The "Missing Audience": A Query into the Future of the Orchestra and the Potential Benefits of Bringing Live Classical Music to the Community through Informal Performances

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THE “MISSING AUDIENCE”: A QUERY INTO THE FUTURE OF THE ORCHESTRA AND THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF BRINGING LIVE CLASSICAL MUSIC TO THE COMMUNITY THROUGH INFORMAL PERFORMANCES

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

in

The Department of the School of Music

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December 2017
To my mom, who somehow makes the impossible feel very possible
Acknowledgements

To the one who taught me how to speak *with* my instrument, I must first and foremost express my appreciation for Dr. Lin He in being my mentor and friend through this academic endeavor. I would be utterly lost without your guidance, as you have been the most influential leader in my musical career.

To my esteemed committee, Professor Kristin Sosnowsky, Professor Dennis Parker, and Dr. Suzanne Stauffer, I thank you for bestowing one of the greatest honors of my life in receiving your direction, time, and support. Professor Sosnowsky, thank you for teaching me how to speak *for* my instrument; you have opened my eyes to the many challenges that I can now view as opportunities to address.

I must also express my deepest gratitude to Ms. Sinella Aghasi, who faced the daunting yet compelling task of exposing to the public our most intimate artistry. I will be forever grateful for your enthusiasm and collaboration, and I will forever remember how proud I felt to share the public stage with you.

To the arts community, I thank you for serving as my inspiration in championing the arts. You have empowered me to re-evaluate my place in the classical music world; I am both a performer and an advocate. Thank you for serving as a daily reminder that music is a miracle in which holds the power to bring together people from all walks of life.
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Abstract

In this dissertation, I discuss the traditional organizational model adopted by symphony orchestras in the United States as non-profit arts organizations that are struggling to maintain solvency within the current philanthropic, political, and digital contexts. As part of the discussion, I conduct field research within the local area of the city of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in providing demonstrations of live and informal classical performance in various businesses and institutions while collecting data via surveys from willing adult participants (ages 18 and above) of all demographics, specifically lower income areas. The survey analysis gives important insights into public perception of symphony orchestras, and generational attitudes towards the support of such organizations, whether it be through attendance or individual giving. The survey study hopes to illuminate the benefits of implementing a more approachable marketing strategy within a local environment and cultivating a paradigm shift in how symphony orchestras access untapped markets of potential audiences.
Chapter 1. Introduction

The nonprofit arts sector in the United States continues to face the perennially limited and diminishing sources of funding in which necessitate the ability for any nonprofit to achieve its mission. The mission, after all, is what inspires arts organizations to establish indispensable relationships with patrons and funders so as to have the ability to serve a public purpose. Moreover, the power of live classical music performance can be a transformative cultural experience for members of a community, as it provides a level of introspection shared by all in attendance while inherently encouraging individual interpretation. Avid and loyal concertgoers may find that live performance offers something magical, especially in watching the mechanics of sixty or so individual musicians coming together as one unified organism. Such magic, however, is largely being ignored and undiscovered within the United States; symphonies and arts organizations across the board are struggling to convince people to attend their events, let alone support their mission with financial contributions.

Arts administrators, government and state funding organizations, and individual researchers are making great strides in data collection, thus providing arts organizations with tools and information that can significantly improve their future prospects in maintaining healthy operations. The research that has been done, nevertheless, is either outdated, too broad (which makes it relatively irrelevant to small, regional organizations), or not conducted within the geographic context of the United States.

Henk Roose’s contributions to the arts sector data collection proves invaluable in studying the motives for attendance and perceptual attitudes of audiences attending classical
concerts.¹ His research bears a similarity to mine in its curiosity to better understand perceptual barriers that impact interested participants who ultimately decide not to attend, but Roose’s empirical data pertains only to the geographic region of Flanders, Belgium.

The article “An Orchestral Audience: Classical Music and Continued Patterns of Distinction” further expounds upon audience attendance in classical music concerts, but highlights the “exclusionary and ritualized nature” of such events as reaffirming class distinctions that inhibit the participation of many age, education, and ethnic groups.² Despite its relevance, the research is centered around audiences attending classical music events in the United Kingdom.

Melissa C. Dobson and Stephanie E. Pitts are also U.K.-based researchers whose study partially inspired this monograph and sparked a curiosity as to why musicians are not taking a more active role in researching the demographic dispositions within their communities. Their report encourages musicians to investigate the “contexts in which they have themselves been involved as performers or listeners throughout their lives.”³ Their survey pool differs from mine in that the target group of potential participants must fit the definition of “culturally aware non-attenders”⁴ between the ages of 21 and 35; my survey is open to any participants above the age of 18 and does not define a target age group.

⁴ Ibid., 357.
The most authoritative, informative, and compelling source of data on the arts within the United States is the National Endowment for the Arts’ Survey of Public Participation in the Arts, providing relevant demographic and socio-economic profiling of arts-goers. For three decades, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) has dedicated itself to collecting, analyzing, and distributing research, which continues to be an ongoing process that inspires many American arts organizations to adopt a more innovative and inquisitive approach to connecting with their beneficiaries. For clarification purposes, the term “American” referenced throughout this monograph specifically indicates the geographic region of the United States. The NEA survey initiates a national, regional, and local conversation between arts leaders, funders, and artists by providing incredible insight into current arts attendance trends and, more importantly, attempts to answer why potential audiences do not attend arts-related events.

American symphony orchestras are no stranger to dwindling audience participation; the demand for live classical music outside of major metropolitan areas is rather miniscule. From its inception, the orchestral world has invariably fought for its place in Western society. History has shown that this industry struggled to define itself as an organized mechanism (what we see as the “symphony orchestra” today, as the ensemble lacked any real permanency). Amidst experimentation with organizational and business models, American orchestras also faced challenges in creating a market for its financial survival and social function. The performing classical arts have stood the test of time, transforming from generation to generation as a reflection of culture and society. Today, orchestras, large and small, face an increasingly scare

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funding environment. The supply of ensembles is in abundance with hundreds of regional orchestras, but the demand to support the supply is rapidly decreasing, due in part to the advent of the digital age. Audience preferences and interests are constantly in flux, and we, as an arts and orchestral community, are lagging behind in adapting to these changes.

Organizations like the NEA are contributing by leaps and bounds to the overall understanding of the main motivations and barriers of attendance, but little research is being updated to reflect the opportunities of growth in regards to local and regional institutions; the NEA report was published in 2012. This monograph aims to contribute to the dialogue initiated by the NEA, and additionally attempts to envisage a more approachable means of communicating with underserved demographics within the city of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. For data collection, my collaboration with various businesses and institutions within Baton Rouge allowed for me to provide live demonstrations of works for violin or small ensemble as an incentive for willing adult participants above the age of eighteen to complete a questionnaire survey. Prior to the discussion of survey results, this monograph includes a brief history of the conception and realization of the American orchestra and its contemporaneous reliance on patronage, as well as current trends in the nonprofit arts sector from the operations and funding perspectives. Referencing historical events pertaining to the establishment of the American orchestra serves as the framework for the investigative survey.

Moreover, the survey and live performance demonstrations act as an unconventional marketing tool to enhance the level of exposure of classical music to the Baton Rouge community. The survey germinated from a desire to take action in addressing several questions: (1) Why is it almost impossible to find updated research and statistics on current U.S. arts organizations and audience participation? and (2) Would it be effective for musicians to initiate a
more active role as proponents of a paradigm shift in public perception of classical music? As an active violinist, I intend to instigate a more approachable dialogue within my community as a contribution to the studies observing the lost potential of the “missing audience” and to gain an awareness of how we, as an arts community, may better communicate with, understand, and serve the public.
Chapter 2. A Brief History

The European Influence

When one attends an orchestra concert in America, he is likely to experience a level of uniformity within the ensemble and traditional customs portrayed by the majority of the audience; the musicians are dressed in concert black, the strings sections maintain identical bow direction, and patrons applaud only after the final movement. Such practices were not always ingrained into the conventional orchestra model. Many reputable authors have shared their chronological accounts of the history of the American orchestra, but one can immediately ascertain the division of two camps of thought in the portrayal of said history. One is predisposed to the inexorable European influence, and the other illustrates Western cultural innovation as pioneering the model reflected in today’s arts sector. The division of these camps is further evidenced by the fact that the *Grove Dictionary of Music Online* yields two separate sources describing the history of the orchestra, one centering predominantly on European progression and the other focusing on orchestras in the United States.

Analogous to the contention between the two camps is the division of “high” art and “low” art that parallels the actions and reactions of concertgoers. Such dissension within artistic semantics largely emerged from aristocratic patronage in the seventeenth century. Patrons of the arts in many parts of Europe were often aristocrats. Members of royalty would compete against one another by hiring and financing the best musicians; thus, supporting the arts was an indication of their wealth and social standing. Musicians were also valued as a source of
entertainment wherein aristocracy would hold Court-sponsored festival operas, and special occasions including balls, weddings, and dining in state.\(^6\)

An early precursor of the American orchestra is King Louis XIII’s “violons du Roi” in early seventeenth-century France; the head position of the ensemble was later appointed to Jean-Baptiste Lully in 1664.\(^7\) Lully’s musical leadership role had a profound and lasting impact on codifying internal hierarchical organization within the traditional European model.\(^8\) He instigated uniformity with bow strokes and adopted an authoritative position of keeping time for the singers and instrumentalists by beating a staff against the ground. His “Grande Bande” (a larger group of twenty-four musicians) and “Petite Bande” (a smaller group of eighteen strings players) were perhaps one of the earliest standardized practices of multiple musicians to a part.\(^9\) In having so many musicians at his disposal (including strings, woodwinds, and brass and timpani from the cavalry’s “Grande Ecurie”), Lully’s compositional process “provided an important model of orchestral scoring to several generations of French, English and German composers.”\(^10\)

Aristocratic visitors were rather impressed by Lully’s innovative instrumental ensembles, so much so that “Princes in neighbouring lands, especially Germany, sought to create Lully-style ensembles at their own courts.”\(^11\)

Music permeated throughout small and large social scenes; aristocracy often financed private and public events, but other forms of patronage extended into civic and ecclesiastical

\(^7\) Ibid.
\(^8\) Ibid.
\(^9\) Ibid.
\(^10\) Ibid.
\(^11\) Ibid.
networks. J.S. Bach served as an organist for the Duke Wilhelm Ernst at the minor Weimar court from 1708-1717, and then as “Kapellmeister” under Prince Leopold until 1723.\textsuperscript{12} Within the year, Bach accepted a coveted position in Leipzig, but this position was authorized by civic supervision; Leipzig’s musical life was largely controlled by the town council.\textsuperscript{13} Handel spent some time working for English royalty (Queen Anne and King George I), and often received ecclesiastical commissions for his reputation as a composer of powerful oratorios.\textsuperscript{14} Arcangelo Corelli also received patronage from the church under Cardinal Benedetto Pamphili; other employment opportunities included the post of chamber musician at the court of Queen Christina of Sweden.\textsuperscript{15} Corelli acted as “contractor, artistic director, leader (concertmaster) and…composer.”\textsuperscript{16} He led public concerts (two in Italy’s Piazza di Spagna theatres), but these so-called “public concerts” were still largely financially sponsored by aristocratic ambassadors from France and Spain. In maintaining authority over his musicians, he followed Lully’s high level of orchestral organization and discipline by requiring adherence to bow direction.

The Esterházy family was “the richest and most influential among the Hungarian nobility,” which substantiated Franz Joseph Haydn’s career and commercial success upon

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[13] Ibid.
\item[16] Ibid.
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accepting the position of Kapellmeister.\textsuperscript{17} Leopold Mozart was exceedingly concerned with securing suitable positions for him and his musical family within Salzburg court; although, his son rejected court musical life in pursuit of a more freelance lifestyle.\textsuperscript{18} The late seventeenth century saw a rise in public opera houses (beginning in Venice in 1637), and churches employing local and international musicians.

As composers and musicians were expanding the availability of live music to their beneficiaries, music publishers identified an opportunity in the rise of amateur music-making, which brought classical music to the public and exposed an eager audience to different genres of music, including the great orchestral works. Experimentation with compositional procedures necessitated a larger ensemble with uniform structure, i.e. physical seating and placement of musicians, a baton/conductor, and a leader or concert master. Orchestral parts were still arduously copied out by hand whenever additional parts were needed beyond that of the printed manuscript and a single set of parts for bowing purposes.\textsuperscript{19}

The typical orchestra ensemble of the Classical period predating 1740 grew to include an increase in the number of strings, and advancements made to woodwind and brass instruments. Composers pushed the boundaries of technical facility required to perform their works, which paralleled the advancements made to the instruments. By the 1730s and 40s, the term “orchestra” came to be recognized in most parts of Europe as an ensemble of instrumentalists gathered into a


\textsuperscript{19} Spitzer and Zaslaw, “Orchestra.”
single group.²⁰ Such an ensemble inspired composers to push the symphony as a compositional procedure to new limits, expanding the number of movements, the dynamic range, timbre combinations, and sonorous effects. Beethoven, Spontini, and Rossini continued to transform the classical orchestra ensemble by delineating specific harmonic and melodic lines to wind instruments, adding horn parts, and giving the brass section a more prominent role.²¹

The Classical period sparked a growth in public concerts in which would attract large audiences.²² Aristocracy may have predicated the European musical culture and patronage system, but composers and musicians received growing support from the rise in public participation in the arts, therefore granting them greater dependence on self-employment and freelancing as opposed to appointed positions under aristocracy. Thus, the demand for public performances grew, initiating an artistic market that permeated all throughout European society.

Between the years 1790 and 1830, composers sought to utilize the symphonic compositional genre as means of establishing their artistic freedom, individuality, and even eccentricity.²³ The musician of 1790 was primarily regarded as an artisan wherein compositions were required for a specific function and, to a large degree, had to satisfy the palate of the patron.²⁴ The development in the shift of artistic freedom was “stimulated by the social emancipation of the composer, whose status advanced a from that of household retainer to independent artist.”²⁵

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²⁰ Spitzer and Zaslaw, “Orchestra.”
²¹ Ibid.
²² Ibid.
²⁴ Ibid.
²⁵ Ibid.
Concert halls in the eighteenth century were still very scarce; most performances took place in “theatres, the great halls of palaces and large houses, inns and other public buildings.”

It was common practice to place the orchestra in front of the stage at floor level with some sort of separation device so as to distance the orchestra from the audience. Designated seating for the instrumentalists was not yet developed; size, seating arrangement, and instrumentation would vary on different occasions, and the winds and brass often doubled the strings. Orchestras were employing the use of a ticket sales system; anyone could presumably purchase one, but “most concert series maintained a degree of exclusivity by allowing admission only by costly subscription.” Private patronage often illustrated a level of elitism wherein audience attendance was by invite-only.

The orchestral ensemble of the Romantic era continued to expand in size and required the function of a more systematized financial operation. Eighteenth-century patronage was mostly “an expression of aristocratic court culture,” but the nineteenth century ushered in the orchestra as its own institution in cultivating a public audience base. Such a base of participation stemmed from the growing interest of the bourgeoisie, whose active support greatly augmented the income from public concerts and created a demand for printed music. Composers were producing more difficult repertoire, which coincided with newly founded conservatories that could better train and develop future generations of qualified professional musicians. The

26 Spitzer and Zaslaw, “Orchestra.”
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid.
inherent challenges faced by orchestras growing in size necessitated the *baton conductor*, whose role was initially less of an interpreter of the music and more of a beat keeper.\(^{32}\)

The later half of the nineteenth century saw an increase in conductors as performers and interpreters in which the public came to recognize as governing stewards of their orchestra; a famous conductor could greatly enhance the reputation of the orchestra and attract a crowd of eager listeners. In having to assemble many components of the operation (musicians, conductor, financing, and ticket sales), it was only a matter of time until concert orchestras “became independent organizations with their own property, administrative structure and income.”\(^{33}\)

Many have argued that this European organizational model was the predominant archetype on “Western cultural influence,” leading to today’s American framework in which “most orchestras are standing organizations with stable personnel, routines of rehearsal and performance, an administrative structure and a budget.”\(^{34}\)

**Orchestras in the United States**

Prior to the nineteenth century, orchestras began to appear in England’s North American colonies; America (referring to North America) was, thus, in its infancy as a country and did not have its own established culture or identity. Howard Shanet notes, “The development of orchestras was slower in the new world due to sparse population, harsh material conditions, and the absence of aristocratic, court culture.”\(^{35}\) Shanet’s claim, however, does not necessarily imply

\(^{32}\) Spitzer and Zaslaw, “Orchestra.”

\(^{33}\) Ibid.

\(^{34}\) Ibid.

that Americans of the past were “the creators and products of a stable, unvarying, undifferentiated culture.”\textsuperscript{36} On the contrary, Lawrence W. Levine asserts that “American culture, from the very outset, was a divided one, replete with ethnic, class, and regional distinctions.”\textsuperscript{37} Moreover, the history of the American orchestra “is a canvas for interwoven issues of class, gender, ethnicity, geography, identity, capitalism, culture, leisure, inventiveness, influence, and power in the nation’s first full century.”\textsuperscript{38} Through its roles as a business and a social enterprise, “a motivation for and a mechanism of trans-Atlantic exchange, and an artistic medium, [the orchestra] touched broad sectors of the American population.”\textsuperscript{39}

By the 1760s, Philadelphia, New York, Boston, and Charleston developed into important English provincial cities.\textsuperscript{40} These more populated cities reflected a thriving musical life, where orchestras could be heard in various concert settings (theaters, coffee houses, and pleasure gardens).\textsuperscript{41} Multiple public theaters were built in Boston and New York; major metropolises held an advantage with building and maintaining a sizeable market for demand. Sponsored concerts were often held by concert societies “in which professional and amateur performers combined to play orchestral music.”\textsuperscript{42} New York was perhaps the foremost authority on setting the major standards for orchestral traditions. Subscription concerts began in New York in the 1760s and featured overtures, songs, and instrumental solos.\textsuperscript{43} The city’s concert societies were comprised of professional and amateur musicians.

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{40} Shanet and Spitzer, “Orchestra.”
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid.
of professional and amateur musicians contributing their talents to public concert life. Significant examples include the St. Cecilia Society, Musick Club, Harmonic Society, and Columbian Anacreontic Society; the St. Cecilia and Harmonical Societies combined to form the Philharmonic Society of New York. At its inception, the Philharmonic appointed a “leader” as the principal violinist, and governance was democratic, “with a constitution, bylaws and elected officers.”

Despite the increase in live classical music and public participation in the arts, the caliber of performance in America was not yet equal to orchestras in France, Germany, England, and Italy, as few instrumentalists emigrated from these musical centers. Thus, well-trained musicians were in short supply until the greater influx of immigrants in the early- to mid-nineteenth century. The first half of the nineteenth century saw many smaller and regional orchestras dispersed throughout the country, in which theaters formed the core of orchestral employment: “Almost every American city had at least one theater with a standing orchestra.” The establishment of local theaters served as the main source of employment for orchestral and operatic musicians in the United States, but New York theaters still held a pervading impact on those throughout the country in terms of organization, structure, repertoire, and quality. The impact of immigrant musicians played a crucial role in establishing musical culture within these cities. While the country was discovering its uniquely artistic identity, American culture correspondingly came to represent a homogeneous blend of language and rhetorical style as a contemporaneous effect of the influx of immigrants.

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44 Spitzer and Zaslaw, “Orchestra.”
45 Ibid.
46 Shanet and Spitzer, “Orchestra.”
47 Ibid.
The majority of nineteenth-century American orchestras were commercial ventures or “semi-professional cooperative societies,” integrating ticket sales for their theater performances, concerts, and other entertainment venues.49 Concerts were often organized by the musicians as an outlet for challenging themselves with more difficult repertory outside of music typically performed in theaters; such repertory included symphonies by Beethoven and Spohr, and concertos by Mendelssohn and Moscheles.50 The main motivation behind such concerts were to benefit an individual musician or a charity, or as a subscription series to which appealing to a broader audience substantiated the prioritization of ticket sales. Thus, musicians made sure to “alternate such ‘classical’ selections with arias from Italian operas, songs in English, and solo numbers for instrumental virtuosos.”51

Subscription tickets eventually led to philharmonic societies initiating a market objective of providing a full season of subscription concerts year after year.52 Subscription series concerts were established in New York and Boston by the 1840s and spread across the country after the Civil War.53 Most concert societies were staffed by the same musicians who would perform in the concerts. Without any concrete governing structure, philharmonic societies (like that of Cincinnati’s Philharmonic Society, St. Louis’ Philharmonic, and Chicago’s succession of “Philharmonics”) inevitably withered away.54 John Spitzer suggests a formula to the initial blueprint of nineteenth-century American orchestras: “In a typical scenario, a philharmonic

50 Shanet and Spitzer, “Orchestra.”
51 Ibid.
52 Ibid.
54 Shanet and Spitzer, “Orchestra.”
society or concert series would be formed with high hopes, musicians would be recruited, the enterprise would flourish for a few years, and then it would collapse in the face of economic hard times or internal disagreements.”55 The lack of an organization operating in perpetuity became the archetypal pattern for nineteenth-century American concert societies; “audiences, it seemed, were reluctant to pay for the music that the musicians wanted to play.”56

The first American orchestra to maintain operations and funding in perpetuity was the New York Philharmonic Society, founded in 1842.57 The New York Philharmonic set the standard and became a benchmark to which other orchestras often emulated as a “business model”; the Philharmonic operated on a managerial structure that allowed for the Society to prosper with institutional stability.58 In 1840, New York City was poised to replace Philadelphia as the nation’s largest city. The Philharmonic prospered within the context of rapid population increase, which leveraged the demand for all types of music that advantageously included “the ‘serious’ repertory that orchestra musicians wanted to play.”59 In organizing as a musician’s cooperative, the newly established “Philharmonic Society of New York” generated profits that were shared amongst the members at the end of each season.60 Officers and conductors were democratically elected, and by 1866, a salaried conductor was elected for the entire season rather than individual conductors for specific concerts.61 The Philharmonic enjoyed a steady increase in

56 Shanet and Spitzer, “Orchestra.”
57 Ibid.
58 Ibid.
59 Ibid.
60 Ibid.
61 Ibid.
attendance and revenues throughout the 1840s and 50s, which solidified its reputation as the nation’s only “permanent” concert orchestra.\(^6^2\)

Other notable successful endeavors included the influential American tour led by the French conductor Louis Jullien in 1853-4. His concerts were quite famous in England, and he brought with him a corps of soloists and section leaders to the United States; he especially enjoyed collaborating with New York’s best musicians.\(^6^3\) The wildly popular tour began with two months of concerts in New York, which were received by “ecstatic audiences.”\(^6^4\) Jullien and his ensemble of roughly one hundred musicians then embarked on a seven-month tour to approximately twenty American cities (large and small), wherein virtuoso pieces and famous symphonies were met with equally enthusiastic responses.\(^6^5\) Jullien’s influence largely contributed to the programmatic eclecticism of combining an assortment of musical styles and entertainment genres within the context of extravagant “jumbo concerts.”\(^6^6\) The high standards in quality of these visiting orchestras and their ability to draw large audiences fostered expectations for patrons throughout the country, which undoubtedly had a huge comparative impact on American concert societies.

During the second half of the nineteenth century (specifically 1866-1890), orchestras “became ubiquitous in American urban life”; people were exposed to classical music via concerts, operas, theaters, in parks, restaurants, hotels, and resorts.\(^6^7\) The “ubiquitous” availability of orchestral music in nineteenth-century American cities bears a striking contrast to

\(^{6^2}\) Shanet and Spitzer, “Orchestra.”
\(^{6^3}\) Ibid.
\(^{6^4}\) Ibid.
\(^{6^5}\) Ibid.
\(^{6^7}\) Ibid.
the “rather narrow range of venues to which twenty-first-century orchestras are confined.”

Relatively stable, professional orchestra concert programs entered our musical life through the expansion of its geographic range from large cities into smaller towns, many of which specialized in manufacturing or industrialization. The foundation of orchestras in smaller cities was typically “the result of collective enterprise originating among the local enthusiasts.” The majority of community ensembles received support from associations of citizens that assumed responsibility for the organization; the associations were mostly “restricted in membership to people of position and fortune, or they may include all who join in a popular subscription – or there may be both.”

Concurrently, Levine discusses the significant impact that nineteenth-century American theater had on engendering a diverse audience within a “shared public culture,” as the theater, “like the church, was one of the earliest and most important cultural institutions established in frontier cities.” The theater essentially represented “a microcosm of American society” in which defined its audience participants by class and economic divisions through seating arrangements. Box seating was generally reserved for “the dandies, and people of the first respectability and fashion,” whereas patrons (apprentices, servants, poor workingmen) who could not afford better seats typically sat in the gallery. The socio-economic categories were

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68 Spitzer, “The Ubiquity and Diversity of Nineteenth-Century American Orchestras,” 19.
70 Ibid., 15-16.
71 Levine, Highbrow/Lowbrow, 30.
72 Ibid., 18.
73 Ibid., 25.
74 Ibid., 24.
75 Ibid.
further exacerbated by educated portions of society who re-defined drama as “legitimate” and “worthy” art in which deepened the chasm between highbrow and lowbrow populations.\textsuperscript{76}

Theodore Thomas and His Pervading Impact on the American Culture

Leonard Burkat argues, “The strongest nineteenth-century move toward the orchestra we know today came from Theodore Thomas…”\textsuperscript{77} Furthermore, he did “more than any other American musician of the nineteenth century to popularize music of the great European masters.”\textsuperscript{78} Thomas (1835-1905), was a world-renowned American conductor of German birth who came from a musical family; his father was a \textit{Stadtmusikus} in Esens.\textsuperscript{79} After studying the violin for the greater part of his youth, he and his family emigrated to New York.\textsuperscript{80} He was a violinist in Jullien’s orchestra, which prompted him to follow a similar model of organization; he molded his ensemble into “America’s first full-time concert orchestra.”\textsuperscript{81} After holding leadership roles in many opera, theatre, and concert orchestras, his reputation as a well-known soloist and chamber player led him to join the first violin section of the New York Philharmonic Society in 1854.\textsuperscript{82}

As a conductor, he experimented with many different programs, from lighter summer concerts to complete Beethoven symphonies during the 1860s and 70s. His contributions in standardizing repertoire and organizational structure greatly influenced local symphony

\textsuperscript{76} Levine, \textit{Highbrow/Lowbrow}, 31.
\textsuperscript{77} Burkat, “American Orchestras,” 15.
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{80} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{81} Shanet and Spitzer, “Orchestra.”
\textsuperscript{82} Schabas, “Thomas, Theodore (Christian Friedrich).”
orchestras in cities throughout America, thus cultivating “a greater appreciation of symphonic music” while educating the American people on the significant European works. He would often employ his ensembles to tour extensively throughout the U.S., thus reaching a wide audience base with his innumerable concerts and fostering support and patronage for orchestral music.

Beyond his ability as a conductor, he was an avid businessman who managed his orchestra with an awareness of public interest and maximizing revenue. Public interest, in his insight, seemed to increase with the promotion of new works by his contemporaries and advocating for the European masterpieces that increased the sophistication of his programs to rival those of London, Paris, Vienna, and Berlin. Thomas “devised ingenious schemes to promote ticket sales, and mapped out special ‘pop’ and children’s programmes, and even concerts for working men.” Essentially utilizing the European “enterprise orchestras” model similar to Jullien and Johann Strauss, Thomas was an “entrepreneur-conductor” who ran the orchestra as a full-time business operation. The role of entrepreneur-conductor afforded Thomas rehearsals with his orchestra almost every day, thus contributing to the much higher standard of ensemble quality. The musicians were also paid well enough to not have to divide their time between multiple ensemble services.

As a talented conductor with his level of managerial prowess and cognizance of audience’ tastes, Thomas reached the height of his career in 1875, to which his orchestra, “was by common consent, unsurpassed anywhere, as was the New York Philharmonic Orchestra under

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83 Schabas, “Thomas, Theodore (Christian Friedrich).”
84 Ibid.
85 Ibid.
86 Shanet and Spitzer, “Orchestra.”
Between 1869 and 1890, his orchestra exerted a massive effect “on the development of American orchestras and on American music in general.” In 1877, he was appointed as conductor of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra until 1891, in which the orchestra thrived under his direction. His concerts in New York were devised around the venue; symphonies, concertos, and more “serious” repertoire were presented in concert halls, whereas more popular selections considered to be “crowd-pleasers” were performed in less formal atmospheres.

He often sponsored concerts with his own finances, which were received either with huge success or enormous failure. His concerts at the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition were a financial disaster, as attendance was quite poor. He, however, worked tirelessly as a proponent of cultivating high art by providing and publicizing his orchestra concerts within many communities. After a string of professional setbacks, Thomas was presented with an opportunity that met “his consuming wish for a full-time permanent orchestra.” A group of businessmen from Chicago offered “to sustain a resident orchestra of Thomas’s choosing, similar to that which Boston already had,” serving as a catalyst to the pattern of widely based support by the wealthy as an organizational scheme for many other American orchestras. In December 1904 (and several weeks before his death), the new Orchestra Hall in Chicago became the permanent home for Thomas and his ensemble.

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87 Schabas, “Thomas, Theodore (Christian Friedrich).”
88 Shanet and Spitzer, “Orchestra.”
89 Schabas, “Thomas, Theodore (Christian Friedrich).”
90 Ibid.
91 Ibid.
92 Ibid.
93 Ibid.
94 Ibid.
The Conductor and His Role as a Leader

An early precursor of the division of administrative tasks during the late nineteenth century occurred when Henry Lee Higginson, a Boston banker and a prodigious advocate for the arts, founded the Boston Symphony Orchestra after witnessing the collapse of the Harvard Musical Association Orchestra in 1882, which was an ill attempt at operating solely on philanthropic subsidy. Higginson hired his orchestra and a conductor, and served as the manager of its activities and finances; he would pay out of pocket for any year-end deficits. The Boston Symphony Orchestra offered, at minimum, six months of full-time employment to its musicians, thus attracting the best instrumentalists. The appointed conductor acted as the artistic leader, but was not given management or fundraising responsibilities. Revenue from ticket sales could increase with the addition of an optional summer season series of popular concerts (known as the “Boston Pops”). Higginson’s and Thomas’ collaborative predilections sparked a trend in the potential advantage of multiple actors contributing their expertise to the overall successes or failures of the organization.

Generally, by the early twentieth century, most conductors had taken on a more active position of leadership; in addition to their conducting duties, they managed the orchestra’s finances and marketing strategies. The conductor was generally viewed as a “star”, whose performances and personality were capable of attracting public attention. Governing boards often employed famous conductors from Europe with the intention of “improving the quality of

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95 Shanet and Spitzer, “Orchestra.”
96 Ibid.
97 Ibid.
98 Ibid.
99 Ibid.
the orchestra and raising its public profile.”\textsuperscript{100} Such a trend was evident in the appointment of Gustav Mahler by the New York Philharmonic in 1909-1911.\textsuperscript{101} The Philharmonic’s committee (initiated by Mary R. Sheldon) decided to incorporate the orchestra as a public institution and to establish its permanency as a full-time orchestra with a high-profile conductor.\textsuperscript{102} The Philharmonic also raised enough funds to establish an endowment in 1912, which spurred other orchestras to follow suit, as endowments would provide greater financial health for organizations operating with large budgets.\textsuperscript{103}

The Marketability of the American Orchestra in the Early Twentieth Century

Orchestras reached perhaps the greatest cultural and social peak within America during the first two decades of the twentieth century, as was evidenced by the abundance of orchestral organizations and venue spaces in small and large cities throughout the country. Permanent symphony orchestras within larger cities maintained thriving financial support with operating seasons lasting twenty or so weeks.\textsuperscript{104} The film industry primarily relied upon composers and orchestral musicians in providing music to silent films, which exposed viewers to high-quality classical music via motion picture theaters. This so-called “high art” was a vital part of the community; musicians were employed for performances in beer gardens, city parks, various restaurants, and hotels.\textsuperscript{105}

This era of musical vitality was countered by the Great Depression, which, when coupled with the over-abundance of musicians in the 1920s and 30s, forced American orchestras to

\textsuperscript{100} Shanet and Spitzer, “Orchestra.”
\textsuperscript{101} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{102} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{103} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{104} Schabas, “Thomas, Theodore (Christian Friedrich).”
\textsuperscript{105} Ibid.
fundamentally redefine their relationship with the public. Most detrimental was the collapse of theater orchestras that served as “the core of the orchestral musician’s livelihood” in providing a steady income.\textsuperscript{106} Classical music also had to compete with the rising popularity of ragtime and jazz music performed by smaller bands and ensembles. The earliest prototypes of federal arts organizations (prior to the National Endowment for the Arts) during the 1930s initiated “New Deal” programs that attempted to employ jobless artists and writers during the national economic crisis.\textsuperscript{107} These programs, the Federal Arts Project and Federal Writers’ Project, were established under the Works Progress Administration.\textsuperscript{108}

Musicians’ Unions

Orchestras across the board were incorporating concert series programs into their seasons wherein prominent institutions like the New York Philharmonic and Boston Symphony Orchestra were setting a six-month season design. Many orchestras operating on the same model attracted the most talented musicians, nationally and internationally, in providing the salaried opportunity of a coveted contract. American orchestras steadily grew in staff and size, most notably in the number of employed professional musicians. Musicians organized themselves into unions as a proactive measure in safeguarding their wages and rights.

Early associations of professional and amateur musicians in the United States had made promising efforts in seeking minimum wages, health benefits, and pensions.\textsuperscript{109} Such efforts were

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\textsuperscript{106} Schabas, “Thomas, Theodore (Christian Friedrich).”
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid.
futile, however, in regards to regulating working conditions and fair representation in negotiations. The first union was the Mutual Musical Protective Society of New York founded in 1863 in which musicians held relatively strong leverage over fair wages. Additionally, the Philadelphia Musical Association was founded in the same year as one of the earliest protective organizations for musicians. Cities like Philadelphia and Chicago soon followed suit. By 1892, roughly fifty participating local unions came together to form a national union (which was still rather lax in organization).

Six years later, the American Federation of Musicians (AFM) was established as the nation’s preeminent musicians trade union. The AFM was and remains a true testament to the powerful relationship shared by musicians and their colleagues in that they assembled together as a collective unit to improve their communication with one another, and to ensure their labor rights. AFM members benefited from the organization’s monthly magazine publications, the American Musician and the International Musician, which provided valuable information on official news of the Federation, including minutes of the Executive Board meetings, educational articles, advertisements for job vacancies, and national contracts.

The International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians (ICSOM) was founded in 1962, which set its major focus on protecting the rights of the minority group within the AFM: orchestral musicians. Both associations have worked diligently towards fair contract negotiations with and representation of the musicians. As orchestral organizations have and

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110 Shanet and Spitzer, “Orchestra.”
111 Loft and Anderson, “Unions, musicians’.”
112 Shanet and Spitzer, “Orchestra.”
113 Loft and Anderson, “Unions, musicians’.”
115 Shanet and Spitzer, “Orchestra.”
continue to face financial deficits, ICSOM and AFM have fought to ensure reasonable wages, working conditions, personnel selection procedures, and reasonable lengths of seasons.\textsuperscript{116}

Particularly in regards to the orchestral domain, the founding of the League of American Orchestras in the 1940s provided greater financial and organizational support to American orchestras across the country, so much so that by 1999, the League included nearly 900 symphony, chamber, youth, and university orchestras.\textsuperscript{117} Now recognized as the American Symphony Orchestra League (ASOL), the institution greatly enhances the quality of orchestras by “offering seminars and workshops for orchestra managers, staff, and volunteers,” and often promotes strong leadership through sponsoring an Orchestra Management Fellowship Program and various academic scholarships.\textsuperscript{118}

The National Endowment for the Arts: A Shift Towards Public Subsidy

Private, ecclesiastical, and public patronage have recurrently contributed to the sustainability of the classical arts as a means of fulfilling a function or serving a public good. Classical music performance organizations are becoming increasingly dependent upon government and public subsidy, as well as revenues generated from public participation. The United States recognizes many forms of arts that serve the community; these include “a wide array of drama, visual and media arts, dance, music, and literature available in formal and informal settings…”\textsuperscript{119} Federal engagement in and support of these art forms in the United States was initiated by the Kennedy administration in 1961.\textsuperscript{120} President Kennedy sent his Labor

\textsuperscript{116} Shanet and Spitzer, “Orchestra.”
\textsuperscript{117} Loft and Anderson, “Unions, musicians’.”
\textsuperscript{118} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{119} National Endowment for the Arts, \textit{How the United States Funds the Arts}, produced by the NEA’s Office of Research and Analysis (Washington, DC, November 2012), 1.
Secretary, Arthur J. Goldberg, to New York to settle a pay dispute between the Metropolitan opera and the American Federation of Musicians. After assisting in the dispute settlement, both Goldberg and Kennedy came to recognize the potential positive impact that government subsidizing could have on the performing arts; their subsequent proposal attempted to persuade businesses to join with labor forces in supporting the arts.

The United States Congress and President Lyndon B. Johnson took it upon themselves to inherit the task set forth by Kennedy, thus establishing the National Endowment for the Arts in 1965. The federal institution was “not intended to solve a problem, but rather to embody a hope.” The NEA germinated out of the pursuit of noble causes: to foster American creativity, elevate the nation’s culture, and “sustain and preserve the country’s many artistic traditions.” Its mission was to connect every citizen with America’s artistic and cultural legacy.

The underpinnings of such a cultural legacy undoubtedly had an impact on the U.S. government’s concerns with establishing the country as a world leader. A portion of the “Declaration of Purpose” written by Congress reads:

A high civilization must not limit its efforts to the science and technology alone but must give full value and support to the other great branches of man’s scholarly and cultural activity…The practice of arts and the study of the humanities require constant dedication and devotion and…while no government can call a great artist or scholar into existence, it is necessary and appropriate for the Federal Government to help create and sustain not only a climate encouraging freedom of thought, imagination, and inquiry but also the material conditions facilitating the release of this creative talent.

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122 Ibid.
123 Ibid., 1.
124 Ibid.
125 Ibid.
126 Ibid., 19.
Thus, the NEA has become a champion of the arts and represents hope for artists and cultural institutions to stand for its merited place within the American society.

Today, the NEA defines itself as “an independent federal agency that funds, promotes, and strengthens the creative capacity of our communities by providing all Americans with diverse opportunities for arts participation.”¹²⁷ The organization is perhaps the most influential intermediary in fostering connections between artistic and administrative entities within the U.S., consisting of a complexly interwoven collaboration with more than twenty other federal agencies, state and local governments, state and regional arts agencies, and private nonprofits on projects that expose the American public to quality arts programming.¹²⁸

In acting as “the nexus between the public and private sectors,” the NEA has an extremely demanding process of awarding its grants to organizations and individuals.¹²⁹ The Endowment additionally “convenes panels that set standards of artistic quality, publishes research reports that guide informed discussions of cultural trends and policies, and creates institutional partnerships that now reach every community in the nation.”¹³⁰

The guidance of the NEA as a formidable champion of the arts within our communities cultivates an enduring resolve for arts organizations to fulfill their missions and create an impact in serving a public good. Nevertheless, a substantial disconnect does exist today in regards to the public awareness and acknowledgement of the arts as a proprietor over cultural identity. The classical arts had perhaps its greatest impression on American culture during the 1950s and 60s:

¹²⁸ Ibid.
¹³⁰ Ibid.
The tremendous presence of music and opera signified an increasing consciousness of cultural values across the United States during the mid-twentieth century. More and more, cities began to consider cultural identity to be as critical to their community as economic prosperity or educational institutions.131

This era of artistic and cultural prosperity created a market that greatly defined and edified the non-profit organizational model with which we are currently familiar; the American symphony orchestra was essentially established in the second half of the twentieth century.132 As the number of full-time professional orchestras increased due to the prevalence of community-based support, orchestras adversely experienced a sharp decline in participating roles within many facets of the entertainment industry; these included motion pictures, radio broadcasts, television, and social events.133 The demand for live orchestral performance, however, provided an opportunity for musicians and arts administrators to invest in a serviceable ensemble business model with a defined season and operating budget. Over the second half of the twentieth century, operating budgets increased, seasons got longer, and more Americans attended orchestra concerts. The profusion and heightened public awareness of orchestras is evidenced by the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of orchestras</th>
<th>Average budget in 2009 dollars</th>
<th>Number of orchestras</th>
<th>Average budget in 2009 dollars</th>
<th>Number of orchestras</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>$4,910,000</td>
<td>34 (34)</td>
<td>$104,000</td>
<td>c250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>26 (21)</td>
<td>$4,118,000</td>
<td>54 (5)</td>
<td>$246,000</td>
<td>c400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>$13,200,000</td>
<td>100 (58)</td>
<td>$1,370,000</td>
<td>c600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>$31,395,000</td>
<td>350 (71)</td>
<td>$3,867,487</td>
<td>c1200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

132 Shanet and Spitzer, “Orchestra.”
133 Ibid.
134 Ibid.
In 2009, the orchestras defined as “major” operated on budgets of $10 million or more, scheduled forty or more weeks per season, and were staffed with professional musicians (the majority with full-time contracts).\textsuperscript{135} The “regional” orchestras operated on budgets of $1-$10 million with seasons consisting of fifteen or more weeks, and were staffed with professional part-time musicians (not full-time).\textsuperscript{136}

As of 2009, the *New Grove* recognizes approximately thirty “major” orchestras operating as *corporate entities* in the United States.\textsuperscript{137} These cultural institutions are incorporated as tax-exempt, charitable corporations with some semblance of a governing board of directors, who then hire the music or artistic director (conductor) and an executive director. A hierarchical structure is accordingly formed in acquiring the musicians, managers, administrative staff, marketing and development, human resources, and so on. Major orchestras subsisting on large operating budgets and endowments tend to provide full-time musicians’ salaries for a fifty-two-week season, whereas small- to mid- sized orchestras operate closer to a forty-week season.\textsuperscript{138}

\textsuperscript{135} Shanet and Spitzer, “Orchestra.”
\textsuperscript{136} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{137} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{138} Ibid.
Chapter 3. The Current Orchestral Model: Its Necessities and Challenges

Orchestras as Charitable Organizations

Symphony orchestras in the U.S. are predominantly incorporated as not-for-profit institutions and make up a culturally valuable portion of the charitable and voluntary sector. As dictated by the mandates established by Congress and the Internal Revenue Service, orchestral organizations qualify for tax-exempt status under the IRC section 501(c)(3) due to their purpose of serving the public good.\(^{139}\) The IRC section 501(c)(3) grants tax exemption to organizations whose purposes are religious, charitable, scientific, literary, or educational; the promotion of the arts (including symphony orchestras) is recognized as a valid educational purpose.\(^ {140}\)

Acquiring the 501(c)(3) status is highly coveted in that it is designed to encourage charitable giving in exchange for serving a public good. The charitable status permits non-profit arts organizations to receive tax-deductible contributions, thus promoting and encouraging a culture of giving through donations.\(^ {141}\) In addition to the donation incentives, legal benefits of having the 501(c)(3) status include: (1) the organization’s net revenue (after expenses) is generally not subject to tax, and (2) the organization is eligible for grants from private foundations.\(^ {142}\)


\(^{140}\) Ibid.


In 1909, the IRS established an act to define the important concept of *private inurement* in relation to charitable institutions, making it illegal for non-profit organizations to use funds and other assets to benefit an individual related to said organization.\textsuperscript{143} Thus, private inurement must hold some impact over the organizational structure of a governing board so that recurring and proactive measures can be taken to protect contributed funds. Symphony orchestras are usually organized into a hierarchical structure consisting of a governing board, a chief executive officer, a music director (or artistic director), administrative staff, and musicians. The model ideally inspires a democratic ecosystem of checks-and-balances relating to mission-driven decisions (including the responsibility of funding distribution).

The governing board (or Board of Directors) bears a great deal of weight in terms of maintaining the health of their organization. In addition to being accountable for the proper allocation of funds, the board must also draft and revise (when appropriate) their organization’s by-laws, articles of incorporation, and mission statement. First and foremost, in representing a non-profit entity, governing boards are mission-driven proponents of their organization. In making mission-driven decisions, part of their duties include building mutual trust with their invested donors, and ensuring (ideally) a healthy relationship between all constituents of the organization as a part of maintaining their responsibility to the public trust. Adopting a culture of transparency largely assists governing boards with establishing public confidence and trust.

Moreover, the board is also responsible for the election of a crucial figure who will represent the image of the organization and will likely be recognized by the public within his/her community – the music director. He/she often acts as the leader of the organization’s ensemble of musicians and serves as a mediator between the musicians and governing board. Music

\textsuperscript{143} Arnsberger et al., “A History of the Tax-Exempt Sector,” 124.
directors can largely set the reputation of the institution, especially in regards to appealing to a specific audience demographic within his/her community. Traditionally, the music director has most of the authority in programming choices, and assumes the majority of the artistic control.

Major orchestras with operating budgets of $10 million or more utilize a tactfully complex system of human resources, but that is not to say that regional and smaller orchestras are any less wary of the complications involved with their own resources. Regional orchestras are crucial to the overall principals of the orchestral model, as they make up the bulk of classical performance distribution throughout many more metropolitan and mid-sized cities within the country. Unfortunately, these mid- to small- organizations do not usually offer full-time salaried contracts; wages are considerably less than the major orchestras.

The framework of financing orchestras was consolidated in the second half of the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{144} Orchestras have lost what used to be an indispensable role within the mainstream entertainment business, thus prompting a push towards greater dependence on public subsidizing and philanthropic funding.\textsuperscript{145} After the Kennedy and Johnson administrations lobbied for greater government involvement with the performing arts during the 1960s, the Baltimore Symphony and the Federal Music Project orchestras were the first to incorporate public funding into their financial operations.\textsuperscript{146}

The Inherent Challenges of a Fixed Location

Classical music performance has shifted away from an advantageous position of exposure towards a more exclusive use of venue space that is, perhaps, necessitated by the complexity of the organization. American orchestras today provide concerts in large halls with the intent of

\textsuperscript{144} Shanet and Spitzer, “Orchestra.”
\textsuperscript{145} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{146} Ibid.
attracting audiences of subscribers and regular patrons. While orchestras gravitate towards the use of a fixed physical building as a home base, it becomes more rare “to hear a full orchestra of live musicians in the theater, in a restaurant, at an exhibition, in a public park, or at a dance; they have been replaced in these venues by smaller, amplified ensembles and by recorded music.”

Orchestras are faced with the inherent impediment of rigidity in performing in a fixed location, which becomes inflexible for interested and non-interested patrons. A consequence of the venue as the primary means of communicating classical music performance to the community is that the American orchestra loses a ubiquitous foothold within the American culture; today, it “occupies a far narrower cultural niche than it did in the nineteenth century.”

Nevertheless, a physical venue space has come to accommodate a necessary function in that rehearsals and performances are easily and more conveniently accessible to the ensemble. It takes hours of labor to set up and break down the components of arranging the rehearsal space in which cannot be possible in randomized venue locations; a home base creates structure and formulaic procedures in preparing the ensemble within a timely manner. Fixed venue locations can also be conducive to the overall quality of sound production depending on the acoustics of the building itself. Perhaps most imperative to the necessity of a venue space is the protection offered to the musicians’ valuable and priceless instruments that benefit from the controlled environment of the building. The many components involved with the staging include sensitive recording devices, adequate air circulation and conditioning, lighting, and issues with sound balance, all in which have some influence on the musicians’ instruments.

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147 Spitzer, “The Ubiquity and Diversity of Nineteenth-Century American Orchestras,” 19.
148 Ibid.
The Current Funding Framework

American orchestras maintain solvency by means of two principal sources of revenue – contributed and earned income. Moreover, artists and arts organizations rely heavily on a network of allied but independent funding avenues. The three established types of contributed income for arts organizations are: (1) direct funds awarded by the National Endowment for the Arts and by local, regional, and state arts agencies, (2) funding from federal departments and agencies outside of the NEA, and (2) private sector contributions. Additionally, the National Center for Arts Research (NCAR) recognizes five important contributed revenue sources that include (1) trustee contributions, (2) individual contributions, (3) corporate contributions, (4) foundation support, and (5) government support.

In 2014, the average unrestricted contributed revenue for American symphony orchestras accounted for 55% of average total expenses. Moreover, contributed revenue generally covers over a half of average total expenses for the symphony orchestra sector; in 2011, the percentage was 50%, 47% in 2012, 53% in 2013, and 53% in 2014. The breakdown by size indicates that small orchestras have a higher unrestricted contributed revenue percentage than medium orchestras. In 2011, the average unrestricted contributed revenue index for small orchestras was 61.8%, 64.5% in 2012, 65% in 2013, and 63.5% in 2014, whereas medium orchestras went from 56.1% (2011), 55.2% (2012), 58.8% (2013), to 61.8% (2014). In 2014, NCAR’s research

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151 Ibid.
152 Ibid.
153 Ibid.
shows that the overall composition of contributed sources of revenue was comprised of 6% Trustee Contributions, 13% Individual Contributions, 3% Corporate Contributions, 5% Foundation Support, and 3% Government Support.\(^{154}\)

In addition to contributed funding, orchestras may also earn revenue through ticket and merchandizing sales. Both sources of income, however, are quite volatile and largely rely on the public interest. Kevin Mulcahy asserts that “First, the responsibility for public culture is spread among a variety of federal agencies; among these the [NEA] may be \textit{primus inter pares}, but it is not paramount.”\(^{155}\) Public interest is, thus, rooted in “a funding triad composed of individual and institutional philanthropy, earned income, and government funding.”\(^{156}\) The concerns of public interest predicate all cultural institutions becoming “increasingly market driven in their need for supplementary funds and a source of justification.”\(^{157}\)

In relation to private sector contributions, American orchestras generally recognize three categories of individual donors:\(^{158}\)

1. Low-level donors: individuals who give relatively small donations on occasion or once a year.
2. Mid-level donors: individuals who give a moderate sum of money (largely defined by the organization’s division of giving recognition) and give at least annually.


\(^{156}\) Ibid., 104.

\(^{157}\) Ibid., 103.

3. High-level donors: individuals who give large gifts at least annually or very large gifts once; this designation depends on the organization’s definition of a *large gift*.

![Figure: Recognized Giving Potential](image)

Arts organizations often group donors into classifications that can be hierarchically structured like a pyramid. Referring to Figure 1, notice how lower level donors account for the largest portion of individual giving, and act as a pipeline in diversifying revenue streams in various levels of donor support. Mid-level donors, however, provide the main weight of support for most organizations and could be considered as the *core givers*. Every level of the pyramid is essential to the long-term sustainability of any orchestra, large or small; having donors at all levels mitigates risk.\(^\text{160}\)

Between 2011 to 2014, NCAR’s annual breakdown of American symphony orchestras by size indicate that small orchestras have a higher individual contributions index than medium orchestras, which consistently had a higher index than large orchestras.\(^\text{161}\) Individual contributions for small orchestras increased from 15.6% to 18.4% between 2011-2014, and

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\(^{159}\) Fresina and Pickles, “Goals and Strategies for Fundraising.”

\(^{160}\) Ibid.

\(^{161}\) National Center for Arts Research, “To What Extent Do Unrestricted Contributions from Each of these Sources Cover Expenses?” under “Trustee, Individual, Corporate, Foundation and Government Indices.”
medium orchestras from 12.6% to 17.3%. Revenue from individual contributions fluctuated considerably over the years for large orchestras, with a low of 9.8% in 2014.

Additional sources of contributed income include community, family, and corporate foundation giving. Foundations are designated as tax-exempt, nonprofit organizations under the IRS, and range from public to private charities. Arts foundations invest in various subjects and fields through a highly selective grant-making process. Such foundations can fuel progress in music education and performance, special interest projects that focus on cultural preservation, commissioning of new works, interdisciplinary studies, and research-related fields. Most notable is the Ford Foundation’s commitment to development departments focusing on arts administration training; the foundation has also funded larger increases in the endowments of major and regional orchestras.

While individual giving and grants awarded by foundations provide for a substantial portion of the symphony orchestra sectors’ total contributions, government funding is an ancillary resource that has become increasingly limited to the charitable sector as a whole. The NEA and the Department of Education are, perhaps, the greatest federally engaged assets to arts organizations. In acting as a public funding source, the NEA distributes and administers grants to arts organizations on a project by project basis. The NEA, as an altruistic funding vehicle,

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162 National Center for Arts Research, “To What Extent Do Unrestricted Contributions from Each of these Sources Cover Expenses?” under “Trustee, Individual, Corporate, Foundation and Government Indices.”
163 Ibid.
165 Ibid.
166 Shanet and Spitzer, “Orchestra.”
represents an idea that inspires the arts community because it serves as “a form of risk capital, enabling organizations to leverage support locally, and as an imprimatur to demonstrate an asset worthy of private investment.”

State, regional, and local funding resources also offer critical support to the arts community. As stewards of the NEA, State arts agencies (SAAs) have provided direct public support for the arts within their respective states, thus broadening the reach of the federal arts agency. In addition to the financial resources made available to local arts organizations, SAAs offer technical assistance, training, and programs that greatly enhance the institutions’ human resources. Like the NEA, SAAs award grants through a rigorous and competitive process and are comprehensive in offering support to artists, arts organizations, schools, media organizations, and various community groups within their states.

While financial contributions make up roughly or over a half of the average total revenue for symphony orchestras, these organizations also generate earned revenue through ticket sales, selling merchandise, and, on occasion, record distributions and sales. In 2013, the average Total Earned Revenue for symphony orchestras was 51.8% in which covered their Total Expenses. NCAR data reveals that the symphony orchestra sectors’ earned revenue index was erratic between 2010 to 2013; the index was 46.5% in 2010, 50.5% in 2011, 40.2% in 2012, and 51.9%

169 Ibid.
170 Ibid.
in 2013.\textsuperscript{172} The erratic behavior of the NCAR results show that contributed revenue must make up for the gap in average expenses and that earned revenue is not necessarily following an upward and more reliable trend.

Ticket sales and subscriptions are the primary source of revenue generated from the exchange of the orchestra’s performing services. The dependence on subscription packages are ideally advantageous for orchestras because they allow for a larger sum of revenue towards the beginning of the season to use for operating or wage-related purposes. Moreover, they design an incentive for patrons to regularly attend the subscription concerts, thus cultivating a higher attendance rate.

Sadly, the subscription package has not yielded these results within the past twenty to thirty years, as general audience attendance rates have followed a steady decline. In \textit{The State of Nonprofit America}, Margaret Wyszomirski notes, “Most performing arts organizations have discovered that traditional subscription packages are outmoded and instead have developed flexible and tailored subscription programs.”\textsuperscript{173} Nonetheless, even flexible and modified subscription options can only remedy so much in a domain that suffers from declining audience attendance rates.

A Case for Public Funding

Orchestras often feel pressured to compose a compelling argument for funding their mission and organization. One such argument is that the arts are much more difficult to quantify than the industrialized sectors. Industries that operate on the production of goods, such as

\textsuperscript{172} National Center for Arts Research, “What is the Relationship of Unrestricted Earned Revenue to Expenses, Not Including Either Capital Gaines (Realized and Unrealized) or Depreciation?” under “Total Earned Revenue Index.”  
agriculture or manufacturing, can numerically measure their output and the quality of their goods. Service related industries, like the arts, are much harder to measure in output. Additionally, the arts are scrutinized by grant makers and funders in relation to a quality dimension, which is even harder to identify than quantity.\textsuperscript{174}

Productivity is generally understood as \textit{output per work-hour}.\textsuperscript{175} Manufacturing industries generate faster productivity growth as compared to service industries like the live performing arts.\textsuperscript{176} This is essentially possible because the costs (including wages) of producing more units of output are relatively minimal or increase incrementally and are potentially balanced by revenue gained from an increase in supply. Orchestras suffer from what is known as the \textit{productivity lag} because they cannot “substitute machinery for labor, and more machinery per worker is an important source of increased productivity.”\textsuperscript{177}

Moreover, \textit{output} for a performing arts organization is generally measured by: (1) number of performances, (2) number of separate productions, (3) number of tickets available for sale, and (4) number of tickets sold.\textsuperscript{178} Ticket sales are a popular quantifiable measuring source for orchestras because they correspond to the number of people sitting in seats; productions are limited to the parameters of seating within the venue wherein the goal is the reach capacity. Output is largely dictated by the manual labor of the workers, or the conductor and musicians. An unfortunate by-product of attempting to increase the productivity is an additionally incurred cost that cannot be offset by increasing units of output. James Heilbrun and Charles Gray

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{174} James Heilbrun and Charles M. Gray, \textit{The Economics of Art and Culture}, 2nd ed., (Cambridge University Press, 2001), 108.
\item \textsuperscript{175} Ibid., 137.
\item \textsuperscript{176} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{177} Ibid., 138.
\item \textsuperscript{178} Ibid., 108-109.
\end{itemize}
correlate output per work-hour with the number of rehearsal hours, which is usually directly proportional to the quality of the performance; more rehearsal hours typically yield better performances.\textsuperscript{179} With or without an increase in rehearsal hours, the wages for musicians and costs to maintain operations will only continue to rise in following general economic inflation trends. Orchestras must continue to provide competitive wages to their musicians, which leads to steadily rising ticket prices.\textsuperscript{180} It therefore becomes more difficult to attract people of low or moderate income to attend live performances if they cannot afford to purchase tickets.

Many major and regional orchestras also operate on a contractual basis with their musicians in negotiating fair wages. Such a negotiation process is often conducted by musicians’ unions that are designed to “regulate, protect, and improve the working conditions of their members (professional performing musicians) and to act as agents in negotiating contractual terms through the power of collective bargaining.”\textsuperscript{181} The combination of productivity lag, increased wages, and diminishing funding resources are all factors that often produce strained relations between musicians, directors, and governing boards. The productivity lag or \textit{gap} is the very nature of the traditional orchestral institution of operation; thus, public subsidy becomes increasingly valuable in bridging the gap between rising costs and stagnant productivity. Perhaps most alarming to the orchestral sector in addressing the productivity lag is that it will become increasingly difficult to maintain a healthy base of arts participation as ticket prices continue to rise.

\textsuperscript{179} Heilbrun and Gray, \textit{The Economics of Art and Culture}, 138.
\textsuperscript{180} Ibid., 145.
\textsuperscript{181} Loft and Anderson, “Unions, musicians’.”
Chapter 4. Current Trends and Their Impact on the Future of the Arts

As we, the arts community, continue to struggle to maintain operations within a limited and declining funding and audience base, many key issues concerning current philanthropic and social trends correlate with the conflict of public perception in proving the legitimacy of the arts as being essential to the American culture and economy. Furthermore, working within the context of the Digital Age affords us the potentially enormous opportunity of reestablishing a seemingly lost relationship with our communities. But are we losing sight of the significance of our definition of relationship? In principle, the arts are essential because they “enhance our quality of life and generate economic benefits and much more for communities.”182 The arts and culture are a medium in which “…we transmit group memory, celebrate ethnic and national identity, and interpret the past.”183 These are beautiful and optimistic sentiments, but why should we bear the struggle of fulfilling our missions if we are failing to really connect with our dwindling audience base – connect with those who have little to no exposure to our craft?

Beginning in the 1990s, the arts sector began employing an economic development argument in building a case for viable contribution to economic growth.184 Currently, the nonprofit classical arts sector consistently proves its economic worth in its exponential and disproportionately substantial contribution to the overall GDP and the nation’s economy; in this respect, disproportionately means that these institutions manage to yield an abundance of cash flow with very limited resources. In making a case for the industry’s profitability, nonprofit arts

183 Ibid.
and culture organizations generated $135.2 billion of economic activity in 2016, which then supported more than 4 million full-time jobs.\(^\text{185}\)

The arts also channel valuable commerce and networking to local merchants, as arts organizations “leverage additional event-related spending by their audiences that pump vital revenue into restaurants, hotels, retail stores,” and other various businesses.\(^\text{186}\) Cities with vibrant, local arts and cultural communities facilitate tourism in which cultural travelers tend to stay longer and spend more.\(^\text{187}\) On the mutually beneficial cycle between the arts and the U.S. economy, Sarah Cortell Vandersypen comments:

> The arts have helped to create and sustain jobs (through direct and indirect spending), government revenue (through taxes), and tourism. Moreover, nonprofit arts and cultural organizations “act as economic drivers” in enabling an interwoven connection between the three economic contributions.\(^\text{188}\)

**Trends in the Digital Age**

One would argue that the technological advancements made within the last twenty years have solely served an advantageous purpose to society. The media and the Internet have made and continue to make great strides in enhancing communication throughout the world, but they have contrarily been responsible for the cultivation of an age of instant gratification, which consequently affects people’s willingness to attend arts events. Why should consumers choose to spend their time attending a concert when they can do so within the comfort and convenience of

\(^{185}\) Vandersypen, “Alternative Uses of Data.”
\(^{187}\) Ibid., 17.
\(^{188}\) Vandersypen, “Alternative Uses of Data.”
their home through technological intermediaries like *YouTube* or *Livestream*? And why would anyone choose to wait for an event when he/she could access almost any recording at any time?

The advancements made to electronic media (radio, movies, and recordings) during the first half of the twentieth century had positive and negative impacts on American orchestras. For one, orchestras benefited from the dissemination of their musical products to a much wider audience. Drawbacks to the advancements included the complicated and often laborious recording process; for instance, strings had to be reinforced with wind instruments.\(^{189}\) Orchestras did not use microphones in the early twentieth century, as it was inconvenient with an ensemble of sixty to seventy musicians.\(^{190}\) Despite the arduous limitations, the dissemination of classical repertoire was beneficial in that it exposed the public to an array of quality performances and widened its arts participation demographic.

The advent of live radio broadcasts exposed a public audience to the highest quality renditions of well-established repertoire performed by some of the most distinguished orchestras in America. Conductors could also enhance cultural appreciation through educational lectures prior to the performance; the NBC Music Appreciation Hour was incorporated into school curricula across the country until 1942.\(^{191}\) Joan Shelley Rubin regards the commercial radio as a medium employed by “middlebrow figures” in bridging the gap between “high art” and “low art”, as intellectual figures could didactically address their audience with their information and knowledge.\(^{192}\) Record royalties, broadcast income, and rental income provided relatively modest

\(^{189}\) Shanet and Spitzer, “Orchestra,” *Grove Music Online*.

\(^{190}\) Ibid.

\(^{191}\) Ibid.

earned revenue for many of the major orchestras. The New York Philharmonic has made more than 2,000 recordings on such forms as 78s, LPs, eight-track tapes, cassettes, compact discs, iTunes downloads, and live-streaming video on Facebook.\textsuperscript{193}

Despite the new and innovative developments being made to the recording and dissemination of classical music, the chronic issue that reverberates throughout the orchestral community is that there is little to no market demand for classical music (live and recorded). Never before has the option of listening to classical music been so easily accessible, convenient, and affordable. Yet, the arts community struggles to maintain a recurring audience attendance base. Moreover, the collective impact of the mass media (television, radio, motion pictures, and advertising) on popular culture has largely impaired the viability of the arts. Heilbrun and Gray note, “In the competition between popular culture and high art, the commercial mass media bias the outcome very sharply in favor of the former.”\textsuperscript{194} This proclivity largely operates on the assumption that the arts offer little return on investment and are quantifiably considered less profitable than catering to the tastes of the majority.

An adverse byproduct of the rapid advancements made in the digital age closely relates to the productivity lag in terms of defining quality: who now dictates \textit{good} art? Social media and streaming platforms have brought to the public a spectrum of art, recreation, and entertainment. Authority over good art, consequently, has moved from the exclusive hands of the experts to those of the general populace (or the “amateurs”). The advantages of these platforms are that


\textsuperscript{194} Heilbrun and Gray, \textit{The Economics of Art and Culture}, 361.
artists now have the potential to distribute their musical product to a much wider audience demographic and to connect with people from all over the world. In 2013, symphony orchestras engaged with an average of 49.7% of the population through virtual and in-person touch points, and only 6% of the population through in-person touch points alone.\textsuperscript{195} NCAR recognizes that “Opera Companies and Symphony Orchestras both engage far more people through digital offerings than in-person: both sectors engage 12% of their total touch points in-person and 88% virtually.”\textsuperscript{196} While the live experience is an indispensable and irreplaceable aspect of these art forms, “they now hold an important existence as digital art forms in contemporary society.”\textsuperscript{197}

Musicians have already begun to tap into this culturally shifted market. TwoSet Violins has and continues to experience paramount success in appealing to the public through Internet music streaming services like \textit{YouTube} and \textit{Facebook}; the comedic duo’s 2017 crowd-funding campaign of $50,000 was achieved in mere days through the mechanism of busking.\textsuperscript{198} The stringed musicians of Time for Three are incredibly talented and accomplished classically-trained musicians who employ the use of unconventional programmatic devices to expand their demographic profile. They have experimented with live radio broadcasts of their performances, professional engagements with major orchestras (incorporating several cross-over popular pieces

\textsuperscript{196} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{197} Ibid.
into the program), and can be found performing in the most unusual places (one of which was in the aisle of a commercial airplane that effectively circulated around social networks in a matter of minutes). Wyszomirski recognizes the positive opportunity of “technology based intermediaries who can help arts organizations to reach potential consumers more efficiently and conversely to direct web-surfing consumers to cultural offerings.”\footnote{199}

Technology has been both intimidating and beneficial to the arts community. A notably positive trend has been the tool of big data that offers incredible funding strategies to arts organizations. Nonprofits are increasingly taking advantage of the resources available to them with data collection and analysis. Big data has cultivated a culture of transparency; invaluable information is now easily accessible to both the funder and the organization. For instance, the Internet offers a plethora of databases so as to help organizations find the right funder, and platforms like Guidestar foster an indispensable relationship between the two constituents. Americans for the Arts is another useful tool in which offers charts, graphs, and tables that many organizations can use to strengthen an economic development argument for the arts.\footnote{200}

Arts organizations are investing more into updating their digital resources and their trained employees. They are slowly but progressively adapting to the digital age and using their resources to make more informed decision on their internal and external challenges.\footnote{201} Critical uses of data include: (1) productivity of fundraising employees, (2) return on investment of time, effort, and strategies, (3) donor retention, (4) first time gifts, and (5) organizational trends.\footnote{202}

\footnote{199} “Arts and Culture,” in \textit{The State of Nonprofit America}, 201. 
\footnote{200} Vandersypen, “Alternative Uses of Data.”
\footnote{201} Ibid.
\footnote{202} Ibid.

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In setting a digital precedence within the arts community, the NEA is taking advantage of the potential impact that big data can have on its constituency. In 2012, the NEA partnered with the Bureau of Economic Analysis in developing the Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account (ACPSA); it became “the first federal effort to measure the arts and cultural sector’s contributions to the Gross Domestic Product.” Collectively, the partnership may have been attempting to build a more quantitative and objective case in asserting its invaluable place within the government and the economy. Data from ACPSA has proven (1) that arts and cultural production contributed more than $698 billion to the U.S. economy, or 4.32 percent of the nation’s GDP; (2) the employment of nearly five million workers related to the production of arts and cultural goods yielded $334.9 billion in compensation. ACPSA has initiated an innovative step towards helping the non-profit arts sector in gaining “a better, clearer understanding of how the arts impact the American economy, as well as new evidence that the arts aren’t just good for the spirit, but for the wallet too.”

SAAs are mirroring the NEA’s increased investment in the use of technology as a development tool; states acknowledge that a “competitive edge and a creative edge go hand-in-hand to support economic prosperity.” The simple act of these large funders recognizing the potential of data analysis undoubtedly motivates local organizations to improve their understanding of the needs and dispositions of different demographics within their community.

204 Ibid.
205 Ibid.
An important recommendation made by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices in gaining a better understanding of your state’s cultural industries is to conduct specialized *cluster* analyses; a cluster is “a group of related producers, suppliers, distributors, and consumers that draw advantages from their mutual proximity and relationships.”

Trends in Arts Attendance

American symphony orchestras are no strangers to a growing absence of audience attendance and have experienced the full gamut of volatile attendance rates, even from one concert to the next. In fact, since the 1960s, general audience participation (and, in effect, ticket sales) has followed a steady decline, save for a handful of large and famous orchestras. Arts attendance experienced a sharp decline from 2002 to 2008, but has followed a relatively stagnant trend from 2008 to 2012. The NEA discusses seven categories of *benchmark* arts activities (jazz events, classical music performances, opera, musical plays, non-musical plays, ballet, and art museums or galleries) in which have collectively followed a declining rate in the proportion of Americans who have attended at least one of the seven activities from 2002 to 2012. The percentage of U.S. adults attending benchmark arts activities at least once within a twelve month period fell from 39.4% in 2002 to 33.4% in 2012. Moreover, U.S. adults attendance in classical music-related events has comparably followed the negative trend; the percent of U.S. adults attendance in 2002 was 11.6%, 9.3% in 2008, and 8.8% in 2012. Thus, it has become

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208 Shanet and Spitzer, “Orchestra,” *Grove Music Online*.
210 Ibid., 3.
211 Ibid.
212 Ibid., 7.
incumbent upon us, the arts community, to adopt the role of scientist in researching why people

decide to attend arts-related events, and more importantly, why they choose not to participate in
response to addressing the overall declining audience attendance rate.

When one attends a classical concert, an initial observation might be the traditional

audience composition of regular patrons; these people are highly committed to and value the arts,

which is evidenced by their engagement and financial support. The importance of recognizing

both their temporal and financial support is paramount because selling tickets does not

necessarily mean that those patrons will attend the concert. Henk Roose suggests that these

patrons serve as the core audience, or the innermost circle of people “who are usually

professionally involved in the arts…”213 “Professionally”, in this context, may insinuate some

level of formal training or education in the arts wherein the core audience participant is well-

acquainted with the formal procedures of the art form. This core audience acts as the gatekeepers

of high classical art, and their avid participation in classical concerts largely contributes to a

public perception of intimidation held by many lower socio-economic demographics. The

gatekeepers who are often the majority of the core audience act as “a warning system for the less

experienced and less initiated listeners…”214

Moreover, Heilbrun and Gray acknowledge this debate as an opposition between the

elitists and the populists.215 The elitists might champion the role of acting as “the defenders of

‘excellence’ and ‘quality’,” whereas the populists are “advocates for artistic ‘pluralism’ and

‘democratic’ access to the arts.”216 Nevertheless, orchestras feel pressured to maintain their

bottom line in earned income and have long catered solely to their core audience of repeat

214 Ibid.
215 Heilbrun and Gray, The Economics of Art and Culture, 304.
216 Ibid.
attendees, so much so that classical concerts have adopted this culture of exclusion. On the interpretation of the nature of exclusivity, Heilbrun and Gray also note:

Symphony orchestras have the lowest earned income ratio among the five major categories [theater, ballet, opera, museums, and orchestras]. They are in general the oldest institutions in the nonprofit performing arts industry, many of them having been established in the nineteenth century. Consequently, they have long-standing ties with well-to-do patrons, especially with what is sometimes referred to as “old money”.  

Data from the NEA’s Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (conducted in the 1990s and 2000s) has indicated an “ongoing attrition in the audience” wherein the predominant patron composition in classical concerts consisted of white, well-educated, and middle- to upper-class citizens. Perhaps most alarming to the future of the arts is that this devoted core composition of patrons consists of an aging body of support wherein orchestras are struggling more and more with attracting young adults (persons age 18 to 24) who hold the immense potential for sustainability. In 2012, the composition of U.S. adults attending classical concerts was comprised of 16.7% between the ages of 45-54, 23% between 55-64, 31.3% between 65-74, and 36.5% above the age of 75, whereas the 18-24 age group was 11% and the 25-34 age group was 13.5%.

Young adults are an untapped resource that Henk Roose recognizes as being a part of the second of three groups of arts participants, the first being the aforementioned core audience. The second group most likely participates less frequently in classical concert events and “lacks formal training to be able to decode all semantic finesses of the art form.”

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217 Heilbrun and Gray, The Economics of Art and Culture, 155.  
219 Ibid.  
221 Roose, “Many-Voiced or Unisono? An Inquiry into Motives for Attendance,” 238.  
222 Ibid.
includes participants and non-participants who might show an interest in the arts. The third group consists of uninterested non-participants, or “incidental visitors” who are rather “passers-by than participants.” These individuals, however, should not be ruled out as potential patrons of the arts, as they, too, are a valuable part of our constituency in providing our services to the entirety of the community.

Continuing the research reports done by the NEA and SAAs, we need to re-evaluate how we engage and interact with the second and third groups by investigating the main motivations and barriers of attendance. Understanding and adapting to their perception about the arts have largely been left unaddressed outside of the NEA, which is not realistically useful for local organizations within the context of their communities. By and large, artists and arts organizations are facing challenges in retaining and attracting new audiences “while simultaneously upholding an artistic mission.” Wyszomirski highlights several issues in which arts organizations hold the capacity to transform:

As a consequence of changing demographics, organizations must simultaneously (a) keep or increase their share of the aging baby boomers in their audience even as this cohort revises the image of retiring and invents new stages of life, (b) cultivate generations X and Y and the latest digital generation as new audiences and new donors who have different value preferences than their elders and respond to different information media, and (c) successfully position their institutions in an increasingly competitive leisure and entertainment market.

National research reports offer invaluable insights into why people choose to attend or not attend concerts, which facilitates arts organizations in attempting to address some of these key issues.

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Many arts organizations have taken a more active role in grappling with “shifting demographics and a rapidly changing participatory culture.”

The NEA’s Research Report #59 offers a salient perspective on important barriers affecting interested non-attendees, “reminding us that people who have not recently attended the arts may exhibit different behavioral, attitudinal, and demographic characteristics, compared both with current audiences and also with other, uninterested non-attendees.” The research report is essentially a comprehensive national survey that illustrates evidence supporting the decline in U.S. adult’s attendance in various types of visual and performing arts events. The report is also based around two distinct types of barriers to arts attendance: perceptual and practical. Perceptual barriers correlate to “the way that people think about the arts based on past experiences and the attitudes and expectations of their social and familial circles.” Additionally, they may relate to an increased sense of risk and unapproachability to the art form, thus relegating prospective attendance.

Adding to this discussion is Julia Lowell, who asserts that many barriers “are likely to be perceptual rather than practical: These art forms may be viewed as exclusive or elitist, using symbolic languages that young people and ethnic minorities are unfamiliar with and do not see as relevant to their everyday lives.” The NEA suggests that practical barriers “come into play only after an individual overcomes perceptual barriers.”

227 Ibid., 6.
228 Ibid., 13.
229 Ibid.
230 Ibid.
231 Lowell, State Arts Policy, 8.
certainly act as a deterrence against adult individuals who show an interest in attending performances but ultimately decide not to follow through; the NEA classifies them as the *missing audience*. This missing audience accounts for approximately 31 million U.S. adults, and represents a potentially enormous, positive opportunity. Competition with other recreational activities is an ancillary challenge in which “…some 95 percent of Americans ages 15 and older engage in leisure activities on a daily basis. These include: TV-watching, exercising, and socializing.”

According to the NEA’s research report, the main motivators of arts attendance include: (1) socializing with friends or family members, (2) visiting a specific location or venue, (3) learning something new, (4) experiencing high-quality art, (5) supporting community events and organizations, (6) seeing a specific performer or works by a specific individual artist, (7) low cost, and (7) learning about or celebrating their family’s cultural heritage. Learning new things is often cited by parents with young children under age six, and celebrating cultural heritage is closely associated with supporting community events. In regards to expressing a desire to experience high-quality art, the NEA reports that the majority of attendees in orchestra concerts are empty-nesters and retirees who are more inquisitive in engaging with their local community events. The report also supports the greater likelihood of the general attendance base being individuals who identified themselves as upper class.

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234 Ibid.
235 Ibid., 4.
236 Ibid., 9.
237 Ibid., 2-3.
238 Ibid.
239 Ibid., 3.
On the opposite end of the spectrum are the key barriers for potential attendees, whom are defined as U.S. adults who expressed an interest in attending an arts-related event but did not do so within the past year, or interested non-attendees. Participants of the survey were asked to consider the following potential barriers in making their decision not to attend: (1) costs too much, (2) too difficult to get there, (3) could not find anyone to go with, (4) could not find the time, (5) did not want to go to that location, or (6) the programs or events were not of interest. Parents with young children especially agreed with the lack of time as a main barrier.

Arts organizations are making progressive strides in publishing research and scholarly works, but are these devices offering any substantial suggestions or solutions to the barriers of participation? Lowell suggests, “These kinds of barriers are relevant to people who already know they would like to participate in an art form, but they probably do not explain why organizations such as symphony orchestras…have such trouble attracting younger and more ethnically diverse audiences.” The NEA report also admits “To date, however, limited data have been collected to address why people do and do not attend.” Furthermore, not much is being done to ameliorate our understanding of the needs of uninterested non-attendees in which we dismiss as an untapped market. Yes, there will forever remain a probable group of people who will never attend a classical concert, but that should not deter the arts community from using that as a powerful and positive opportunity to challenge public perception.

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241 Ibid., 13.
242 Lowell, State Arts Policy, 8.
Funding for the arts is largely influenced by the changing external environments that can foster opportunities and trials for arts organizations. External environments include economic, political and legal, cultural and social, demographic, technological, and educational contexts.\textsuperscript{244} Economic uncertainty has continued to rise in 2017, which will undoubtedly impact the arts sectors within this changing landscape of public and private funding. The U.S. stands to experience the greatest intergenerational wealth transfer to the millennial generation.\textsuperscript{245} A survey conducted by the U.S. Trust on the giving trends of the wealthiest donors (defined as those from U.S. households with a net worth of $1 million or more)\textsuperscript{246} reveals the distribution of high net worth dollars to the Arts and Culture sector at a low percentage of 4.6%, with Religion, Basic Needs, Higher Education, and Health charitable categories receiving a substantially higher share of funding.\textsuperscript{247}

Generational giving statistics observe that different age demographics have vastly disparate incentives for private support. An interesting infographic breaks down the generations into five groups: the Matures, the Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation


\textsuperscript{247} Ibid., 18.
Of these groups, the Matures (born 1945 and earlier) are top supporters of emergency relief, troops and veterans, the arts, and advocacy and election campaigns. The Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964) represent the largest percentage of total giving (at 43%), but the arts are not necessarily one of the significant sectors receiving support. Generation X and Millennials will be extremely vital to the sustainability of nonprofit organizations, as they stand to inherit over $40 trillion; more importantly, Millennials represent over a quarter of the U.S. population. Communities across the country will be impacted by how Millennials become involved with civic and social causes. We are seeing a trend being passed down to each generation of becoming more engaged with the organization and its mission. The wealth transfer to millennials is a huge amount, and now it is a matter of what those donors (or “investors”) will do with that wealth.

In being the largest generation in the country and the workplace, millennials are in the position of having the greatest impact on how nonprofits and businesses approach cause work engagement. We are seeing a change in the traditional definition of philanthropy; “love of humankind in the form of time, talent, and treasure.” Now that millennials are being ushered into the philanthropic landscape, new approaches to how the millennial donor connects, gets involved with, and supports causes are redefining philanthropy. Millennials are continuing the

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249 Ibid.
250 Ibid.
251 Ibid.
philanthropic efforts of previous generations, but they are often more engaged in the process, as their motivations are different. The Case Foundation suggests adding two new criteria to the existing definition of *philanthropy*: voice and network.\(^{254}\) This generation is increasingly more vocal in advocating for and educating others about a cause. In doing so, they are aligning themselves with that particular cause or issue and actively getting others involved. Networking is creating advocacy on a much larger scale than voice, as one’s message has the potential to spread to thousands, if not millions, of people outside of the local area.\(^ {255}\) Most notably, social networking is taking rapid philanthropic action, with individual social networks adding value to a cause that can resonate with people across the country.

Private philanthropy is also seeing a strategic trend in partnership and collaboration between stakeholders with millennials utilizing these tools of engagement.\(^ {256}\) Partnership is proving to be the favored funding model amongst donors and organizations because “the more that we (civic society, philanthropists, NGOs, and activists) can work together toward a cause, the faster we can move the needle.”\(^ {257}\) However, philanthropists are also prioritizing engagement in deciding which social sectors are facing the most urgent missions, thus making it extremely difficult for arts organization to compete for the donor dollar.

Private philanthropy is not necessarily declining, but with public funding cuts across the board, nonprofit organizations are under a lot of pressure to make up for these losses in funds. Policymakers tend to assume that the private sector will fill this financial gap, and state political leaders have generally remained uninvolved concerning matters of arts policy and advocacy; the

\(^ {255}\) Ibid.
\(^ {256}\) Glanville, “Four Giving Trends Among Wealthy Donors.”
\(^ {257}\) Ibid.
SAAs deem this as the “arm’s length” approach. The majority of this support, however, is going towards religion, education, human services, and health. The Harvard Business Review also notes that “the problem is not money, per se,” as 10 million people work for nonprofits and nearly $700 billion of foundation assets contributed to these organizations. The problem lies in ineffective funding models, especially that of capital allocation; overhead costs are too often not being met because donors refuse to cover them. Grant-giving foundations like the Ford Foundation, Walton Family Foundation, and the Case Foundation have some capacity to meet the financial gap that is largely left by policymakers. These foundations act as “intermediaries between the individual donors who fund them and the various social enterprises that they, in turn, support.” America’s grant-making foundations command substantial resources and are entitled to considerable tax benefits and exemptions. They also operate with exceptional independence in that they are “free from

258 Lowell, State Arts Policy: Trends and Future Prospects, x.
260 Ibid.
262 Ibid.
direct responsibility to shareholders and voters.”

Michael Porter and Mark Kramer promote the innate capability of foundations to institute social progress: “Free from political pressures, foundations can explore new solutions to social problems with an independence that government can never have. And compared with individual donors, foundations have the scale, the time horizon, and the professional management to create benefits for society more effectively.”

A recent revival of an ancient funding model is beginning to take shape within the non-profit world: venture capitalism. Venture capitalism generates a sort of “impact investment” in which has started to “bring opportunities to harness entrepreneurship and capital markets to drive social improvement.” Venture, or civic, capitalism is essentially a hybrid model of for-profit and non-profit business strategies; a synonymous term would be social entrepreneurship.

Urban entrepreneurs and managers are engaging with civic activities while maintaining the mentality of business growth. Venture capitalism does not identify the entrepreneur as pushing his/her personal social agenda, but rather reveals his/her civic-minded capitalism that encourages the service of doing good. It seems that civic capitalism is more community-based, where we are seeing businessmen and women integrating a “social mission” into their investment within smaller and more local business ventures. Impact investing fosters social ventures “led by socially motivated entrepreneurs whose core mission is to bring about social change or innovation.”

If investors continue to utilize this funding model, the potential for talented social

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266 Porter and Kramer, “Philanthropy’s New Agenda.”
270 Ibid., 354.
271 Ibid., 367.
entrepreneurs to build effective organizations can proliferate a social impact while reaping financial returns at the same time. Nevertheless, even with the rise of this funding model, we are seeing a decline in private philanthropy for the arts, and it is affecting public arts organizations in their ability to sustain themselves.

Trends in the Political Environment: The Trump Administration at the Helm

The NEA serves as an important advocate for the preservation of the arts within American society, but ongoing funding cuts to the NEA and SAA’s budgets may reflect a negative public attitude towards the arts and, thus, effectuating a bleak outlook for arts organizations across the board. For instance, the FY2012 House Interior Appropriations Floor voted on the Walberg Amendment, which proposed to cut an additional $10.6 million from the NEA; it failed with 181 (yes) to 240 (no). What is important to note is that specific states, particularly those who are home to some of the nation’s major orchestras, have representatives who advocate for the arts (please refer to Table 2 below).

Table 2: Excerpts from the 2012 House Interior Appropriations Vote on the Walberg Amendment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Orchestra</th>
<th>Voted No</th>
<th>Voted Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>Los Angeles Philharmonic and San Francisco Symphony</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>Boston Symphony</td>
<td>All ten representatives voted “no”</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>New York Philharmonic</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>Chicago Symphony</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


273 Ibid.
Excluding Louisiana, these states most likely have political leaders who support the arts, which encourages the legitimacy of arts organizations within their communities and can reinforce missions that are highly valued by state residents and beneficiaries.

Despite the failure of the proposed Walberg Amendment, progressive action in maintaining arts funding is still a contested and controversial topic for many political leaders. President Trump’s initial 2017 budget plan called for the elimination of four independent cultural agencies – the NEA, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.\(^{274}\) The budgets of these four organizations, if eliminated, are believed to be “negligible as a percentage of the larger federal budget…”\(^{275}\) NEA supporters have defended funding for the arts by arguing that “public support for the arts is miniscule compared with national budgets for defense and entitlement programs.”\(^{276}\) Additionally, as arts agencies struggle to justify why they deserve federal dollars, other federal departments are “fighting for their share, which in turn could put increased strain on philanthropic funding for a large range of social services, including health care and education.”\(^{277}\)


\(^{275}\) Ibid.


\(^{277}\) Kennicott and McGlone, “Trump Wants to Cut the NEA and NEH.”
The elimination of the NEA would undoubtedly have a colossally negative impact on arts organizations’ ability to leverage state, corporate, and individual contributions; the endowment has been a “powerful incentive for states to maintain their own arts agencies.”\textsuperscript{278} It would also severely corrode the arts sector’s position in the social and economic ecosystems, prompting many to view the arts as unimportant or less deserving of support. The difficult reality of the lack of support from our country’s leader can trigger an enormous shift in public perception on the arts’ place and purpose within the community at large. Many arts organizations already struggle with recurring deficits and are operating at the edge of solvency. Every cultural sector would be “forced to rethink how to survive, and what they would be able to preserve of their fundamental mission.”\textsuperscript{279} A concerning repercussion would also directly affect the beneficiaries; the areas to suffer the most detriment would be poor and rural communities, and schoolchildren, seniors, and veterans.\textsuperscript{280}

\textsuperscript{278} Kennicott and McGlone, “Trump Wants to Cut the NEA and NEH.”
\textsuperscript{279} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{280} Ibid.
Chapter 5. A Survey: Methodology and Data Analysis

The impetus of my initial inquiries into the investigation and implementation of an unorthodox marketing strategy came from a relevant economic observation made by James Heilbrun and Charles M. Gray:

Consumers…have to be aware of all the available options if they are to make optimal choices. Ignorance on the part of consumers is therefore a source of market failure. The arts are rightly said to be an “acquired” taste, meaning that the consumer has to be familiar with them to enjoy them and that once consumers do become knowledgeable, their demand is likely to increase markedly. But consumers are not in a position to acquire the taste if they lack information about the arts. (“Information” is here understood broadly as including not only “facts” but also the opportunity to experience the thing itself).281

In being an orchestral musician (and, therefore, a member of the suppliers side), I have mostly concerned myself with my art, and ignored the dispositions of the consumers who hold the power to illuminate avenues of re-establishing successful relationships. I also greatly value the exhausting and innovative steps that orchestral organizations are currently taking in widening their community outreach. In an attempt to entice a younger demographic, the San Francisco Symphony has launched its SoundBox program in which patrons are encouraged to enter a curiously sunken space that houses live music of various classical genres and a bar stocked with craft cocktails and small bites.282 The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra has initiated its Autism Community Program as inspiration in experimenting with sensory-friendly chamber music

programs and to promote social interaction amongst its beneficiaries.\textsuperscript{283} The League of American Orchestras also recognizes the combined efforts of orchestras in making music with diverse communities wherein “Orchestras are reaching new audiences in unexpected ways, from collaborating with community service and educational organizations to redefining the concert experience through the use of technology.”\textsuperscript{284} My survey is only an additional marketing device that I hope can benefit symphony orchestras in continuing their efforts to better serve their community.

The NEA survey reports served as inspirational tools that prompted me to delve further into my inquiries; I essentially adapted their strategy of conducting field research into a more localized approach. What was most alarming (and proved to be quite inconvenient) was that I struggled to find research-related and quantitative sources that were current to today’s trends. I sincerely hope that this is not an indication of the future of funding in continued research on the arts, especially in regards to philanthropic trends and public perception. Thus, the following study was spurred by the lack of research involving perceptual barriers; an intense curiosity ensued in collecting local data on how people perceive the arts.

In conducting a general survey within my local community (Baton Rouge, LA), my proposal was a push towards a paradigm shift in the traditional orchestra model and the overall dialogue between the orchestra, musicians, administrative staff, and each generation of beneficiaries. As a marketing strategy for symphony orchestras, I set out to test an unorthodox way of presenting to and communicating with the public, specifically to a variety of

\textsuperscript{284} League of American Orchestras, “Community Impact and Engagement: Orchestra Story Bank.”
demographics. I wanted to find out if we, the arts community, were ignoring a large disconnect with our community. The test concurrently allowed me the opportunity of collecting invaluable data on a pool of the population.

Methodology

Description of the Service: I implemented live and informal classical demonstrations in informal settings throughout my community. The demonstrations represented a live classical performance (either as a solo violinist or with collaborating instrumentalists) that facilitated data collection and an educative purpose. The demonstrations created a relationship between myself, the musician, and the listener through the simple acts of exposure and proactive engagement. Participants were randomized, with few repeat attendees (who were not given additional surveys).

Method of Data Collection: Willing participants ages 18 and above were given a survey as an interactive means of receiving feedback while I, the musician, provided a live demonstration of an assortment of violin works. Surveys were provided via print form (please refer to the survey in the Appendix on page 97). The average duration of completing the survey took less than 15 minutes.

Sample Size: A population sample size was generated with the help of Creative Research Systems Survey Software. For a population of approximately 230,000 and a confidence level of 95%, and a confidence interval of 5% (or margin of error), the sample size needed was 384 participants.\(^{285}\)

Timeline: The projected goal was to give demonstrations over 11 weeks, with at least 3 performances per week and 12 completed surveys per performance. Much to my surprise, my overall sample size goal of 384 was reached within the first two weeks of demonstrations, as the number of willing survey participants greatly exceeded 12 surveys per performance.

Location: Geographic coverage consisted of various, participating local businesses and organizations within the Baton Rouge metropolitan area. Target areas were based on several criteria including foot traffic, demographics, busiest times of day, seating capacity as a courtesy to the participants, and Zip Code Tabulation areas (specifically lower-income households). Participating businesses included fast-food restaurants and coffee shops in the Downtown, Midtown, LSU/Lakeshore, Old South, and Sherwood Forest areas. I also provided demonstrations within car dealerships in the Sherwood Forest area, and various clothing stores within the Cortana Mall and Mall of Louisiana.

Community Demographic Analysis: According to the United States Census Bureau, the 2015 Baton Rouge City population is approximately 229,186 (2016 estimates are not yet available). The city’s ethnic composition is comprised of approximately 39% Whites, 55% African Americans, 3% Hispanics, 3.5% Asians, and less than 2% Other Ethnicity. The median household income is $39,876, with 26% of total households living in poverty, but the high school graduation rate has increased to 87%.

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287 Ibid.
288 Ibid.
Demonstration-Related Details: A general poster with pertinent personal information regarding my research inquiries was propped on a stand next to each demonstration. The total length of the demonstrations was anywhere from one to one-and-a-half hours, and actual performance time was approximately thirty to forty-five minutes long. I stopped between every piece to speak to the public regarding information about the specific piece being performed, my instrument, or my academic studies. Audience members and survey participants were highly encouraged to ask questions or provide any anecdotes relating to their classical music experience. I made sure to wear casual clothing (i.e. t-shirt and jeans, colorful sundress, sandals) and specifically chose not to don the usual concert black uniform associated with professional orchestral performance.

Reasons for Conducting the Research:

1. as a means of collecting data that is relevant to the needs and interests of the current cultural and community environment
2. to reach a much wider audience demographic
3. to cultivate collaboration with various local businesses and vendors
4. to initiate a dialogue with the audience that fosters education and exposure to said constituents

The fourth reason for conducting my research was a key component in combating public perceptions and impressions often associated with classical concerts. We, as musicians and purveyors of classical music, have the ability to make the greatest and most immediate impact in altering or reshaping public perception of the so-called “high art” that has been historically adapted into American culture through European hegemony. “This approach,” notes Melissa Dobson, “makes the acquisition of knowledge and understanding about classical music more accessible, therefore further increasing the non-attenders’ understanding of the role of the
performer.” In accordance with her stance, exposing my artistry to the general public created a direct link between the musician and the listener that is often missing within the context of an orchestra concert.

Data Analysis: The following output for this paper was generated using Qualtrics software, Version 7-9.2017 of Qualtrics. Copyright 2017 Qualtrics. Qualtrics and all other Qualtrics product or service names are registered trademarks of Qualtrics, Provo, UT. As a graduate assistant for the Louisiana State University School of Music, I was granted access to the Qualtrics software, which largely facilitated accurate records of my data, as I had 400 paper surveys.

Table 3: General Concert Attendance from Survey Pool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>58%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows the results of Question 10 in the survey (located in the Appendix): Have you ever attended, in person, an orchestra concert? The options are binary answers – yes or no. Of the total survey pool, those who answered yes will hereafter be interchangeably addressed as Attendees (of classical concerts) and those who have not will be addressed as Non-Attendees (of classical concerts). Attendees have previously patronized a live orchestra performance, whereas Non-Attendees have not. As one can deduce, almost half of my survey participants had yet to

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experience live orchestral performances, which leaves a gargantuan market opportunity for my local community to investigate.

Of the Attendees (Yes Group in Red) and Non-Attendees (No Group in Purple), Table 4 (on the following page) shows a breakdown of the two groups by general race. Most notable is the results relative to the Black, African, or African American body of survey participants in that approximately 81% of participants have not attended an orchestra concert.

Table 4: Concert Attendance in Comparison to Race Ratios

Compare this to the 71% of White/European participants who have attended a concert, which largely agrees with the NEA’s observance of the predominant audience base being White/European.

Table 5 (on the following page) provides a breakdown of income groups and the percentage of survey participants per group who have and have not attended an orchestra concert. Generally, the percentage of survey participants whose annual income was less than $30,000 was higher in never previously having attended an orchestra concert. With the exception
of those who earned between $60,000 and $69,000, the other income bracket groups showed a higher percentage in Attendees of classical concerts compared to Non-attendees. Perhaps this indicates that arts participants within my community are less deterred by ticket prices for orchestral events if they earn above $30,000 a year.

Table 5: Income Comparison of Attendance

Table 6: Likelihood of Attendance in Relation to Education
Table 6 reveals that more survey participants with a bachelor’s, graduate, or post-graduate degree have attended a live classical concert as compared to those with a highest earned degree of high school or an associate’s degree. Moreover, the percentage of Attendees with a master’s (84%) or professional (75%) degree was far greater than any other educated group. The educated populace within Baton Rouge seems to show a positive inclination in supporting the cultural arts, and perhaps a higher education cultivates a greater appreciation for classical art forms like symphony orchestra concerts.

Table 7: Factors Contributing to Concert Attendance

Of the Attendee group (those who have attended a concert), four factors were listed as options that represented principle motivators in choosing to attend a concert. The results yielded the leading motivator as experiencing high-quality art (34%), with learning new things as a relatively less concerning motivator for participants. Attendees also prioritized a social inclination in sharing their experience with their friends and family. This information is useful in that orchestras can devise more interactive and engaging activities for their patrons in
encouraging social interaction, which would largely break the perception of orchestra concerts being “stuffy” or “boring”.

Table 8: Expressing an Interest in Concert Attendance for Non-Attendees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>68%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 exhibits results from Question 17 (of the survey) with regards to the Non-Attendee group. Of those who have not attended an orchestra concert, 68% have, at one point, expressed an interest in attending a concert but have chosen not to follow through with their interest. Within my community, that means there exists an overwhelmingly large group of interested potential patrons who orchestras like the Baton Rouge Symphony Orchestra need to address as valuable beneficiaries.

Moreover, Table 9 (on the following page) continues with the investigation into the main barriers of attendance for the Non-Attendees. The left division of the graph yields results for the Non-Attendees who answered YES to having expressed an interest in attending an orchestra concert but have not done so. The right division shows results pertaining to the group of Non-Attendees who answered NO to expressing an interest in attending a concert. Notice that the group who expressed an interest (listed on the X-axis as “Yes”) listed lack of time (64%), not having anyone to go with (59%), and being intimidated by orchestra concerts (52%) as the top three barriers of taking action in actually attending an orchestra concert. For the group who expressed no interest in attending an orchestra concert (listed on the X-axis as “No”), the top
three barriers on attendance were not having anyone to go with (82%), lack of time (79%), and being intimidated by orchestra concerts (75%).

Table 9: Main Barriers on Attendance Based on Non-Attendees' Willingness to Attend Concerts

In regards to the results from Table 9, we, as an arts community, have the capacity to address the third main barrier on attendance for potential patrons in combating the stigma that orchestra concerts are too intimidating, as both groups of interested and non-interested Non-Attendees believe orchestra concerts to be unwelcoming or outside of their comfortability.

Table 10: Potential Ticket Sales for Non-Attendees
Continuing with the group of interested and non-interested Non-Attendees (those who have not attended a concert), Table 10 reveals potential earned revenue via ticket sales that are largely being dismissed. 43% of the Non-Attendees who said “Yes” to having been interested in going to an orchestra concert but chose not to attend are willing to pay up to $20 for a ticket; we must also add to that the 32% of potential patrons who would be willing to pay up to $10.

Table 11: Correlation Between Arts Education in Non-Attendees and Their Willingness to Attend a Concert

Table 11 demonstrates the correlation between being exposed to classical music during formative years of education and willingness to attend an orchestra concert as an adult. The pie chart on the left represents the group of Non-Attendees who have been interested in attending a concert but have not done so, in which 61% said they had some exposure to classical music in their elementary or middle school education. The pie chart on the right representing the non-interested Non-Attendees seems to shed light on a lowered interest in attending a concert if the Non-Attendee has not been exposed to arts education during their elementary or middle school education.
According to Table 12, the main barrier deterring the survey pool’s Attendees (those who have attended an orchestra concert) seems to be the lack of information regarding event details. 18% of the Attendees said they do not receive any information on future concerts, which means orchestras within my community have failed in their marketing or visibility strategies.

Furthermore, Table 13 (on the following page) yields results on how the survey participants (both Attendees and Non-Attendees) were being exposed to upcoming concerts or events. The top three marketing indicators were participants doing their own research through Internet browsing (30%), through information posted on social media platforms (40%), and a complete lack of information (44%). The community is largely being left uninformed about orchestra concerts or is having to rely on its own means of locating such information (which many people find to be inconvenient). Posting event information on social media platforms is a fast, accessible, and cost-effective means of establishing your organization’s visibility, but it is not an effective solution to the larger problem at hand – people are simply not aware of these events.
Table 13: Visibility of Concerts to the Survey Pool

Table 14: Relationship Between Speaking with the Musician and Acquiring Information
For the Attendees and Non-Attendees who had the chance to speak with the musician(s), they were asked the following question (Number 28 on the survey): “Did speaking with the musician(s) change your perception of orchestra concerts or make you feel more informed about classical music?” The results from Table 14 show that 70% of Attendees who spoke with the musician(s) benefited from the interaction in some educative or perceptually altering capacity. 92% of Non-Attendees felt the same value in learning something new or experiencing a change in perceptual attitudes. My presence as both the performer and the educator facilitated a dialogue and interaction that has the capacity to constructively combat perceptual barriers on arts attendance.

Table 15: Reception of the Demonstration for Attendees and Non-Attendees

According to Table 15, Attendees and Non-Attendees were both receptive to the demonstrations, citing the experience as fun, exciting, and enjoyable as the main reaction. Classical music has a reputation of being boring, and many find that they cannot appreciate it
because they do not comprehend the art. This particular result is quite salient for my personal inquiry because I now feel very empowered knowing that I made classical music exciting to my beneficiaries.

Table 16: Millennial Preferences in How They Spend Their Free Time

![Table 16](chart)

Table 16 sheds light on the millennial generation (ages 18-34) and how they spend their free time. Attending theater shows (32%), classical concerts (27%), and visiting museums (35%) are of the lowest interests for 18-24 year olds. Similarly, attending theater shows (10%), classical concerts (27%), and visiting art galleries (17%) proved to be of the lowest dispositions for the older millennial crowd. Instead, both groups highly value spending time with their friends and family, listening to music, and browsing the Internet or social networking platforms in their free time. The millennial generation’s proclivity for socializing is especially significant for orchestras.
to explore unorthodox means of engaging and interacting with their patrons, even within the context of the performance, itself.

My Argument Post Survey Experiment: Orchestras must continue to push their limits in bringing classical music to the community rather than expecting their potential patrons to go to them. My nontraditional approach to marketing classical music may yield beneficial results wherein a relatively cost-effective remedy to barriers on attendance could realistically be addressed. Businesses are finding ways of making the visibility of their product more convenient to patrons. They may be for-profit enterprises, but the manner in which they adapt to the needs of their patrons in communicating their product should not be a negative reflection of their business acumen; we should be inspired by that mentality.

I recognize that orchestras might face several issues in the realization of short demonstrations throughout their community:

1. contention with musicians’ labor unions
2. dependence on musicians’ willingness to participate
3. logistics of travel
4. establishing and maintaining relationships with local businesses
5. must be in line with the organization’s mission

Notable survey testimonials:
“I found it a highlight of my day for the unexpected mini-concert to be happening as I walked out of work. I don’t know why I associate classical music with older people, but the two young ladies performing today were an absolute delight, and I didn’t expect such flawless music to be played by relatively young, well dressed, attractive people. Thank you for sharing your talents!”
(Account given by a female between 18-24 of White/European descent)

“I am a music person and go out of my way to attend orchestral performances. I think that this short public event helps expose those who didn’t grow up with music to wonderful art. I also believe music should be taught in all middle schools and high schools. I didn’t have any school music program until high school and joining the program, I was behind. Music is very important. Good luck! You guys sound amazing!”
(Account given by a male between 18-24 of White/European)
Chapter 6. Instituting a Change

Fixing issues with arts attendance, decreasing subscription ticket sales, and contributed funding cannot merely be reduced to a generic formula; no single or easy solution exists. Symphony orchestras are at least on the right path in acknowledging that public perceptions of live classical music have largely affected potential funding opportunities, and access to tools (like data analysis and social media) are providing them with a better understanding of current trends in philanthropy and public participation in the arts.

The experience of instituting live demonstrations as a relatively low-cost, informal marketing strategy within my community completely altered my assumptions about the reception of classical music. Through this medium of expression and exposure, I realized that musicians have the greatest authority to initiate a dialogue between the audience and performer. I was an agent of change, sharing in live performance rather than as a digital or nonexistent representative, as the majority of the survey participants voiced their lack of knowledge about any upcoming concerts or events.

Local infusion of classical music by the proactive engagement of the musicians serves as one of many tools orchestras may use in bringing music to the public (rather than presuming that the public will go to them). Orchestras could, perhaps, explore options that include substituting a concert with a smaller ensemble in the context of local venues, or by incorporating additional performances to the total number of productions. We also have many technological tools and resources that we, as an arts community, are not fully taking advantage of in educating, communicating with, and collaborating with the general public.

Groupmuse is one such innovative organization that utilizes an extremely successful online social networking platform to engage with its members and patrons. The organization
essentially acts as a master scheduler in building a musician membership base all throughout the
country and forming spontaneous collaborations (often times with musicians performing with
complete strangers) inside the homes of any willing participating hosts. Its founder, Sam Bodkin,
adopted the musician-entrepreneur approach in tapping into a market that fosters a more intimate
Groupmuse event as taking place in a cramped living room where millennials “sat cross-legged”
with craft beers in hand, which is a great testament to the impact that live classical performance

Bodkin, himself, used to share similar sentiments wherein many young people found
classical music to be “stuffy, boring, made for people with white gloves and white hair.”\footnote{Ibid.} It
was not until he attended a friend’s performance of Beethoven’s \textit{Große Fuge}, Op. 133, that
prompted him to realize “how much more powerful chamber music was when performed live,”
thus inspiring him to become a champion of the live performing arts.\footnote{Ibid.} He continued to attend
chamber music “house parties” initiated by his friend and colleague, Cristian Budu, and
musicians from the New England Conservatory soon followed suit in contributing to the growing
idea.\footnote{Ibid.} Bodkin then adapted and refined this idea into the Groupmuse networking platform.

Similarly to my demonstrations, Groupmuse performances are shorter in length as
compared to the typical orchestra concert. The Groupmuse concerts consist of two twenty-five-

\footnote{Groupmuse, “About Us.”}
minute sets of instrumental music in which the first set features works from the classical canon, and the second is the performers’ choice.295 The organization prides itself on its success in bringing live classical music to audiences of different demographics outside of “the usual Lincoln Center crowd.”296 Approximately 70% of the overall audience make-up were born in the 1980s and ‘90s.297 The premise behind Bodkin’s musician-entrepreneur model can be quite effective if incorporated into the marketing strategies of orchestras within their local communities.

In an attempt to relate to the millennial audience, the London Symphony Orchestra is changing its outdated subscription packages and incorporating an application for smartphones as a digital vehicle to encourage younger audience participation.298 The application presents its beneficiaries with discounted tickets to students and offers points for purchasing concert tickets.299 These points can be redeemed through various online music streaming services or video game companies.300

In addition to adopting digital tools into their marketing strategies, I urge orchestras to re-examine the traditional orchestra model that shows very little progress in accessing a larger attendance base. John Spitzer claims American audiences are becoming increasingly unfamiliar with “serious” orchestral music and believe it to be too “exotic” for their aesthetic dispositions.301 Spitzer makes the recommendation that orchestras re-evaluate their cultivation of

295 Locke, “Uber, But for Millennials Who Want Orchestras in Their Living Rooms.”
296 Ibid.
297 Ibid.
299 Ibid.
300 Ibid.
301 Spitzer, American Orchestras in the Nineteenth Century, 21.
creating a market in recruiting and retaining audiences. Musicians who created associations or
worked for orchestras in the late nineteenth century idealized the symphony orchestra as an
outlet for them to perform difficult European repertoire, and they acknowledged, to some extent,
that they had to create an audience for such repertoire. Spitzer notes:

To recruit and keep audiences, orchestra musicians, conductors, and promoters offered a
heterogeneous repertory: symphonies, tone poems, and concertos along with vocal
numbers from operas, solo turns for members of the orchestra, and sometimes popular
dance and novelty numbers as well. At the same time, the musicians tried to “educate”
their audiences to appreciate and patronize symphonic music.\footnote{Spitzer, \textit{American Orchestras in the Nineteenth Century}, 21.}

Deborah Borda, the current President and Chief Executive Officer of the New York
Philharmonic, is an arts administration leader who recognizes potential market opportunities
within her community. Her creativity and authority have initiated innovative programs such as
the rush-hour and Casual Saturday concerts.\footnote{Deborah Borda, “Drawn to the Music,” \textit{The New York Times} (April 10, 2010),
module=RelatedCoverage&region=EndOfArticle&pctype=article (accessed March 21, 2017).}

Perhaps the most proactive means of engaging the arts community with an uninformed
public is by the exposure of the classical arts through educative programs, including higher and
lower levels of public education. This certainly does not hold disregard for the painstaking
measures of arts education that many organizations are already providing for their communities.
The SAAs have commended such missions, and concur with the argument that the best way to
reduce perceptual barriers to participation “is to give people the tools they need to understand
and value many different forms of art,” ideally commencing at the k-12 curriculum level.\footnote{Lowell, \textit{State Arts Policy: Trends and Future Prospects}, 8.}

Music Director Gustavo Dudamel makes a powerfully compelling case for continued arts
funding in the public education system throughout the greater Los Angeles area. Dudamel’s 2015

\footnotesize
\begin{enumerate}
\item Spitzer, \textit{American Orchestras in the Nineteenth Century}, 21.
\item Deborah Borda, “Drawn to the Music,” \textit{The New York Times} (April 10, 2010),
module=RelatedCoverage&region=EndOfArticle&pctype=article (accessed March 21, 2017).
\item Lowell, \textit{State Arts Policy: Trends and Future Prospects}, 8.
\end{enumerate}
Keynote Speech shares an inspirational anecdote of his first concert with the Youth Orchestra of Los Angeles under the LA Philharmonic. He reflects on the similarities in fear and anxiety that he shared with one of the youth orchestra’s new members, a 12-year-old boy named Adam. Regardless of that fear, he believed wholeheartedly that his experience with Adam on the Hollywood Bowl stage (“the same stage where once stood Leonard Bernstein, Van Cliburn, Jimi Hendrix, Frank Sinatra…”) allowed them the opportunity to grow, and in Adam’s case, to provide an outlet for him to experience life outside of the highly dangerous area of South Central Los Angeles.

In recognizing the funding crisis that many organizations currently face, Dudamel advocates for the continued support of the arts in public education, as the “first programs to get cut are Art and Music, because they are not considered ‘essential’.” Harnessing his position as a leader within his community, Dudamel asserts:

> Art is the nourishment of the soul. Our children will learn architecture to design the bridges that will connect us with our future, they will excel in math to calculate their foundations. Many of our children will better humanity through science, and ALL must strengthen themselves, learning the limits of their bodies through sports. The ARTS are equally vital. Those who cut back art programs must understand that without art, the human spirit dulls…I believe spiritual health should have the same weight as physical health. If we all recognized that it’s just as important to keep a healthy psyche and soul as it is to keep a healthy body, then even insurance companies would give out free tickets to concerts, museums and galleries.

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306 Ibid.

307 Ibid.

308 Ibid.

309 Ibid.
Despite their efforts to increase the level of arts education within their communities, orchestras are still struggling to appeal to younger audiences, and the difficult reality is that orchestras must now accept the responsibility of arts education outside of the public system. Unfortunately, the public education system has shown little progress and performed miserably in the arts.\(^\text{310}\) Roger L. Stevens (former Chairman of the Board of Trustees, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts) argues that the first priority for the arts community should be a complete overhaul of the system of arts education at all levels. He notes, “Presentations made by most art teachers are so dull and unimaginative that they deaden student interest. As a result we lose much of our potential audience and much potential talent. This is one area that needs a great deal more thought and planning; and needless to say, more funding.”\(^\text{311}\) The claim may have been made some thirty-five years ago, but the principle still rings true in today’s context.

Historically, the U.S. government has recognized the decline of arts instruction in the k-12 curriculum since the 1980s, which has had a negative rippling effect in American culture.\(^\text{312}\) Resources have been provided, but they have not necessarily been used to give opportunities for all, or even most, students to become culturally literate.\(^\text{313}\) Consequently, support of and demand for qualified arts educators has decreased. The current political environment under the Trump Administration is certainly not providing much hope for arts organizations and arts education. Trump’s early 2017 budget also proposed funding cuts to the education department by 14%.\(^\text{314}\)


\(^{311}\) Ibid.


\(^{313}\) Ibid.

\(^{314}\) Kennicott and McGlone, “Trump Wants to Cut the NEA and NEH.”
Now more than ever, musicians have an incredible opportunity to take action by leading the pursuit of exposure to classical music that is severely lacking within the majority of communities across the nation. An overhaul of the system of arts education within the public school curriculum is not a realistic and achievable goal.

Even on the collegiate level of education, students are not gaining experience or knowledge of leadership and advocacy within their respective fields. Higher education institutions are recognizing the deficiencies in student-preparedness, especially in regards to arts administrative strategies; this is evidenced by the increase in programs now offering specialized instruction in arts administration. Michael Cooper of *The New York Times* writes:

> Orchestra management has become increasingly difficult. Its challenges include selling tickets as the old model of marketing subscriptions to a season’s worth of concerts is dying out; raising the donations that make up an ever larger share of orchestra budgets; dealing with rising labor costs and musicians protected by powerful unions; and forging connections with audiences as classical music is marginalized.\(^{315}\)

The decline in public and private support for the arts is undoubtedly affecting incoming generations of musicians who seek a profession in the arts. Deterred potential artists are consequently impacting administrators’ ability to successfully recruit qualified prospective employees.

Furthermore, leadership in the nonprofits sector is experiencing a new urgency in generational turnover. Executive and artistic directors are retiring, and organizations are scrambling to find suitable replacements. The turnover has prompted concern about the recruitment of new leaders, which is further exacerbated by the growing complexity and

demands of these positions.\textsuperscript{316} The efforts made by arts service organizations like the American Symphony Orchestra League in initiating leadership development programs are largely appreciated, but “the cultivation of a new generation of cultural policy leaders remains haphazard.”\textsuperscript{317}

The information discussed in this monograph may be very daunting to readers. Regardless of what may seem like a bleak and disheartening future for the arts, professional and aspiring classical musicians must come to believe that they have the capacity to initiate change; the public does want to witness your gifts. Prior to my survey and demonstrations investigation, I assumed that the majority of the general public did not enjoy listening to classical music. It was during each subsequent demonstration that I came to reject my assumption as more and more people visibly expressed their fascination with and appreciation of my artistry. To them, I did not live inside a recording or a video; I was real and engaging. Convincing them to like classical music was no longer a main objective, as their lack of exposure to the genre afforded me with an advantage; I set the portrayal of my definition of musician with which most of the audience was unfamiliar. I was the live combination of the teacher, the performer, the representative (of the arts), the collaborative entrepreneur, and the approachable friend that my community needed. I implore classical musicians and arts organizations to embrace their role as agents of change, and through us, the arts can survive and flourish.

\textsuperscript{316} Wyszomirski, “Arts and Culture,” in \textit{The State of Nonprofit America}, 192. \\
\textsuperscript{317} Ibid.
Bibliography


Appendix. A Survey on Declining Audience Attendance in Orchestra Concerts

1. Please select your gender (check one)
   ○ Male
   ○ Female
   ○ Other

2. Which is your age range? (check one)
   ○ 18-24
   ○ 25-34
   ○ 35-44
   ○ 45-54
   ○ 55-64
   ○ 65 or older

3. What is your marital status? (check one)
   ○ Separated
   ○ Married
   ○ Widowed
   ○ Divorced
   ○ Never married

4. Do any children age 12 or under live in your household?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No

5. Please specify your race. (may check one, all that apply, or other)
   ○ American Indian or Alaska Native
   ○ Asian
   ○ Black, African, or African American
   ○ Hispanic or Latino
   ○ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
   ○ White or European
   ○ Other (please specify):

6. What is your total household income?
   ○ Less than $10,000
   ○ $10,000 to $19,999
   ○ $20,000 to $29,999
   ○ $30,000 to $39,999
   ○ $40,000 to $49,999
   ○ $50,000 to $59,999
   ○ $60,000 to $69,999
   ○ $70,000 to $79,999
   ○ $80,000 to $89,999
   ○ $90,000 to $99,999
   ○ $100,000 or more

7. Employment Status: are you currently…?
   ○ Employed for wages
   ○ Self-employed
   ○ Out of work and looking for work
   ○ Out of work but not currently looking for work
   ○ A homemaker
   ○ A student
   ○ Retired
   ○ Unable to work

8. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? If currently enrolled, mark the previous grade or highest degree received. (check one)
   ○ No schooling completed
   ○ Middle School (6th, 8th grades)
   ○ High School – high school diploma or the equivalent (for example: GED)
   ○ Associate degree (for example: AA, AS)
   ○ Bachelor’s degree (for example: BA, AB, BS)
   ○ Master’s degree (for example: MA, MS, MEng, Med, MSW, MBA)
   ○ Professional degree (for example: MD, DDS, DVM, LLB, JD)
   ○ Doctorate degree (for example: PhD, EdD)
   ○ Other (please specify):

9. Please describe your work:
   ○ Employed, working 1-39 hours per week
   ○ Employed, working 40 or more hours per week
   ○ Not employed, looking for work
   ○ Not employed, NOT looking for work
   ○ Retired
   ○ Disabled, not able to work

Continue to next page...
10. Have you ever attended, in person, an orchestra concert?
   - Yes
   - No (if no, skip to question #17)

If you answered **YES** to #10, please answer the following questions. If you answered **NO**, please skip to question #17.

11. How many orchestra concerts have you attended within the past 6 months?
   - None
   - 1-3
   - 4-6
   - 7 or more

12. Did you learn about classical music in your elementary or middle school education?
   - Yes
   - No

13. Have any of these factors affected your willingness to attend another concert? (select all that apply)
   - I did not like the music selection
   - I am not interested in classical music
   - I was intimidated by the concert setting or the music
   - I think concerts are too long
   - Travel difficulties
   - No time for these activities
   - Tickets were too expensive
   - Tickets were hard to find or purchase
   - I had no one to go with
   - I did not receive any information on future concerts
   - Other (please specify):

14. When attending a past orchestra concert, did you decide to go for any of these reasons? (select all that apply)
   - To spend time with friends and family
   - To learn new things
   - To experience high-quality art
   - To support the community

15. How long would you be willing to attend and remain at an orchestra concert?
   - Less than 1 hour
   - 1-2 hours
   - 2-3 hours

16. Do you plan to attend another orchestra concert within the next six months?
   - Yes
   - No

   Within the next 12 months?
   - Yes
   - No

The following questions are for subjects who answered **NO** to #10 (people who have not attended an orchestra concert).

17. Have you ever been interested in going to an orchestra concert but chose not to attend?
   - Yes
   - No

18. Do any of the following serve as reasons for not attending? (check all that apply)
   - Lack of time
   - I heard that orchestra concerts are too long
   - Difficult to find a childcare provider
   - Tickets were too expensive
   - I do not like classical music
   - I think orchestra concerts are too intimidating (I do not know what to wear or when to clap)
   - I do not feel like I fit in with the audience
   - I do not have anyone to go with
   - I have no way of getting to the concert (difficulties with travel)
   - Other (please specify):

19. How much would you be willing to pay for an orchestra concert ticket?
   - Nothing
   - Up to $10
   - Up to $20
   - Up to $30
   - More than $30

20. If you were offered a free ticket, would you attend an orchestra concert?
   - Yes
   - No

21. Did you learn about classical music in your elementary or middle school education?
   - Yes
   - No
All participants: please resume answering the following questions.

22. How have you been informed about upcoming orchestra concerts?
   ○ Through television ads
   ○ Through movie theater ads
   ○ Through print ads posted around town
   ○ Through handouts given by people
   ○ Through social media (like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)
   ○ Through your own Internet browsing
   ○ Other (please specify):

23. What do you like to do in your spare time?
    (select any and all that apply)
   ○ Prefer to spend time alone
   ○ Spend time socializing with friends
   ○ Dining out
   ○ Watch a movie in a theater
   ○ Read
   ○ Exercise/take walks
   ○ Listen to music
   ○ Browse the internet or social network platforms (such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)
   ○ Watching television
   ○ Attend concerts, shows, or performances
   ○ Attend theater shows
   ○ Attend classical concerts or music recitals
   ○ Visit museums
   ○ Visit art galleries
   ○ Visit public parks
   ○ Other (please list any other interests):

24. Did you enjoy today’s live classical performance?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No

25. If orchestras provided more performances like today’s in places that you frequently visit, would you stay for the majority of the performance (at least 20-30 minutes)?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No

26. Did you learn anything new today about classical music and/or classical music performance in general?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No

27. Were you able to speak with any of the musicians?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No

28. If yes, did speaking with the musician(s) change your perception of orchestra concerts or make you feel more informed about classical music?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No

29. Did you find today’s performance to be: (check all that apply)
   ○ More convenient than traveling to and attending a classical concert?
   ○ Fun, exciting, and enjoyable?
   ○ New and untraditional?
   ○ Easier to learn about classical music and musicians?

30. Would you be more willing to attend orchestra concerts if you found out information about upcoming concerts through performances like today’s?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No

For additional comments or suggestions, please indicate below:

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

*The LSU Institutional Review Board has looked over the project and determined that it did not need a formal review.
Vita

Natalie Chang, a native of Ocala, Florida, received her Master’s Degree in Violin Performance from Valdosta State University (VSU). In addition to performing with local orchestral ensembles, Ms. Chang has gained invaluable experience in marketing and arts administration through her graduate assistantship with Louisiana State University’s School of Music, the University’s Symphony Orchestra, and Baton Rouge’s non-profit arts organization, Kids’ Orchestra. She anticipates graduating with her DMA degree from Louisiana State University in December 2017. She plans to pursue teaching opportunities at the collegiate level, expand her performing talents through a professional orchestral career, and continue to advocate for and promote the arts through arts administration leadership positions within her community.