



Scottish Arts Council

ARTISTIC EVALUATION – DRAMA

Organisation/Venue: Tron/Perth Theatre Co-production at Perth Theatre

Title of Event: Half Life

Type of Event: Performance

Date of Visit: 4 November 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.)

Excellent

This was a beautifully conceived and realised piece of theatre. It tackled deep themes in a fresh and unhackneyed way. It would have been easy to slip into sentimental patronising of older people. The conflict between the two children of the elderly couple set up an interesting tension that helped give the play significant interest. The production complemented the play in the direction and performances.

Name: David Taylor

Date: 13 November 2005

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	This was an imaginative piece of programming. The introduction of theatre of an international standard to the Perth Theatre programme is to be welcomed. The collaboration with the Tron Theatre also breaks new ground and opens up interesting opportunities for the audiences at Perth Theatre.
1.2	Clarity of Communication	Good	The piece was clear and well communicated.

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	Mighton's script is sensitive, well constructed and highly effective. He uses understatement and ambiguity with great skill to draw the viewer in to the concerns of the piece. This results in a moving and affective piece that avoids sentimentality, and sets up a number of compelling moral dilemmas.
2.2	Direction	Excellent	Daniel Brooks' direction is measured and assured. He establishes a pace that serves the piece well. The play is in danger of being episodic but Brooks' skilful scene changes work well to keep the rhythm.
2.3	Standard of Performers – where performers are not trained, please reflect this in you comments	Excellent	The actors are all of a very high order. They exhibited an assurance and command of the material that was impressive.
2.4	Use of Music ¹	N/a	

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		
2.6	Design ² – including set, costume and lighting design	Good	The design was simple but effective. Different set elements were used well to suggest the different parts of the old peoples' home. Lighting was atmospheric and worked well.
2.7	Technical Standards – was the production professionally presented from a technical point of view	Good	Well presented
2.8	Audience Response – appropriateness of the production for the audience, estimate the size and reaction	Mixed	Most of the audience seemed to be engrossed and there was laughter at appropriate points during the performance. However, I could see at least three people who markedly did not applaud at the curtain call. The house seemed to be around half full.

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
3.3	Publicity/ pre-publicity ⁴	Good
3.4	Ease of booking and payment	N/A- invited

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

3.5	External signage and signposting	Fair
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. The length, without interval felt about right.
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.