

Case study

Collusion Music – Chamber Ballet

Details

What:

Collusion Music received Arts Queensland funding to present the Chamber Ballet 2014 series. Through a program of events, Collusion delivered diverse performances that delighted, engaged, and enriched Queensland urban and regional audiences through performances of 12 new compositions.

The 2014 program included premiere performances, first stage developments, regional community concerts, school workshops and cross- art form collaborations across Queensland.

Collusion Music is an ensemble of freelance musicians and dance practitioners exploring the synergy between music and dance. The key creative team includes: Benjamin Greaves (Violinist), Diana Tolmie (Clarinet), Dr Danielle Bentley (Australian Art Music scholar), Gareth Belling (Resident Choreographer) and Susan Hawkins (Composer).

A partnership with the Judith Wright Centre of Contemporary Arts (JWCOCA) through the Fresh Ground program, an Ensemble in Residency at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University and support through Projects and Program Funding enabled Collusion Music to further create, develop, refine and tour major work.

When:

December 2013 to November 2014

Where:

Brisbane, Ipswich, Toowoomba, Redlands, Clare, Townsville and Cairns



Dr Danielle Bentley (Cello) Melissa Tatum and Michael Smith (Dancers). Desirelines photographed by FenLan Photography

Key stats:

- Number of activities = 48
- Number of attendees = 2117
- Number of participants = 619

Arts Queensland contribution:

\$ \$59,121– Projects and Programs Fund

Contact for further information:

Email: benjamin@collusion.com.au

Phone: 0404 646 709

Website: <http://www.collusion.com.au>

Links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=64xkZO2QUdQ>

Outcomes

- Collusion Music members developed new skills through the integration of technology in the production of *Desirelines*. In collaboration with animator Pete Foley musical scores were projected on the floor to enable the musicians to efficiently perform works to a complex degree, while being moved throughout the stage by dancers. This interaction of musicians and dancers created a new paradigm of possible movement language for Collusion's resident choreographer Gareth Belling and added a visual element and musical roadmap to performances.
- The re-invigoration of the production *Transient Beauty* delivered a unique and authentic live performance of dance and music. This production toured to regional audiences in Townsville and Cairns to a higher than expected capacity. In addition, a CD of the Soundtrack was produced and sold at performances.
- A partnership with ALARA QLD which supports people with disability enabled Collusion Music to deliver three free concerts in Ipswich. These concerts also enabled ALARA to fundraise for improvements to their gardens and other facilities.



Benjamin Greaves (Violin) Michael Smith, Melissa Tatum and Chloe Lanham (Dancers). *Desirelines* photographed by FenLan Photography.

Audience feedback

It was wonderful to see how all the work previously created by Collusion Music has informed and deepened the poignant beauty of this more traditional collaboration, it was breathtakingly Beautiful. I was transfixed from the first breath

Lovely movement marrying with the music... I especially loved the ending with the motif being repeated, so emotional!

I thought this was one of the most engaging performances combining musicians and dancers that I have ever attended. Though the themes were not new, they were handled elegantly and with such a clear narrative that the performance was never pretentious or forcing a point. I would definitely attend another such performance by these collaborators

Learnings and reflections

Collusion Music provided the following reflections on what worked well, lessons they have learnt and advice for other artists:

- *Marketing your product should always be based on strong relationships with your audience. The quality of Collusion's products in 2014 was consistently excellent, but audience numbers were lower than forecast. A greater focus on relationship-based marketing will assist in growing audiences in 2015.*
- *Two of Collusions major productions All in the Wash and Transient Beauty were presented for 'One Night Only' seasons in Brisbane. While it reduced presenting costs for the productions, it proved a financial risk. In 2015 Collusion will be presenting our collaboration with dance across a one week season to gain greater market visibility.*
- *Plan contingencies into everything – you can never really understand how much a Bass Clarinet road-case weighs until you have to pay the excess baggage fee.*