

Arts Council/Abbey Theatre Critical Evaluation Report Form (CER)



ARN: 02003

ARTS COUNCIL CRITICAL EVALUATION REPORT – ABBEY THEATRE

DATE:	18 February 2013
PLAY/AUTHOR:	King Lear by William Shakespeare
CREATIVE TEAM:	Director: Selina Cartmell, Set Design: Garance Marneur, Costume Design: Gaby Rooney, Lighting Design: Chahine Yavroyan, Composer: Conor Linehan, Sound Design: Carl Kennedy, Choreographer: Liz Roche, Assistant Choreographer: Philip Connaughton, Fight Director: Donal O'Farrell, Assistant Director: Maeve Stone, Voice Director: Andrea Ainsworth
PERFORMERS:	Sean Campion, Lorcan Cranitch, Ciaran McMenamin, Owen Roe, Tim Kellegher, Beth Cooke, Caoilfhionn Dunne, John Kavanagh, Phelim Drew, Andrew Macklin, Serge Bolze, Aaron Monaghan, Dylan Tighe, Hugh O'Connor, Ronan Leahy, Robert Fawsitt, Aidan Crowe, Lauterio Zamparelli, Manus Halligan, John Merriman, Danny O'Connor

Please ascribe a value for each criterion below. It is important to keep in mind what the numbers represent in **language**, and not the value of the number itself.

- 1 – Falls below what would generally be regarded as an acceptable standard for professional theatre presentation
- 2 – Achieves an acceptable standard, but not much more in terms of technique, ambition, innovation or quality
- 3 – Is good in terms of overall standard
- 4 – Is very good in terms of standard
- 5 – Is of an excellent standard in the view of the assessor

CRITERION	VALUE
The Abbey's Mission (<i>The Abbey Theatre, as Ireland's national theatre, has a cultural, social and political role in Irish society. Its stated mission is to "to create world-class theatre that actively engages with and reflects Irish society." To what extent does the production deliver on and reflect this role and this mission?</i>)	3
This new production of <i>King Lear</i> forms part of a Shakespeare season and is the first Abbey production for 80 years. It contains a range of themes which are still very relevant today including old age, inheritance, treachery, power and of course, love. The Production itself was clear and accessible and the evening was never dull.	

Ambition (<i>innovation, risk-taking, originality</i>)	3
It's a large show and true to Abbey tradition was given to a younger director to produce. There were a number of interesting ideas but they didn't seem tie together. A good example of this was the choreography which was used early on and then petered out. Although big I was underwhelmed by the set design, which with the costume design seemed a pastiche of shakeperean designs of the 1950's. The Irish Wolfhounds were a nice touch but they were underused.	
Execution (<i>quality of technique, skill, performance, scenography, direction, etc.</i>)	3
There were a couple of very good performances not least by a charismatic [REDACTED] and he was ably supported by [REDACTED] whose performance grew on me during the evening. The Shakespearean text was clearly delivered throughout and the show was well paced. The sex scenes between Edmund and the two sisters were unconvincing as was the duel at the end. Costumes & set were well made and the lighting was atmospheric. Pity about the scruffy focus in the preshow lighting.	
Effectiveness (<i>connection with the audience, engagement & response, the extent to which piece affects change and leaves a lasting impression</i>)	4
With its good pace and clear delivery this was any easy production to access. The central performances were powerful and the audience response was very appreciative.	
Excellence (<i>the extent to which, in the view of the assessor, the work presented is excellent when compared to best international practice, i.e. the extent to which the work is "world class"</i>)	3
There were lots of good things about the production, and some interesting ideas. For me the production lacked the detailed work and finish which would have added depth to some of the characters, particularly the three sisters and their husbands.	
Quality of New Writing (in the case of new writing, dramaturgical technique as well as artistic ambition and originality will be taken into account)	N/A
Any other comments:	
Half full on a Monday evening. Very responsive audience. The programme had an interesting range of articles on the play and its history at the Abbey, which found very useful.	
Report Completed by:	[REDACTED]