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# Redefining Classical Music Literacy: A Study of Classical Orchestras, Museum Anthropology, and Game Design Theory

## Abstract

The current state of declining audiences for the performing arts in the United States is cause for concern for those musicians and ensembles interested in the continuation of the art forms. The previous model of using audience numbers as the sole or primary measure of an orchestra's success is no longer sufficient in an era of participatory design and interactive experiences. Through observation and analysis of the culture of classical music, this study focuses on the emerging visions of participatory culture and the ways in which museum anthropology and game design theory can be used to redefine classical music literacy and audience development in terms of interaction and participatory design.

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REDEFINING CLASSICAL MUSIC LITERACY: A STUDY OF CLASSICAL  
ORCHESTRAS, MUSEUM ANTHROPOLOGY, AND GAME DESIGN THEORY

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A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of Arts and Humanities

University of Denver

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts, Digital Media Studies

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by

Kimberly M. Zahler

June 2011

Advisor: Adrienne Russell



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Advisor: Adrienne Russell, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Digital Media Studies  
Degree Date: June 2011

### **Abstract**

The current state of declining audiences for the performing arts in the United States is cause for concern for those musicians and ensembles interested in the continuation of the art forms. The previous model of using audience numbers as the sole or primary measure of an orchestra's success is no longer sufficient in an era of participatory design and interactive experiences. Through observation and analysis of the culture of classical music, this study focuses on the emerging visions of participatory culture and the ways in which museum anthropology and game design theory can be used to redefine classical music literacy and audience development in terms of interaction and participatory design.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

“What precisely the future of the orchestra may be is hard to guess. Will it continue merely as a vehicle for reviewing the past, while contemporary composers turn more and more to electronic ways of realizing their dreams? Will conductors continue to inflate their egos in a dizzying starsystem reminiscent of the worst excesses of Hollywood? Will the tottering economies of the Western world be able to support as many orchestras as we now enjoy? In short: is the history of the orchestra at an end?” (Hurd 1980, 46)

The current crisis in classical music is typically defined as a lack of understanding of classical music by the current culture resulting in and evidenced by a decrease in audience attendance for live performances. Maintaining a classical orchestra in an age of mediated social interaction presents a number of challenges including effective business models and adequate audience numbers. Despite the cultural revolutions of postmodernism and post-structuralism in the 1960s and 1970s, which emphasized the lack of metanarratives and argued that meaning is created in the moment of consumption as opposed to ascribing to a universal truth, many orchestras maintain modernist paradigms of universal truth—and therefore enduring value of classical music—preventing the modification of business models and a larger definition of classical music literacy and engagement with music. Most efforts by orchestras to address the issue of declining audiences repeat the same sorts of historical programming by presenting different versions of concerts to passive audiences rather than any new approaches designed specifically to relate to the current mediated cultural environment. Programming is defined as the music and educational efforts of an orchestra, typically

including the types of concerts (i.e. family, movie themes, all-Mozart, music in the park, etc.), the historical information contained in the printed program, and any other events designed to promote education and engagement with classical music. These challenges have been addressed more effectively and innovatively by other cultural institutions, such as museums, that have been forced to rethink their cultural relevance and therefore can offer solutions to changing expectations for audience participation. The fields of museum studies and video game design can be used as a model for approaching the crisis in classical music. The terms museum studies, museum anthropology, and museology refer to the anthropological study of museum collections and history. These terms will be used interchangeably throughout this study.<sup>1</sup> New museology was a term introduced in 1958 by Mills and Grove, referring to the changing role of museums in education and society, urging the profession to new perspectives of social engagement.<sup>2</sup>

This thesis is a study of classical orchestra social engagement and contemporary business models. I used participant observation methods to study The Loveland Orchestra, a volunteer community orchestra in Northern Colorado. This research is supplemented with observations of the challenges and innovations within the larger classical music field in the United States. The Denver Art Museum and the Strong National Museum of Play were also closely examined for the nature of designed social engagements within traditional museum structures, providing insights into new paradigms and approaches to classical music concert design. This first chapter of the

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<sup>1</sup> From Christopher J. Berry, "Hume's Universalism: The Science of Man and the Anthropological Point of View." *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 15: 535-550, 2007. Accessed January 28, 2011 from <https://sites.google.com/a/fieldmuseum.org/pacific-web/Home/collections--collectors/research/why-museum-anthropology>.

<sup>2</sup> Accessed January 28, 2011 from <http://www.city.ac.uk/ictop/mus-def.html>.

thesis presents the background of the study, specifies the problem addressed in the study, describes its significance, and presents an overview of the methodology used.

### **Background of the Study**

In 2008, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Survey of Public Participation in the Arts indicated that the years 1982–2008 witnessed a 30% decline in adult audience attendance for performing arts (National Endowment for the Arts 2008). The performing arts of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and classical music in particular, were typically such that an audience—of a certain education level and societal standing—expected to attend a concert in which a performance was presented with little to no audience participation required. The advent of networked digital technologies in the late twentieth century initiated new expectations for audience participation and collaboration, the arts and music not excepted. The NEA survey indicates this greater societal shift away from passive consumption to active participation. These numbers are cause for concern over the financial viability of the cultural industry of classical music. Nearly every month an orchestra, opera, or performing arts organization is reported in the news to be closing its doors or declaring bankruptcy.

Innovations in technology have created new ideas of what it means to be an audience and a socially active citizen (Coniglio 2004; Jenkins 2006). The Internet has provided the means for audiences to be dispersed across both space and time, in contrast to traditional notions of an audience being gathered together at the same time and in the same place. Along with the idea that an audience can be so dispersed, the Internet and advent of video games in the 1980s have provided the idea that an individual can be able to respond to media, contributing her own ideas and teasing out the meaning for herself

(Beck and Wade 2006; Geçkil and Anderson 2010; Jenkins 2006). Video games provide immersive, compelling, and stimulating environments in which players can become major actors and the environment itself responds to the actions of the player. While the idea of being social still includes physical spaces such as coffee shops, bars, and living rooms, people are no longer restricted to such. The Internet and music recording industry have made it possible for people to access the “best” recordings from years past and even observe live performances, making it less necessary to be a physical audience member. The lack of ability for audience members to make an impact on the performance (i.e. in real performance time or in the selection of music played) or education could be a deterrent for new audiences to be formed and turned into fans of classical music. All this means that orchestras have a lot of rethinking to do when it comes to defining objectives for audience development, retention, and the value provided to the community.

Although postmodernism, with its rejections of metanarratives and absolute truth, began nearly 50 years ago (Docherty 1993), classical music as a whole has yet to question the paradigms of modernism on which the industry is based. Very much unlike the rest of the arts, classical music is commonly discussed in historical terms of inherent, universal meaning and the supposed value that the rest of society “just doesn’t get” (Hanley 2010). Classical music can be accused of perpetuating the cultural divide by insisting that the “high art” of classical music has more value than the “low art” of popular consumption and creation. This divide prevents the field of classical music from perceiving and pursuing bridges to new audiences. The modernist perception of eternal inherent value regardless of context or circumstance does not allow for new creativity and consigns musicians to a life stuck in the late nineteenth century.

By examining the transitions made by the field of museum studies, possible models may be suggested for the revitalization of the classical music field. The field of museum studies has closely examined the nature of social engagement, redefining the role of museums as an active agent in social dialogue. Despite the fact that museums originally existed as a celebration of colonialism and the subjugation of peoples and cultures (Kurin 1997; Ross 2004), museums are now an active voice in the social dialogue and a place of relevance for people to engage with controversial content while discussing difficult topics, establishing relationships with both old and new acquaintances (Handler 1992; Simon 2010).

Rather than looking at how the music is interpreted by a performer or conductor, or discussing the “authenticity” of musical presentation and technical mastery, orchestras can look at how museums have maintained historical collections while embracing new technologies available through the Internet and video games as ways to connect to contemporary culture and engage new audiences and potential financial sponsors. Many museum exhibits are already implementing video game principles of immersive design, responsiveness, and the ability to form new relationships and enhance communication. This study looks for ways in which orchestras and classical performing arts organizations can similarly preserve the classical “collections” while at the same time connecting to new audiences and introducing new notions of musical education.

### **The Problem Statement**

Many performing arts organizations recognize the problem of a changing relationship to society, a decline in audiences, and a perceived lack of understanding of classical music, but are at a loss for how to develop appropriate responses addressing

these issues. Some attempts to engage audiences include pre-concert lectures by the conductor, descriptive program notes, and children's or family concerts with traditional children's literature (i.e. *Peter and the Wolf*, *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, etc.) and pop music transcriptions, such as popular movie scores. The lectures and program notes give audiences who have not formally studied music the necessary "vocabulary" to understand the music being performed. Children's programs—in both the concert hall and in schools—attempt to introduce children to the music at a young age, making it a normal part of life; and have the secondary goal of aiming to inspire lifelong musicians or audience members. In order to reach new audiences and pay the bills by selling seats, outreach methods have typically included "watering down" the music by performing movie scores or other popular music instead of the historical, classical "high-brow" music.

A current trend in reaching new audiences for classical music is to retain the complexity of the music and historical repertoire but present performances in new, unconventional venues in order to introduce new audiences to the repertoire. Instead of altering the content of the music or watering down the music such as by performing popular movie scores, the context and setting of engagement are changed, such as what members of the Cleveland Symphony have done by performing at a local bar with their chamber ensemble, *Orchestral Maneuvres at the Dog* (Barnett 2010).

Looking outside the field of classical music for innovation, the two disparate fields of museum studies and video game theory provide examples and insights into approaching solutions for the challenges facing classical music. Museum studies, a field developed in the 1960s, was a response to a need for critical reflexivity within the

museum practice. Museums faced many of the same challenges classical music has identified in both declining audiences and a detachment from contemporary culture; the solutions found by museums can be adapted and applied to classical music. They provide another example of how, or how not, to preserve tangible and intangible heritage, as well as providing platforms for establishing relationships with the community and meeting community needs. Another example of a platform for developing relationships and alternative modes of education are video games, which were developed as popular culture and may not seem relevant to a discussion of high culture. However, a shift is visible in public consumption and production patterns, with video games leading the way in participation and collaboration. Video games thus provide an insight into understanding contemporary audiences and into providing engaging experience through concert design.

The purpose of this study is to observe, describe, and analyze the culture of classical music and the ways in which museum anthropology and game design theory can be applied to redefine classical music literacy and audience development in terms of participatory design. This work aims to frame a discussion between the three fields, where future work can be the active imagining and implementation of new ideas.

### **The Professional Significance of the Study**

This is a study of the classical music industry's current relationship with its audience, undertaken in order to make a contribution toward the continued economic viability of the classical music field, allowing growth and new definitions of meaningful audience engagement and education by introducing a relationship between music and phenomena in museum anthropology studies and game design theory. This contribution comes in the form of examining emergent cultures for how they affect existing paradigms

within the arts, providing the framework for arts organizations to create meaningful connections with their local communities. Video game design theory presents a model to inform new interactive practices and educational design within the traditional performing arts, including but not limited to orchestras, operas, ballet companies, and theatres. Studying innovations in technology can inspire questions of what would it look like to create more interactive and/or collaborative music endeavors. Combining these disparate fields that have not previously been studied in tandem creates space to think about the ways the changing societal contexts alter the purpose and expression of music.

This research will contribute understanding for new ways in which to develop audiences and educational programming in addition to the existing paradigms. This study also aims to encourage new thinking about the purpose of classical music, the relationships between people participating in the arts, and to broaden definitions of creativity.

This study argues that classical music is still valid and relevant even after centuries of practice and despite changing cultural patterns. This argument is significant because of the proliferation of arts within society and the necessity of continued educational programs in order for meaningful innovation and creativity. The idea of the orchestra as a classical music museum is examined because many of the volunteer musicians making up community orchestras around the country are deeply invested in preserving the music, and the orchestras provide the opportunity to perform the traditional musical canon. Thus, the importance placed on maintaining the classical canon is important because of the importance placed on it by the musicians themselves. The goal is to provide a platform for new innovation and continued growth within



classical music by opening new possibilities for audiences to be introduced to the music. Identifying the challenges present and redefining the notion of literacy in classical music opens the door to translating methodologies from the disparate fields of museology and video game design into innovative solutions for the continued vitality of classical music.

### **An Overview of the Methodology**

While there are many possible reasons for the current crisis in classical music, this study seeks to provide an understanding of the crisis by asking the questions: Are audience attendance numbers an adequate measure of orchestral success and community engagement? What are the current forms of education and outreach addressing the problem?

This is a study of The Loveland Orchestra within the current state of the broader classical music industry, examining orchestra education and audience development programs attempting to address the problem of declining audiences. In studying the orchestral culture, the goal is to outline an appropriate definition for musical literacy that reflects changing cultural patterns of audience consumption and participation. In order to accomplish this, the fields of museum studies and game design theory provide a framework outside the classical music field to understand the changing face of participatory culture and suggest new interventions intended to provide space for additional creativity in performance, composition, and education. Through this study, I demonstrate that classical orchestras play an important role in the community, which can be strengthened through the integration of technology and participatory design.

I analyze The Loveland Orchestra, reporting the concerns and interests of the musicians, focusing largely on their interest in the historical canon and performance

practice. The study of The Loveland Orchestra reflects the larger interests of community orchestras across the United States. In my analysis, I am concerned with identifying items that exemplify participatory design and challenges to reframing historical power structures surrounding classical music. In order to draw a picture of the unique challenges facing community orchestras and examine the ways in which technology can assist in an ensemble's efforts to achieve their goals, I interviewed Luciano Silvestri, the conductor and music director of The Loveland Orchestra, who spoke on behalf of the board of directors using a semi-structured interview format. Extensive participant observation as a musician in the orchestra provides insight into the challenges facing community orchestras as well as the enthusiasm of the participants and audience members.

Reading frequent notices about the dissolution of various orchestras around the country such as the Honolulu Symphony or the union troubles of the Detroit Symphony, in addition to the innovations of ensembles like The Cleveland Symphony, ultimately led me to the question of the actual state of classical music on the semi-professional and volunteer level. At the same time, research conducted into the nature of changes in museum design and theory, along with the ubiquity of game design principles led me to consider possible connections between these three disparate fields with the goal of suggesting new ideas and paradigms for classical orchestras to reach goals within their respective communities.

Professional orchestras and the classical music industry in general were examined through websites, blogs, and articles for the challenges facing the industry and the ways in which classical music differs at the volunteer level. Although there is much that is

interesting and compelling in the greater classical music industry, the scope of this work is limited instead to the local level of participatory culture.

In order to use museum anthropology as a model for classical music, I visited the Denver Art Museum in Denver, Colorado, and the Strong National Museum of Play in Rochester, New York. The Denver Art Museum is featured prominently in *The Participatory Museum* (Simon 2010) for its innovative programming and social engagement. The Strong National Museum of Play is a fully interactive experience for visitors of all ages, with emphasis on hands-on learning, while maintaining extensive historical collections traditional to museums. Each served as examples into the ways that museums are redefining education and community engagement through the facilitation of audience participation, while still maintaining historical artifact collections. There are significant differences between the industries of museums and classical music, resulting in a number of innovations on the part of museums that are not applicable to live classical music performance. The most important difference is the focus on live music performance occurring in a specific place at a specific time, experienced by the audience synchronously at the same time and place. This temporal discrepancy creates differences in the idea of audience, and therefore must be accounted for another way.

This study is limited to live performance of classical music and takes little notice of the recorded music industry, which would be a substantial study of its own. Current discussions in classical music about the concerns of failing orchestras and the decline of audiences, suggest that the previous mode of measurement for the success of ensembles is no longer an accurate measure taken alone, given the participatory and technologically mediated nature of current society. The orchestra, as arguably the largest and most

expensive classical music ensemble, was chosen to narrow the scope of the discussion to the ensemble I have the most experience with. Other classical music organizations face similar challenges to those discussed in this study, and the results of this study can be scaled to fit the particular details of various performance groups. This study looks beyond the normal concerns orchestras have in maintaining adequate audience numbers and focuses instead on emerging visions of participatory culture and the ways in which community orchestras can become an expression of local culture, rather than a byproduct of the classical music industry.

In my research of The Loveland Orchestra, I discovered many points of entry for technology to be incorporated into the events planned by the orchestra. In fact, the stated goals of the orchestra, as well as many like it, can be most easily achieved through the inclusion of technology and participatory design elements, as Simon discovered in her work with museums (2010). An easy entrée was the website that the orchestra currently has. As a beginning for the ensemble, utilizing resources already available to the orchestra, I solicited volunteers from the orchestra to share a brief personal story about their connection with classical music and the orchestra. The result is a compilation of videos that demonstrate the personal commitment and passion of the musicians in the orchestra as a means of engaging new audiences, while simultaneously providing a “voice” for the individual musicians who comprise the orchestra as a whole. Monitoring any changes in the number of visitors to the website will indicate whether the addition of video is a draw to the website, and additional changes focusing on audience and musician participation will similarly follow a conservative pattern of implementation and analysis of visitor traffic to the site.

## **Areas of Inquiry**

The following chapters analyze The Loveland Orchestra as an example of the larger phenomenon of volunteer-based classical music, drawing from the fields of museum anthropology and video game design as models for audience engagement.

### Literature Review

Chapter Two sets the background for the current discussion through the extensive review of the history of classical music, museum anthropology, and video game design, pointing to overlaps between the disciplines and ways in which the disciplines can influence the continued formation of the classical music industry. As is demonstrated through the literature, one of the primary criticisms of classical music – that it acts as a museum of historical artifacts unrelated to contemporary society – can instead be turned into an asset by examining the innovations occurring in the field of museum anthropology, transforming museums into socially engaged spaces.

### A Study of the Loveland Orchestra

In this chapter, The Loveland Orchestra is examined, including the ensemble's history, current challenges, and concern for greater community engagement. I position The Loveland Orchestra as an example typical of many similar ensembles throughout the United States, thereby providing insights into the greater field. Throughout this study, I pursue three critical questions: how audience numbers as a sole measure of success have been inadequate, demanding a broader definition of audience engagement; how educational models, which have been previously centered on assumptions of universal value and appeal, can be reshaped to ask questions of what concerns the audience; and how, by defining live classical music performance as a museum, concerts can be

redesigned with audience engagement in mind, much like museums have maintained collections and provided new opportunities for visitors to engage with content. The choice to separate the phenomenon of classical music production from the classical music industry is significant, as it points to a different scenario than that facing the struggling classical music industry and professional ensembles.

### Classical Music as a Means of Community Engagement

*Classical Music as a Means of Community Engagement* broadens the discussion to examine the ways in which the fields of museum anthropology and video game design can provide examples, methods, and paradigms for the classical music industry in reformatting definitions of audience engagement and musical literacy. The classical orchestra can be viewed as a museum of sorts, opening parallels to the field of museum anthropology, which has developed methods of both preserving heritage while creating new opportunities for social engagement. Game design theory provides a new set of rules with which to frame interactivity and engaging immersive design, offering classical music the means to further connect with contemporary audiences. This chapter widens the scope beyond The Loveland Orchestra for examples of innovations and challenges within the classical music field.

### Segue to a New Musical Literacy

The theories proposed in this thesis have been put into practical application for The Loveland Orchestra in the form of video added to the existing orchestra website. A small step toward more active participation, the video allows members of the orchestra to express personal interest in the music, thereby also acting as individual faces of the orchestra, creating the possibility for additional connection between the audience

and the performance. This chapter also discusses further avenues of inquiry into the recontextualization of classical music performance as relational art and a means for community interaction.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

Classical music is based on strong historical traditions, which must be examined in order to understand the current phenomena and suggest appropriate solutions for the problem of declining audiences in classical music. The historical development of the classical orchestra into what can be described as a museum was established within the assumptions of modernism. The conflict between modern and postmodern paradigms has led in large part to the current crisis facing classical music. Adopting systems thinking, as modeled by video game design, provides examples for orchestras navigating the transition from music as object to music as performance within the context of postmodern participatory design. This systems thinking, once applied to classical music, ultimately suggests a new definition of classical music literacy and engagement.

### **History of Classical Orchestras**

The contemporary classical orchestra began to develop in the seventeenth century, finally settling into the shape recognizable today by the end of the nineteenth century (Hurd 1980). Three critical factors in the development of the orchestra were the “standardization and refinement of the orchestral ensemble;” the advent of printed music and formal concerts indicating the shift from private to public patronage; and “the creation of classical style” (Stauffer 1986, 37-38; Hurd 1980). The term “classical music” has come to be used colloquially to describe Western musical styles from the Renaissance through the early twentieth century (Sandow forthcoming).



Performing arts organizations within this classical designation include orchestras, small instrumental ensembles, opera companies, and ballet troupes. These ensembles are “high” culture, often at odds with the “low” popular culture of jazz and theatre in earlier eras, and television, movies, music, and video games of contemporary times (Sandow forthcoming). The differentiation between high and low culture through a sense of “otherness” has been a pivotal definition of classical music as well as fine art. The sense of otherness or separation is contradictory to current discussions of participatory design and audience engagement. In order to bring classical music into discussion with the ideas of participatory design as exemplified in video games or interactive museum exhibits, this separation in cultural production must first be identified and then dismantled.

### **Classical Music Museum**

“The modern concert hall may be likened to a museum, where natural wonders or man-made artifacts are taken from their native habitats and mounted for display to an admiring and curious public” (Burkholder 1986, 410). There are two things to examine in comparing classical music to a museum: first, the creation of musical “works” as objects of preservation, and second, the questions of “authenticity” in performance. By comparing classical music to museums, we can look at the similar cultural challenges museums face and apply the new paradigms developed by museums as a response to criticisms of classical music.

Goehr’s work on the classical music museum (2007) centers on the concept of musical “works.”<sup>1</sup> She establishes the idea that pieces such as Beethoven’s *Fifth*

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<sup>1</sup> “Works cannot, in any straightforward sense, be physical, mental, or ideal objects. They do not exist as concrete, physical objects; they do not exist as private ideas existing in the minds of a composer, a performer, or a listener; neither do they exist in the eternally existing world of ideal, uncreated forms. They are not identical, furthermore, to any one of their performances. Performances take place in real

*Symphony* or Dvořák's *Symphony No. 9* are "works" similar to objects preserved in a museum, each with a tradition and set of expectations for historical study and contemporary performance. The tonal, rhythmic, and instrumental properties of the pieces are symbolically represented by composers in scores – the physical object being a series of black dots on a white page that is known as that particular work. However, she outlines these works do not necessarily exist as concrete, physical objects, nor are they identical to their performances or their scores. Goehr goes on to say that this notion is a modern one, foreign to the historical composers who created each work (Goehr 2007), further opening the door to recontextualizing classical music performance and meaning.

The work concept arose in the Romantic era alongside the idea of a classical style, or the newly established canon of "classics" (Goehr 2007; Bennett 2008). In Haydn or Mozart's day, orchestral music was ephemeral, with each piece being performed only a few times in a brief period. But by the middle of the nineteenth century, nearly one hundred years later, their music had been revived and "granted immortality among the first 'classics' of the orchestral repertoire" (Burkholder 1986, 409-410). Once the concept of classical music was established, the music of composers other than Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven were gradually added to the canon (Burkholder 1986, 410). The classical music museum then behaves very much like art museums, which, as collections of artifacts removed from original historical contexts, combine works of various eras side by side and not only preserve tradition, but promote and influence it (Burkholder 1986, 413).

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time; their parts succeed one another. The temporal dimension of works is different; their parts exist simultaneously. Neither are works identical to their scores." (Goehr 2007, 3)

Musicologists have traditionally concerned themselves with the study of the written musical text or specific performance historical practices. However, the musical text “displays only the first level of meaning systems informing musical practice” (McCormick 2006, 124). A second layer of representation is the background structure informing the actual performance of these musical texts. McCormick points to an accusation against the field of musicology: “Because they think of performance as in essence the reproduction of a text, musicologists don’t understand music as a performing art” (McCormick 2006, 121; Cook 2003, 204).<sup>2</sup>

Research into historical practices surrounding each piece is tied to the establishment and repetition of the classics. Beginning at the end of the nineteenth century, the contemporary era of classical music performance is the first in which earlier performance practices were researched, for earlier eras were concerned only with music of that time (McCormick 2006). This performance practice debate is a modern one, coming out of the aesthetic and cultural values of our time (McCormick 2006; Taruskin 1995). “Authentic” performance operates “on the basis of objectivity and authority rather than identification and subjectivity,” and “seeks to derive normative procedures from empirically ascertainable facts to determine how texts should be realized” (McCormick 2006, 136). This definition of authentic performance within the debate surrounding

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<sup>2</sup>“The notated music came to be viewed less as a preliminary script for performance than as the locus of the truest revelation of the composer’s intent, the unique and full inscription of the composer’s expressive spirit which was elsewhere—in any one performance—only partially revealed. Music writing itself seemed an inscriptive means endowed with nonsemantic, mysterious, even transcendent significance. It was now conceivable, to a degree that it had not been before, that the work as embodied in music writing, divorced from its contexts of production, performance, and reception, could become the avatar of the transcendent spaces absolute music could attain and inhabit. The notated work took on almost magical characteristics, projecting spirit outward in legible form, and traversing the distance between musical exegete and composer. The search for the secrets of this written work could in large degree ignore and thus conceal the social interactions of performers and audience at the scene itself of music making.” (Tomlinson 2003; 39)

performance practice locks classical music into a backward-facing gaze, missing current social events and paradigm shifts. One such shift is the transition from modern to postmodern ideology, which affects all the arts.

Museology, or new museum theory (Lindauer 2006), was defined in the 1960s as a postmodern response to modern positivism (Gurian 2006; Kurin 1997), in which positivism emphasized judgments of good versus bad and right versus wrong, based on the inherent universal value of objects. New museum theory responded by defining the meaning of objects relative to the surrounding context (Schiffer 2001). These new theories shifted the focus of museums away from the objects in collections to how museums serve society. These questions in anthropology came out of post-colonialist and –imperialist philosophies, in which the values of imperial expansion and colonization had come into question. This presented a conundrum for museums, which had existed originally as places to celebrate the expansion of kingdoms through the subjugation of perceived primitive peoples.

Similarly, the field of musicology witnessed a critical shift from the 1960s to the 1980s (Clayton, et al 2003, 2). New approaches to studying music propose that culture, including contemporary culture, matters as much as the musical text itself (Clayton, et al 2003). Even still, the great majority of literature written about classical music focuses almost exclusively on technical musical performance, adhering to a modern concept of integrity, fidelity, and authenticity to the intent of the composer (Barenboim and Said 2002). Individual creativity on the part of the performer, as well as the idea that each performance is created new and is dependent on the presence and participation of an audience, are neglected in an attempt to preserve imagined nineteenth century values

(Barenboim and Said 2002). Barenboim and Said, in conversation with Ara Guzelimian in 2000, similarly argue that “authenticity” is a modern idea not natural to the historical context of composers such as Bach or even Wagner, critiquing the fundamentalist “preoccupation with the past in literature and music” (Barenboim and Said 2002: 129). And yet, their conversations center primarily on the written music’s interpretation by a conductor, neglecting the contributions of the individual musicians and the participant audience.

While museums are critical for making works of art—either visual or musical—available to the public, they have also done much to widen the perceived divide between high and low cultural productions. The architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel wrote that the social role of art was “one of the most important areas of human culture.” “Museums were thus monuments to art, reminders of its importance to all times and places, and their designers sought to make their every aspect—from exterior shape to interior plan—serve such functions” (Applegate 2004, 120). Just as works of art placed in museums are removed from original contexts and functions, thereby creating new meanings and experiences of them, the “classical” music performed in the concert hall has been removed from original contexts, thus creating new meaning. An example is the St. Matthew Passion by J.S. Bach. While still a religious piece, it is no longer liturgical and performed by small church choirs for which it was written (Burkholder 1986), but rather reserved for large ensembles and venues.

Paradoxically, the contemporary orchestral performance practice of playing music of every period has left little time for new compositions. “Indeed, the primary occupation of the orchestra has become the presentation of a museum repertoire” (Hurd 1980, 46;

emphasis in original). Prior to 1810 and even extending as far as 1900, performance practices dictated contemporaneity (DeNora 2008; Weber 1984; 2001). Just as the museum functions to preserve significant works of art, “the concert existed to display the work of art to the advantage of the public and to educate listeners in the fullest possibilities of serious art” (Applegate 2004, 121). “The recognition that an autonomous musical work existed, worthy of preservation and repeated performance, emerged gradually in the late eighteenth century and became stable in the nineteenth” (Applegate 2004, 121). When operating as a classical music museum, the orchestra adopts assumptions about the education necessary for an audience to comprehend and appreciate the historical significance of the music and evaluate the authenticity of the performance. Postmodernism and post-structuralism provide an alternate reading of history and suggest a new view of the role of performance.

### **Postmodernism/Post-structuralism**

The 1960s and 1970s were a period of intense cultural change in which existing structural patterns were brought into question. Antiestablishment sentiments became the fashion, opposing the established social, cultural, and moral values (Shepherd 2003). The arts were no exception.

The “sense of history as a continuous, linear ‘narrative,’” was called into question with the rise of postmodernism and post-structuralism in the 1960s (Strinati 1995). Postmodernism questioned the assumed inherent value of high culture production, asserting “that there is no absolute categorical difference between high and popular culture ... there are no longer any easy reference points, to which we can refer, and which will automatically preselect for us the good from the bad” (Storey 2006, 146). Bourdieu

similarly “argues that distinctions of ‘culture’ ... are a significant aspect in the struggle between dominant and subordinate groups in society.” Further, the “consumption of culture is thus a means to produce and to legitimate social difference, and to secure social deference” (Storey 2006, 145). Just as postmodernism denies positivism and inherent meaning separate from participants, post-structuralism asserts that audiences actively assign meaning to content (Wilson 2009). This has implications for the way contemporary audiences engage with cultural production, including the high arts and classical music.

Prior to these radical cultural shifts, the emphasis of musicological study was on “the music itself” (Shepherd 2003). Social and cultural forces were marginalized when printed music as an object or the technical performance were judged to be autonomous. Similar to positivist assumptions of a museum object’s inherent value, Western art music was assumed to be “beyond the influence of social and cultural forces” and “to embody within itself universal, ‘otherworldly’ values and truths immune to the impact of everyday life” (Shepherd 2003, 70), creating a distinct barrier between the music and the audience.

These cultural paradigms form an important background for assumptions about and expectations for contemporary cultural production. Despite the assertion that there is no difference between “high” and “low” cultural production (Ross and Nightingale 2003; Grossberg 1992), this discussion becomes important to understand the divide between the expectations of the participants and the creators of culture and art. This discussion is also critical to understand the cultural backdrop against which the assumptions of classical music stand in stark relief.

In response to these challenges, new museology positions museums as social spaces (Ames 1992), responding to the loss of public space elsewhere. The now familiar debate of the museum as a temple versus a forum (Cameron 1972) encapsulated the conflict in ideologies between the modern and postmodern eras. Ultimately the argument for the museum as a temple focuses on the museum itself, whereas the argument for the museum as a forum transitions the focus to people and community. Postmodernists argued for the museum as a forum, responding to the needs of the people through providing spaces for conversation, community, and contribution.

In *The Participatory Museum*, Simon (2010) identifies a crucial problem for cultural institutions and the arts:

Cultural institutions argue that their programs provide unique cultural and civic value, but increasingly people have turned to other sources for entertainment, learning, and dialogue. They share their artwork, music, and stories with each other on the Web. They participate in politics and volunteer in record numbers. They even read more. But they don't attend museum exhibits and performances like they used to (Simon 2010, 1).

This argument serves as the basis for a set of principles for museums to use in redefining their role within society and providing for the needs of the community. While her work is focused exclusively on museums, the problems and methodologies she outlines are applicable also to the performing arts. Furthermore, she draws connections between museums and contemporary technological social practices. She invites visitors to become active participants and creators of culture, moving beyond passive consumption. Her work affirms the role of the museum in centering social interactions by not abandoning collections but using them to frame and inspire conversation, with the emphasis on people and relationships, rather than the objects. Simon asserts that museums should not



abandon collections, pursue trends, or put traditional work on hold, but instead continue the daily work of the museum while looking through the lens of social awareness. The transformation away from the exclusive importance placed on objects within a museum to the concept of community engagement is a potential model for transitioning away from the idea of musical “works” preservation to designing audience experiences and participation platforms within classical music.

### **Problem of Classical Music**

As theorists discuss the commonly perceived problem with classical music in contemporary society, there is conflict over the cause and nature of the problem. One such conflict is the nature of the connection to popular culture. “Classical music today occupies a position similar to that of religion in other ways. For a majority of people, it derives from an earlier age, very different from our own, and survives only as an anachronism” (Johnson 2002, 7). John Williams, a contemporary composer, embodies this conflict, as his work in composing orchestral scores for movies draws both fire from classical musicians decrying his work as diluting classical music and acclamation from audiences who deeply identify with the score in combination with the movie.

The second notable conflict surrounds the funding and patronage of classical music. On the one side is the argument for allowing consumer sovereignty to reign and discontinuing the subsidization of an art form that is not prioritized in the marketplace (North 2004). North argues for allowing the private sector to produce classical music in the form of small chamber and organ recitals, while reducing the number of professional orchestras and removing tax subsidies for the performing arts. This premise is in opposition to the idea that public funding is absolutely essential for the continuation

of the arts (Hanley 2010). Hanley argues against the false idea of the divide between classical music and “the people,” maintaining that without greater accessibility to classical music, classism is preserved, relegating classical music to the rich elite, when in reality, it belongs to everyone as common culture. She asserts that public funding is vital to giving society access to their shared culture instead of “leaving cultural provision to either the whims of philanthropists or the demands of profit-makers” (Hanley 2010).

The Survey for Participation in the Performing Arts (SPPA) focuses on attendance at cultural nonprofits, such as orchestras that typically interact with the National Endowment for the Arts (Tepper and Ivey 2008, 2). Audience numbers have historically been the primary measure for the success and health of the arts in the United States. The decline in attendance numbers over the past 30 years bring to light outdated assumptions of organizations that new, young audiences would automatically replace declining ageing audiences (Tepper and Ivey 2008). The survey operates on the assumption of the superiority of the fine arts: “Art with a capital A” (Tepper and Ivey 2008, 6).

The assumption made by the SPPA points to the larger argument that one of the suggested “problems” of classical music is the continued insistence of keeping discussion about music within the frameworks of modernism and structuralism. In broad, sweeping strokes, classical music can be said to speak one language – of inherent value and eternal meaning – while contemporary society, and thus new audiences, speaks another – that of constantly changing contexts and the creation of meaning at the moment of consumption. Without reconciling these two perspectives, classical music will continue to face the challenge of declining audiences and waning significance within the larger community.

The audience is an important factor to consider in addressing concerns of classical music. Edward Said described his sense of the two audiences of classical music. The first are the wealthy and corporate sponsors who tend to be conservative, wanting only the “classics.” The second audience is much smaller, made up of the people who know music and actively make it a part of their lives (Barenboim and Said 2002). The challenge in audience development becomes that of balancing the needs and desires of the two audiences, while at the same time seeking to balance budget sheets (Bennett 2008). To do this, many orchestras end up focusing on short-term goals of enticing audience attendance through the use of “subscription deals, coupons and vouchers, ‘meet the artist’ functions, and other incentives that are simple, effective and, importantly, have almost immediate results” (Bennett 2008; 24). Thus the industry of music has increasingly left out the opportunity for new experiences and creativity in performance and composition.

This all points more to the concern over maintaining financial viability in the music industry than it does for promoting cultural accessibility for music and social engagement. The industry of classical music can be traced back to the late eighteenth century at the establishment of the formal orchestra, which required suitable performance halls, skilled instrumentalists, reviewers, composers, and publishers (Stauffer 1986).

Rothstein critiques the classical music industry by saying:

Meanwhile, the music world continues on the road to ever greater financial successes, building its audiences out of amateur listeners at best, while professional players parade across the stages, endlessly repeating the great music of the past. The concert scene of the last century had more vitality; ours has more professional polish. The concert scene then was the home

of virtuosos and showmen and urgent music making; it was the dream of the amateur writ large. The current scene not even an amateur could wish for (Rothstein 1986, 548).

The “professional polish” that Rothstein talks about is evidenced in the large numbers of music students intending to pursue a career in performance, conducting, or composition, despite the low probability of achieving such a career that is profitable. Bennett argues that the reality is musicians must sustain careers “within an increasingly complex and competitive cultural environment” that is not adequately represented in the economic cultural industry (Bennett 2008, 11-13). She points out that the two most commonly proposed solutions for maintaining a viable performing arts industry, and therefore jobs for all the trained graduates, are “(1) to educate the population so that people have the skills and knowledge to participate fully in the arts; or (2) to rationalize public funding so that ‘high arts’ are increasingly funded through corporate and other private forms of sponsorship, thereby removing the pressure to educate the population” (Bennett 2008, 28). Johnson describes this topic as “tired,” being locked in the same “superficial and circular pattern.” He goes on to say that the burden of proof lies with those who assert the aesthetic value of music that does not demonstrate sufficient commercial value to survive without some intervention in market economies. He claims, “the evidence for this aesthetic value is elusive and the case usually relies upon vague appeals to ‘artistic greatness’ and ‘cultural heritage’” (Johnson 2002, 17).

Along with the challenge of creating market value for a viable financial model comes the problem of accessibility to the arts. Green observes, “while technological developments have increased the availability of music for the listener, only a relatively small percentage of the adult population is engaged in active music making” (Green

2003, 263).<sup>3</sup> Referring to a report by the Wallace Foundation,<sup>4</sup> Bennett points out that “negative feelings about the arts tend to be allied with ‘a sense of social exclusion’ that overshadows the association with formal education and places many art forms out of reach” (Bennett 2008, 25). Business practices within classical music have evolved from older beliefs and conditions, regardless of how circumstances have changed; perpetuating a culture and habits existing long after its usefulness has passed (Zander and Zander 2000, 4). Arts organizations are perceived as out-of-date, lacking in sector-wide planning, interaction, advocacy, sharing of skills and knowledge, and vision. What is worse, these organizations lack the marketing skills necessary to compete effectively for public attention and funding. “Lack of public understanding and engagement, it is argued, necessitates the ‘demystification’ of the arts to improve access, participation, and the feeling of cultural ownership” (Bennett 2008, 28). She goes on to discuss the desire many people have to be creative, but are unable to identify ways to become involved in the arts socially or as beginners, suggesting that a broader definition of the arts to include more day-to-day arts activities would overcome some of the strong elitist perceptions expressed through her audience research (Bennett 2008).

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<sup>3</sup> “The more highly specialized is the division of labor generally, the more likely it is that music will also become a specialized sphere of action: listened to and enjoyed by many, but practiced by only a few ... Nowadays, while technological developments have increased the availability of music for the listener, only a relatively small percentage of the adult population is engaged in active music making” (Green 2003, 263).

<sup>4</sup> See Motivations Matter: Findings and Practical Implications of a National Survey of Cultural Participation by the Wallace Foundation at [http://www.wallacefoundation.org/KnowledgeCenter/KnowledgeTopics/Arts\\_Participation/?source=wfgawg0101&adgroup=Arts+Participation+01&kw={keyword}](http://www.wallacefoundation.org/KnowledgeCenter/KnowledgeTopics/Arts_Participation/?source=wfgawg0101&adgroup=Arts+Participation+01&kw={keyword}).

## Performance

Despite the revolutions of postmodernism and post-structuralism evident in contemporary museum design, much of the discussion about and within classical music is still firmly rooted in modernist metanarratives and structural analysis. For example, classical theorists such as Theodor Adorno and Herbert Marcuse claim a piece of classical music can be said “to contain a transcendent or critical moment, even when it is performed and heard in a modern context” (Eyerman and McCormick 2006, 2-3). Adorno also argued that music is “key to any understanding of the psychocultural features of modern social life” (DeNora 2005, 157). Daniel Barenboim, a prominent orchestral conductor, and his colleague Edward Said talk of how music can provide an understanding into the “phenomena of nature, or the qualities of human beings, or the relationship to a God or to some different, spiritual existence” (Barenboim and Said 2002, 173).

The structuralism of Adorno and positivism of Barenboim and Said seems to fit better with society prior to the 1960s and 1970s. By focusing almost exclusively on the value or inherent meaning of the music—and even the performance of music—as an object, the experience of the music for both audience and performers is overlooked. This experience is what Nina Simon emphasizes in analyzing new developments in museum design and what can be used to rethink the experience of music (2010). This new perspective can be explored through what Said briefly refers to as “a school of criticism that says there is no stable textual object and that every object is created anew in the reading or performance or interpretation of it” (2002, 36). In other words, postmodernism changes the way we look at classical music and its performance.

Cook and McCormick level the accusation that “by misconstruing music as an object produced by an industry or used as a resource for social action, sociology has shackled itself to a theoretical vocabulary that, like musicological language, ‘leads us to construct the process of performance as supplementary to the product that occasions it’”(Cook 2004, 205; McCormick 2006, 121). McCormick emphasizes the need for sociological analysis to accompany musicological study, thereby transforming the performance of music into an effective social agent.

For twentieth century composer Benjamin Britten, the audience completes the “holy triangle” of the musical experience, which “needs three human beings at least. It requires a composer, a performer, and a listener; and unless these three take part together, there is no musical experience” (quoted in Simms 1999, 180; McCormick 2006, 126). Much of the literature, apart from McCormick’s sociological analysis, emphasizes the first two entities, failing to account for the third voice in the triad: the listener. The listener or audience participant is precisely the target for which video games so effectively design compelling experiences, and for which museums are now taking into greater account (Simon 2010).

Just as the audience has been overlooked, the role of the performer in creating musical experiences has been neglected apart from discussions of technical authenticity. Christopher Latham, formerly of the Australian Chamber Orchestra, predicts orchestras of the future “will be a whole bunch of musicians who can do different things ... The orchestra will become a much more fluid organisation [sic], multi-faceted”<sup>5</sup> (Cunningham 2004; Bennett 2008, 48). He goes on to argue that while many orchestral musicians

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<sup>5</sup> Harriet Cunningham, “Let Me Entertain You,” *State of the Arts* (January – March 2004); 30-40.

are satisfied as performers, involving musicians in the operational side of organizations in conscious participatory design would add to the skills and knowledge of players and management, benefiting both the organization and musicians themselves. Bruce Coppock, managing director of the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, echoes the sentiment, suggesting that “one of the key frustrations for musicians, typically, is they are not engaged, other than playing, in the real artistic planning and development of an orchestra”<sup>6</sup> (Bennett 2008, 48-49). Bennett further affirms that “orchestral musicians have skills and knowledge far beyond those utilized in their orchestral roles” and suggests the best way for musicians to be comfortable with their professional identity in the changing environment of performance and social engagement is to adopt a wider definition of musicianship, “based on the activities that you do rather than on the status you have achieved” (Bennett 2008, 123). Orchestra directors can manage the changing environments and musician roles by adopting a wider systems approach to concert design and orchestra management. Video game design will serve as an example, exemplifying systems thinking and engagement with contemporary society.

### **Systems Thinking for Concert Design**

In 2004, it was estimated that 145 million consumers and employees – five out of every ten Americans – play video games in some form (Beck and Wade 2004, 4). “Members of the game generation themselves recognize that the experience defines them” (Beck and Wade 2004, 6). Video games offer complex experiences with cinematic images, multilayered sound tracks, and an environment that responds to the player’s actions and shapes itself to the player’s skill level (Beck and Wade 2004, 33). Beck and

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<sup>6</sup> See the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra website, <http://www.thespco.org>



Wade argue that games are good training for collaborative problem solving in real life and provide an environment where constraints conveniently drop away (i.e. being able to play in a Nintendo Wii tennis competition despite not having played tennis in real life) (2004, 75).

Games have changed the nature of business practices (Beck and Wade 2004) as well as expectations for entertainment and immersive experiences. The performing arts have for centuries been immersive experiences, with audiences enveloped by sound and entertained visually. The difference between historical performance practice and the immersive nature of video games is that game design is a consciously designed complex system (Salen and Zimmerman 2004) providing opportunities for audiences to be active, rather than passive.

Games and game design are made up of three elements: design, systems, and interactivity (Salen and Zimmerman 2004, 29). In *Rules of Play*, Salen and Zimmerman (2004) extend these principles to fields outside game design. “The concepts and models, case studies, exercises, and bibliographies can be useful to interactive designers, architects, product designers, and other creators of interactive systems” (Salen and Zimmerman 2004, 2). Similarly, social theorist Clark C. Abt proposes games as “a particular way of looking at something, at anything” (Salen and Zimmerman 2004, 4). Systems thinking can be understood as a process of understanding how multiple objects or ideas influence each other within a complex environment. In this way, game design can then be used as a lens to consciously design and develop classical music experiences and environments, not eliminating but building on historical traditions. Classical music as a text is primarily discussed in modernist terms of authenticity or performance style

(Barenboim and Said 2002). However, musicologists such as Lucy Green, in setting her account of music education within the context of class, gender, and ethnicity formations and the institutions of educational reproduction, are already demonstrating to advantage systems thinking within the field of music (Middleton 2003, 12). Reframing classical music performance within systems thinking provides the first definition of new classical music literacy.

### **New Literacy**

Literacy has been defined as more than the ability to read but “the ability to reason and make informed decisions” (Aston and Schwarz 1994, 259). Previously, music literacy and participation were defined as being able to read and create music oneself, and listening was a group activity in the home (Ross and Nightingale 2003). However, by the middle of the twentieth century, participation adopted a more passive meaning so that in the 1960s, when the notion of cultural vibrancy was being addressed by nonprofit arts organizations, “the concept of participation had already been reshaped to be about audiences and consumption through attendance at nonprofit events” (Tepper and Ivey 2008, 5). Consumption of cultural products has progressed further until “it is not unusual today to find people reading a newspaper, book or magazine while listening to the radio or the latest MP3 track, or putting the latest interactive game on hold to take a call by mobile phone from a friend” (Ross and Nightingale 2003, 1).

The relationship of recordings to performance and concert repertoire is complex (Brunner 1986). Musical recordings have long since been taken for granted, transforming what it means to “know” an orchestral work (Brunner 1986). Brunner points out the paradox that recordings familiarize audiences with music outside the standard fare, thus

increasing their acceptance of less-familiar music. However, the existence of recordings “can encourage orchestras to relinquish their responsibility to broaden their performance repertoire,” thus reinforcing the idea of a static classical music museum (Brunner 1986, 483). Likewise, sameness – with integrity to original files, recordings, and such, the very quality valued in digital media – is antithetical to the fluid nature of live performance. The essential fluidity of performance is dampened, preventing performers and audience from experiencing the change in character of the material from moment to moment (Coniglio 2004).

Important to the discussion of changing musical literacy is the changing nature of media literacy, communication, and participation. “Being part of an audience, using the skills required to engage with mediated information, is now equal in importance with family and interpersonal interactions” (Ross and Nightingale 2003, 5). New communication patterns include having the ability to discuss and comment on consumed media content through film, books, TV, and the Internet (Ross and Nightingale 2003). Mitchell asserts the new multimedia consciousness is fundamentally different, superseding the linear, print-defined literacy of the past (Aston and Schwarz 1994; Mitchell 1993). Game-design changes echo this sentiment, by using complex computer programs “that lead the brain to new combinations of cognitive tasks and demand new levels of processing power” (Beck and Wade 2004, 20).

In designing new technological forms and interventions, historical patterns are still maintained, similar to the way early cinema remediated theater (Dixon 2007, 136). In response to fears of technology supplanting older traditions, “digital visual media can best be understood through the ways in which they honor, rival, and revise linear-

perspective painting, photography, film, television, and print” (Dixon 2007, 136). The same response can be extended to orchestral performance incorporating technology. However, Tepper and Ivey offer a word of caution in embracing new forms of media by pointing to the adoption of the Internet by nonprofits in the 1990s and “although technology can create new paths to participation, digital media, the Internet, and handheld delivery devices are just as likely to divert consumers from traditional ways of connecting with exhibitions and performances” (2008, 8).

Jenkins argues to focus on the interactions made possible among media consumers, texts, and producers rather than talking about the technologies themselves (2006). This resonates loudly with the concept of audience-centered participatory design desired by postmodern and post-structuralist theories. He goes on:

Building brand loyalty requires more than simply coopting grassroots activities back into the commodity culture. Successful media producers are becoming more adept at monitoring and serving audience interests. The games industry, which sees itself as marketing interactive experiences rather than commodities, has been eager to broaden consumer participation and strengthen the sense of affiliation players feel towards their games<sup>7</sup> (Jenkins 2006, 148).

Applying the idea of presenting audiences with interactive musical experiences rather than a high culture commodity could ultimately result in new audiences for performing arts organizations. Similarly, Jenkins highlights Kurt Squire’s description of the participatory design process in which ordinary users are able to “bring their expertise using products to the conversation, and help ensure more usable products ... which

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<sup>7</sup> Elizabeth Kolbert, “Pimps and Dragons: How an Online World Survived a Social Breakdown,” *New Yorker*, May 28, 2001.

benefits everyone”<sup>8</sup> (Squire forthcoming; Jenkins 2006, 148). If the term “product” is replaced with performance, one can easily see how incorporating participatory design strategies could result in new experiences benefiting both performers and audiences.

Tod Machover, known for his electronic music and concept of the “extended orchestra” employing electronic technologies, showed concern that “today’s symphony orchestras, because of social and economic reasons, are hard-pressed to keep up with the twentieth-century repertoire and risk becoming museums of past music” (Machover 1986, 598). Believing that technology and the performing arts are not mutually exclusive, he instead proposes to ask where the forums are “that permit and facilitate the frequent encounter and collaboration of symphony orchestras and advanced technology” (Machover 1986, 598). DeNora (2005; 2006) similarly explores music as a “workspace” and “place to think,” which complements Eyerman’s notion of art as a conceptual space (Eyerman and McCormick 2006, 10). DeNora addresses how music is a medium for agency, meaning, “capacities, modes, and opportunities for action, produced and distributed across individuals that afford preconditions, pretexts, and media for social performance” (2006, 103). These ideas demonstrate how music can be something more than a museum artifact preserving past history and practices and continue to be a dynamic and provocative medium for social production. DeNora uses the idea of “thinking with music” to advocate a shift in focus away from the production of culture to “action and situated networks of activity” (2005, 147).

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<sup>8</sup> Kurt Squire, “Wars Galaxies: A Case Study in Participatory Design,” Joystick 101, [www.joystick101.org](http://www.joystick101.org), forthcoming.

The new dialogue between performer and system embraced by participatory design problematizes traditional authority and authorship, which is clearly at odds with classical music's general clinging to modernist paradigms (Carver and Beardon 2004, 176). The essential step forward is not just the interactivity of the moment but embracing a dialogue between consumers and producers of performance, reversing the cultural economy based on producers as distanced guardians, to a system allowing the wider population a role in the process of creative production (Carver and Beardon 2004, 177). In museum design, professionals have argued that participatory or interactive experiences may be off-putting to some visitors, but the converse is also true. Especially if the priority is reaching new audiences, users of social media and video games, as well as people preferring social and recreational activities must be taken into account when designing experiences (Simon 2010). These visitors seek to understand how cultural institutions such as museums and performing arts organizations are relevant and valuable to their own lives (Simon 2010, 35). Participatory techniques are not to be seen as supplanting traditional methods, but rather as an "and" for the cultural professional's toolbox (Simon 2010, 6).

Audience-centered design requires trust that audiences can and will find content that is most useful to them, reinforcing the post-structuralist argument that meaning is created at the point of consumption. By relinquishing positivist control over the distribution of knowledge and experiences, audiences are made to feel like the owners of their experiences, thereby creating greater incentive to repeat similar experiences (Simon 2010, 66).

Connecting to DeNora's work on the social agency of music, Simon introduces the subject of social objects in which objects, physical or otherwise, are the center of attention, stimulating conversation and interaction of the audience (Simon 2010). She discusses the importance of maintaining historical museum collections, but using them in ways that spark connection between visitors. This can be easily transcribed to the classical music museum, where the "classics" do not need to be abandoned, but can be used in new ways to connect audiences and spark new creativity. Instead of focusing solely on attendance numbers, orchestras can use participatory design to demonstrate the orchestra's value as a community asset and investment (Simon 2010). Simon argues that "object-centered institutions are uniquely equipped to support creative and respectful community dialogue ... strengthen[ing] relationships among diverse audiences ... provid[ing] valuable civic and learning experiences" and most importantly, that participatory practice is imperative in order to attain the idealistic mission statements of many cultural institutions (i.e. connect visitors to new ideas, support creativity, etc.) (Simon 2010, 351).

Simon believes there are "incredible opportunities for cultural institutions to distinguish themselves by encouraging participation in the physical environments of museums, libraries, and arts centers" (2010, 4). Each of these institutions offers a physical venue that the Internet cannot provide. She argues that by "combining professional design skills with the lessons of participation pouring out of the social Web, cultural institutions can become leading participatory venues in our cities, towns, and neighborhoods" (Simon 2010, 4), which is certainly good news for orchestras and performing arts organizations desiring continued viability.

## Conclusion

The literature examined suggests a transition for classical music from modernism to postmodernism and post-structuralism, fostering new conversations about the social relevance of classical music and definition of classical music literacy and engagement. These new perspectives in turn suggest possible solutions to the challenge facing classical music in declining audiences, exemplified by the efforts of museum anthropology and video game design in creating community, fostering educational experiences, and preserving and recontextualizing historical artifacts. Museum anthropology was chosen since the advent of museums coincides roughly with the establishment of the orchestra and has filled a similar cultural role within society. Video games were chosen as an object of study for their very contemporaneity and insight into the changing social environment.

Although differing widely, the three domains of classical music, museum anthropology, and video game design do overlap in ways that allow for conversation among the three. The literature has established the orchestra as a museum of musical works and performance practices, mapping directly onto the idea of a museum of historical art and cultural artifacts. It is only a small step from there to examine the questions museums have asked in reevaluating their own position within the local community, and therefore adopt the principles, if not the exact interventions, making possible further connection with the community. Some of the most effective principles used by museums in designing these interactions employ game design principles based on interactivity and immediate response, as well as providing rewards for visitor interaction and reframing education based upon the actions of the visitor. Understanding



the contemporary mediated culture and the extent to which gaming has become part of daily life provides a framework within which to begin developing audience-centered experiences through classical music.

Despite the flagging classical music industry, this study will demonstrate the continued vibrancy of volunteer-based community orchestras within the United States. These orchestras can look to the fields of museum anthropology and video game design to address the challenge of designing meaningful interactions between the performance and performers and the audience.

### **CHAPTER THREE: A STUDY OF THE LOVELAND ORCHESTRA**

The mission of The Loveland Orchestra is to:

1. Promote the education and appreciation of high-quality orchestral music in the Loveland community.
2. Provide an opportunity for area musicians to share in performing and recreating some of the finest musical works ever written.
3. Provide musical experiences and opportunities for educating young people in and around the city of Loveland.
4. Foster the development of music in this area by assisting and cooperating with other artistic organizations within the community.<sup>1</sup>

The classical music industry has faced numerous challenges in recent years.

Orchestras such as the Honolulu Symphony have declared bankruptcy while others such as the Detroit Symphony are paralyzed in union disagreements and financial difficulties.

Apart from hearing the music as part of a movie score, classical orchestral music on the whole is no longer a normalized part of American society. The National Endowment for the Art's Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA) indicates a significant decline in audience numbers at performing arts events between the years 1982 and 2008, giving orchestras, operas, and other arts organizations reason for concern (National Endowment for the Arts 2008). However, these numbers also present an opportunity to redefine success in the form of participation and active engagement, rather than solely on audience numbers.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.lovelandorchestra.org](http://www.lovelandorchestra.org)

In the United States, there are many more orchestras than the professional ones seen in the news. Oftentimes overlooked in the discussion about the relevancy of classical music are the volunteer and semi-professional community orchestras found in communities of all sizes, such as The Loveland Orchestra in Loveland, Colorado. Interestingly enough, within the SPPA study, it was discovered that community venues continue to play a significant role as settings for arts activities, with these venues reporting the highest rates of attendance for any individual arts-attended activity between May 2007 and May 2008 (Novak-Leonard and Brown, 2011).

Community orchestras certainly face challenges similar to the large professional ones. Making sure there is an audience to fill a concert hall and donate financially to the organization is the primary concern of all orchestras. While the goals of connecting with communities and providing the highest caliber of live music performance possible are the same regardless of the orchestra, without the imposing overhead costs of maintaining performance halls and subsidizing a large roster of employees, community groups are in a better position to experiment with engaging audiences and employing participatory design. It may seem counterintuitive, given that larger symphonies appear to have more resources available to them, but volunteer groups have fewer financial responsibilities and are therefore more flexible in event design planning.

The Loveland Orchestra will serve as a case study to examine the following three challenges within the larger classical music industry:

1. Success for classical orchestras has previously been measured almost exclusively by audience numbers. This study will examine ways the orchestra can foster and intentionally design audience participation, using game design principles and museum anthropology as models.

2. Educational outreach models assume the audience is ignorant, rather than disinterested. This study will look to the field of museum studies as a potential model for attracting new audiences, submerging overt educational methods.

3. Orchestral performance practices seek to preserve historical tradition and musical artifacts. This study will argue that historical practice is valid and the music can be preserved while simultaneously seeking ways to engage and attract new audiences by redefining what classical music literacy means.

## **Historical Tradition**

### History of The Loveland Orchestra

The Loveland Orchestra was formed in 1981 as a classical music chamber ensemble to perform smaller classical works, filling a void in the community for an instrumental performing arts ensemble. In the beginning of the orchestra's life, a season consisted of perhaps three or four concerts, but has since expanded to the current season featuring six concerts over the course of nine months, with the possibility of further expanding the number of performances. The group gradually



© The Loveland Orchestra, 2011

grew from its original roots as a small chamber group to a larger chamber orchestra and then into a full, large orchestra capable of performing large works such as those by Wagner or Tchaikovsky, which require extensive orchestral personnel to play the parts, as opposed to the works of early classical composers such as Mozart or the early works of Beethoven.

The primary focus of the orchestra is live performance. Very few recordings have been made of the concerts, and are not widely distributed, nor is it a priority of the orchestra to create recordings. Instead, the orchestra's contribution to the community is in the form of live performances, whether in their normal venue—currently a church sanctuary, but various concert halls in the past—or in less formal settings, such as at a local sculpture garden or hospital grand opening. The orchestra provides a place for local musicians to perform, as well as another place for advanced music students in high school and college to gain real life musical experience. One of the main thrusts in the orchestra's marketing campaign is that the local community can witness excellent live musical performance for a fraction of the cost of attending a concert with one of the local professional or semi-professional orchestras such as the Colorado Symphony in Denver, or more locally with the Fort Collins Symphony or the Greeley Philharmonic.

The Loveland Orchestra concerts exemplify both formal and informal elements. An audience member is greeted at the main door by a ticket booth, followed by ushers at the Sanctuary entrances who exchange tickets for printed programs. Thirty minutes prior to the concert, Luciano Silvestri, the music director and conductor, presents an informal history of the music to be performed that night, the unique challenges of that music, and answers questions audience members may have about the history or the orchestra. A considerable number of audience members attend this lecture, even though it means coming earlier and staying longer for the concert event. The performing musicians commonly sit in the back, commenting that the historical lesson is an interesting complement to the music they have prepared for performance.

The beginning of the concert is very formal, looking like any professional concert. The musicians assemble on stage, attired in “concert black,” which consists of tuxedos for the men and formal black attire for the women. The last member on stage is the concertmaster (principal or first violin), who strides onto the stage to the applause of the musicians and audience after the orchestra has had a few moments to warm their instruments and fingers and prepare for the performance ahead. The concertmaster then tunes the orchestra, by asking the principal oboist to sound an A. First the winds and brass are invited to tune their instruments to the note, and then the strings receive the same opportunity. The concertmaster takes his seat and a brief moment of silence fills the hall before the conductor makes his entrance. The maestro then strides onto the stage to the applause of the audience and the standing ovation of the orchestra. Upon him taking the podium, the music starts.

Contemporary orchestral tradition places concerts in formal concert halls, with tiered seating and the orchestra on stage. The current performance venue at Good Shepherd Church still provides a raised stage on which the orchestra performs, but the environment of the Sanctuary creates a more intimate concert experience. Silvestri’s goal is to create an atmosphere where the audience feel ownership of the orchestra and be as close as possible to the action of the orchestra. In this way, he is attempting to create an immersive, if not yet interactive and participatory, environment that could not otherwise be accomplished with recorded media.

Silvestri describes how easy it is to sit at home and listen to or watch recorded performances and get the impression that is all that music or art or theatre is, but he emphasizes that there is more. “Until you’re in the moment, you don’t experience that

something special about seeing the work and effort unfold in front of you. With CDs, you only hear sound, you don't see faces" (Interview February 9, 2011). Audience members have commented to Silvestri after a performance that they had never known how hard musicians have to work to create the music. In this way, he points to the way live performance humanizes music. Silvestri uses the example of the way Beethoven's music is captivating because of Beethoven's human experience, out of which comes some of the most humanly connected music.

### Concerns in Classical Music

Reports of the bankruptcies of other orchestras are a cause for concern to Silvestri, but not specifically for The Loveland Orchestra. He finds it heartbreaking to hear of musicians losing income and the means to support a family, and feels the dissolution of orchestras sours the musical experience for the organization as well as the community. He thinks that when orchestras declare insolvency, the entire community suffers by missing out on the performance of live works. However Silvestri has made it his first priority in his leadership of the orchestra to live within the means of the orchestra. He states that the audience would have to completely disappear for The Loveland Orchestra to close its doors.

When Silvestri came to leadership during the 2003–04 season, there was a serious possibility that the orchestra would fold, due to previous irresponsible financial management. Having been awarded a substantial grant, the orchestra leadership had chosen to abandon further fundraising efforts, eventually squandering the money. Since his first season, Silvestri is proud to say the orchestra has operated in the black every year. He and the orchestra board constantly look for ways to minimize expenses through

locating more affordable venues—such as the switch from the Loveland High School auditorium to Good Shepherd Church—to using public domain music scores and parts that have run out of or were never in copyright and can be downloaded and printed from the Internet free of charge.

Silvestri feels that for people who don't want classical music, it has no relevance and never will. However, there are only a handful of musicians in the orchestra who were professionally trained and/or worked as professional musicians at other times. The rest of the orchestra is made up of hobbyists who have made a priority of practicing at home and rehearsing as a group each week to prepare the concert performances. Classical music is extremely relevant to them, as is evidenced by the time and effort put into each concert.

### **Measuring Success Through Audience Numbers**

Although audience attendance numbers have served as a marker of success for The Loveland Orchestra, inadequate records have been maintained over the history of the ensemble to reflect the percentage of community members attending orchestral concerts and events. Audience numbers can provide valuable information for an orchestra, but they form only part of the picture. Alone, the numbers fail to indicate who the audience is, and therefore what additional methods of marketing can be implemented to reach target audiences.

### **Unique Value of Community Orchestras**

Silvestri feels there is great personal value when the orchestra is made up of volunteers as opposed to contracted professional musicians. Those who make up the orchestra do so because they love the music and love what they are doing. The individual musicians of the volunteer community orchestra have chosen to spend time and effort



preparing the music because they find personal fulfillment in it and value classical music as a genre. The concert season for The Loveland Orchestra is currently six concerts coinciding with the school year, with rehearsals beginning in September and the final concert in May. Each concert requires five to six weeks of rehearsal from 7:00–9:30pm on Thursday evenings. The January and May concerts are exceptions, each requiring three rehearsals of the same length. This adds up to a considerable time commitment for musicians, as it does not account for personal practice time at home. The downside to an orchestra made up of volunteer musicians is that musicians are not paid for the considerable amount time donated for rehearsal, personal practice, and performance time. Therefore, it becomes important for a full audience to be in attendance as a reward for the musicians' time and effort.

There may be less buy-in from professional groups because the musicians view it as a paycheck, not an organization to be personally invested in. This personal investment on the part of the musicians of the orchestra creates an immediate platform for participatory planning. Although, utilizing the musicians in the planning of concert experiences contradicts the traditional hierarchy of power within an orchestra, in which the music director wields nearly all the decision-making power. In general with professional orchestras, concerts are planned with the intent of filling as many auditorium seats as possible in order to fill the coffers and pay the bills. However, as will be seen with the efforts of The Loveland Orchestra, although concerts mostly have the appearance of a traditional orchestra, the goal is to provide an access point for the community to hear music as well as provide an opportunity for musicians to perform. The primary focus is shifted away from money and ticket sales.

The orchestra is committed providing the community with a good, local product, for which the community does not have to travel. Ticket prices are financially accessible in a way that professional orchestras tend not to be. Adults can attend a concert for \$10, students age 13 through high school are \$5, and children 12 and under are free, making the concerts child- and family-friendly. The orchestra also introduced value memberships in the form of a concert ticket four pack for \$35, where an adult may choose any four concerts to attend during the season, or a full concert season membership for \$50, which includes admission to all six concerts.

In contrast, season tickets to the Colorado Symphony range from \$231 to \$973 for 14 concerts, and \$19 to \$80 for a single performance from the Symphony's Masterworks series. As the only fully professional orchestra in Colorado—meaning the musicians do not need to work a second career—the Colorado Symphony is able to attract larger name guest performers and conductors, such as Itzhak Perlman, which in turn attract audiences for those performances. At the same time, those high profile performers translate into higher ticket prices, effectively making the concerts inaccessible to those in the community with economic limitations.

However, if classical music is to be compared to other elements of contemporary cultural production, the assertion that the expense of classical music is the reason for low attendance numbers doesn't hold water. Rock concerts and large sporting events often charge ticket prices that are much higher than that of even visiting the Colorado Symphony Orchestra, and therefore points to elitist assumptions within the classical music field about the superiority of classical music compared to other forms of cultural production.

## Benefits of Incorporating Technology

The orchestra launched a website, [www.lovelandorchestra.org](http://www.lovelandorchestra.org), for the 2006-07 season. This first iteration of the website included only basic information and performance dates. This paved the way for the orchestra to communicate to the community about the ensemble. Previous methods of advertising had included word of mouth, a mailing list, and advertising in the Loveland Reporter-Herald. Another benefit of the website was that it attracted musicians to the organization. For example, a new principal cellist was engaged to play with the orchestra after she contacted the orchestra through a website inquiry. A number of other musicians have subsequently auditioned and joined the orchestra after searching “Loveland music” or other similar web search terms and discovering the orchestra. Although records are not kept, numerous audience members have commented to Silvestri at the end of a concert that they discovered the orchestra because of a class assignment or an internet search and they had previously been unaware of the orchestra’s existence. For example, after the orchestra’s most March 2011 concert, a woman approached Silvestri, as he greeted audience members and congratulated performers.

“I never knew there was an orchestra in Loveland before. I just loved the concert and will definitely be coming back again. Thank you so much!”

Comments of this nature are common after a concert of The Loveland Orchestra. Audience members seem genuinely interested and excited to attend concerts performed by the group. New audience members frequently express delight in the quality of the performance and surprise that the group is in Loveland when they had previously not known about it.

The current version of the website was developed by an orchestra member but is currently maintained by the music director. The information contained on the website includes the “Sponsor a Piece” program, performance and rehearsals schedules, maps, a listing of donors/sponsors, and a general introduction to the orchestra. While the first version of the website was one-way communication of the orchestra to the Loveland community, more recent changes are beginning to facilitate two-way conversations. For example, the Young Artist Competition information is now on the website, allowing parents and music teachers to communicate directly with the music director through email inquiry to best prepare student musicians for the annual competition. Previously, the competition had been announced through the distribution of fliers to local music teachers.

The problem with the website is that in order for it to be effective, it needs to be managed and updated frequently. There are not currently any volunteers to fill this role, and the responsibility falls on the shoulders of the already busy music director. Silvestri envisions further opportunities for the Loveland community to interact with the orchestra and shape the direction of each season, furthering his mission of making the orchestra truly belong to the community, but lacks the knowledge of web design to implement such ideas.

The orchestra also maintains a Facebook page, with 52 people “liking” the page as of April 2, 2011. Events are created for each concert on the page, giving orchestra members the opportunity to tell their private Facebook community they will be attending the event, and invite others to attend. Marketing responsibilities have fallen primarily to the individual musicians, who are encouraged to invite friends and family to attend



- Wall
- Info
- Photos
- Discussions

**About**  
 The Loveland Orchestra serves the greater Northern Colorado area with high quality classical music.

**52**  
 people like this

- Subscribe via SMS
- Unlike
- Create a Page
- Report Page
- Share

# The Loveland Orchestra

Non-Profit Organization

Wall The Loveland Orchestra · Top Posts ▾

Share: Post Photo Link Video

Write something...



The Loveland Orchestra created an event.



**Season Finale II**  
 Saturday, May 14, 2011 at 8:00pm  
 Golden High School

June 28, 2010 at 7:39am · Like · Comment · Share · RSVP to this event

### RECENT ACTIVITY

"Many thanks for an outstanding..." on Holiday Concert's Wall.

The Loveland Orchestra edited their Founded, Website and Company Overview.



The Loveland Orchestra created an event.



**Season Finale**  
 Friday, May 13, 2011 at 8:00pm  
 Good Shepherd Church

June 28, 2010 at 7:37am · Like · Comment · Share · RSVP to this event



The Loveland Orchestra created an event.



**Young Artist Concert**  
 Friday, April 15, 2011 at 7:30pm  
 Good Shepherd Church

June 28, 2010 at 7:28am · Like · Comment · Share · RSVP to this event



The Loveland Orchestra created an event.



**All Tchaikovsky Concert**  
 Friday, March 4, 2011 at 7:30pm  
 Good Shepherd Church

June 28, 2010 at 7:25am · Like · Comment · Share



The Loveland Orchestra created an event.



**Mozart's 255th Birthday Concert**  
 Saturday, January 22, 2011 at 7:30pm  
 First Christian Church

June 28, 2010 at 7:17am · Like · Comment · Share



The Loveland Orchestra created an event.



**Holiday Concert**  
 Friday, December 3, 2010 at 7:30pm  
 Good Shepherd Church

June 28, 2010 at 7:11am · Like · Comment · Share



The Loveland Orchestra created an event.



**Halloween Concert**  
 Friday, October 22, 2010 at 7:30pm  
 Good Shepherd Church

concerts. However, a member of the orchestra recently joined the board of directors—a team of musicians that voluntarily assume greater responsibility in managing the business of the orchestra—that has knowledge of marketing and a desire to create a more specific marketing plan for the orchestra.

Most importantly, Silvestri wants the community to feel it is in partnership or collaboration with the orchestra, not merely the source of funding. For this reason, the “Adopt a Piece” program was initiated in the 2009–10 season. In this program, a donor selects a piece of music and donates the purchase price, enabling the orchestra to add the piece to the permanent library of pieces. The donor is identified in a byline on the program and on the website whenever the piece is performed, in perpetuity. The orchestra provides a more intimate classical music environment for the audience, making it feel like “my” orchestra only a few feet away with an approachable conductor. Silvestri makes a point of being accessible during the intermission and after the concert for patrons and performers to engage him in conversation.

Silvestri has considered programming more contemporary pieces for orchestra requiring audio tracks played at specific moments in the performance such as bird calls or whale soundtracks (exemplified in works by the American composer Hovhaness, as one example). The performance venue, Good Shepherd Church, has a good audio system, which would lend itself to this type of performance. He strives to bring the performance to the brink of what is tolerable sonically, as is demonstrated with performances of Charles Ives and Igor Stravinsky, but he identifies a challenge in bringing individual musicians out of their comfort zone in performance. He feels he is helping the orchestra move in the right direction, but must be careful to not move too quickly. His goal is to

always investigate new possibilities for performance without offending either musicians or audience. Silvestri also thinks it could be advantageous to occasionally program pieces requiring audience participation, such as by contributing ringtones at a specific moment in a live performance. However, whatever participation was programmed would need to be substantially engaging, not just a gimmick.

Silvestri spoke of a concern in the possible distractions to programming either visual or game-like activities during the concert. His concern is reflective of the larger struggle within the classical music field in which anything visual is seen as a distraction. Those within the field promoting the modernist classical music paradigm – whether intentionally or unintentionally – seek to assert the autonomy of music as an art form requiring no support, with other things that stimulate the senses during the performance being labeled as diluting the performance and music.

### **Educational Models**

#### **The Role of the Orchestra**

Silvestri envisions the orchestra having two primary roles: the first is for the orchestra to be perceived as belonging to Loveland, rather than being an imposition upon the community; and the second as an organization that connects extensively with students. The orchestra currently has players as young as 15 and as old as 70. He feels it is important to involve youth in order to provide opportunities to develop musical performance skills, as well as educate and cultivate arts patrons for the new generations. Silvestri has a vision to further expand the concert season with educational concerts inviting schools to performances, whether by special events at Good Shepherd Church, or by the orchestra traveling to individual schools. In this way, the orchestra would be

adopting the responsibility for classical music education by crossing over into a position that is normally reserved for professional orchestras.

### Community Engagement

In addition to concerts in formal auditoriums or church sanctuaries, the orchestra has performed in numerous venues around Loveland. In the 1980s, the orchestra performed at the grand opening of the Chilson Center, a recreational facility. More recently, in 2007, the orchestra partnered with a local organization, Partners Youth Mentoring, a Loveland organization that provides foster and mentoring experiences for students. The orchestra was asked to provide chamber music for a cocktail party and chef's gala at the Loveland Sculpture Garden. Members of the orchestra volunteered to assemble small duos, trios, or string ensembles to rehearse and prepare approximately 30 minutes of music each during the event. The orchestra did not receive monetary remuneration for their efforts, but the musicians were provided another venue in which to perform and the orchestra was able to distribute advertising in the form of brochures and handouts to the attending visitors. This event was repeated in the summer of 2008, with a venue change to the Chapungu Sculpture Garden, also in Loveland. The orchestra has not been approached since, possibly due to a new director for Partners in Youth taking the organization in a different direction.

Another extension of performance into the community occurred at the Medical Center of the Rockies in January 2009, in which small ensembles of musicians again performed background music for the grand opening and gala. Orchestra musicians again assembled themselves into ensembles, preparing 30 minutes of music each for a total of several hours for the opening during the day. Musicians were also asked to perform for



the black tie cocktail event in the evening. The Medical Center of the Rockies gave a generous donation to the orchestra, which was distributed to the individual performers who participated.

The entire orchestra was invited to present a concert in the summer of 2008 as part of a summer evening concert series at the Chapungu Sculpture Garden in Loveland. These concerts were free to the Loveland community, but the orchestra received payment from the concert organizers. The concert was rescheduled at the last minute due to torrential rainfall, which may have affected attendance numbers, but the resulting audience at the rescheduled concert was enthusiastic, and ten sets of season tickets were gifted to audience members, encouraging attendees to go to concerts during the upcoming regular season.

During the 2009–2010 season, The Loveland Orchestra was approached by the conductor of the Golden Concert Choir about a collaboration between the choir and orchestra. This collaboration takes the shape of a two-concert series, in which one performance is in Loveland and the other is hosted in Golden. The same concert is performed in both locations, but each ensemble is responsible for marketing, advertising, and venue management. The first combined effort took place in May 2010 and was such a success that another concert set was scheduled for May 2011. The collaboration is so mutually beneficial that discussions are underway for adding an additional two concerts each season to incorporate the choir into either the holiday concert or a season opening concert in September. The Golden Concert Choir had previously attempted collaboration with the Niwot Timberline Symphony, a similar community orchestra located just outside of Boulder, Colorado, but the proximity of the two ensembles proved to be challenging

in the distribution of marketing responsibilities and dividing audience share and revenue. For the musicians of the Loveland Orchestra, Silvestri felt it was a good opportunity to move them out of their comfort zones; as well as to build relationships through time spent carpooling.

Other musical and artistic collaborations have included concerts featuring elementary and middle school choirs, such as singing Christmas carols at the annual Holiday concert, with the orchestra accompanying the students. Holiday concerts draw more audience members in general, but the addition of school children increases the audience size substantially, achieving the goals of building new audiences and extending music education. Unfortunately, these are both temporary, as most audience members return only when their child performs again. There are no mechanisms in place to monitor the return of new audience members that may have desired a repeat experience, or of how the students may have been inspired to continue with music because of the experience. Such an undertaking would be massive. Another collaboration with high school students was the October 2010 concert, “Shakespeare’s Halloween,” in which students from Fossil Ridge High School performed Shakespearean monologues during intermission.

The longest running educational outreach effort has been the Young Artist’s Competition, launched in the early 1990s. Each February, high school students in Larimer and Weld counties are invited to perform one movement of a concerto in competition. One winner is chosen to perform with the orchestra in the April Spring Concert, also winning \$500. The competition annually draws over a dozen very talented young musicians from the surrounding area, and results in another temporary increase

in audience attendance. At some point in the history of the orchestra, there was also a Young Composer competition, but little is known about the program. Silvestri would like to revive it in the next few seasons as an additional means of engaging students and fostering creative development in the community.

#### Venue and Collaborations

The Loveland Orchestra, as a small 501(c)3 organization, operates with a small annual budget, precluding the ownership of a performance space. The orchestra currently performs five of its six concerts at Good Shepherd Church in Loveland, with the January Mozart concert performed at First Christian Church. First Christian Church in Loveland also hosts the weekly orchestral rehearsals. Due to the nature of Mozart's music, there are fewer players needed in the orchestra, and are therefore able to fit on the smaller stage of First Christian Church's sanctuary. The sanctuary provides a very intimate setting, which is desirable for concerts, bringing the audience close to the action. Pragmatically, the Mozart concert also helps maintain a good relationship with First Christian Church, rather than merely exploiting the church for its rehearsal space. In return, the music director for the church has periodically solicited musicians from the orchestra to assist in playing for services at the church, providing the musicians with small remuneration for their time and services.

Before engaging Good Shepherd Church as the primary location for concerts, the orchestra performed at the Loveland High School auditorium. During the five years the orchestra performed there, many audience members assumed the orchestra belonged to the high school, attaching a stigma to the Loveland Orchestra. Previous advertising had served to deepen that impression. The move to Good Shepherd Church

as the primary performance venue affirmed the idea of the Loveland Orchestra as an autonomous ensemble in Loveland. The further question to be asked is whether the current performance venue in a church might also dissuade some audience members from attending, but given the lack of suitable performance venues within Loveland, the orchestra faces very few alternatives for truly neutral spaces.

### Theory of Audience Education

Silvestri emphasizes his belief in the importance for patrons to have a sense of the history of the music and an understanding of the behind-the-scenes workings to bring a concert to fruition. Silvestri introduced a pre-concert lecture by the music director for the 2003-04 season. Lightly attended at first, it has grown to be a significant portion of the concert, both for patrons and performers. 30 minutes prior to the start of the concert, Silvestri welcomes the audiences and gives a brief introduction to the history of the pieces, composers, and unique challenges to performing each particular piece. By outlining the history and suggesting things in the music to listen for, he educates the audience and with the goal of deepening their appreciation for the music, whenever they hear it.

Silvestri chooses pieces for each season that he feels people—both audience and performers—find appealing. Silvestri is mostly concerned with responding to audience demand and has considered a season of audience suggestions as the theme, possibly titled “Audience Favorites.” The niche of The Loveland Orchestra is neither all contemporary nor all classical. He feels that if the music appeals to him in some way, it is likely to appeal to a wider audience for similar reasons. Previously, the planning for each season was centered on the needs and desires of the music director, but the focus has shifted to

be primarily about the interests of the larger audience as well as providing musicians the opportunity to perform historically significant and large ensemble pieces. Ultimately, Silvestri hopes that appealing to larger audiences will result in additional sponsorship through the “Adopt a Piece” program, thereby helping fund the orchestra. He talks about how education becomes important especially for youth, who will eventually become patrons. “If they are not exposed to classical music performance, they will choose other art forms to patronize. The same can be said about musical theatre or any other art form. Classical music performance builds society, community, and friendships” (Interview February 9, 2011).

The Loveland Orchestra demonstrates the challenges common to American community orchestras in particular, and the larger classical music industry as a whole. The primary concern of any orchestra is obtaining and maintaining adequate audience numbers through the use of education and preservation of a museum repertoire. Outdated assumptions about audience numbers and educational models provide an opportunity to discuss alternate perspectives of active audience participation and engagement, moving beyond a passive consumer mentality. The language of the first point of the orchestra’s mission statement is where the group shows their cards, positioning the orchestra within a modernist paradigm, in which the role of the orchestra and music conductor is assumed to be that of evangelism rather than true community engagement and partnership. The language of promoting “education and appreciation” of the music presumes community ignorance and the need to be informed in order to appreciate the music as an art form. Silvestri’s leadership of The Loveland Orchestra has moved the orchestra beyond traditional concert and event design, but also presents further occasion to apply

participatory design as a means of engaging the local community, as is demonstrated by his desire for the orchestra to belong to the city and people of Loveland. The scope will now be broadened to examine these issues of engaging and educating audiences and preserving historical musical artifacts in the larger classical music field, looking to museum anthropology and video game design for insight into achieving the goals of active audience participation in classical music.

## CHAPTER FOUR: CLASSICAL MUSIC AS A MEANS OF COMMUNITY

### ENGAGEMENT

“All music, any organization of sounds is then a tool for the creation or consolidation of a community, of a totality. It is what links a power center to its subjects, and thus, more generally, it is an attribute of power in all its forms.”

Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*

“We are similar to a museum. My function is to present old masterpieces in modern frames.”

Rudolf Bing, Austrian Opera Administrator, 1902-1997

The idea of a classical music crisis is not a new one. Technological innovations have caused the wringing of hands almost since the establishment of the orchestra. Printed program notes in the nineteenth century caused concern over the nature of music literacy and understanding, lowering the barrier to entry. Previously, to “know” a piece of music required having the ability to perform it, however polished, on an instrument. Introducing program notes meant that audience members did not have to come to a performance armed with extensive knowledge of the pieces already in hand. A similar uproar occurred at the advent of recorded music and the phonograph, which was seen to be the end of the music world, as it was known. However, as we now know, the music world, particularly the classical music world, has survived these technological innovations. The technological shifts seen at the beginning of the twenty-first century may seem more dramatic and fast advancing, but nevertheless appear to be repeating the cyclical nature of history. There is cause for concern, but not necessarily over the

technology itself. Perhaps the greater cause for concern is the nature of audiences and participation.

In a recent blog for *ArtsJournal*, Greg Sandow (2011) identifies two perspectives on the problem of classical music: the first that “classical music, as presented right now, is fine, and the problem lies in two things—access and education. Teach people about classical music, give them a chance to hear it, and they’ll love it just as much as we do.”

He continues with a second perspective claiming that classical music

just doesn’t fit very well into current culture. Which ... is why the classical music audience has aged, why you don’t find classical music in current media, and why, with each passing year, a smaller and smaller percentage of people go to classical performances. So to fix things, we have to bring classical music up to date, and make it a contemporary art (Sandow 2011).

Looking to the fields of museum anthropology and game design provides challenges for classical music. There are limitations in the ways that the paradigms from these fields can be applied to classical music. Both museums and video games deal primarily with visual objects; classical music is based on sonic experiences. Perceptions of time and space differ among the fields: museums are fixed in location but flexible in time; games are flexible in both time and location; and live classical performance is largely flexible in neither, although recent advances in broadcasting performances are breaking down limitations in location. Game design utilizes complex layers of motivation and rewards that are largely independent from the marketplace, where classical music’s obsession with authenticity is driven toward ticket and album sales, rather than experiences. Game design can thus indicate new definitions of authenticity by emphasizing collaborative creation and experience instead of economics as motivation.



Classical music is an elite form that has relied on a sense of “otherness,” defining itself as separate from folk, popular, jazz, or commercial music. Its market value has depended upon discussions of authenticity, which in recent years has included a return to period-accurate performance (in style and actual instruments) as well as an emphasis on the professional quality and perfection of performance, in order to be considered authentic, laudable, or worthy of purchase. These definitions are largely at odds with ideas of participatory culture, collaborative creation, and community involvement. The consumer mindset has permeated nearly every part of American culture, and classical music is no exception.

### **Transitioning from Audience Numbers to Participation**

Community and volunteer orchestras may be in the best position to begin implementing interactive or participatory design and incorporating technology into live performance in order to engage audiences. While most organizations sufficient lack resources to present large digital interventions on the scale of Leif Ove Andesnes,<sup>1</sup> they are able nonetheless to consider audience engagement and the performance environment by examining game and participatory design.

Orchestral Maneuvres at the Dog, a chamber ensemble formed with musicians from The Cleveland Symphony, demonstrates that by moving classical music performance outside the traditional, formal concert hall, the ensemble is able to find support and audiences, the reward for hours of practice to prepare a performance (Barnett

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<sup>1</sup> In 2009, Leif Ove Andesnes, a professional classical pianist, collaborated with artist Robin Rhode to present Mussorgsky’s *Pictures at an Exhibition* in a performance entitled *Pictures Reframed*, which incorporated large video screens in addition to the solo piano. See [picturesreframed.com](http://picturesreframed.com). Andsnes would like to make concert settings more welcoming by making contact directly from musicians to audiences and rethinking the formal concert hall setting (Andsnes 2011).

2010). The group performs at a local bar, The Happy Dog, which sponsors musical performances from a variety of genres. Although only superficial changes have been made to traditional performance – musicians perform in casual clothing, and the setting is informal – the invisible barrier between audiences and performers, as facilitated by the stage and concert hall, is removed. The musicians are able and apt to engage with the audience members, and the audience is given permission to appreciate the music as they see fit. Moving classical music out of the concert hall also furthers educational efforts, in which new audiences are introduced to music they may not have known previously, opening opportunities to discuss the historical, musical, and emotional significance attached to the performance. This new sense of space and place for performance is much like the discussions in museum anthropology about creating engaging spaces for audiences. A natural transition in discussing the new sense of place is to look to game design as a model for connecting audiences and crafting immersive and compelling experiences.

### Audience Participation and Gaming

Video game design can provide insights for the classical music industry, but there are also limitations in drawing this analogy. Networked game experiences, such as World of Warcraft, enable players to engage with the game across vast distances of space and are not time dependent. This is in contrast to the specific time and place of a live performance. Classical music and video games also share some common characteristics, particularly a sense of reward for proficiency and tasks accomplished, as

well as camaraderie for the people working together toward a common goal. However, this experience is limited to the musicians performing, and is not normally extended to the audience.

Attending a classical music concert is often about work: understanding the historical and theoretical significance of the music being performed, as well as appreciating the effort expended in the performance. A very different, powerful narrative can be found in the gaming world, in the idea that players forget how hard they are supposed to work in order to enjoy the game. For example, even a simple game such as Bejeweled<sup>®2</sup> provides incentives for the player in progressively difficult layers, with immediate feedback on right or wrong moves. There are rewards built into the game play for accomplishing difficult tasks. Games, regardless of type, provide an immediately responsive environment for interactive play. These ideas of rewards for participation and responsive environments provide a place to think about concert design and incorporating technology into live performance.

In gaming, the feedback structure is not oriented toward profit, but toward engagement. Even knowing that orchestras require capital in order to continue performing concerts, perhaps more event design can be planned with audience engagement, instead of monetary gains, in mind. Audience engagement would serve as a means for presenting compelling experiences for an identified audience, and providing tools for education and establishing new layers of meaning. Orchestras can apply the principles of what makes a game compelling to play into conscious performance design that transcends the choice of music and begins to consider ways to actively engage an

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<sup>2</sup> [www.popcap.com](http://www.popcap.com)

audience in performance, making it a more personal experience. As Nina Simon points out in her book on participation in museums (2010), the educational goals of most orchestras would benefit from events where audiences are able to do more than sit in a chair for two hours.

Games are also compelling for the way they change and respond to user input. The most effective uses of participatory design in museum exhibits incorporate this idea of changing as a result of each visitor's interaction. This interaction could be as simple as an electronic counter that keeps track of the number of visitors (Simon 2010), but nevertheless responds to the attending visitors. It may seem a distance removed from the traditional concert hall, but participatory design could similarly employ such methods with classical music performance as a method of moving beyond counting heads to creating experiences.

The Denver Art Museum has demonstrated this exhibit responsiveness in very low-tech ways through "The Hub," a space where visitors are invited to write their favorite exhibits on cards in a Rolodex, to make suggestions that are hung on the wall, or to discover what other visitors and staff members consider interesting within the museum. This interactive exhibit does not employ digital technology, but nevertheless provides instant feedback for participants, as well as the opportunity to connect with other visitors outside of time and space.

While this example may not be appropriate in a concert setting, the principle of interpersonal connections can be applied to classical music. The Loveland Orchestra demonstrates this through their use of cookies and drinks at intermission, creating an environment where conversations frequently cause the intermission to extend beyond

the 10 minutes declared in the program. Silvestri has plans to eventually incorporate a mechanism on the website in which the musicians and community members could make suggestions for the music the orchestra would perform.

### Educational Models

The primary goal of most classical music organizations is education. Education is identified as a priority in order to create a new generation of patrons who will not only appreciate the music, but also become financial supporters through donations and ticket sales. Many educational programs by orchestras assume potential audiences are ignorant about the orchestra and the historical musical artifacts on display through performance and therefore need to be educated. In many cases, this assumption is not far from the truth. What the educational efforts within the concert setting fail to account for is that these people are already in the door. In a sense, they don't need to be convinced about what they have already come to see, but instead be drawn into a very personal and meaningful experience.

Education outreach efforts often operate on the assumption that if people only knew more about classical music, they would love it. However, these educational programs are focused only on teaching about the historical significance of the music or the efforts that the orchestra goes to in order to perform the concert. Instead, applying the paradigms of new museum theory, a more effective question to ask would be to look at the needs of the community and the points of entry already existing to the arts. For example, in Loveland, there is a tremendous emphasis placed on sculptural design. Sculpture is one of the ways the community engages with the arts, and is therefore an opportunity to move out of the concert hall, as was demonstrated when musicians

from The Loveland Orchestra performed at events held in the sculpture gardens. This shifts the focus away from the historical importance of the music to the contemporary significance and how it relates to life in 2011 and beyond. In this way, just as museums are preserving historical artifacts and the stories of history by presenting them in new ways approachable for current audiences, orchestras can transform into agencies that are socially applicable and engaged.

Musicians and composers are reluctant to relinquish control over the performance or performance environment, where unexpected interruptions could reflect poorly upon the musicians themselves. The very nature of the classical music world, from how musicians are taught from a very young age to value practice, perfection, and a stoic distance from the audience in performance, is at odds with contemporary culture's desire for interactivity and near-instant responses. Virtuosity and emulation are built into the system, not allowing for punk rock type improvisation. There is an embedded tension with the authority structures, privilege via the availability of instruments and instruction, and accessing a talent that not everyone possesses.

Much of what is meant by education in classical music is really making sure that the public is invested in preserving the performance tradition of classical music, which is rooted in habits from the nineteenth century. In this way, education cannot be separated from the discussion about preserving the historical musical artifacts. What current technological interventions in classical music demonstrate is the need to attract audiences through marketing and popular technology. Broadcasting an opera production still operates under the assumption that if only audience members could hear the music, they would become dedicated enthusiasts, presupposing a felicitous "love at first sight"

relationship with the music. Many of the examples listed below demonstrate a lack of reflexivity, rather than presenting something truly new. The opportunity in classical music is to transform the ideas of education into meeting the needs of the public, allowing the public to appropriate the music and create new ideas.

Without negating the necessity of education within classical music, the role can be redefined and more appropriate responses applied to the challenge of diminishing audiences and a lack of understanding. Instead of using educational outreach as a façade for engaging new audience members, orchestras can discard the notion of “love at first sight,” and focus on the needs and interests of the audience. Education can be reframed in terms of deepening experiences for audiences already enthusiastic about the music and on providing opportunities for new young musicians who may be interested in the active creation of music, rather than using education as a marketing tool. Using education as marketing adopts a paternal attitude toward the public, in which the public is told they “should” appreciate classical music, when they have not been given reason to. New assumptions about performance could thus give audiences a reason to appreciate the music.

Instead, by redefining itself, classical music can allow for new innovations and ways to engage audiences and society by presenting the complexity of sounds available in orchestral music. The way that classical music can do this is by looking at the things in society that are engaging and provide platforms for citizens to discuss and build relationships, and then apply these principles in unique ways to classical music, rather than mindlessly emulating what “lower” forms of art or entertainment are doing.

## **Historical Preservation and New Museum Theory**

Looking to museum anthropology and game design has limitations for the classical music field. However, each supplies a perspective that can be adapted and applied to the challenges facing orchestras. Museum anthropology is concerned primarily with the preservation of history and educating the public through access to collections. Since the 1960s, the field has seen significant changes in the philosophy of exhibit design, transitioning to programs and exhibits that are inviting to the public and easily interactive, breaking down assumptions of education or financial status for visitors. The focus of museum anthropology has shifted from an inward gaze, in which the primary concern is self-preservation as an entity and organization, to an outward gaze, where the goal is to actively engage the local public and provide platforms for discussions and relationships as well as participatory exhibits and educational programs. This shift in educational paradigms is applicable to orchestras, many of which list providing music education to communities as one of the highest priorities.

Largely, the limits to adopting museums as a model for classical music exist as the difference in physical and temporal boundaries. For the most part, a museum is confined to the building in which it is located. Where classical music is normally confined to a concert hall, the musicians can travel to new venues and reconfigure themselves into different ensembles for performance, as we've seen with The Loveland Orchestra, unlike the static walls and exhibit spaces of a museum. In this way, the orchestra can literally take the music to the community, breaking down the assumption that the audience must always come to the orchestra. Temporally, a museum provides access for the public over an extended period of time, enabling large groups of people to experience exhibits. Live



concerts, however, occur at a specific time, and except for recordings of the performance, are limited in the scope of audience to those who are able and interested to attend at that particular time.

The Denver Art Museum has a network of support groups set up to support the efforts of the museum. These various groups provide different voices and additional avenues of entry into involvement at the museum. In so doing, not only does the museum reap the benefits of additional people contributing to and volunteering at the museum, but the individual needs and interests of community members can also be met. For example, the DAM Contemporaries group was founded “to promote the appreciation, enjoyment, and acquisition of contemporary art. Programs include evenings with artists represented in the collection and opportunities to meet artist, collectors, critics, and other visitors. The group also offers lectures, seminars, studio tours, parties, trips to major national and international art centers, and tours of private and corporate collections” ([http://www.denverartmuseum.org/get\\_involved/support\\_group](http://www.denverartmuseum.org/get_involved/support_group) accessed March 14, 2011). This model could prove useful for orchestras in engaging local communities without interfering too directly into the performance event, further establishing the benefit to the community as well as furthering the organizational goals of engaging with community members.

In a small way, the board of directors of The Loveland Orchestra behaves as a support group for the orchestra. The board positions are all volunteer, and the members serving volunteer extra time above and beyond the rehearsals and concerts. Serving on the board of the orchestra has been a means for community members in the past who were not performing musicians to be part of the orchestra. Since this model is already in

place, it would not be a stretch to consider the addition of focused small groups to support or simply enjoy the performances of the orchestra, thereby fostering new relationships and developing active audience participation.

### Innovations in Classical Music

Looking to the broader world of classical music, there are a number of recent innovations worth investigating. Broadcasting performances to movie theaters has become common for large opera companies and orchestras. The Metropolitan Opera has begun broadcasting performances to movie theaters (Montagne and Inskip 2011), which include behind-the-scenes views of the production, as well as interviews and multiple camera angles, providing the movie theater audiences with a broad perspective. Broadcasting the performance to movie theaters provides the opportunity to a much larger audience to experience the opera, through both proximity and lower admission fees. The English National Opera is similarly broadcasting performances in 3D (Hemley 2011; Higgins 2010) which “reflects ENO’s ambition to create an exciting future for opera and reach out to a wider audience through innovative collaborations with the wider arts” (John Berry, artistic director). The L.A. Philharmonic also launched high-definition simulcasts of performances from Walt Disney Concert Hall to approximately 450 movie theaters across the US and Canada (Johnson 2011).

Examples of the hybridization of classical music performance and otherwise unrelated fields include the Nouveau Classical Project linking classical music with couture fashion design. “The clothes, jewelry and headpieces definitely add to the depth and level of the performance” (Sims 2011). In this way, not only is the music moved into a new setting, but the tradition of the performer disguised behind concert

black attire in order to maintain the focus on the music is broken down, since it is the musicians themselves that wear the fashion designs. The events are largely attended by a younger crowd, opening an avenue to connect with the desired younger demographic largely missing from the concert hall. The project argues that classical music needs to open itself to the rest of the world, rather than turning it into a cause to be saved. Video Games Live™ uses a full rock orchestra to play the themes from video games (www.videogameslive.com), playing to full crowds of video game fans, thus connecting the audience with live instrumental performance and expanding the venue for performing musicians.

Changes to more traditional performances are also being explored. The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center has introduced “Late Night Rose” in which small chamber concerts are performed in the Rose Studio, where audience members are offered a glass of wine at candle-lit tables. Small changes to the traditional format have nevertheless provided significant positive differences to both performers and audience (Isacoff 2011). The Borromeo String Quartet has adopted technology into the world of classical music by recording performances and using laptops to read the music (in the original handwriting of Beethoven). The orchestra is being praised as being at the forefront of classical music for embracing technological advances, and yet, nothing changes for the audience except that the performers’ faces are now lit with the glow of laptops instead of the glare of spotlights. All the same assumptions about classical music remain: passive, educated audience receiving a performance from highly trained professionals, with a distance between the two (Wakin 2011). More drastic are the efforts of Orchestral Maneuvres at the Dog, an ensemble assembled from musicians of

The Cleveland Symphony. The small group performs at The Happy Dog, a local bar that patronizes a wide variety of musical styles. In all three examples, the music is performed with historical accuracy, changing little between the relationship between performer and audience, although by moving the performance to more intimate settings in which conversation is normally encouraged, such as the “Late Night Rose” and Orchestral Maneuvres at the Dog have done, the performance is recontextualized, breaking down the separation and “otherness” inherent to high art production.

A much talked about experiment with the classical orchestra is the YouTube Symphony Orchestra, assembled by Michael Tilson Thomas, music director of the San Francisco Symphony. Auditions were solicited and selected from videos on YouTube. The musicians selected to perform assembled in New York in 2009 and Sydney, Australia in 2010, to perform a concert together. The novelty was in utilizing YouTube, which is commonly used to share family or other amateur videos, in the production of the high culture classical music. Using YouTube contradicted the traditional orchestra audition, in which hopeful performers travel to the performing hall and audition behind a curtain. Instead, that model was turned upside down, with performers auditioning in familiar places, their identity fully displayed, and the conductor essentially coming to them, by watching the videos to make a decision.

The accessibility to classical music archives is also changing. The New York Philharmonic has created a digital archive (<http://archives.nyphil.org/>) in which the entire archive of the orchestra will be available. Complete historical music manuscripts are also now online from The Morgan ([themorgan.org/music](http://themorgan.org/music); Ross 2011). Many of these manuscripts had previously been carefully protected from the public, emphasizing the

elite nature of the art form by controlling access to the artifacts.

More along the lines of actively engaging new audiences and moving outside of the concert hall is The Citizen Musician Movement in Chicago (Caro 2011), which gets the Chicago Symphony (the sponsor of the movement through its Institute for Learning, Access and Training) out into the community, with semi-impromptu “flash mob” style performances in public places, such as a train station. This movement has the support and active participation of Yo-Yo Ma, an internationally renowned cellist. His participation further breaks down the barrier between audience and performer, since the audience normally would never be able to come that close to such a famous musician. Instead, his performance declares that the music belongs to all the people, regardless of whether they could afford the tickets to see him in a concert hall.

These examples demonstrate the incorporation of technology and participatory design into classical music, but as can be seen in most instances, the technology serves to preserve the existing assumptions and politics of the classical music world instead of presenting new opportunities for participation. Broadcasting performances to movie theaters certainly increases the accessibility to audiences by bringing performances closer to home and lowering the admission cost. These efforts attempt to bring a sense of digital democracy to classical music, where individuals are able to participate and consume the music in ways previously not available in a traditional concert hall. However, audiences remain passive consumers without means of reciprocal communication. Even the YouTube Symphony Orchestra, despite using a collaborative media site to facilitate the project, maintains the system of auditions and selection, culminating with a performance in a concert hall.

The most notable examples are the Nouveau Classical Project, Orchestral Maneuvres at the Dog, and the Citizen Musician Movement. Each introduce classical music into new contexts, and by moving the music out of the concert hall, engage new audiences and allow new meaning to be assigned to the music, not erasing the historical meaning, but layering on a contemporary one, relevant to those specific audiences. The music itself is not changed, thus acting as a means of preservation. Although modest in scope, these projects effectively apply participatory design by choosing environments in which the audience can make connections to the music and to each other.

### **Conclusion**

As musical performance and composer patronage transitioned from private to public sectors, there was a greater accessibility for audiences to attend performances, leading to the inception of the concert hall. Previously, performances had been the privilege of the wealthy, taking place in private spaces to exclusive audiences. Even as the concert hall tradition was born, the habits and expectations of a large audience in attendance were developing as was the notion of “classics” to be preserved and repeated in performance (Goehr 2007). In the beginning of audience patronage, orchestras and composers catered to the desires of the public to hear new works. This resulted in pieces such as Beethoven’s symphonies to be performed only a handful of times to what would be considered by contemporary standards to be extremely small audiences.

Now, however, orchestras effectively maintain collections of music by the “greats.” As they are more familiar to casual audiences, these pieces, such as Dvořák’s *Symphony No. 9, “From the New World”* have become important methods of drawing in audiences. The question has effectively been, “How can orchestras get the public to care

more about classical music and provide the funding for these specialized activities?” An alternate question following principles of participatory design would be, “In what ways can a performing arts organization provide opportunities for the community to engage with this specific music, assigning new meaning, in order to create something new for everyone?” Asking a question in this way shifts the perspective of the orchestra from one in which the audience is viewed as the financial means to continue a specialized interest, into that of exploring the ways in which classical music performance can create interpersonal connections between audience members, and even create events at which the music is used to address specific community needs and interests. The latter question can also be a means of reflexivity, planning interactions equally for musicians and audiences. This reflexivity would serve to further deconstruct power structures inhibiting democracy and new interpretations within classical music. By asking the second question, orchestras can identify new avenues of meaningful involvement with the community and redefine the roles of musicians and performance.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SEGUE TO A NEW MUSICAL LITERACY**

The purpose of this study has been to respond to the challenges in classical music by reframing questions and assumptions, thus allowing each organization to discover unique solutions, avoiding a cookie-cutter model. These questions are not exclusive to classical music, and can be applied to any field seeking greater community engagement.

### **Reciprocity**

The ultimate goal in researching The Loveland Orchestra was to provide the organization with insights into the ways their current practices fit within the larger classical music domain, ideally providing examples that could be implemented to further achieve the mission and goals of the orchestra. Within this study, I found that the ensemble has already taken steps toward a more interactive experience, by moving outside the concert hall and consciously designing interactions between musicians and audience members.

In keeping with the goals of the group, as well as in their budget, this project created an initial video to be incorporated on the orchestra website. This video is composed of six orchestra members discussing the reasons they became musicians and continue to volunteer with the orchestra on a weekly basis. These stories open the door for the musicians to have a greater voice in expressing their individual interest in classical music, as well as putting a personal face on the orchestra.



## Avenues for Future Inquiry

In the course of this study, a number of questions were raised that suggest additional avenues of research within this topic. Cultural events do not happen in isolation, and the incorporation of technology and participatory design into classical music will have ramifications for technology as well. Of interest would be to examine the ways that participatory design and digital media can model interaction based on observations of the live performance environment and concentrated listening skills required by classical music. Classical music acts as one of the last places in our contemporary culture in which these specific aural skills are exercised. While there are certainly experiments using technology to explore the various senses, particularly synesthesia, the primary emphasis in digital media is visual. Performing music as an ensemble is an early example of interactivity and immersive environments, if only auditory. An orchestra can then provide inspiration for continued exploration in participatory and collaborative design.

Other topics of study could focus on the crossover points between classical music composition and popular culture. Composer John Williams is a good example of using classical music in new contexts, providing much-loved movie scores. His music is rife with references to historical composers and their works – the recognizable theme from *Jaws* is straight out of the fourth movement of Dvořák's *Symphony No. 9*, for example. What he has done is quote almost verbatim the highly revered works that would otherwise be unheard by a large portion of the population, and put them in a new context that is relevant and contemporary. Classical musicians often disparage Williams, feeling his work dilutes classical music. In reality, his work is no different from historical

composers who borrowed musical ideas from other musicians. His compositions for movie scores repurpose historical musical artifacts, recontextualizing the music for a broader audience. In one sense, his work breaks down the assumption of education as a barrier to appreciating classical music by using the music to engage with audiences emotionally, rather than intellectually. The opposing argument is that his work removes the music from live performance and the need for concentrated listening, thereby separating it from the accepted notion of classical music. These contradictions point to conversations worth pursuing for the redefinition of classical music literacy and cultural engagement.

So far, the discussion has been focused primarily on the classical music audience and performance environment. The volunteer musicians forming community orchestras were only briefly touched on in this study. This thesis has dealt with the democratization of classical music, calling for the barriers to entry to be torn down. However, the democratization does not end with the audience, but can also be extended to the musicians, as the original active participants. In this way, community orchestras already stand at an advantage to professional orchestras, since there is deep personal buy-in from the musicians, who make it a priority to continue making music in spite of a lack of remuneration. Technology and participatory design can then be applied to the musicians as well as the audience, deepening the experience for the musician and creating increased value. Much of concert planning is centered on either luring in audiences or satisfying the interests of the conductor, not necessarily creating the best experience for the performers. The musicians of The Loveland Orchestra are welcome to make suggestions and volunteer further time and skills toward the functioning of the group. However,

due to the flexible roster of local musicians, the open nature of communication between musicians and the board of directors is not always apparent. Rather than a once-a-year meeting, the website could thus be available at all times for members of the orchestra and community to engage with event and concert planning. Using existing media, such as the website, to foster relationships between the musicians and the conductor and board of an orchestra could result in new ideas for innovation and connecting with the local community. The video of orchestra musicians created for The Loveland Orchestra is an attempt toward this aim, by giving voice to the musicians.

In looking to examples of participatory design and culture, the question of who gets to play – the audience or the performers – is brought to the front. This study proposes a breaking down of the rules defining who is “in” and who is “out.” The notion of “play” supplies an interesting nexus for further research into the implications and connotations of the word as it applies to both music performance and other forms of cultural production.

The divide between the classical music world and the technology-driven consumer culture continues to widen, creating a need for bridges connecting the two. The point is not to transform classical music into a zeitgeist cultural machine such as the television show *Glee* or video game *The Legend of Zelda*. Rather it is to learn from current cultural events and use them for insights into the greater society, looking for ways to keep classical music as an effective and engaging art form in which new stories can be told, new discussions can unfold, and the difficulties of society can be addressed outside the political arena.

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## APPENDIX A

February 9, 2011 Interview with Luciano “Louie” R. Silvestri, Jr., Music Director and Conductor of The Loveland Orchestra

**I am here today with Louie Silvestri, the music director and conductor of The Loveland Orchestra. Do you realize and give permission to be recorded?**

Sure.

**Okay. This will be used for a thesis for a Master’s project.**

Excellent.

**You have the history of The Loveland Orchestra, correct? Tell me a bit about that.**

Uh, it looks like the orchestra was started in the 1981–1982 year by William Gleickman, and it was founded initially as a chamber group specifically to play chamber music. It looked like there was a void in the city as far as groups went, so it was formed for chamber music and as a chamber group originally. Shortly thereafter, maybe two seasons into the orchestra, Mike Schaffer took over the reigns as the conductor. He led for quite a few years, into it looks like the early nineties or so. Right around the early nineties, Bill Johnson was the conductor for a year and then the orchestra moved into music directorship with Keith Ellison and Keith broadened the orchestra’s exposure, and added some instruments that was essentially the beginning of moving it from a chamber orchestra more to a full orchestra. I understand Bill Johnson had tried unsuccessfully to expand the orchestra into works by Wagner, and it just wasn’t the right time to make that change. So Keith Ellison took the group pretty far along, ‘til about the early 2000s. Then Will Schwarz took over as conductor for about 3 years or so, and then after his three years, I took over as music director and conductor and this is my eighth year in the position.

**So you’ve told me a bit about how the orchestra started to fill a void within the community; that’s great, I’m going to pursue that a little bit more. So it was started as a chamber orchestra and it grew a larger orchestra.**

A larger chamber orchestra, then a full orchestra, then what it is now.

**Tell me a little bit about what it is now.**

It’s an orchestra that used to do maybe three or four concerts, now we do six concerts annually. We use the full complement of winds and percussion, whereas before they were doing almost exclusively works of Mozart, and smaller chamber works that didn’t require winds in more than pairs, and brass as well in pairs. Now we’ve expanded that to later Romantic works that require lots of doubling instruments and sort of expanded the group to probably twice as big, I would think, from—at least twice as big from what it was, originally.

**Now, I know there are a number of similar community groups in the area. What does The Loveland Orchestra do to set itself apart from other groups in the area?**

I know the other groups are running concerts in a concert season. About five or six years ago, I believe, we started thematic concerts so that every season was unified with a theme, and that seems to have drawn folks in quite a bit because they get to follow essentially a story that goes along with the season. From the first concert to the last concert, there is some thematic thread that's woven into each concert; sometimes quite apparently, sometimes a little forced. But I know that we're doing that. We're collaborating with lots of local groups in performance—folks that are musicians in town, soloists, and other arts organizations. We're playing benefits for other non-profits as a way to promote our group and get the word out.

**So, I like what you said about drawing the audience in through a narrative; and that's a musical narrative, is that a historical as well? Tell me a bit about that.**

I think it depends from season to season. I know our first season was entitled, "Out of This World," the first season I had done that. I think that was probably the 2005–2006 season, and the gist coming into the season was that we were going to do Holst's *The Planets*. And so, to make it work, at the time the group wasn't strong enough to play the entire piece at a single concert setting, so we spread out the entire *Planets* suite over the course of the season. And so, the tie-in was that you'd hear one or two "planets" per concert if you were an audience member. So by the end of the season, you'd hear the entire set up, which was pretty cool. The next season, we did "A Long Way From Home." So that was the 2006–2007 season, where we picked essentially composers writing music – composers of one nationality writing music of a different nationality, and the season thread was Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*, and that was one piece per concert. The following season was, I believe, "Dance, Dance, Dance," so we unified the season by playing dance pieces by various composers throughout the year. Following "Dance, Dance, Dance," was "A River Runs Through It," and we connected the whole season by featuring works that were written about water or inspired by water or descriptive of water. This season we're doing "Shakespeare in Love...land," and that's connecting Shakespeare's literary masterworks with musical masterworks, kind of threading that through the season—unifying that way. Next season is entitled, "A Game of Cards," and so we'll run the whole season through some card/game terms and concepts while you're playing the whole season.

**Now, going back, you said that this narrative theme was drawing people in, that they could follow the season, so have you seen the audience numbers bump?**

I think so. We don't have real good audience numbers prior to maybe just a year or two before we started the theme concept. But it seems like the themes are bringing folks in, especially if there's a ... we try to put one piece on the concert that people will at least immediately recognize, something that is a classic—a piece that will draw an audience member in, even if they're not a classical music fan. And then we like to do something that's maybe off of the mainstream just to make sure kind of touching those bases, too, and not just doing the classics.



**So, apart from, or in addition to audiences who pay ticket prices, how does the orchestra fund itself? And maybe tell me about the ticket prices.**

Sure. Primarily, I guess as the orchestra was early on, it was supported mostly by donations.

**From whom?**

Donations from patrons, usually, I think, from orchestra members themselves. They would contribute some money, not in the sense of dues, but just, you know, 50 bucks or a hundred bucks, whatever they had to kind of assist in music purchase. And then, obviously, ticket prices cover just a small portion of the ongoing expenses for a group.

Grants were used, certainly for the two or three years before I took over as music director, there was one grant, and I'm not quite sure of the name. There was a grant given for about \$10,000, I think, it was a pretty sizeable grant, and rather than fundraise, the organization at that time just kind of stopped any additional fundraising ventures and decided to live off of that money. As you can imagine with a grant that you don't continue to fundraise through, that money dried up and put us in a rather bleak financial picture starting in that my first season, which was 2003–04, we actually started the season pretty sizably in the red and needed to find ways to get out of that circumstance.

So we've added concerts—I don't see adding concerts in this last couple of years as a way to increase funding expressly, that's never been my goal with having a concert—it's always been to expand the role of the orchestra. But that's helped, especially with some of the concerts we've added specifically targeted as fundraising concerts. We do an annual Mozart concert that started in January 2006, right around the time of his birthday, and that concert has always been designated as a fundraising concert, at least from the board perspective and from my perspective, that's how it was originally planned. And in that 2006 year, the cost of tickets were 250 pennies to celebrate Mozart's 250th birthday, and the turnout for that concert was exceptional—lots of folks attending. I had never envisioned it as a one-year test case, but the success of the concert went so well that we added it as a fully self-revenue-generating fundraising concert every year. The ticket price changed the year after that first concert to \$5 for general admission. And this is our sixth year, we finished our sixth year of concerts for Mozart, and that's been very productive. It increases our audience, I think, and it adds an element to kind of come back to the orchestra's beginning history.

So, we continue to look at grants, as well; we're looking to add a grant writer in the not-too-distant future to help us pursue specific grants that we're in line for. Donations from patrons and orchestra members still continue to come in.

**What about businesses? Do businesses support the orchestra?**

Businesses were a big portion of our support probably ... I want to say three or four years ago. And then the IRS changed their structure for advertising in brochures and programs for arts organizations such that: before, we could have a business card, we could have lots of promotion for an individual business donor that we could display. The IRS changed that to not make that possible as a non-profit organization. So now, those that donate have bylines and a little write-up, but we can't have any visual indication of

their business. So, I think that's hindered us quite a bit in terms of folks that want to see their business card, that want to see their name, want to see their stuff in a brochure or program, they're kind of turned off slightly from providing funding because they don't get to see that immediate visual aspect.

**I'd like to go back to something you said that adding concerts was not to raise more money but rather to expand the role of the orchestra. So I'd like you to tell me what you perceive the role of the orchestra is.**

I've always had these underlying visions of where I want the group to go and I think as a music director that's imperative that you know what you want with the group. I envision the group as an organization that really connects with students that are arts inclined, that are connected to the arts—really allows them not only an opportunity to see great music performed, but also be a part of great music. So our membership—the youngest student I think we've had is 15 or 16, the oldest person we've had is maybe in their seventies. I think as a community orchestra, which we are, I think it's important to get youth involved both in attendance at concert and performance in concert and some of the behind-the-scenes work, too—recruiting and practicing and all those things. So that's the youth vision, I guess.

In terms of the community, I want the community to feel like they're in partnership with the orchestra, so we started—I think last year or the year before—we started the “Adopt a Piece” program with the orchestra so that anybody can fund our performing of a specific piece. They refund the cost of what it would cost us to purchase a piece and then we perform the piece and it's a dedication that they own, and they get to be a part of the orchestra not just now, when they see their dedication in the program that we have, but also any time in the future that we do that particular piece, their dedication continues to be a part of the orchestra's history. So youth, and their buy in and their role, community and their buy in and their role.

Ultimately, I want to do educational concerts with the orchestra, whereby we would invite local middle schools, elementary schools, and I don't know how far down the road that is—whether we invite them into a rehearsal or special evening concert, or if we just find a way to move into doing during-the-day concerts at schools, which I think would be really powerful. And that kind of crosses that line between community orchestra and professional orchestra, I think, because there are a lot of professional orchestras that have those educational outreach plans in place. But, I think it's important for us to get everybody, every facet of folks involved in what we do.

**Tell me a little bit about your philosophy audience education. Education is very clearly important to you—you've mentioned it several times. Talk to me about your philosophy.**

I think it's important that the folks that are our patrons, that ultimately are providing the sustainability for us to continue doing what we're doing, I think it's important that they are—not well educated in what we do, but just ... they have a sense of the history behind the music and some of the forces required to perform the music. I think a lot of audience members show up to a concert and they think that what they see for two hours

on a Friday night is what we do. And it's part of what we do, but most of what we do is behind the scenes and it's the rehearsals, and it's the sectionals, and it's all the tedious work that folks don't get to see that I think is what really makes up what we do mostly. So I like to educate them with a pre-concert lecture—that started with my first season in 2003–2004. It never happened before in the orchestra's history. About 30 minutes before concert time, I visit with the audience and share a little bit about the music they're going to hear, and kinda give them some history of the composers and the pieces and pretty much just set the stage to enhance their listening and give them things to listen for, stories about the pieces. So I think that's been very valuable. There was many 10 to 15 folks in the first pre-concert lecture I ever gave and now we get a pretty sizeable population of audience members that are coming for the concert that end up sticking around and coming a little early. So it kinda makes for a long night, because they have to be there by seven to hear the pre-concert lecture—stories and anecdotes—and then they stay for the concert, which sometimes goes until 9:30. So it's a big time investment, but especially in the last couple of years, folks have told me they've come away with lots of knowledge and that I'm a good story teller, so I think they've picked up something educational from even just that fifteen, twenty, twenty five minute pre-concert lecture.

**What challenges do you see or have you encountered with your mission of education with the audiences—what challenges do see with people understanding or not understanding classical music?**

It's always tough; it's a fine line when you're looking at a community group because the group is two-fold. The two problems, I guess, are you have community members that are sometimes—in the best possible way—transient, and that is they may be in town for a year or five years or their entire life, and you can never know that demographic when those folks are involved in the orchestra. And you also need to program pieces that the audience finds appealing. There are many groups that are programming contemporary music non-stop and that's cool, and if that's their niche, then that's great. I don't see that as our niche. I don't see our niche as all classical works. I kind of like to program things that are appealing to me personally, because I feel like if they're appealing to me, they'll probably be appealing to a larger audience. So it's ... programming is very well thought out with the audience in mind, and it wasn't always that way, especially the first couple of years when I started. It was more, "What do I want to do? What do I want the orchestra to play?" And now it's much more considerate of what the audience would like to hear and what they'd like to sponsor. And so getting back to that sponsorship for pieces, as I'm picking pieces for a season, I'm also picking pieces that I believe somebody in the community would want to sponsor. And so it kind of helps the funding to program a Beethoven 5 or a Schubert symphony or something that I know someone in the community has some connection to, would want to be a sponsor for during the season.

**What do you see as the unique value of volunteer community orchestras such as The Loveland Orchestra?**

That's a great question. There's a lot of personal buy in from the orchestra, where they're volunteers, as opposed to when they're contracted musicians. A volunteer shows up

because they enjoy what they're doing and they enjoy making music and they enjoy the experience and they love what they're doing. Not to say a professional musician doesn't, but in many cases, a professional musician is showing up for a contract job. And so I think in many cases there may be less buy in from a professional who's playing in a professional group just because it's a service, it's a contracted event. If they don't like the music, then that's okay because it's a paycheck. And many of our volunteer musicians are gigging in the area and so they are having those opportunities to earn money. But I think the volunteer aspect is good in that sense. It's also bad in that they're volunteers, and so there's no payment other than audience applause which is why it's important for me to fill an auditorium—or wherever we're playing—with lots of people because the only payment most of these folks get, other than discussions with me and congratulations from me, is the approval from an audience. And so, there were times in our history—I was just talking about this with our board of directors the other day – there were times in the orchestra's history where a concert included not having to start over a piece on stage, and in some cases, two or three restarts of a piece. So I think that audience applause and a full audience is a great payment for a volunteer musician. But again, they're volunteer, so if something offends them, if something upsets them, they can just as easily walk out the door without any contract obligating them to fill a season or some other role.

**Now, what about the community? What does the community get out of having a volunteer group?**

I think the community gets a very accessible, easily accessible musical product. There aren't many orchestras here in town, that is: Fort Collins, Loveland, Berthoud—that area. There are a few, but they get a good product, they get a local product so the community doesn't have to travel to Denver to see a great concert and if you're a Loveland resident, you don't even need to travel to Fort Collins. So it's kind of close to home. Because it's not in a major city and because it's not a major organization, the ticket prices are much more financially, I think, possible and kind to wallets of families that have kids. Adult tickets are \$10 across the board; students thirteen years and older, through high school, are \$5; and students who are under the age of 12 are admitted free. And there aren't a lot of orchestras that are doing the free student ticket prices. And I know maybe student tickets are \$10 at some organizations and there are other professional organizations in the area that are charging \$160 for season tickets in many cases for the same amount of concerts that we're having. We charge \$35 for a four-pack of audience member's choice, so they can choose four concerts for \$35, or they can choose the whole season of six concerts for \$50. So it's a great deal, in many cases families can take out their whole family for less than the cost of what it would be to go to one professional concert. So, the community gets their own group, their own identity, they don't need to leave town to have a great musical experience, and I think they feel connected—it's closer, it's a more intimate environment, especially during our Mozart concert. It's not an orchestra on a stage, it's "my" orchestra just a couple feet away. I make it a habit of going through the refreshments area during intermission just to talk to folks and get their opinion, their feedback on concerts so they have a sense that their conductor for their group—I'm their conductor for the orchestra—that they get to talk to me, I'm approachable. They get a

conductor, they get an orchestra, they get an experience, they get a good financial deal, they leave happy, and if they don't like a concert, in terms of what's programmed, there's always something—usually different—programmed stylistically for a future concert.

**So would it be fair to say that you're interested in relationships with the community?**

Absolutely. 'Cause the community is what makes or breaks our organization.

**My thesis is looking at ways that technology can be applied to traditional art forms, and either create something new or preserve traditions. How do you see that technology first is a benefit and then could get in the way of what you are trying to accomplish with the orchestra?**

Technology is a benefit, I think we've seen with our website that we developed just a few years back—that would have been in 2006-2007, I think was the first season that we actually employed a website, and it went from a very basic website, just orchestra information and concert dates. And what it allowed us to do was to begin those first steps of letting the community know there was a serious group in town. Because, I think before that, folks that attended were on a mailing list that just kind of passed down through the years, and so you just knew about the group and maybe you invited a friend, but there wasn't a bona fide way to find out more information on the orchestra. So we started that website in, I think it was 2006–2007, and from the website we've gotten tons of musicians—many very talented folks that have joined us just because they were surfing, perhaps, “Loveland music” and up pops our website and the website had information that was relevant to what they were looking at. We acquired a principal cello from the website, just a website inquiry. We've acquired quite a few folks for the orchestra, very talented musicians that first connected with us because of the website. We went from just that basic website to contact buttons on the website, so now we have a conductor link for if you have a question for the conductor, where you can click on a link and send an email that's forwarded directly to my personal email. We have a Young Artist competition that had existed for quite some years but now it's more digitized and online so folks that have questions about the Young Artist competition, they can send an email to the board members responsible for Young Artist's and get answers to whether pieces they're looking at fit for performance. The sponsor a piece is all located on the website so at a glance, folks can take a look to see what music is still available—not only what music is still available for sponsorship, but also what pieces have been sponsored and what might be coming up on future concerts. We list our schedule, we have maps to the location linked onto the website, so it's a pretty full service introduction to the orchestra for folks that don't know. We have our mission statements, we have a rehearsal schedule that's up so that folks that are interested in performing with the group can actually click on a rehearsal schedule and see when we rehearse and frequency—that may determine whether or not they want to join the group. We have our sponsors listed on the website so that's another area to really promote folks that have taken an ownership or sponsorship in what we do on a daily basis.

The problem with that particular bit of technology—despite all of the great aspects of the website—is that it needs to be managed and it needs to be updated and it needs to be checked pretty much all the time to make sure there are no errors and to make sure we’re not sending folks to the wrong location. I remember just a couple of months ago, there was a problem with the actual location of where the concert was—the address was not the right address, so folks had taken that and tried to Google it or search for it, they wouldn’t have found the venue. So, it’s a continual battle to update the website. I am currently the website updater, so that’s what I spend spare moments that I find doing. So that technology piece is probably a downside because I’m not a computer guy at heart, so I don’t just automatically think to update that.

**Now, you talked about a website that is separate from the performance—it drives people to the performance. Are you familiar with Tod Machover at MIT?**

I don’t believe so.

**He’s done what’s called the Extended Orchestra, and he is really actively bringing technology into orchestral performance and redefining what that looks like in his particular way. Or have you heard of laptop orchestras?**

I think so.

**People performing with an iPad or a laptop, where it’s completely technical. How do you see technology playing a role possibly with the performance or the physical night of performance?**

I’ve often thought that at some point we’d do some more contemporary pieces that require audio tracks. There are a number of works—mostly contemporary works—that are written with a ... say, a bird soundtrack or a soundtrack of whales that is played along at certain points in the concert. We have a pretty good audio system at our current venue, which is Good Shepherd Church, and so I’ve often thought of how we might incorporate that into performances of some Hovhaness or some other tunes that may require an external musical input in addition to what’s happening with the orchestra. I’ve not thought of any digital instruments, other than a digital keyboard that we use from time to time, but no, I haven’t thought through what MIDI and the orchestra would look like, if there was some need for that. So I think it has its place, I just haven’t found its place yet.

**Sure. Now what about the audience? You’ve talked a lot about the priority you’ve put on the audience, of planning for the audience. In our contemporary society, the formal concert is really kind of an anathema, it’s outside of a lot of peoples’ normal experience. What ways do you see, or have you thought about ways that audience members—so you talk about the website bringing people in and you talk about the performance, and still the musicians doing it—but what about the people who are sitting, have you thought of ways that technology could be incorporated ... would that be a good thing, would that be ...**

I think it could be a good thing. It would be interesting to see if there are any pieces for audience participation in some kind of technology aspect—that would be pretty

cool. That would bring with it a chance element, which I kind of find exciting in music; not so exciting that I would program pieces like that on an even semi-regular basis, but something that would involve the audience in maybe the use of cell phones with their ringtones and they were just instructed at some point to sound a ringtone, whatever it was, which could be kind of an interesting concept. It just ... I think there are a lot of possibilities, I just haven't researched enough of what's going on contemporary music-wise and who's writing. There may be pieces out there already, waiting to be performed that fit those bills.

**I guess what I'm getting at is, would this be the place to try those things? Is this the ensemble – would that sort of thing fit with your goals?**

I think it would, if it was the right piece and I sensed that it was an engaging piece and not just a piece to say, "Hey, let's use a piece of technology for a grant" or something. The orchestra—personally, from the orchestra's perspective—I think has been pushed in a number of pieces we've done to the brink of adding something and technology based. The audience has been pushed to the brink and by brink, I mean the tonal brink—that is, the easy listening aspect that most concerts we do seem to touch upon. So the brink, to that regard, is just the very edge of what is musically tolerable. I always paint those in fun ways—I give the audience something to think about, some fun about the piece to get them out of their comfort zone. It's been very tough to get the orchestra out of their comfort zone of a piece like that. We've done Charles Ives in the past, we've done some Stravinsky in the past, so I feel like we're moving in the right direction, but I don't want to push the orchestra too far, because again, it's volunteer. It's kind of all connected. If the orchestra's pushed to far, they won't want to buy into the performance, they won't want to play, the audience won't show up—it's kind of this chain reaction, domino thing. But I think the orchestra's in a position now where we can start to investigate those technology things without either offending the orchestra or the audience, because I think the audience's gotten—especially our usuals—has gotten to know me pretty well. I think they would say that I'm a friend, if you would, that they have that sense that they can talk to me during an intermission and not be so awkward for them. So we may start to push that envelope in the next couple of years or seasons.

**So going back to technology and performance, with YouTube and iTunes and being able to access music whenever you want and from whatever group you want, what do you see is the value of live performance, and why should that be preserved?**

I think it's very easy—I was having this discussion just the other day, which is kinda cool—it's very easy for anybody, I think, to sit in their home and watch a performance on TV—classical performance or even a jazz or a rock performance. It's very easy to listen to a CD of a multi-faceted performance and get the impression that that is what music is, or that is what theatre is or that is what art is itself. And so I think it is, for me at least, you can listen to a piece a thousand times, you can watch a performance a thousand times, but until you're there in the moment ... there's something special about being in a room listening to the notes of a Tchaikovsky symphony unfold from beginning to end and seeing the work and effort that's coming together to form this beautiful work, whereas if

you're ... sometimes you get that when you're watching a performance, one of the great performances on TV or something, but listening to a CD, all you hear is sound. You don't see the mechanism behind the sound, you don't see the faces of the folks that are partaking in that music.

In our last concert, our Mozart concert, there was a woman that came up to me after the concert—she was probably in her 50s – that was the first concert she'd ever been to, and she was a, I guess a second career student at one of the community colleges – I think AIMS Community College. She'd never been to a concert and decided it was \$5, she'd take a risk, and she thought it was outstanding. She'd never known that folks have to work: the musicians, the violins have to work and their fingers have to move and their arms have to move, and she'd never put the pieces together. And I wonder how many folks are listening to performances or even seeing performances on TV, never realizing that it's a thousand little pieces that are put together. I think that perspective changes when you see it live and you can see the sweat on peoples' faces as their working on passages and you can see the love that they dedicate as they're playing. I think that, for all the pitfalls, I think that live music is still going to be around for quite a bit of time.

**So, essentially what you're saying is live performance *humanizes* music.**

I think so; and yeah, I don't think so, I know so. And I think it's important for people to see that, to know and the stories that I tell prior to a concert then humanize the composers that the audience then sees humanized through the music. And there's a reason why, not to go off on a tangent, but I want to. There's a reason why Beethoven's music is so captivating, and it's not just because it's great music, it's because of his personal struggle. It's because of the fact that his dad was an alcoholic, the fact that he was abused as a child. It's all of that that we can, on some level, resonate with, knowing that we've heard of people in that situation or we know people in that situation and the truly awesome part is, despite what he went through, or maybe in spite of what he went through, out of that experience comes some of the greatest, most humanly connected music I think ever. It would be hard for me to name a composer that I have more connection with than Beethoven and I would dare say, if you asked an audience member who they connected with, if we were in a concert situation, I don't doubt that Beethoven would be at the very top of the list. Certainly in the top handful. The most human of composers, at least in my perspective with the conducting I've done, so I think there is that aspect that if it's on a CD, it's just a piece of music. If folks see a concert live there's a connection to: "humans are making this and it is human," and then the human nature of those that are composing music for the performers who are then, as humans, performing the music who will perform the music for audience members who, as humans, are listening to the music. I think it's just a wonderful chain of human connection.

Along those same lines, for the Mozart concert, there was another student that approached me at intermission—she was probably in her teens, late teens: eighteen, nineteen maybe. She's a student here in town at Front Range Community College, and one of her class projects was to go see a classical music concert, and so she also took a gamble on our Mozart concert, whether ... She did say she was a fan of the music of Mozart, which I can see, and she said that was the main driving force. But then she



also asked me a bunch of questions to confirm that he was, in fact, a composer in the Classical period. So, she may have liked him, I just don't know how much about him as a composer she knew. But she interviewed me right after the concert, just kind of general questions about the music and about what was happening and putting things together. And so, I think in an audience perspective there, as well as an educational perspective, my role changed slightly from entertaining folks with music to providing this particular student not only with more detail about the music she was listening to, but I think also in a very real sense helping her fulfill the academic requirement of her music appreciation class just by giving her tidbits of information about the pieces and kind of broadening her experience post-concert instead of some of the folks that were at the pre-concert lecture that had that enhancement coming into the music we played that night.

**Okay, coming back to the importance of live performance, the orchestra has performed in a number of different venues that I know of, from churches to the high school auditorium to in the park and sculpture gardens. What patterns have you noticed first for attendance in the different venues?**

Ah, that's a perfect question. We noticed quite a while ago that when the orchestra was performing at the Loveland High School auditorium, there were many folks that thought it was a high school orchestra, that it was the orchestra of Loveland High School that was presenting these concerts. So there's a certain stigma, I think, attached to the orchestra. And we were there for ... I want to say maybe five years of time. Some audience members even found themselves thinking it was the high school orchestra, not because they played like a high school orchestra, but because that's how it was advertised before our website and before word of mouth promotion that we had worked on. So I think initially the move from Loveland High School to our new venue, which is Good Shepherd Church, also in Loveland, just a little ways away, that really helped to firm up the idea that this is an organization that isn't obviously a high school group, that also functions on its own, that has its own space. And I think many of the orchestra members have identified Good Shepherd Church as the concert venue. I can tell you a little bit about the history of the change, if you want from that venue, or I can maybe save that for another time.

**No, I'm more interested in what you just told me about the stigma attached it, or perhaps tell me about some of the performances that have taken place outside of a hall.**

Sure. We've done a number of those performances. Just to kind of go back on the concerts, we do our annual Mozart concert at First Christian Church, which is our rehearsal location and the reason we chose that church as our location for the Mozart concert, despite the fact that every other concert is done at Good Shepherd Church ... several reasons, actually. We usually have less folks playing in the Mozart concert just because of who Mozart was and how he was writing, so that fits the space very well. It's an intimate setting at First Christian Church, which is what we want for that Mozart concert. We want audience members ... they end up sitting in pews, not unlike Good Shepherd Church, but they're very close to the action. You can be in the front pew at

First Christian and be probably three feet away from me or a violinist. So it's a very intimate experience for the audience members, and it also helps us to continue a good relationship with Good Christian Church so we don't just use their space for rehearsals and then do all of our concerts elsewhere. There's a buy in, I think, associated with doing our concerts there, which is kinda cool.

We've had the opportunity to do lots of other concerts in other locations, I know. In 2006–2007, we were invited by Partners Youth Mentoring, which is an organization, I think it might be a national organization, but the local branch is out of Loveland and they provide essentially foster experiences for students that either don't have one parent or the other or don't have any parents; kind of like a Big Brother/Big Sister organization only the youth mentoring is more of an adult to kid kind of a thing. They'd asked us to perform at the Loveland Sculpture Garden, behind their organization, so we did that in 2006–2007, and we just had small chamber groups perform. Just works that they had planned, and folks would meander around. It was also essentially a chef's gala, so there were various restaurants in town that donated their chef for the evening, who would make little bits of food that folks could come around and sample. So it was a fundraiser for Partners Mentoring. We didn't receive—the orchestra, that is—didn't receive any monetary compensation for that experience, but we did have our brochures and programs out so folks could hear the group, and if they liked what they heard, then they could obviously attend a concert. We continued with Partners Mentoring in 2008, but their location had moved to the Chapungu Sculpture Garden, which is at Centerra, in Loveland. Again, the same event, same concept, same idea, us as—the orchestra of chamber music as background music while folks that were involved in the actual fundraiser for Partners Mentoring meandered about, tasted food and drinks. Also, no compensation on that 2008 concert. And then, we've not been asked to join them since. So summer of 2009 and summer of 2010, we weren't asked to come back. I don't know, I don't think that was because of the quality of music as much as perhaps they went to a different direction and I know they had changed directors for Partners Mentoring and perhaps they had different ideas on what they thought the background music should be. So, we haven't been invited back. I am hoping to check with them for this upcoming year to see if that direction has changed and see if that might be some place that they would want us to be involved in.

I know, in 2008, summer 2008, I believe it was in August—July or August 2008—we were engaged to play at the Centerra Sculpture Park as part of the—I think it was a Friday or Saturday night concert series. There was one concert a night, and again, I'm not sure if it was Friday or Saturday but there was one concert a week and there was different styles of music, and as the orchestra, we were asked to come in and present a—I think it was about an hour and a half or two hour-long concert. It was originally scheduled, again for July or August; I believe we had torrential rains, so we had to reschedule that to a different day, that may have affected attendance, but there were a lot of people. A lot of audience members there. It was a free concert that we gave them, but the orchestra did receive a stipend that was paid directly to the orchestra; I can't recall the amount of that stipend. But, that was a chance for the orchestra to get some exposure. I believe at one point, I offered season tickets for the next season coming up to the first

maybe ten people who came up to see me at the podium. And so, there was kind of a little hesitation for folks to come up, and then we actually went through all ten of our season tickets, which was kinda cool.

Also, at our board meeting this past Monday, I found out we played for the opening of the Chilson Center in Loveland, the Chilson Recreation Center, and the orchestra played in 1988. And that was for the opening of that center; they played in the gym, I guess in one corner of the gym while the building was open.

In January '09, and I believe that date's correct—I can check on that for you—we were invited to perform at the opening of Medical Center of the Rockies in Loveland, which is the new state of the art healthcare facility hospital in Loveland that had opened up. It was their grand opening, and so we had chamber groups come in. Again, those chamber groups performed. MCR gave us a very generous cash donation to the orchestra, for which, unbeknownst to the orchestra members that played, we returned some of that money to musicians that showed up as kind of our thank you for all they did there. So, those are the extra concerts that I know of.

Also during Mike Schaffer's time with the orchestra, one of the early directors, they would do a Young Artist's Concert here in town, in Loveland, and then the following—so the concerts were on Saturday—so the following afternoon, which was the Sunday following the Young Artist concert, we would do the same concert at The Stanley, in Estes Park. So that was kind of a neat experience, I think, for the orchestra, traveling-wise. They got to take a field trip and do a concert.

We started to do that last year in collaboration with the Golden Concert Choir. I was actually solicited via the website by their musical director, who wanted to do a partnership and had wondered if that was possible. I know in years past, the Golden Concert Choir director had collaborated with a number of arts organizations in and around town, most notably, I think, the Timberline Niwot Symphony the year before last. That proved to be difficult in terms of Golden and Niwot were fairly close to each other, and so they had to devise a system to split profits and revenues and promotion and all those things. We started our partnership last year, and we did a performance of the Mozart *Requiem*—one performance in Golden, one performance in Loveland. The partnership worked out probably as perfectly as an artistic partnership can work out. They did their promotion and their setting up at the concert venue; we did our own promotion and setting up of our concert venue and we just kind of shared forces. So successful was that last collaboration last year that we decided to do it again this year, and as we close out our 30th anniversary season we are doing the Fauré *Requiem* and the Beethoven *Choral Fantasy*, which is very exciting as kind of a great way to close out the season. The director—we haven't yet had rehearsals for that collaboration this year – and the director has already asked me if there are any possibilities for us to do any collaboration for our holiday concert this December for 2011. So it's a good relationship there. We perform in Golden—Golden High School is where the Golden Concert Choir shows are. So that gets us out of our comfort zone, which is kind of fun for the orchestra because we got to do a field trip and carpool and get to know some of the orchestra members in smaller groups a little better, I think.

So, we play wherever we're asked to play and if that works into our schedule; we've been at rec centers and outside and under tents and in hotels and high schools and churches. I think the group is very versatile; they play great music wherever they're asked to play.

**What's your opinion of other orchestras that are employing technology?**

I think it's a good resource and if you can complement what you hear with something you see, I think in many respects that creates a more lasting impression on the audience. I know there are orchestras, when they perform *The Planets*, maybe recently in Boulder, perhaps, when they performed *The Planets* Suite, they projected images from NASA of the various planets as they were playing those movements. So I guess I'm in favor of that because there's a visual aspect to what folks are listening to. It's also slightly distracting, I think, 'cause folks are looking at pictures and music is then becoming background. I think music as background is okay in some circumstances, but at a concert, music is—if you're at an orchestra concert—music does really need to be at the forefront. Even a ballet, a Tchaikovsky *Nutcracker*, the music is pretty present and pretty important and you do see ballet on the stage but the music is an integral part. Soundtracks to movies, even—*Star Wars*, those big soundtracks have those visual components as well, but they're not divorced from each other, they're intimately tied together. I don't know that abstract pictures of Mars while playing the suite movement titled *Mars* truly do the music as much justice, especially given Holst's astrological significance to the planets and not necessarily what they look like or how we experience them. I think it's a good thing and maybe something that we can look into as well as something we'd want to be cautious of—falling into a trap of presenting images and accompanying them with music versus presenting music that's accompanied by images.

**Where else in the larger society do you see opportunities for people to really exercise their auditory skills like you're talking about, divorcing the music or preventing it from becoming background. Where else do you see that?**

You know, that's really tough. I think most of society has placed music in a background setting. Folks can listen to their iPod and do homework. We're visiting right now to a soundtrack that's being played in the background and those things are, I guess, perceived as normal. You stand in an elevator, and there's music, and you know it's there and it's not the focus of your elevator trip, unless you're me and then you focus on the music. Or if you're put on hold somewhere on some customer service telephone line and there's background music. And so I don't know if there's an actual way to focus that listening. That's a tough one. I don't know if there's a way to focus listening without making it background without being intentional about not wanting to make it background music.

**I was just curious if you knew of something else completely unrelated that does that, other than live classical performance.**

I'm not personally aware.

**Because even rock concerts are very visually driven. It's live music performance, but ...**

And that's not to say that there isn't a huge visual component to what we do in the orchestra. Certainly what I do with the orchestra.

**Right, because you talk about seeing effort that's being made, but the primary focus is auditory.**

Correct. And I think there may be a difference between what the connection is to the visual. So it's one thing to have visuals and music that are somewhat disconnected. So let's say, for example, playing Händel's Water Music and having pictures of the ocean. Those two aren't as intimately connected as seeing a conductor bring out music and then having music essentially respond to the gesture you see. I think there's just more of a connection to seeing the group, for an audience member, knowing that a certain gesture means a certain sound, means a certain volume. And so I think they see a connection and I have tried to do that in my conducting, to get the sounds that I want, but to—in many cases—make them visually apparent so that there is that connection for the audience.

**In December 2010, just two months ago, Honolulu Symphony declared bankruptcy. This is just one of many orchestras that we are hearing about in the news. Is that cause for concern?**

Yes and no. It's cause for concern to me, and my heart breaks when a group finds themselves in bankruptcy. In many respects it's heartbreaking. It's heartbreaking for the musicians, because many of them are using that, in many cases, as their sole source of income. In many cases, not all cases. So they lose that avenue of income and if they've got families to support that then makes their experience much tougher and then kind of sours the musical experience, which is usually exuberant—kind of turns it into a sour experience. The community, the audience, the patrons of that particular organization—depending on how they resolve their bankruptcy—they miss out on these great works and they miss that live orchestra component in their lives. I think it's crucial, not just because it's what I do, but I think there's a certain, again sense of humanity that we build with seeing those live concerts.

It doesn't concern me personally because I know that, at least for The Loveland Orchestra, we're living well within our means and our budget. We've kind of set that up. The audience would have to completely disappear, I think, for us to fold. When I first took the orchestra over in 2003–2004, that was not an unreal possibility, that the orchestra could be folded after that first year there, just because of the neglect of funding and the lack of ... really the lack of leadership to realize that there was a potential problem on the horizon. Quite successfully, we've run in the black every year since the first year that I took over. So at the end of that first year, we've been in the black every year. We've looked for ways to kind of shore up expenses and minimize those expenses—everything from looking for different venues to perform at that are less expensive or are better deals for the money involved, to public domain orchestral parts which are freely disseminated—actually at a repository website, International Music Score Library Project and they contain a wealth of public domain parts. The cool thing about public domain

parts is they can be downloaded, printed, and performed free of charge because they have fallen out of copyright or were never in copyright to begin with. So, we've done a lot of work with that such that music purchase, which used to be our largest expense is, I don't think our largest expense any more. There are times when we do have to purchase pieces, but for the most part, that used to be, I believe, a \$5,000 a year expense for our orchestra and it's significantly less now because of those avenues. We're managing things pretty well. We always get to those moments where things are scary, but when the economy went into the tank, as it were, at the end of, I guess, two season ago, I had planned to do this "Shakespeare in Love...land" theme last year and realized it wasn't a good idea. So, decided to create a season of "classics" that build an audience back by giving them pieces that they wanted to hear and it worked very well. Very successful concerts, pieces on every concert that people knew and wanted to hear.

I've toyed with the notion of doing an entire season of audience suggestions. We'd have a question box and starts at the first concert of the season, goes through the end of the season and audience suggestions come out and we kinda tabulate those and see if we can find a theme. So the theme would be maybe "Audience Favorites," but the actual theme is just that notion of audience favorites, so there's no real thread that connects unless there's some trends that we've noticed. So yes, it saddens me for orchestras that declare bankruptcy. I know that Colorado Springs Symphony declared bankruptcy quite a number of years ago and their music director at the time stuck with the orchestra and they came back as the Colorado Springs Philharmonic and have been doing business as the Philharmonic for ... I don't know, five, six, seven, years. Flourishing, they've got new visions, new outlooks.

### **Are they a community orchestra or professional?**

I would say semi-professional. It's a per-service kind of orchestra and they do maybe seven, eight concerts a year. And Colorado Springs is not a Denver as we would see it musically, yet the symphony is surviving. It's doing pretty well. I think just managing your resources is the biggest key for me and not, obviously, spending beyond your means and there are a lot of orchestras that I don't think do that and I don't know what the reason may be.

### **What would you say to someone who says that classical music is dead and that it has no relevance in the twenty first century?**

I think it was a couple weeks ago that the Denver Post put out some articles about that. I think to the folks that don't want that relevancy in their lives, it doesn't have any relevance. To the musicians that play in our group, it has a lot of relevance. I think that's evidenced by the fact that maybe two or three of them are professional musicians that have had musical training, that are dedicated musicians. Most are engineers; they have day jobs. So it's relevant to their lives to spend hours of practicing, in some cases, to make great music. I think it's very dangerous to write off classical music as not relevant, because if that's the message we're sending the youth—that we're, as an orchestra, trying to engage—if that's the message we send them, then obviously, when they become patrons of the arts they're going to choose some other art to patronize,

whether it be visual art or theatre. I think by that same token theatrical arts could be in danger and irrelevant because Shakespeare may not speak to folks as he did a while ago; dance may be in danger. So, I don't know. I think it's very relevant for those folks that want to make it relevant, but I think it's important that it builds society and community and friendships and all of those human aspects, in addition to providing a venue for great music—and sometimes not good music. It's okay to miss a note here or there or have a not-so-great performance. I think that's okay.

**What is your response to criticism that classical music is more reflective of 19th century values and culture than being relevant for the 21st century?**

I think the criticism is very valid if you consider what the 19th century values and culture were. People went to concerts, people enjoyed live music in their homes, people loved being a part of all the facets of music (from composition to performance to audience). Composers frequently are listening to other composers' compositions, modeling their own works after what they like or dislike. And in a very real sense, the music is reflective of those times...heck even pieces are reflective of those specifics (Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, you name it). Now, does its relevance to 19th century stuff make it irrelevant to today? Well, not necessarily. There are lots of people saying "Music improves your test scores." But that to me doesn't make classical music more relevant....I don't think you can sell music on the merits of its benefits to something else and still say you're exclusively promoting music. Classical music is relevant because it takes us to those places that are impossible for anything else to take us to. It's comforting, it's soothing, it speaks of the human condition, never grows old, is tireless, and sparks in us the excitement to continue our creative journey! It's definitely relevant to who we, as people, today if we allow classical music the freedom to do what it has always done, which is approach us effectually.

**What orchestras (and/or other businesses) serve as a model and example for the Loveland Orchestra?**

Interesting question! There is this healthy mix in mind of how the orchestra should function. I really see it as a multi-tiered organism. On the artistic side, I think it's a blend of how the successful professional orchestras run their operations. Ultimately, it's the love of music that drives what we do. People wouldn't show up if they didn't love playing great music. I doubt it's much of me in that journey for the orchestra that keeps people showing up (I pick the music, sure, but I feel like I'm a conduit for music-making). The Loveland Orchestra has NEVER been about me, or having people see me conducting or wanting some fame or glory. It's about the music, and I just happen to be the one controlling the action. As such, I think the best models are the successful community orchestras out there whose players are having fun playing for music's sake. I think of a Longmont Symphony as a good measure of that. I think our playing should be modeled off of the very best professional orchestras, and I am DEEPLY saddened when I hear someone say "Oh, we're just a community orchestra". That mentality is so limiting, and I think it hurts the entire group in the long run! Now, no entity be that charity or business survives unless it can get the bills paid, so money does drive a portion

of what we do (to the extent that money is required). I like to think that when we are most successful in managing the orchestra, it's because we have adopted a business-like approach.....and I find that when most things are not right or need improvement that using a business model tends to solve the problem (provided it's not a musical problem). We had trouble with attendance and commitment years ago, so we adopted an MOU policy which curbed the problems. That policy went lax the last several years, so it has come back to solve attendance issues. Our Young Artist Competition has functioned decently over the last bunch of years, but in assessing the entire concept, we noticed that there were several weaknesses (some rather glaring). We are currently revising the Young Artist Competition, applying more business models to it, and will hopefully create a MUCH stronger product for the 2012 Competition! So I think our modeling is multi-faceted, depending on what we're hoping to accomplish be that musical, procedural or financial.



## APPENDIX B

### Vita

Kimberly Weirich Zahler received her Bachelor of Arts degree with an emphasis on Flute Performance from George Fox University. Her postgraduate music studies include The Flute Studio and the Royal Academy of Music in London. She is currently finishing her Master of Arts degree in Digital Media Studies from the University of Denver. Her flute teachers have included Trevor Wye, Zartouhi Dombourian Eby, and Denise Westby, and she has performed in master classes with Trevor Wye, William Bennett, Alexa Still, James Galway, and Paul Edmund-Davies.

Ms. Zahler began her musical career early, when she taught herself to play piano at the age of three. Her subsequent explorations included many instruments, as well as operatic vocal studies, with an ultimate preference for the flute. She has appeared as a soloist with the Chehalem Symphony and Sotheby's London. Ms. Zahler has played with numerous professional and volunteer ensembles including Orchestra Seattle, Rainier Symphony, Newport Symphony, Federal Way Symphony, and has been principal flautist with The Loveland Orchestra since 2006. She is passionate about assisting performing arts organizations define goals and provide exceptional value to local communities. She has taught flute, piano, and music theory for over 15 years in the United States, England, and Africa.

Ms. Zahler spent nearly 10 years working with both non-profit and fortune 500 companies, focusing on graphic design, marketing, and improving business practices as well as starting and overseeing a private music academy. It is the combination of this work history and experience as a performing musician that led her to pursue further opportunities to support volunteer organizations in creating and sustaining vibrant local arts cultures. She believes that new creativity in music lies at the intersection between the various arts and new technologies.

Ms. Zahler's personal experience of synesthesia and perfect pitch intrigued her and inspired her to pursue opportunities in visual and auditory arts, ultimately leading her to the program at the University of Denver. She enjoys bringing unconventional ideas into conversation with each other, creating something new. A member of Mensa, she is extremely interested in the way the brain processes information, experiences, and memory.