**‘Highly sexualised’ Roger Casement dance show sparks outrage in Kerry**

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A “highly sexualised” dance show, depicting the sexual conduct of Roger Casement sparked outrage during a family festival on Banna Strand in Kerry.

Two dancers wore T-shirts reading “Deep to the Hilt” and “Very Deep Thrusts”; male dancers groped each other; a voiceover referred to the size of Casement’s anus; and graphic sexual language was used in front of children, complainants said.

Organisers at the Project Arts Centre strongly defended the performance saying there were “many different kinds of families”, only a small number found it offensive and the content was based on Casement and what others said of him. However, the statement contradicts itself with regard to nudity — the centre says there was no nudity, but the artistic director says there was.

Butterflies and Bones six-man dance performance is part of The Casement Project dance performance produced by Fearghus O’Conchúir in conjunction with the Project Arts Centre and is part of the Arts Council’s Ireland national and international 2016 programme.

Premiered in London, its first Irish performance was on Banna Beach on Saturday last — Casement’s ill-fated landing spot — and was performed at 9.30pm during a day-long festival of music, song and dance.

Families were waiting for a fireworks display at the free festival which was advertised as “a family-friendly event” that would be alcohol-free and would feature dance, beach games, and music. A free shuttle bus ran between Banna and Tralee from midday.

Kerry County Council, which promoted it as part of the 1916 programme, yesterday said they had received “quite a few” complaints from people who were present during the Butterflies and Bones performance. The complaints were about the explicit sexualised nature of the content during what was flagged as a family event.

The council spokesman stressed it had no direct role and said it has forwarded the complaints to the Project Arts Centre.