull-out. The List also previewed the project. The Tramway season brochure has been dramatically improved of late and it has been interesting to note a growing visibility of Tramway projects which bodes well for future audience development.
Accessibility of venue	4	Good.

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

² Publicity/pre-publicity (leaflets, posters, etc), including the 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

Criteria	Rating	Comment and key reasons for rating
Ease of booking and payment	2	I found it difficult to book by telephone on 27 May. Initial calls to the booking number led to a message being taken with the promise of a call back. I then called back later and succeeded in getting an operator. The operator was fairly inexperienced, so the process was a bit shaky. This was probably a new member of staff, so allowances should be made for this.
Location of venue	4	Good for a Southsider! Good bus and transport links make getting to Tramway an easy exercise.
External signage and signposting	2	There isn't a great deal of signage on the exterior. The façade is in a poor condition and really needs further capital investment. As it stands, it does not entice the casual passer-by.
Internal directional signage	4	Good
Access and provision for disabled people	4	Good
Timing of the event	4	8pm is a useful start time for a short show. Allows time to eat beforehand and recharge the batteries after work!
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	3	A bit hands off. No sense of welcome, rather a slightly apologetic presence. Needs more sense that the staff are really buying in to the venue and its programme. Quite pleasant staff though and well presented.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ³	4	Yes, on season brochure.

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.