

# Case study

## *Hotel Pantelone*

### Details

#### What:

*Hotel Pantelone* is the second original inclusive commedia dell'Arte production presented by Blue Roo Theatre Company Inc.

Touring to Townsville and Ingham in 2015, the tour featured six performances and four community engagement activities.

The *Hotel Pantelone* tour involved an inclusive three-day drama residency in Townsville in collaboration with local service providers Kith and Kin, Endeavour and Dancenorth.

In Ingham, the production was performed as part of the Australian/Italian Festival. Performances included a mainstage performance and a performance tailored for the festival's Masquerade Ball. A roaming version of the production was also presented, with actors performing pop up excerpts from the production throughout the festival site.

An additional community engagement activity was delivered in partnership with Centacare Disability Services, and other performances were presented to aged care facility, general public and high school audiences.

#### When:

July and August 2015

#### Where:

Townsville and Ingham



Daniel Tomlison (Arlecchino) and Carlos Heron (Brghella) (right to left) Photo: Jan Brutton.

#### Key stats:

- 2 communities
- 6 performances for 4130 attendees
- 4 engagement activities for 139 participants
- 2 paid artists and arts and cultural workers and 40 volunteers

#### Arts Queensland contribution:

\$18,939 – Playing Queensland Fund

#### Contact for further information:

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#### Links:

<http://www.australianitalianfestival.com.au/>

## Outcomes

- The tour's outcomes were strong and reached a range of audiences, with Australian/Italian Festival Director Donna Zanotto commenting:

*Blue Roo brought a diversity to our programming that confronted people's idea of inclusive theatre. The performances were thoroughly professional and fitted into our program really well.*

- The three-day performing arts residency was a new and innovative community engagement practice for Blue Roo. The residency was fully subscribed in advance of the tour's commencement.
- The success of the community engagement activities has led to discussions about further projects in the communities.



Sam Heard (Silvio), Lyndal De Vantier (Colombina) and Joel Dodemont (Capitano) (left to right). Photo: Jan Brutton

## Learnings and reflections

*Hotel Pantelone* has been a successful tour for Blue Roo both in developing the skills of the company and actors and engaging residents in Townsville and Ingham.

New opportunities such as performing at a festival and adapting the production into roaming theatre further developed the skills and confidence of the artists.

*Another important learning for Blue Roo was the development of the ensemble's capacity to deliver quality theatre to large audiences. The Australian/Italian Festival generated over 8,000 people for the weekend. Blue Roo were programmed into peak timeslots in front of up to 2,000 people. It has been a huge step for our company to sing and story tell to such big audiences. Our shy individuals singing solos with such pleasure is so rewarding and empowering. The response was fantastic.*

*On the Sunday of the festival we adapted the stage version of *Hotel Pantelone* into a roaming street theatre version. We maintained the characters with mask and costumes and improvised the story through all the songs. It worked exceedingly well. We generated large audiences as people were wandering around the large festival site. We had the opportunity to roam wherever. The actors really enjoyed this new form of performance. It is this flexibility and another form of theatre that we have learnt from this tour.*

The community engagement aspect of the tour worked well. Blue Roo attributes this to preparation in setting up the residency prior to the tour. Their advice to others is to:

*make contact with the community and build partnerships.*