

Case study

Camerata of St John's – *Strings at Sunset* Tour

Details

What:

Camerata of St John's toured their program *Strings at Sunset* to eight drought-affected Queensland communities focusing on delivery to regional schools and aged care facilities.

The tour was developed in partnership with Chinchilla-based organisation Drought Angels, which provides food and resources to drought stricken farmers across Queensland. Camerata of St John's provided assistance through concert proceeds and community engagement activities.

The tour featured the world premiere performance of *Renewing Rain* by young Australian composer Chris Healey at Pioneer Aged Care Facility in Longreach.

An ongoing relationship established with Drought Angels will be helpful in organising future tours as may connections developed with Radio National and the QANTAS Founders Museum.

When:

July – August 2015

Where:

Chinchilla, Blackall, Longreach, Ingham, Townsville



Camerata of St John's *Strings at Sunset* regional tour 2015

Key stats:

- 8 performances to 6543 attendees in 8 locations
- 520 participants in 10 community engagement activities
- 15 artists and cultural workers employed

Arts Queensland contribution:

\$25,720 – Playing Queensland Fund

Other key funding:

Tim Fairfax Family Foundation

Contact for further information:

Website: www.camerata.net.au

Links:

Tour story and photos:

<http://camerata.net.au/strings-at-sunset-drought-relief-tour/>

Outcomes

- The world premiere of *Renewing Rain* by Chris Healey was performed at the Pioneer Aged Care Facility in Longreach. Chris is a young Queensland-trained composer whose work was a response to the Queensland drought. *Renewing Rain* was specifically commissioned for this tour and was featured in stories on Radio National and ABC TV's Landline program.
- Camerata collaborated with Chinchilla community-based organisation Drought Angels to raise awareness of the effects of drought on regional Queensland. Camerata provided concrete assistance through concert proceeds and community engagement activities.
- Camerata's delivery of workshops in schools and concerts in aged care facilities, provided highly valued outreach to Queenslanders who do not have immediate access to live classical music performances and training.



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Learnings and reflections

Camerata identified that strong partnerships were the key to the success of the *Strings at Sunset* tour:

Working with Drought Angels enabled potent and tangible community engagement. By partnering with a community organisation working state-wide, we were able to build an itinerary where Queenslanders most in need could experience our performances and activities. The tour party made genuine connections within each community, and the fact that Camerata took such an interest in the challenges that the community faced was noted and appreciated. This project achieved our strategy of genuine community engagement with regional Queensland, rather than replicating a fly-in-fly-out concert model.

Running the tour in conjunction with Australian Festival of Chamber Music performances made for an efficient itinerary ensuring we captured audiences in regional centres, radio coverage and national awareness. The mix of regional tour programs and a high quality festival increased the opportunity for players to perform a diverse array of music and to work together for an extended period of time. As a project company it is important for player development, for performers to have the opportunity to play together over an extended time frame to contribute to the group dynamic and performance quality.

Camerata was also able to connect with schools and local ensembles. This tour highlighted that further work can be done connecting directly with the private music teachers in the area (who are not necessarily connected directly to schools). Earlier engagement with these professionals may also enable greater intelligence gathering to create tours that are even more effective and reach more Queenslanders.