Video Killed the Radio Star: An Analysis on the Decline in Popularity of Classical Music

Malinda Yuhas
Chapman University, yuhas100@mail.chapman.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/cusrd_abstracts

Recommended Citation
http://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/cusrd_abstracts/256

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity at Chapman University Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Student Research Day Abstracts and Posters by an authorized administrator of Chapman University Digital Commons. For more information, please contact laughtin@chapman.edu.
An Analysis on the Decline in Popularity of Classical Music

Yuhas, Malinda

With rapid advances in modern technology and the lack of funding in musical education across the United States it has been widely accepted that traditional Western classical music is dying. Evidence of shifting preferences in musical genres amongst younger generations and a widening divide between “art” and “pop” music prove classical music's growing irrelevance in this modern age.

Are we seeing an end to classical music as we know it, or does the genre’s image simply need an “upgrade”? 

SOLUTIONS FOR THE ORCHESTRA:

CURRENT STRATEGIES

“There’s no more support for opera”. - Bob Jones, President and CEO of Opera Pacific

The typical orientation of a performance hall today was the brain-child of the well-respected German composer, Richard Wagner. The purpose of his opera house was to make sure the audience only focused on his music, as well as ass a removed, dream-like quality to the performance as his operas were often based around fairytales. Such an experience was revolutionary at the time but has lost its appeal with today’s mainstream audience.

‘Labels work as cheap marketing tactics, but don’t serve music well at all’

Rename music, which has been referred to as ‘classical music’. This term is used to define a genre which covers music from multiple time periods (not just classical) up to present.

‘The atmosphere of a “standard” classical music performance is isolated and impersonal... the performer walks onto a distant stage, plays then walks off, the end.’

Pricing is an important part of driving demand, however it must be used wisely. Opera Pacific drew in a large audience when they lowered their ticket price after receiving a large grant, but had to close down when they angered patrons by having to raise ticket prices when the funds ran out.

“Donor fatigue”

High fixed costs and weakening demand

Alienation of contemporary composers and modern audiences

SOLUTIONS FOR THE ORCHESTRA:

EXPANDING STRATEGIES

‘I believe audiences don’t dislike “art music”, they just can’t relate to it’

‘There’s no more support for opera’

‘I really think ticket prices are a problem. If I wish to attend the symphony with my wife, I must pay nearly $300-$400 for two seats.’

Current Consumer Market

‘Fans are interacting with music differently, but their passion for music remains strong’

Concerts Attended in the Last 12 Months

8.8% of adult Americans have attended a classical music event at least once in the past 12 months

Current Issues with the Orchestra

Total adults who have attended a cultural event at least once in the last year

41%

1992

33%

2012

‘There’s no more support for opera’

Donor fatigue

High fixed costs and weakening demand

Alienation of contemporary composers and modern audiences

Solutions for the Orchestra:

Expanding Strategies

‘I believe audiences don’t dislike “art music”, they just can’t relate to it’

‘The atmosphere of a “standard” classical music performance is isolated and impersonal... the performer walks onto a distant stage, plays then walks off, the end.’

‘Labels work as cheap marketing tactics, but don’t serve music well at all’

Rename music, which has been referred to as ‘classical music’. This term is used to define a genre which covers music from multiple time periods (not just classical) up to present.

‘There’s no more support for opera’

‘I really think ticket prices are a problem. If I wish to attend the symphony with my wife, I must pay nearly $300-$400 for two seats.’

Pricing is an important part of driving demand, however it must be used wisely. Opera Pacific drew in a large audience when they lowered their ticket price after receiving a large grant, but had to close down when they angered patrons by having to raise ticket prices when the funds ran out.

Current Issues with the Orchestra

Total adults who have attended a cultural event at least once in the last year

41%

1992

33%

2012

‘There’s no more support for opera’

Donor fatigue

High fixed costs and weakening demand

Alienation of contemporary composers and modern audiences

Solutions for the Orchestra:

Expanding Strategies

‘I believe audiences don’t dislike “art music”, they just can’t relate to it’

‘The atmosphere of a “standard” classical music performance is isolated and impersonal... the performer walks onto a distant stage, plays then walks off, the end.’

‘Labels work as cheap marketing tactics, but don’t serve music well at all’

Rename music, which has been referred to as ‘classical music’. This term is used to define a genre which covers music from multiple time periods (not just classical) up to present.