



DeepBlue

DeepBlue - the orchestra unleashed comprises strings, electronics and physical theatre amplified and magnified by video and interactivity.

The group remix Radiohead, Gotye, Bowie, even Ravel and DeepBlue originals combining lush strings with big beats and rock 'n' roll. The performers' exquisite playing, precision moves, physical antics and immersive visuals are guaranteed to enthral audiences.

Since 2008 DeepBlue have received huge exposure through their live performances and TV appearances across the country, and at massive festivals in India, Taiwan, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and the Shanghai World Expo. DeepBlue's last three Australian seasons sold out. They have completed five successful national tours, performing at major metropolitan and regional entertainment centres involving thousands of school-aged children in YoungBlue workshops and performances.

DeepBlue were finalists in one of the highest rated episodes of *Australia's Got Talent* 2011 and won the Australian Performing Arts Centre Association's 2009 Drover Award for Excellent Audience Response.

DeepBlue have developed three shows, four CDs, one DVD and eight international and national tours. This output was achieved through meticulous planning, a strength recognised early in DeepBlue's career by the Queensland Government Vortex4 Best Business Plan & Best Financial Plan 2006.

DeepBlue, which began as an Australian Research Council project in 2006-2008, has been inspired by the challenge of reinventing the orchestra into a globally successful business model that is:

- technologically innovative;
- community and customer-focused;
- sustainable and resilient;
- artistically excellent.

Technological innovation - Electronic Show Programme (ESP)

Audiences are invited to use their mobile devices to access DeepBlue's mobile web app - The Electronic Show Programme (ESP) that is full of info about DeepBlue's music. This groundbreaking idea also enables audience members to confidentially share identity-forming moments of their lives during the show. DeepBlue's ESP and the audience interaction it enables is inspired by DeepBlue's long-term goal to inform the show's creative development with considerable audience input. DeepBlue dig deeper into the desires of their audience, continuing a conversation, which has previously seen their fans text in their dreams and song requests during the show. Using the ESP DeepBlue received 10,000 responses (1 every 2 seconds) in their last series of Brisbane shows.

Fans also have the opportunity to inspire DeepBlue's repertoire on a micro level. Dane Alexander, a DeepBlue musician and composer has worked with a small group of fans using a private Facebook page to co-create the show-stopping piece Gypsy Robot. This has opened the possibilities of future audience creative engagement strategies.

Community Engagement - YoungBlue and ChoralBlue

In 2008 YoungBlue began with a vision to provide local young musicians an opportunity to perform on stage with professional musicians. Considerable government funding is spent on instrumental teaching but often fails inspire young musicians who are not engaged with conventional approaches to performance. The project has been so successful that the program has been extended to offer week long holiday programs, tailored school shows across Australia, involving over 5000 young musicians and over 50 schools. Consistent positive feedback from YoungBlue participants and their teachers confirms that DeepBlue's creative approach gives young musicians confidence and motivation in both their music and personal lives. Demand is such that DeepBlue's most recent holiday program is 30% over-subscribed.

Another community engagement program, ChoralBlue, involves a wide demographic. Participants sit scattered in the audience during the show, masquerading as regular audience members. At a pre-arranged moment in the show they emerge, flash-mob style, onto the stage to perform with DeepBlue.

Further afield, DeepBlue are working with a community in Zimbabwe to help set up and support the Schona Music School. In Brisbane DeepBlue regularly work with a variety of local schools in collaboration with the Smith Family Charity to deliver workshops for young, disadvantaged musicians.

Sustainability and resilience

DeepBlue's business model was built on the 'blue ocean strategy' that was used by Cirque Du Soliel, which enables a sustainable and resilient future by creating 'uncontested market space'. I.e. not trying to compete with current ailing orchestras, but to innovate. To maintain this model DeepBlue operates in R & D mode. They are always looking to maximise their success by leveraging disruptive technologies, by meaningfully exciting audiences, and by broadening their audiences through community engagement.

Artistic excellence

"Think ELO and Nigel Kennedy's exuberant lovechild on stage. Think cello player walking backwards on stilts. Think 17 young and mobile players enthusiastically performing everything from Bowie to Rachmaninoff and you have the DeepBlue Orchestra."

Review, Fairfax Digital Independent Weekly

"There was quite a lot of 'Pow!', quite a lot of 'Wow!', and it was definitely 'Now!'."

Australia Stage review by Peter Bleby, 2008

"Throw non-stop choreography that illuminates conversational exchanges between instruments and theatrical realizations of string technique into the mix and this stereotype is forever wiped... The approach is immediate. Note bound, seated, reverent and retiring these determined, bright-eyed communicators are anything but."

Australian Stage review by Gillian Wills, 2012

“Dynamic dance and movement, tight choreography that emphasised rather than distracted from the musical performance, and big bright smiles of highly motivated players shattering the audience’s preconceptions of orchestral music. No sheet music, no sitting (apart from some dangling legs over the front of the stage, or perched atop a prop ladder), no static counting of bars between parts – any break in playing was marked by spirited dancing or acrobatics. Each orchestra member seems fired by zest and zeal that leads to an inspired mix of high ideals and hands on approach to music. A non-stop extravaganza DeepBlue has plenty for classical aficionados and the shortest attention-spanned youngster alike.”

artsHub review by Nerida Dickinson, 2012

DeepBlue videos

DeepBlue at blueFROG Mumbai

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfPzEJmN6gl>

ABC Arts story:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=nVChsS6G8aY#at=12

Short news story on Channel 7:

<http://au.gwn7.yahoo.com/w2/news/a/-/national/14744761/acrobatic-orchestra-bring-colour-and-music-to-kids-video/>

Short ABC story on DeepBlue’s community engagement in regional Australia, 2012:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FJFS599UANQ>

DeepBlue performing on *Australia's Got Talent 2011*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DVoB4pu2oek>

artsHub Review by Nerrida Dickenson 4.5 stars:

<http://au.artshub.com/au/news-article/reviews/performing-arts/deepblue-orchestra-who-are-you-191444>

Australian Stage review by Gillian Wills:

<http://www.australianstage.com.au/201210125893/reviews/brisbane/who-are-you/-deep-blue.html>