



Scottish **Arts** Council

ARTISTIC EVALUATION – DRAMA

Artist/company: Wee Stories

Venue: Byre Theatre

Title of Event: Tam O Shanter

Type of Event: *(e.g. performance, informal showing, work-in-progress, etc)*

Performance

Date of Visit: 30 September 2004

Overall Rating (Please rate the production overall, using the ratings * below and taking into account your ratings for each section. Please state the key reasons for your overall ratings – i.e. the particular strengths and weaknesses.)

Rating	Comment
Excellent	

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:

	Rating	Comment and key reasons for rating
Vision and imagination	Excellent	Andy Cannon performs the poem Tam O Shanter not once but three times wrapping the renditions around a frame of a man retelling stories about his childhood. It should never work for a young audience, or any audience for that matter, but it does, thrillingly. Vision and Imagination? To re tell the poem not twice but three times and to not just get away with it but to let us see the text in new and exciting ways each time was as exciting as anything I have seen in the theatre last year.
Clarity of communication	Excellent	Brilliant. Never condescends. Is always pushing at the boundaries of what an audience can handle – vital for children’s work to succeed – and works for all ages but never falls into the trap of pandering to adults simply because they are here.
Quality of production	Excellent	Wee Stories are rightly praised for their work. What I feel sometimes is missing in that praise is that because their shows are such fun we can overlook the detailed craft that goes into them. Tam O Shanter is the continuing development of a very special company with what I believe is its strongest and most complete work to date. (I made a very foolish statement to a colleague a couple of years ago that, good as it was, I couldn’t see how the company could develop within the style and framework they were working within. Arthur and Tam O Shanter have shown how much nonsense that comment was)

You are also asked to **assess the strengths and weaknesses** of the event with specific reference to the following:

	Rating	Comment and key reasons for rating
Direction	Excellent	Very tight and imaginative (this was a new Wee Stories show that I couldn’t find fault in terms of length and going off on slight tangents)
Script	Excellent	A fine script. When can we stop the nonsense of ‘written’ and ‘devised’ texts. Wee Stories show these divisions to be meaningless with such deep seated skill and knowledge about what to say and how to its audience.
Performers	Excellent	Andy Cannon and Wendy Weatherby were brilliant.
Sound		
Design	Good	Simple and highly effective
Choreography		
Technical standards	Good	High
Overall production	Excellent	As good as it gets.
Audience	Excellent	Good response.

2. Management of Event

Please evaluate the way the event was presented/organised by the organisation and by the venue. Please answer, where relevant, with reference to the checklist below adding any other comments/observations you may have.

	Comment and key reasons for rating
Suitability of the venue for the event	Good
Information/ interpretive material provided at the venue (e.g. programmes, displays etc), incl. the range of materials, quantity and clarity	
Publicity/ pre-publicity ¹	
Accessibility of venue	
Ease of booking and payment	
Location of venue	
External signposting and signage	
Internal directional signage	
Access and provision for disabled people	Good
Timing of the event	
Customer service - quality and efficiency of staff (e.g. box office, front of house, bar and/or catering)	Good
Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding ²	

Name: Tony Reekie

Date: 10 December 2004

Advisor



Scottish Arts Council Officer



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 a Council Officer, as

¹ 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

² 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.

indicated above. The report will be circulated to the organisation which produced the work, 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.