

# Case study

## 4MBS Festival of Classics

### Details

#### What:

In 2014 4MBS presented the 21<sup>st</sup> annual Festival of Classics. The Festival highlighted Queensland's talented classical musicians in 24 concerts in various venues over one month, with collaborations between professional, emerging and community performers including orchestras, choirs, and instrumental and vocal soloists. Arts Queensland funding was used to provide performance and employment opportunities for Queensland talent.

The entire 2014 Festival of Classics focused on Queensland artists with 756 Queensland performers taking part. The festival provided emerging artists with great opportunities to perform alongside established artists.

As part of the festival three information sessions, *Vivaldi's Four Seasons Explained*, were presented in Brisbane City Council Libraries. The sessions provided increased understanding of the structure and content of this major classical work.

A seven hour Chopin Marathon was well-received and resulted in increased knowledge of Chopin's output.

The concerts were broadcast nationally and internationally via streaming.

#### When:

4 May – 1 June 2014

#### Where:

Brisbane



*Dream of Gerontius*

#### Key stats:

- 8089 total attendees at the festival, with 4% of attendees new to the festival.
- 756 Queensland artists participated across 25 activities.
- 11 Queensland based businesses contracted to provide services.

#### Arts Queensland contribution:

\$45,000 – Projects and Programs Fund

#### Contact for further information:

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#### Links:

<http://4mbs.com.au/festival-classics>

## Outcomes

- The Vivaldi Concert in St John's was filled to capacity. Additional seating was required to cater for the extra-large audience. The audience enjoyed the ambiance created by two groups dressed in period costume. Musicians from Prima Spada lined the steps of the Cathedral and a group from The Society of Creative Anachronisms ushered the audience to their seats. A string quartet performed just inside the Cathedral as the audience entered adding to the baroque atmosphere.
- The Dream of Gerontius, performed in Brisbane City Hall, attracted a very large audience. This was the first performance of this piece in Brisbane in 30 years.
- The Chopin Marathon, held in the Conservatorium provided a platform for established professional musicians to perform alongside emerging performers in the same concert.



Vivaldi Spectacular

## Learnings and reflections

- The Vivaldi Spectacular benefitted from the addition of traditional costumes and the glorious setting of St John's Cathedral which were both suitable for the period of music.
- To add to the experience of the Vivaldi Spectacular for audiences 4MBS presented three information sessions, explaining how the music depicts aspects of each season, in Brisbane City Council libraries. The musical themes were performed by a violinist while 4MBS' General Manager, Gary Thorpe, explained what aspect of the season they represented. Audience comments included:

*"I now have a greater appreciation of Vivaldi's genius"*

*"Please do more of these talks"*

*"I learnt a lot"*

- The 2014 Festival of Classics had a focus on composer, Richard Strauss, to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth. Seven concerts and a radio series featured his music. 4MBS note this worked well to highlight this particular major composer's work.