



**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:** Various artists - Kevin Atherton, Stephen Littman, Pictorial Heroes, Zöe Redman, Stephen Partridge and Tony Sinden

**Venue:** Street Level, Glasgow

**Title of Event :** Lost and Found

**Type of Event:** Exhibition

**Date of Visit:** 21 April 2010

**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.)*

I have awarded an overall rating of 'Very Good' for *Lost and Found*. The exhibition focused on a particularly interesting area of art production, the often overlooked area of Video Art. The exhibition, curated as part of the Glasgow International Festival of Visual Art, responded very appropriately to the Festival's theme of 'past, present and future'. Whilst looking back at past, the selected works are very much part of the present, and future, addressing many pertinent themes which affect society. Many of the issues explored in these works from the 70s and 80s, are as relevant, if not more today. I would also like to praise the interpretation materials, in particular the artists' interview on the website and the tutor/teacher notes which have been produced to enable groups to explore the exhibition themselves, but with some helpful prompts.

Name: Helen Monaghan

Date: 19.5.10

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>Excellent</p>	<p><i>Lost and Found</i> revisits a number of video installations from the 70s and 80s which have largely been unseen since their original presentation at two of Glasgow's key venues - <i>Video: Towards Defining an Aesthetic</i> at the Third Eye Centre (now CCA) in 1976 and <i>EventSpace1</i> at Transmission in 1986. The exhibition charts how the medium of video art was used by artists and the technological advancements made at that time with the introduction of the video wall. The video works on show have been transferred from their original analogue format to digital playback but are presented (with exceptions) in their original technological apparatus. The screens and video monitors presented become almost sculptural - an essential part of their overall installation. Importantly, it brings to light these forgotten works which is part of art history's recent past , particularly Glasgow's recent past.</p> <p>The exhibition features a great selection of thought-provoking works including a new work by Kevin Atherton. Here he revisits his 1986 work <i>Stand Up TV - Death in Glasgow</i> in which he takes on the persona of a television monitor in the guise of stand-up comic. For <i>Lost and Found</i>, his new performance is a tongue-in-cheek interview with David Garcia about his proposed comeback - as an LCD flat screen. There are some very interesting insights into celebrity and the digital age. This performance took place at Street Level and was then filmed to audiences to watch retrospectively.</p> <p>Other works include Steve Littman's <i>Overseen, Overlooked, Overhead</i> and <i>Faction, Fragments, Vision</i> by Pictorial Heroes. Both explore the political climate at the time in the 1980s - Thatcher's Government - and are presented in video wall format showing images relating to data protection, surveillance, class wars, civil unrest (miners' strike in the case of Pictorial Heroes - the repetition of a rioter picking up a stone to throw at the authorities). These works in particular are very pertinent, not least as a documentation of social history but very relevant today with the explosion of CCTV, the very recent change of government, on-going strikes, the proliferation of TV and the internet. These issues are still very much part of public debate and technology plays a huge part in disseminating this information.</p>

Criteria	Rating	Comments and key reasons for rating
<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 programme.</li> </ul>	Very Good	<p>Street Level provides artists and the public with a range of opportunities to make and engage with photography and screen-based work. The <i>Lost and Found</i> exhibition exemplifies the organisation's vision to present challenging works not seen anywhere else. They also set out to rescue hidden works from earlier periods in Scottish art and link that to current practice. It also connects to their on-going project, Dotcrawl, which aims to chronicle moving image art within a Scottish context.</p> <p>The exhibition was curated to coincide with Glasgow International Festival of Visual Art (Gi), and in particular to the Festival's theme of 'past, present and future.'</p>
<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 great exploration of this media and presenting work by artists that audiences may not have come across before. A very thought-provoking exhibition, allowing you to make comparisons with the video and film work produced by contemporary artists today but also the political climate of the 80s and today.</p> <p>It also linked in very well to Gi's theme of 'past, present and future'. There are few survey shows on video art, so this will be seen as a very important exhibition. As well as showing works from the past, it also included new works in Kevin Atherton's piece and will no doubt contribute to a wider discussion on the themes addressed here, well into the future.</p> <p>The exhibition was curated by Street Level to coincide with Gi . It was supported by Gi and Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art in Dundee.</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>Use of Space and Layout: Great large exhibition spaces at Street Level with each work given enough space so as not to conflict with the other works on show.</p> <p>Interpretation: Information panels on the walls next to each work as well as a press release and the Street Level brochure which gave information about each artist and their work.</p> <p>Street Level also produce interpretation notes for each exhibition through their SNAP programme, which encourages teachers and tutors to create their own self-led tours, using the notes and discussion points provided. The notes for <i>Lost and Found</i> were excellent, giving a brief overview of the exhibition as a whole, notes on the artists,</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>background information on video art and points for discussion which linked in with the key themes of the exhibition and also offered practical activity suggestions.</p> <p>Labelling: Good clear labelling, easy to understand and gallery floor plans</p> <p>Visitor Comments: Didn't see a Visitor book but may have just missed it (I emailed Street Level and they sent back a selection of comments - all very positive). Also very positive reviews in the Press.</p> <p>Activities: Performance with Kevin Atherton and David Garcia - <i>The Television - Repeat</i> (performed on the day and now screened in the exhibition space)</p> <p>Screening was also organised to further reinforce the curatorial motivation of <i>Lost and Found</i>, including some forgotten film and video works by Scottish-based artists from the early 90s.</p> <p>Guided tours and talks with student groups when booked in advance (which included photography students from Glasgow Metropolitan College and Glasgow School of Art:</p> <p>Guided tour by curator Malcolm Dickson to 17 Arts Council of England Collectors Scheme members; 16 curators and collectors from Sydney, Australia. Guided talk with SNAP Coordinator with members of Black and Minority Ethnic Carers Group Talk with SNAP Coordinator to 16 people on a 'Spin-Off' tour.</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>Yes, located in the city centre housed within the Trongate 103 development. Easy walking distance from train station and on public transport tour.</p> <p>Very clean, big exhibition spaces and very suitable for the video works on show.</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>Good interpretation materials including a press release and gallery floor plan, Street Level's two-month programme brochure and information panels on the gallery walls.</p> <p>Very good information on the website including images of all the works, text about each work and short interviews with the artists.</p>

Criteria	Comment																
<p><b>Publicity/ pre-publicity</b></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> <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>Gi brochure and website. Street Level brochure and website Press release available Street Level's two-month programme brochure which includes a page for each artist/collective within the Lost and Found exhibition Clearly describes the work on show and its themes SAC logo acknowledged in all printed material relating to the exhibition.</p>																
<p><b>Signage and signposting</b></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>Clear signage externally and internally - now part of Trongate 103 I didn't notice if there was Braille signage or signage for audio loops.</p>																
<p><b>Access and provision for disabled people</b></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>Not sure</td> <td>Audio description</td> <td>Not sure</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Captioning</td> <td>Not sure</td> <td>Lift/ramp</td> <td>yes</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>Not sure</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Yes/No		Yes/No	BSL interpretation	Not sure	Audio description	Not sure	Captioning	Not sure	Lift/ramp	yes	Accessible toilets	yes	Accessible marketing materials eg website or alternative formats eg large print, Plain English	Not sure
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<p><b>Customer service</b></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>Friendly, helpful and attentive staff.</p> <p>A group of adults were being shown the exhibition at the time of my visit and were given a talk by the Gallery's director, Malcolm Dixon.</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

<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.

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.