


BUZZ EXTRA

BLUE MAN GROUP

October 5-17
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SPOTLIGHT

GET READY TO PAINT THE TOWN... BLUE!



With a fantastic array of strange instruments, brilliant colors, incredible sound, blinding lights, special effects, amusing comedy, amazing multimedia, rock music, wild dance and a sense of wonder, [BLUE MAN GROUP](#) drums its way into PlayhouseSquare October 5 – 17 as part of the KeyBank Broadway Series.

The New York Times describes BLUE MAN GROUP as “one of the most delightful performance pieces ever staged in NYC theatre.”

“Nearly everybody likes to make a mess. And if we can’t make a mess ourselves, we like to watch somebody else doing it,”



Blue Man Group Instruments...

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salivates *The Orlando Sentinel*.

Photo by James Porto:

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Buzz Extra is a publication of the Community Engagement & Education Department at PlayhouseSquare

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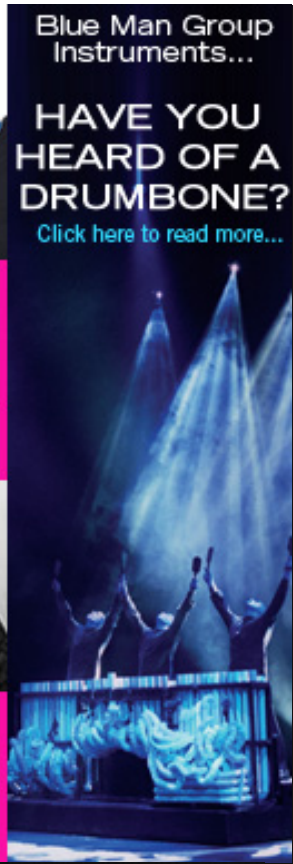
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USA Today avows BLUE MAN GROUP to be “an absolute ecstatic experience!”

“Blue Man Group is cooler than cool, hipper than hip: there is no audience too sophisticated, or too unsophisticated, for what they offer. It’s about as universal as the theater gets, and I defy anyone to avoid having a rewarding time,” dares *Curtain Up*.

Awards

BLUE MAN GROUP been nominated for a Grammy Award and several Emmy Awards, as well as received a Drama Desk Award for Unique Theatrical Experience, an Obie Award and a Lucille Lortel Award.

International Appearances

A global phenomenon that has been seen by more than 17 million people around the world, BLUE MAN GROUP, according to *The Chicago Tribune*, “speaks volumes without ever saying a word.” Blue Men have been seen all over the world, including Berlin, Tokyo, Toronto, Zurich, Amsterdam, London, Stuttgart, Stockholm, Vienna, New York, Boston, Chicago, Las Vegas, Orlando, San Francisco, Dallas, Anchorage, Atlanta, Philadelphia, Nashville and Denver. Soon, they will head to Spain and France. As Boston’s ELS Language Center declares, “Laughter needs no language.”

Synopsis

"In a world of words and images, of previews and advertisements. In a world of hype and promotional gobbledygook...BLUE MAN GROUP."

While there is no plot...three men dressed in utilitarian clothing - with blue skin, no hair and no ears - make discoveries and create art, music and laughter in this unique and unusual performance. Twinkies, gumballs, Jell-O, Captain Crunch, drums and PVC pipes rock as the audience joins in a show that’s really a party where the fun never stops. Be sure to sit in the poncho section – if you dare!

Photo by James Porto

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Photo credit: Blue Man Group

- Norwegian Cruise Line is the official [Blue Man Group \(BMG\) cruise line](#).
- “Making Waves” is [BMG’s traveling children’s museum exhibit](#).
- BMG started a [private school](#) for preschool to second grade children. It is called the [Blue School](#) in New York City.
- BMG appeared with the Dalai Lama at the *2009 Vancouver Peace Summit*.

BMG TV Appearances:

- [The Tonight Show](#)
- [Live with Regis and Kelly](#)
- [Scrubs](#)
- [The Drew Carey Show](#)
- [Las Vegas](#)
- [Dr. Phil](#)
- [Ellen](#)
- [Arrested Development](#)
- [The Guiding Light](#)
- [America's Got Talent](#)

BMG Sports Appearances:

- During time-outs for the Harlem Globetrotters
- Halftime performance during the Orlando Magic vs. Boston Celtics

BMG Concert Appearances:

- Boston Pops
- Dave Matthews Band
- Ricky Martin

BMG Commercial Advertisements:

- [Intel’s Pentium 3, Pentium 4 and Centrino](#)
- L. A. Dodgers

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- [Swatch Watches](#)

BMG offers [corporate workshop training](#) to learn how to cooperate in the workplace.

BMG has a 3-D IMAX movie called [Blue Man Group: Mind Blast](#) opening in 2011.

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PERFORMANCE ART OR VAUDEVILLE?



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Matt Goldman, a founder of BLUE MAN GROUP, once heard an old vaudevillian say, "If you're in vaudeville, you've got to open a show doing something no one in the audience can do."

"Back then," Goldman said, "they were talking about juggling or sword swallowing or spinning plates. We decided to catch things in our mouth." And BLUE MAN GROUP was born.

Three roommates, Matt Goldman, with an MBA; Chris Wink, an ethnomusicology student; and Phil Stanton, an actor; were all living in Manhattan when the idea of a Blue Man came to mind.

In 1988, Goldman, Wink, Stanton and several of their friends held a funeral for the 80s. They staged a burial in Central Park where MTV's Kurt Loder happened to show up and film BLUE MAN GROUP's first unofficial public appearance for broadcast on national TV.

The trio began doing performances in the East Village as BLUE MAN GROUP. To fit their budgets, they played instruments made from PVC pipes and old washing machines and added science, technology, movement, art and humor to their shows. Blue Men would spatter audiences with paint as they pounded on drums and PVC pipes. They spurted gooey stuff out of their chests, and spit marshmallows, gumballs, Twinkies or Captain Crunch as they made art. Their show was so exciting and unusual that the Drama Desk gave them an award for "unique theatrical experience." Due to their unusual nature, BLUE MAN GROUP would not classify in the regular musical and play categories.

If BLUE MAN GROUP is not a drama, comedy or musical, where do they fit?

Vaudeville?

Entertainment in late 1800s to the early 20th century that consisted of a series of specialty acts such as song, dance, acrobatics, comedy, ventriloquism, animal acts, plate spinning, juggling and burlesque was called vaudeville.

The New York Times has called BLUE MAN GROUP, "radical in a way, testing the limits of commercial entertainment with a kind of high-tech vaudeville."

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Performance Art?

While some people believe performance art began in the 1960s, some form of performance art has been around since the Middle Ages.

Traveling poets, called bards, minstrels or troubadours, often combined music with their original poetry for performances in the streets. Their poetry usually commented on their world and the people in it.

The Dadaists in 1916, Bauhaus artists from 1919 and Beatnik artists of the 1950s were all precursors of performance art as we know it today.

By 1970, performance art was a worldwide phenomenon that was art, but not theater. By the 1980s, technology began to be incorporated into performance art, along with music, dance and poetry.

The New York Times also called BLUE MAN GROUP a “delightful performance piece.”

Is BLUE MAN GROUP vaudeville or performance art? Here are some of the characteristics of each, along with a description of what the group does while performing.

BLUE MAN GROUP often:

- Begins with drumming while creating a rainbow of colors made of paint splattering from the drums.
- Follows with any of these acts:
 - Blue Men spitting gumballs from their mouths or funky things happening with marshmallows, Jell-O or Captain Crunch. The gumballs are sometimes used to create a spin art painting that makes fun of modern art.
 - An orchestral rock music piece
 - Slapstick comedy
 - Technology used in amazing and unusual ways
 - Dance
 - Interaction with the audience

Vaudeville often:

- Began with a silent act (such as jugglers)
- Followed with a:
 - Singing group of sisters or brothers
 - Comedy sketch
 - Novelty act (often involving escape artists, freak shows or regurgitators, who would drink and then spout out liquids)
 - Orchestral number
 - Comedy act
 - Headliner
- Ended as it began with a silent act

Performance art often:

- Is experimental
- Is performed for a live audience
- Is not for sale
- Uses music, dance, multimedia and props
- Usually has some sort visual art component
- Is NOT theater or a play of some sort
- Is theatrical (exaggerated, larger-than-life)
- May have a script or be improvised
- May be short or long in duration
- May involve the participation of the audience
- May be performed in any type of space
- Should be memorable

Is BLUE MAN GROUP vaudeville or performance art? You decide.





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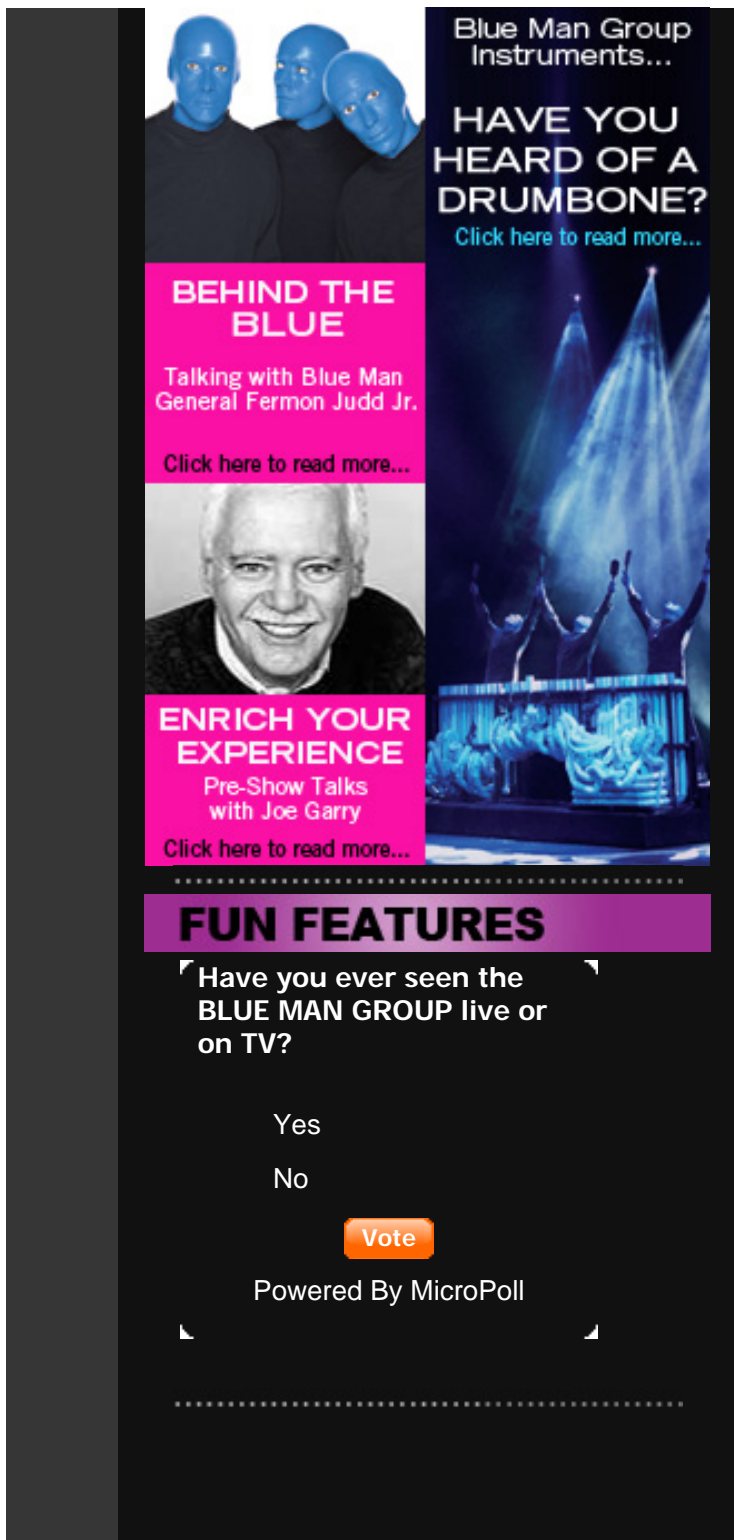
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BE BLUE



Photo Credit: Blue Man Group

The three founders and original performers of BLUE MAN GROUP had been performing the show for three years, six days a week. They had done more than 1,000 performances with only one understudy, who had never



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performed the show. Then, one day, one of the Blue Men cut his hand and couldn't perform. Since the show must always go on, the understudy stepped into the role and a new Blue Man was born.

When magician Penn Jillette (of the group Penn and Teller) saw the show, he excitedly told the Blue Men, "Oh, my god! You guys can do what Teller and I can never do! You can clone yourselves!"

While BLUE MAN GROUP began with only three performers, today's BMG has more than 70 diverse men and women portraying the Blue Man all over the world.

Blue Man Anthony Parrulli says, "Being a Blue Man is the most amazing experience of my life."

Who can be a Blue Man?

Blue Men have very **specific characteristics**, both physical and emotional:

- Athletic build, 5' 10" – 6' 1" inches tall
- Skill in percussion and music
- Capability to communicate without words
- Knack for working in a collaborative environment
- Energetic, captivating personality
- Ability to travel and/or relocate

If you meet these requirements, electronically send your photo, résumé, height, weight and current location to casting@blueman.com or snail mail it to:

*Blue Man Casting
Blue Man Productions
411 Lafayette Street, 3rd Floor
New York, NY 10003*

Only send it once; if the casting director is interested, they will contact you for a private interview.

If the interview is successful, a one-minute drumming audition will be

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followed by an acting audition. Auditionees also learn Blue Man "language."

The next part of the process takes one to two days. Several auditionees rehearse bits from the show and perform it for the casting team who ultimately chooses new Blue Men.

"This is the best job I've ever had; a dream experience for any musician in search of a challenge," said a member of the Blue Man Band.

BLUE MAN GROUP also seeks [musicians](#) to accompany the show. The musicians in the BLUE MAN Band also have specific requirements. They must be:

- Drummers, percussionists, guitarists and bassists who play with a pick
- Multi-instrumentalists
- Excellent musicians
- Able to play well with other performers
- Able to rock

In the musician audition, the BLUE MAN GROUP Music Directors play a short version of a song from the show that the auditionees must play back using a drum kit, guitar and bass. No sheets of music are involved. Just hear it, and play it back. Callbacks involve playing more music from the show with other musicians.

BLUE MAN GROUP also seeks [interns and people to work behind-the-scenes](#).

While casting occurs at various times and locations throughout the year, be sure to check [bluemancasting.com](#) to see if submissions are being accepted and when and where casting calls are being held.


You could be blue.

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TALKING WITH...
BLUE MAN GENERAL FERMON JUDD,
JR.



General Fermon Judd, Jr. has been with



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BLUE MAN GROUP since 1998. He has been blue in New York, Chicago, Boston, Las Vegas and for the first time, is doing the National Tour. We caught up with him in Arkansas, right before he was heading to Dallas.

EXTRA: You are the first African American who has been a Blue Man.

JUDD: Yes, and it's an honor.

EXTRA: What exactly is a Blue Man?

JUDD: The Blue Man character is sort of a scientist and a shaman. The scientist creates these crazy instruments out of PVC pipes and the shaman plays with them with precision. It's a lot of fun creating this unique sound of beautiful music.

EXTRA: How did you get from where you started to being blue?

JUDD: When I was a kid, everywhere I went with my mom, everyone thought I looked a lot like [Sidney Poitier](#). I wanted to know who this guy was. So, I saw his movies, got interested and thought that would be an amazing life.

EXTRA: Were you always interested in drumming?

JUDD: As a kid, in North Carolina, I had no formal training of any kind, just an interest and a love of drumming. It was sort of a hobby that I had in my back pocket until I auditioned for Blue Man in New York.

EXTRA: How did you get from North Carolina to New York?

JUDD: I've always wanted to act. It was always in me (the Sidney Poitier thing), but I was really, really shy as a kid. Finally, in my senior year of high school, I auditioned for *West Side Story*, and that gave me the go-ahead.

Then I went to a community college with a really big theater department. They did summer stock and I auditioned for a show where I had a good friend who always wanted to work in the movies. She got hired to work on *The Abyss*, James Cameron's epic underwater film. Well, I had talked her

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into auditioning because she was really afraid and when she got hired, she called me and said they were hiring some guys to work for a few weeks. I interviewed and got hired, and a two-week job turned into three-and-a-half months.

After I worked on *The Abyss*, I got called for another film, and another and another and it turned into almost a 10-year career. I worked a lot of films as an on-set dresser in the Art Department.

When I moved to Wilmington, North Carolina, I got an agent, and [Rambling Rose](#), a film with Robert Duvall came to town. I auditioned and got a role. Then after that, I started to get more and [more roles on television and film projects](#). I knew I wanted to move to New York and study, so I did. I auditioned for Blue Man and have been there ever since.

EXTRA: How do you actually [make yourself blue](#)?

JUDD: We have make-up personnel and use special Blue Man greasepaint and wear Blue Man latex gloves.

EXTRA: You also have no ears and play with your food.

JUDD: (Laughs.) Oh yes, the character is innocent. If you place a bowl of something in front of a kid that you've never had before, the kid is going to experiment with it and have a sense of wonder about it.

EXTRA: What food will you be playing with?

JUDD: Lots of different things, marshmallows, [Twinkies](#), gumballs, and we love playing with [Cap'n Crunch](#).

EXTRA: I understand, at the show, there's a poncho section. Can you tell us why we need ponchos?

JUDD: (Laughs.) The show gets a little messy. The character expresses himself with paint and it gets a little messy.

EXTRA: What about tube cannons that fire stuff at the audience?

JUDD: Oh yeah. The finale of the show is pretty spectacular. It appeals to everyone.

EXTRA: In addition to being blue, we understand you have an [interior design company](#) with your wife?

JUDD: It's a perfect combination. In films she controlled the art department and I worked in the art department, so we sort of put this together. It's so much fun, shopping with someone else's money! I try to do a little bit of everything.

EXTRA: You've also done scuba diving, [stunt work](#), and [American Sign Language](#)?

JUDD: I have. I played a character in a movie, where I was [beat up by the Klan](#). It was rough, but I knew how to do it.

And Sign Language. I speak with groups after the show, and they're really surprised.

EXTRA: You do so many amazing things; you are a Renaissance Man!

JUDD: I'm just thankful to have these opportunities and to be able to be in a show that everyone likes and has a great time. To see the faces of people who are so excited and have shared an experience with them. It's a great feeling.

EXTRA: It's great for us too. We look forward seeing you in Cleveland.

JUDD: We are going to have a ball!


Headshot: General Fermon Judd, Jr.

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BLUE MAN GROUP INSTRUMENTS



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BLUE MAN GROUP began appearing in edgy performance spaces in the East Village. Wink, one of the group's founders, had studied drumming as an ethnomusicology student at Wesleyan University, and the group savored the vigor of the drum. They also liked creating their own instruments, which fit their tiny budget. Stanton, whose father was a builder, used cut-up washing machines and PVC piping they found to make instruments. In the shows, the Blue Men make music with tubes that they take apart and put back together.

"It's the old thing like when you're a kid and put cups together with a string," says Stanton, another founder of the group. "We thought these were interesting metaphors. The tube is a really old structure, but it's made with high-tech materials. We wanted to use it as a device for communication."

BLUE MAN GROUP has many unusual instruments that are used in their performances. Here are several different types of instruments they play.

Tubes

PVC PIPES of different lengths are struck with foam rubber mallets.

TUBULUM is similar to the PVC instruments but played with drumsticks and makes a low bass sound. Portable tubulums are carried on the back and can be used to launch rockets at the audience from the tubes.

DRUMBONE is a tube-within-a-tube (like a slide trombone) that slides to get different sounds.

Drums

DRUM WALL is a two-story wall, usually with several different types of percussive instruments.

PAINT DRUMS have paint on the head of the drum that splatters when hit.

Strings

The CHAPMAN STICK was actually invented by jazz guitarist Emmett Chapman in the early 1970s. It looks like a wider, longer guitar fret board and is played by tapping the strings with fingers.

Originally found in Eastern Europe, the CIMBALON is a type of hammered

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dulcimer (a box with strings stretched across and played by hitting the strings with mallets).

Airpoles

AIRPOLES are long flexible rods that are held by the hands and make a sound when sliced through the air.

There are different types of airpoles: Sword airpoles are short and easiest to use. Wiper airpoles can be 18-feet long and are used for slower tempos. Angel airpoles are two connected poles that, when played, look like angel wings and are used for fast tempos.

Additional Instruments

GARY STRIPS are sheets of aluminum that make a thunder sound.

SHAKER GONG is played with a mallet and sounds like a rattlesnake.

GYRO SHOT are rings filled with different size ball bearings balls that spin to produce a sound similar to that of a rain stick.

Build It Yourself

To build a version of BLUE MAN GROUP's PVC pipe instruments, go to:
<http://www.bmgconstruction101.com/cptub.php>

Toy Quest

Want to play but don't want to build a Blue Man instrument? BLUE MAN GROUP has a line of [toy instruments, appropriate for any age.](#)

The Percussion Tubes consist of five percussive instruments, eight motion sensitive tubes, ten pre-programmed songs and MP3/drum/recording modes.

The Keyboard is a 37-key synthesizer with nine instruments, MP3/ recording modes, pre-programmed Blue Man songs and the ability to change volume and tempo by waving the hand.

Sing

Don't want to make an instrument but would still like to be a Blue Man?

While the Blue Men don't speak or sing, if voice is your instrument, make a recording of your voice with the BLUE MAN GROUP playing their instruments using the [Bootyshaker Song Maker](#).

It rocks to be blue.


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Want to find out even more about the show? Come get “buzzed” with host Joe Garry at the Broadway Buzz Pre-Show Talk! Join us one hour before the curtain of each performance of BLUE MAN GROUP in the Idea Center® at PlayhouseSquare.



The Idea Center is located just two doors west of the Allen Theatre at 1375 Euclid Avenue. You can enter the Idea Center quickly from the PlayhouseSquare parking garage by taking the elevator or stairs to Level 1. Exit through the red doors and cross at the crosswalk which will lead you directly into the rear entrance of the building. You also may enter the Idea Center from Euclid Avenue.

Catch our Post-Show Chats with the Cast following Thursday evening performances (7th and 14th).

There is no charge for admission to Broadway Buzz events.

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