

Case study

Mozart Airborne – Expressions Dance Company and Opera Queensland

***Mozart Airborne* combined the talents of Expressions Dance Company and Opera Queensland in a celebration of contemporary dance, opera and music.**

What

Mozart Airborne was a collaboration between Expressions Dance Company (EDC) and Opera Queensland (OQ) which premiered during the 2017 season.

Developed by EDC's Artistic Director Natalie Weir and OQ's Artistic Director Lindy Hume the production featured contemporary dance pieces by six Australian choreographers matched to a selection of Mozart's arias and piano works.

Virtuosic pianist Alex Raineri joined six singers from OQ and EDC's ensemble of six dancers to perform the six new dance works.

The *Mozart Airborne* premiere in August 2017 was the first production to be staged in the [refurbished Cremorne Theatre](#) at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre (QPAC), Brisbane, following a \$2.3 million upgrade funded by the Queensland Government.

When and where

4 to 12 August 2017, QPAC, Brisbane

Find out more

Web: <http://expressionsdancecompany.org.au/edc/>



EDC *Mozart Airborne*. L-R Melissa Gregory, Elise May and Jake McLarnon. Photo: FenLan Chuang

Key stats

- 13 artists
- 11 performances
- 2476 audience members

Arts Queensland investment

EDC receives \$2.4 million in quadrennial funding through Arts Queensland's [Organisations Fund](#) 2017–2020 which provides multi-year funding for the core operations of small to medium organisations.

The Queensland Government supports OQ as a major performing arts organisation.

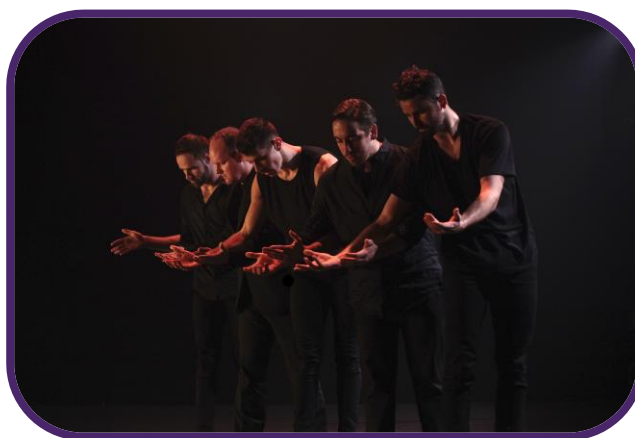
Outcomes

- *Mozart Airborne* was one of the four productions nominated for the 2018 [Helpmann Awards](#) for Best Dance Production.
- The production exceeded box office targets with sell out shows fueled by audience recommendations:
It was an entirely different experience for us and we were so glad we chose to go. The talk after the show was also great. The talent, agility and enthusiasm of everyone was inspiring. We handed the program to many people and told them 'Go, just go! It is so good.
- The collaboration introduced contemporary dance and opera to wider audiences.
- EDC dancers expanded their practice by working with a range of emerging and acclaimed choreographers including Kristina Chan, Stephanie Lake, and Lisa Wilson.
- Provided a professional development opportunity for EDC dancers Elise May and Richard Causer to choreograph works, providing exposure for them as emerging choreographers.
- OQ provided professional performance opportunities for emerging artists by contracting recent graduates from Griffith University Queensland Conservatorium.
- The collaboration strengthened the relationship between EDC and OQ, and demonstrated how small-medium and major arts organisations can work together to achieve mutually beneficial results.

Learnings and reflections

Mozart Airborne was a fantastic opportunity to cross-pollinate a traditional artform with a contemporary one, providing opportunities for artists to network, learn from and inspire each other.

Finding similarities in the way we work as arts organisations, despite the differences in size, and forming relationships across the artistic sector in Queensland was a beautiful result of this collaboration.



EDC *Mozart Airborne*. L-R Richard Causer, Dominic J Walsh, Jake McLarnon, Samuel Piper and Benjamin Chapman. Photo: FenLan Chuang

Reviews and feedback

Mozart Airborne is a very special experience. The concept of the collaboration...is beautifully realised, with total integration of the music and the movement – and of the dancers and the singers, whose movement and acting blended seamlessly. – XS ENTERTAINMENT

Enchanting...raw and intimate...a superior melding of art forms. – THE WEST END MAGAZINE

I was moved to tears with Requiem. It was simply divine. I loved the interaction of the pianist, the singers and EDC. Thank you so much. – Audience member

Tips for others

With collaborations, be mindful of ways that you can maximise a sense of artistic equality on stage, through direction, lighting, costuming etc.

In marketing and publicity, the collaborative nature of the production is a strength to highlight. Additionally, the marketing expertise and reach of two (or more) companies presents a great advantage – marketing teams should talk often and coordinate activities.

What next?

EDC and OQ are exploring the possibility of a future national tour of the production.