

## Technology and the Future of Classical Music

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WRTG 1150-006

Final Writing Project Final Draft

The purpose of my final writing project is to create a few thought provoking materials that can be distributed to music students around the U.S. The purpose of this material is to get classical music students to evaluate the world we live in and to take advantage of the technologies of our time. How can classical music best reach audiences of today when it's an art that developed in an entirely different world? The opportunity is in technology. The first of the three parts is a poster. This will be quite large (two feet by three feet?) and is intended to catch the attention of busy music students in the music building or practice room hallways. This should convey a quick and easily understandable message without requiring a reading commitment from the viewer. The second of the three parts is a newsletter. This will be on a standard 8.5x11 sheet of paper and printed on both sides. The purpose of the newsletter is to inform the students of the trends of today as technology affects the concert attendance of Classical music concerts. This should be stand alone in informative quality but still clearly tying back to the overarching messaging of the poster. The last of the three parts is a brochure. This will also be on an 8.5x11 sheet of paper but folded into a tri-fold brochure. This is intended to be take-home material that students can easily carry with them to their home computers. The information on the brochure helps them to access useful technologies with the goal to further their ability of reaching people with music. If enough students take advantage of technology and follow the trends of today, perhaps classical music can rejoin the cultural conversation of our generation.

Letter

12/6/2011

The Juilliard School  
60 Lincoln Center Plaza  
New York, NY 10023

RE: Music and Technology

Dear Juilliard,

There are definite national statistics from the National Endowment for the Arts as well as the Strategic Communications at the League of American Orchestras that show that classical music audiences are aging and dwindling without any signs of growing support from the youth. This is a serious concern for all music professionals. Daniel Asia, head composition professor at Arizona State University, and Judith Kurnick, Vice President for Strategic Communications at the League of American Orchestras are just two of the many music professionals who have voiced their concern. It is apparent that classical music isn't a part of our "cultural conversation" in the same way that it was in the 1950s and 1960s. Classical music has taken a back seat in our American culture.

So far, technology has seemingly been an opposing force to classical music. Stanley Waterman, emeritus professor of Geography and Environmental Studies at the University of Haifa in Israel, believes that technology is "stressing the present over the past and emphasizing youth culture through art forms requiring minimal dedication or reflection". This is directly against the nature of classical music as classical music is a sophisticated form of expression that developed in a time very different from ours. However, my mission is to urge music students to take advantage of technology. Within the challenge that technology presents us, there is also a great opportunity to be found. It's time for classical music to successfully enter into a new era. Kurnick expresses that the future of classical music is directly contingent on how well classical music professionals can adapt to the statistical truths and tap into the technologies of today. Some orchestras and operas are exploring technological possibilities like streaming live performances to movie theaters across the nation. Large organizations are exploring the possibilities of technology but I would like to encourage individuals, particularly music students, to take advantage of their technological surroundings. I feel that Juilliard, being one of the most respected and prestigious music conservatories in the world, has the power to set a great example in helping classical music rejoin the cultural conversation.

Through these materials, I hope to inspire students to share their music through technology and to give them the resources to do so. Not only is it helpful for young musicians to self promote in various ways, but if every individual can offer their musical influence in technological form, such as a well kept blog or popular YouTube video, I feel that classical music can secure a healthier future. As an alumnus of your institution, I understand that the majority of the students spend most of their time in the practice rooms. I feel that if a student devotes even as little as 5 percent of their practice time towards self promoting through technology, it can benefit the individual as well as build the classical community. The goal is to create a self sustaining classical community by following some simple trends of our generation.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Lee  
Juilliard Alumnus  
10 Pawnee Dr.  
Boulder, CO 80303

Poster

A close-up photograph of a silver CD-ROM disc resting on a computer keyboard. The disc is the central focus, showing its reflective surface with a rainbow-like iridescence. The keyboard keys are visible around the disc, with some keys being white and others black. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of the disc and the keys.

SHARE

your music

through technology,  
the whole world will be listening...

Newsletter



# The Future of *Music*

NEW EXPECTATIONS... NEW DEMANDS... A NEW ERA.

*"Technology... is a queer thing. It brings you great gifts with one hand, and it stabs you in the back with the other."*  
--C.P. Snow, *New York Times*, 15 March 1971

## Diminishing Audiences

Diminishing concert attendance is a serious concern for the classical music industry. More than ever, music professionals and enthusiasts are examining how such a lengthy history of music culture is affected by today's technologies and social tendencies. Although both pessimistic and optimistic views are being expressed, it is clear that with the current situation, changes need to be made. It's time for classical music to take advantage of the strengths of our generation and join the world in cultural conversation. It's time to target new technological venues to secure a better future for Classical music.

In order to understand the current health of the classical music world, it's important to explore the trends within its supporters. According to Judith Kurnick, the Vice President for Strategic Communications at League of American Orchestras, there are definite national statistics showing that classical music audiences are aging and dwindling. Despite the efforts by orchestras to attract younger crowds, there's no statistical suggestion of any growing support. The big concern is how to build a new audience to replace the older audiences who are steadily passing away.



## CURRENT CULTURE

"Like almost everyone today, students cannot exist in any environment without encountering popular music. It is piped into all malls, restaurants, coffee houses, doctors' offices, health facilities, office buildings, vehicles, and of course, directly into our heads by iPods. There is hardly a second in the day when students are not hearing some form of music, unless of course, they are texting on their cell phones. Whereas in previous generations students moved from relative quiet into a musical sphere, they now inhabit or are surrounded by music of some sort most of their waking moments. Whereas in previous generations one had to seek out music, by playing an instrument or attending a performance, one now has to seek out, and occasionally demand, silence. The result is that the ability to register and engage with musical ideas has been reduced. All students today must be taught how to listen. And because they are also easily distracted, they must be taught how to focus and to concentrate as well, and for spans of time to which they are unaccustomed."

-- Daniel Asia <sup>1</sup>



# Technology: Challenge and Opportunity

*Our field seems to have been handed both a challenge and opportunity: How can we move beyond debating the tough truths confirmed by the data toward charting an innovative course--individually and collectively--that will enable orchestras and audiences to flourish in a vastly different society than the one in which they developed?*

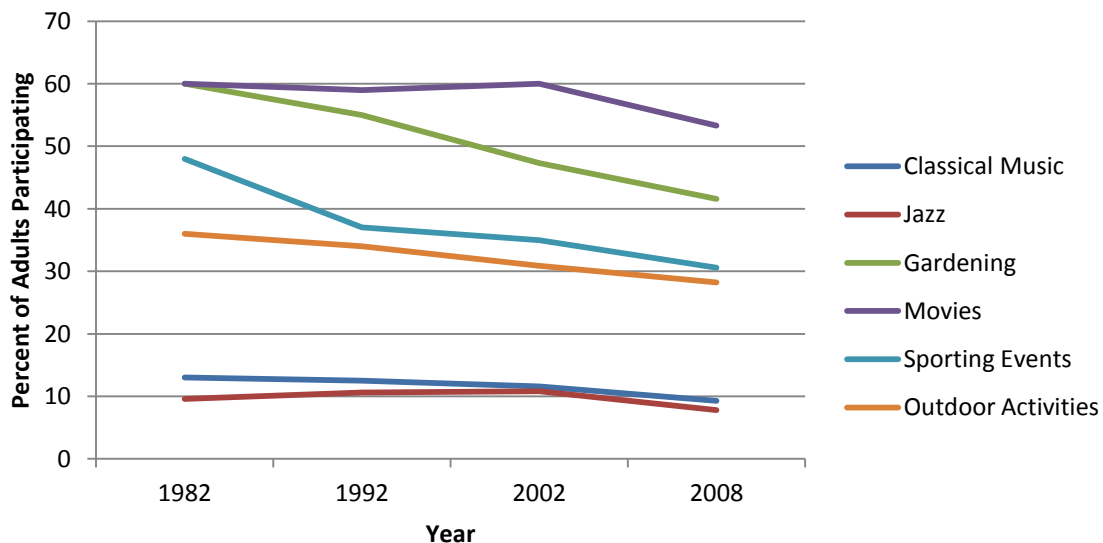
*--Judith Kurnick<sup>2</sup>*

It isn't just the symphony orchestras that are experiencing a decline in attendance. According to national statistics, there has been a decline in attendance in most all performance activities. This includes sporting events, musical plays, non-musical plays, movies, gardening, and other outdoor activities.

Do these statistics illustrate that it's not a problem that's unique to the classical music field? Perhaps there is a larger issue at hand that's keeping people home and away from performance activities. It's being discussed that the influences of technology may be largely responsible for keeping people indoors.

Kurnick expresses that the future of classical music is directly contingent on how well classical musical professionals can adapt to the statistical truths and tap into the technologies of today.

## Participation in Leisure Activities, 1982-2008



Source: National Endowment for the Arts

<sup>1</sup> Asia, D. (2010). Diminuendo: Classical music and the academy. *Academic Questions*, 23(2), 186-195.

<sup>2</sup> Kurnick, J. (2010). Climate Change. *Symphony*, 61(1), 21-25. Retrieved from EBSCOhost.



Brochure

# SHARE YOUR MUSIC

MUSIC AND TECHNOLOGY



LEARN TO PROMOTE YOURSELF  
THROUGH THE WORLD WIDE WEB!

- WEBSITE/ONLINE PORTFOLIO
- BLOG
- YOUTUBE

## CREATING A WEBSITE

http://www.

### CREATING A WEBSITE IN 5 EASY STEPS

- Register a domain name
- Set up a web host account
- Point your domain to your web host
- Install WordPress On Your Site
- Configure your website

Having your own website is cheap and easy.  
An easy to follow walkthrough of these steps  
can be found at

[www.makeawebsiteguide.com](http://www.makeawebsiteguide.com)

#### WHY?

Having your own website can help you advertise yourself easily and keep your audiences current on your latest information. An ideal website for a performing artist serves the purpose of a portfolio. A typical portfolio includes professional headshots, an up to date resume, and samples of the artist's work. A website is perfect for all of these as you can easily upload all kinds of media to a well organized space.

## CREATING A BLOG

Creating a blog is significantly easier than creating a website. There are many blogging providers that make creating and managing blogs easy:

- LiveJournal
- Blogger
- WordPress.com
- Xanga
- Tumblr

Check out their websites and see which templates you like. You will have access to premade designs and functionalities just by signing up on their site.

Ideally, you should make a website as well as a blog. You can make a link to your blog on your website so that fans can read about your most current news and thoughts. Your fans will only make a habit of visiting your website/blog if you make a habit of updating it regularly. Updating your blog with interesting news can help you build and retain your fan base.

### SEE IT IN ACTION

A nice example of a classical music blog is [jessicamusic.blogspot.com](http://jessicamusic.blogspot.com)  
You can see how this is an effective way to keep your fans up to date, especially if used in conjunction with a nice website. Posting frequently is the key to success. In this particular example, the blogger updates almost every day. The information can include your likes and dislikes as you share interesting things with your audience. This is a good way for fans to understand your influences and stay interested in who you are.

# SHARE YOUR MUSIC

MUSIC AND TECHNOLOGY

the whole world will be listening...

## YOUTUBE



1,619,146  
VIEWS



7,941,120  
VIEWS

547,547  
VIEWS



28,622  
VIEWS



YouTube is one of the most powerful ways to share music. To use YouTube just sign up at the website. The video uploading is quite straight forward as the website is very user friendly. As you can see from the "views" above, it is clear that there are quite a few more viewers on the World Wide Web than in Carnegie Hall. The internet is the new venue for performance arts so consider it to be one of your target venues. It's okay to practice with Carnegie Hall in mind but be sure to video tape your performance-ready pieces and post them on YouTube. You never know who may stumble across it!

## UNDERSTANDING THE FUTURE

### Understanding Your Role

Your responsibility as a Classical musician is not only to refine your craft and to master your discipline, but also to further the art of Classical music. Classical concert attendance is slipping as our current generation is looking in other directions for their musical entertainment. It's important for Classical music to rejoin the cultural conversation by being flexible with the trends of today. The effects of technology are obvious as you can see the music world changing. Orchestras are being more innovative than ever as they stream performances to movie theaters to reach out to younger audiences.

In 2008, YouTube made the first online collaborative orchestra. This innovative move brought together musicians worldwide as they held the auditions online on their website. The YouTube Symphony Orchestra was a great success as the live feed was one of the most viewed channels on YouTube.

The excitement generated by the YouTube Symphony Orchestra attracted attention worldwide and gained the support of huge influential supporters and artists. Famous musicians Lang Lang, Yuja Wang, Gil Shaham, and Joshua Roman collaborated with amateur and upcoming musicians with the support of the London Symphony Orchestra and the Sydney Opera House. This is the beginning of a new classical world.

### the whole world will be listening...

It is important to understand that a little goes a long way. By diversifying your efforts, you maximize your achievements. Even as little as 5% of your practice time devoted to self promotion or conversing with the world around you makes a huge difference, both for yourself and for the Classical music industry. It's important for everyone to play their part and to build our own sustainable music community. These are just a few suggestions to set you on your way but you will soon find that there is whole world out there on the World Wide Web. Reach them.

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