



**ARTISTIC EVALUATION: Visual Art and Crafts**

This evaluation is intended to represent an objective aesthetic judgement. **Specialist advisors and officers should avoid making judgements based on their own personal tastes and preferences wherever possible.**

**Artist: Featured artists;** John 'Hoppy' Hopkins

**Venue:** Street Level Photoworks

**Title of Event :** Taking Liberties

**Type of Event:** Photographic exhibition

**Date of Visit:** 22 October 2009

**Overall Rating:** Very Good

*(Please rate the event overall, taking into account your ratings for each section. Please state the key reasons for your overall ratings – ie the particular strengths and weaknesses. If the management of the event affects the overall enjoyment of the event, please comment, but the overall rating should be based on the artistic merit of the event.)*

Overall rating is very good. A history lesson/reminder through great black and white photography, and candid commentary from the artist provided a very interesting and enjoyable exhibition.

Name: Steve McKenzie

Date: 5 November 2009

Scottish Arts Council Officer

Specialist Advisor

This report has been commissioned by the Scottish Arts Council to evaluate the artistic quality of the production named above. It has been prepared by either a specialist Advisor, or an officer of the Scottish Arts Council, as indicated on 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 will form evidence for the Artistic Leadership and Public Engagement sections of the Quality Framework and be taken into account in assessing the work of the producing company in relation to future applications for funding to the Scottish Arts Council. It may also be used by the Joint Board to report on the overall performance of its 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 well conceived and executed

**Satisfactory**

**Good** - well conceived and executed

**Very Good** – well conceived and executed to a very good standard

**Excellent** – Inspiring and executed to an exceptionally 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
<p>Vision and imagination of work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of ideas, execution of work and installation</li> <li>• if you have seen other work of this artist(s) before, please comment on any relevant comparisons</li> </ul>	<p>Very good</p>	<p>Exhibition PR synopsis sums up the exhibition perfectly; <i>‘Taking Liberties’ is a retrospective of the photographic work of John ‘Hoppy’ Hopkins from the period 1960 to 1966. The work captures the ethos and aspirations of the emerging counter-culture, which were expressed through music, protest and art. Included are iconic images of The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Marianne Faithful, jazz greats Roland Kirk, Thelonius Monk and others. A unique series of images capture the historic poetry convention at The Albert Hall in 1965, another set show CND marches and anti-racist demonstrations illustrating the power of popular protest. Alongside these are images of Bikers at the legendary Ace Cafe in London, as well as a series of shots of prominent movers and shakers’ of the various scenes.</i></p> <p>There are some images that have become imprinted in our sub-conscious as iconic historic moments. Although some of my favorites and most powerful images are not those that are most notably recognized with the race issues in America but the images from the biker series. These are emotive and captured a sprung loaded intensity – conflicting our pre-conceptions about the aggressive Brighton beach fighting with the Mods and Hoppy’s description of friendly, peaceful bike enthusiasts. One image in particular, where everyone in the café is oblivious of the artist apart from one young girl who is looking straight at him, projects a tremendous sense of intensity.</p> <p>The installation was categorized by theme, which was orderly and provided the impact of a new subject to be introduced effectively. Bikers, musicians etc, and within each category the images were arranged in a cluster, rather than a grid form.</p> <p>The lighting in the gallery to the left, used spots. I found this distracting, and not effective to fully light the arrangement of work. The pools of light create hot spots that left some works in shadow.</p> <p>Lots of additional material is available to read from the prison letters to editions of the International Times co-founded by Hoppy in 1966.</p>
<p>Curatorial/ programming vision/ selection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does it fit within the artistic vision of the organisation?</li> <li>• If the event is part of a Festival, please say how it contributes to the overall</li> </ul>	<p>Very good</p>	<p>As a gallery that develops its role to explore the nature of photography and lens based media. This was an ideal example of journalistic/reportage photography.</p>

Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
programme.		
<p>Success of event against stated aims of exhibition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does it relate to information contained in the programme, the website or other printed material?</li> <li>• How well did it communicate the artistic themes?</li> <li>• How did the event originate eg from the exhibiting/ producing organisation, from the artist or from commission?</li> </ul> <p>Education events – see <sup>1</sup>below for definition</p>	Very Good	<p>A retrospective of John 'Hoppy' Hopkins, this exhibition did exactly what it said on the tin.</p> <p>The artist learning to see through a camera, created a series of incredibly iconic and historically significant shots. Thus establishing an important foundation and value as an artist – to look, then look again.</p> <p>No comment on the origination of the show.</p>
<p>Quality of Public Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of space and overall layout/hang?</li> <li>• What interpretation or support materials were available?</li> <li>• Were labels/maps available and how appropriate were they?</li> <li>• Was a Visitor Book available or opportunities for audiences to comment/interact? What were the comments like overall?</li> <li>• What activities were available to enhance the experience of the event eg workshops, artist's talks, discussion groups programmes, on line info?</li> </ul>	Very good	<p>It is a great space. A good proportion of natural light with visibility from the street. The eclectic nature of each theme was approached in a systematic and visually interesting way.</p> <p>The labels were snapshots from Hoppy's memories that provided a background context and were an excellent way of informing the context of the photography without becoming too academic.</p> <p>The visitor book was very positive about the exhibition and venue. A number of people had noted that they had been drawn into the exhibition as they walked past.</p> <p>The supporting interpretative material is very good. Its content and tone is accessible to a wide audience. In addition the talks, events and discussions provided a platform for a more rigorous discourse.</p> <p>A series of talks and discussions that explored the ethos and legacy of the 60s counterculture, coincided with the exhibition.</p> <p>1. Andy Roberts, Stewart Home and George Robertson – hidden past of drug culture.</p> <p>2. John Hoppy Hopkins in discussion with John Cavanagh – a rare interview.</p> <p>3. Wholly communion, Peter Whitehead and</p>

<sup>1</sup> Education is a bridge between artform excellence and increased access and participation, and it is people centred. Providing opportunities for learning and progressing in an artform or using an artform to address other, non-artistic, outcomes are equally valid; in either case a high quality strategic approach is required in order to benefit the participants and the organisation. Delivery can be through workshops, post/pre-show discussions, outreach work, etc aimed at any age group.

Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
		<p>Pilgrimage from Scattered Points' – FILM screening.</p> <p>4. Joe Boyd and Bruce Findlay in discussion with John Cavanagh – Music making in 60s Britain.</p> <p>5. Jim Hayes, Barry Miles and Jenny Fabian – 3 legends discuss their time and place in the 60s.</p> <p>6. John 'Hoppy' Hopkins and Sue Hall – Screening and discussion.</p>

## 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. Please try to view the venue and the services, and interpretative material as though you had never visited it before eg if you did not know the venue's location, how easy would it be to find your way there, and to find your way around once you had arrived?

Criteria	Comment
<p>Location and suitability of the venue for the event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is it easy to find?</li> <li>• Is it on a main transport route?</li> <li>• Are the spaces clean?</li> <li>• How suitable was it for the exhibition?</li> </ul>	<p>I'm not familiar with Glasgow and I printed the map out from the Trongate 103 website and walked straight past the venue because the arrow for Trongate is marked on the wrong side of the street! Once at the venue it was well signed post. The new building looked in great condition and ideal for the show. The gallery space was perfectly suited to the venue.</p>
<p>Information/ interpretive material at venue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there programmes, posters and displays about the event?</li> <li>• Is there information on the venue's website?</li> </ul>	<p>An A5 leaflet that folds out into an A3 poster promotes the list of events enhancing the exhibition. Includes information about the events and some images from the show. Also a generic 24 page booklet has been produced that provides an overview of the gallery activities from Sep-Mar 2010. There is a 4 page spread that summarises the exhibition very well, and includes addition reference to the prison letters.</p> <p>The website was informative without being too overwhelming. I thought the introductory text was the right balance between delivery of information and quantity of words. Text generally needs to be accessible and easy to read/digest, too long and it becomes unwieldy (hence a 'nice length') Along with the tone and information conveyed - this was a very good example of web-writing.</p> <p>One dynamic area about the website is how the variety of exhibition elements are treated; General info, video interview, press area, archive, reviews, talks and events etc. Had these been listed on one page it would have been difficult to read and navigate as to the priorities of the information and ultimately as a result the interpretation would have been difficult to sustain the viewers attention. However the 'bite-sized' treatment of these elements, segmented each of them via a clear menu provided a much more interactive experience on the site and dealt with the substantial amount of information in a very effective manner and identifies the requirements of different users.</p>
<p>Publicity/ pre-publicity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What leaflets, posters, websites, did you see the event listed in?</li> <li>• What publicity materials are produced?</li> <li>• Is it easy to understand/appropriate to the intended audience?</li> </ul>	<p>None</p> <p>As above E-newsletters are also available to those registered on the mailing list.</p> <p>Yes the content of the exhibition can be easily related to a lens based practise and further establishes the ethos of Street Level and its audience.</p>

<sup>2</sup> In press releases, at launches, on all published materials (including leaflets, brochures, programmes, posters, company's website, notices display, exhibition materials, websites and advertising, recordings, publications, video, broadcasts, computer programmes etc.) Where the event is publicised in the programme brochure of another organisation (eg venue, gallery, etc) then SAC acknowledgement should appear against the particular programme entry for this event.

Criteria	Comment																
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where can you get the information?</li> <li>Is there Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding<sup>2</sup>?</li> </ul> <p>Please be alert to the publicity available prior to your visit to the event and comment on the company/organisation's website.</p>	<p>The website generates an archive page which catalogues the information about the exhibition. The website keeps the most recent exhibitions as key links on the home page.</p> <p>SAC logo is present on the 'about us' page</p>																
<p>Signage and signposting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the entrance clearly marked?</li> <li>Is there clear internal directional signage?</li> <li>Is there Braille signage or signage for audio loops?</li> </ul>	<p>Yes – very clear signed at the entrance</p> <p>Yes internal direction at intermittent stages</p> <p>Didn't notice any Braille signage</p>																
<p>Access and provision for disabled people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please insert yes/no in the boxes to reflect what you notice about the venue/event</li> </ul> <p>Please add in any additional comments below the table</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Yes/No</th> <th></th> <th>Yes/No</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>BSL interpretation</td> <td>no</td> <td>Audio description</td> <td>no</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Captioning</td> <td>no</td> <td>Lift/ramp</td> <td>Yes – although out of order on day of visit</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Accessible toilets</td> <td>yes</td> <td>Accessible marketing materials eg website or alternative formats eg large print, Plain English</td> <td>no</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Yes/No		Yes/No	BSL interpretation	no	Audio description	no	Captioning	no	Lift/ramp	Yes – although out of order on day of visit	Accessible toilets	yes	Accessible marketing materials eg website or alternative formats eg large print, Plain English	no
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<p>Customer service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How was the quality and efficiency of staff (invigilators etc)</li> <li>If possible, comment on how responsive they were to the needs of disabled customers?</li> </ul>	<p>Excellent – the welcome by the female gallery assistant was friendly and informative. She provided a brief summary of the exhibition, events talks and handed the generic booklet and the fold out sheet about the events and interpretation for the exhibition.</p>																

### 3. Organisation's Comments (optional)

This is the organisation's opportunity to respond to points raised within this assessment. Please do not feel obliged to fill this section in. In the spirit of the Quality Framework, we would ask that any comments are self-evaluating, providing an insight as to why, if there is, a major disagreement of response between the organisation and the evaluation, in a constructive way.

This will not alter the rating given by the assessment, but will allow the organisation the opportunity to give their opinion/feedback. The Scottish Arts Council reserves the right to edit comments if they are deemed to be libellous or defamatory.

As the Scottish Arts Council implements the Quality Framework internally, we intend to publish artistic evaluations on organisations that we support regularly on our website. The final artistic evaluation, including the organisation's response will be published on a quarterly basis on our website.

Please keep your response to max 500 words. If we do not hear from you in 15 days, we will assume that you do not want to respond.