



Scottish Arts Council

**ARTISTIC EVALUATION – VISUAL ARTS**

**Organisation/Venue:**

**Title of Event:** Car Stereo Parkway, Transmission Gallery, Glasgow

**Type of Event:** (e.g. exhibition/workshop/screening/lecture)

**Date of Visit:** Friday 13 May 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).

An exhibition which was appropriately contextualised within the Glasgow International Festival. With one or two exceptions, the works in the exhibition were only marginally engaging, dense and unreadable. The accompanying information was unhelpful. There was a good use of the downstairs gallery space. On the whole a disappointing exhibition.

Name: \_\_\_Lisa Kapur\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Specialist Advisor  Scottish Arts Council Officer *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, with particular reference to the strengths and weaknesses of the following:

Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
Vision and imagination of artist's work <sup>1</sup>		<p>The works on display were a selection of 4 free standing assemblage sculptures in the upstairs gallery alongside a film, with a site specific installation in the downstairs gallery. The upstairs gallery was adorned with bunting, which linked the works together. The works themselves were playful and implied a narrative and a process of creation which was not illuminated for me by the off-putting text in the accompanying leaflet. The video work was arbitrary, I did not understand its meaning or location in that context, although I did like the fact that it interacted with one of the sculptures to create an interesting effect.</p> <p>There was one memorable piece of work in the upstairs gallery which involved cardboard boxes and boots (I did not take a note of the titles of the works and am not entirely sure that these were available). I found the other works in the upstairs gallery unreadable, forgettable and meaningless although not entirely unappealing. There was an interesting use of disparate materials which, when put together, created works which were quite humorous but only fleetingly engaging.</p> <p>I spent a fair amount of time in the installation downstairs, which consisted of sprouting potatoes in dark corners and lights flashing as if attempting to convey some message. I found this piece quite meditative and engaging and felt this work responded well to the nature of the space.</p> <p>It was unclear what the significance of the exhibition title was, (even though an unsatisfactory explanation was given for it in the information sheet) or how it related to the work in the exhibition.</p> <p>The interpretative material told me that the work induced frustration or bewilderment in the viewer – this is not necessarily an indication of Harrison's skill as an artist.</p>
Curatorial vision/ selection – also indicate if the event has originated from the exhibiting organisation, part of a festival, artist-led, or commissioned		<p>The exhibition was part of Glasgow International and was appropriate within this context. It is unclear whether the show was curated by GI or by Transmission. The selection of Rachel Harrison as an exhibitor is in line with Transmission's aim of providing exhibition spaces and opportunities for young artists in Glasgow as well as extending an invitation to influential young artists to become part of a dialogue with the organisation. Clearly,</p>

<sup>1</sup> Quality of ideas, skills in execution, if you've seen the work of this artist(s) before – particularly in relation to new work or second productions

		as a New York based artist, Rachel Harrison would fall into this latter category. However, I would suggest that Transmission consider using the international platform offered by GI to present work by Scotland based artists.
Events available/ groups targeted – workshops, artist's talks, discussion groups, pre-school/ primary/ secondary students, >18,>60 etc		There did not seem to be any exhibition specific events happening as far as I am aware, although there would have been an opening for Transmission members. There was a talk at Transmission, involving international artist Gustav Metzger on the 25 <sup>th</sup> April, which was part of the Glasgow International Festival, but not connected to this exhibition.
Standard of Presentation – use of equipment, space and overall layout/hang		It was a bright day, so the video was almost completely bleached out by the sunlight and this was unsatisfactory. Otherwise, presentation and the overall layout of the exhibition was fine. The use of empty cardboard boxes as a pedestal for the video tied in with the nature of the work.
Foot Traffic – number of visitors/ participants at the time of visit		There were no other visitors to the exhibition during the time of my visit other than a friend of the invigilator who was chatting rather than viewing.
Audience Reaction – time spent, interest, activity, and visitors' books comments		This exhibition appeals to and is probably visited by regular Transmission attenders - it is unknown to what extent Glasgow International would bring in new audiences. I do not imagine this work would have broad appeal without a significant degree of interpretation and mediation, which Transmission is not resourced to undertake. I did not see a visitors' book.

## 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		The space was suitable for the exhibition and the site-specific installation made good use of the downstairs gallery space, which can be difficult.
Information/ interpretive material at venue <sup>2</sup>		The information sheet let me know that the works avoid easy reading, but I didn't feel the need to be told this. I would prefer to have been given the opportunity to understand something more about the artist's work and approach. The text in the Glasgow International leaflet was much more informative,

<sup>2</sup> These include wall panels, labels, catalogues, leaflets, artists CVs etc., assessing the range, quality and clarity

		although I felt that the text in both pieces of print attempted to give the work an authority which I feel it lacked when engaging with it.
Publicity/ pre-publicity <sup>3</sup>		Inclusion in the Glasgow International exhibition meant that the exhibition probably received wider publicity and pre publicity than the Gallery would normally be resourced to undertake, which is very positive. I saw at least two mentions of this exhibition in the press (Scotsman and The Guardian) neither of which were particularly positive. The exhibition was promoted on the organisation's website as well as in listings and publications.
Ease of booking and payment		Admission to the Gallery is free.
Location of venue		This is well located within Glasgow city centre and adjacent to other arts venues. The website should probably have a map on it, as well as opening times for the exhibition-.
External signage and signposting		The Gallery is clearly marked externally.
Internal directional signage		This is not really necessary.
Access and provision for disabled people		The venue is not fully accessible for people with disabilities.
Opening times/ timing of the event		The exhibition run was for 4 weeks and the opening times of 11am – 5pm Tues-Sat were reasonable given the target users of Transmission.
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. welcoming/ informed)		The invigilator was friendly and welcoming.
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding <sup>4</sup>		This was acknowledged on the information sheet and on the website, although the logo isn't used.

<sup>3</sup> 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

<sup>4</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.