# Chapter 1. A Brief History of the American Symphony Orchestra and Its Future


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## Origins and Evolution of the Symphony Orchestra

The term "sinfonia" emerged in the early eighteenth century as overtures to Italian operas. By the 1770s, with the hundred-plus symphonies of Joseph Haydn, the sinfonia evolved into a four-movement composition featuring strings and winds. These pieces gained immense popularity in London's concert scene during the 1790s. In the early nineteenth century, Beethoven's nine symphonies became the gold standard in the symphonic world, with the repertoire arriving in the United States in the 1840s.

The New York Philharmonic, founded as a cooperative ensemble in 1842, coincided with the establishment of the Vienna Philharmonic. In 1848, following the European revolutions of that year, the Germania Orchestra, comprising twenty-three musicians, arrived in America. Theodore Thomas's traveling orchestra began in 1864, followed by the founding of the Boston Symphony Orchestra by Henry Lee Higginson in 1881, and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra by Charles Norman Fay in 1891. This marked the beginning of a phenomenon that, by the early twentieth century, had spread to most major cities in the United States.

Initially, these early symphony orchestras focused on a Germanic repertoire, which would come to an abrupt halt after America's entry into World War I. Near the end of the war, Karl Muck, the sixth consecutive German music director of the Boston Symphony, was arrested by the FBI following a rehearsal of Bach's St. Matthew Passion. He was detained for eighteen months at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, before being deported to Germany.

While Muck's case was exceptional, the removal of German influence from orchestras paved the way for works by non-German composers in the postwar decades. Leopold Stokowski, known for his flamboyant style and adventurous approach to new music, made a significant impact in Philadelphia and New York City. Serge Koussevitzky championed American composers and introduced new music by French and Russian composers to

Boston. He also founded the Tanglewood Festival in 1940. In the late 1930s, American entrepreneur David Sarnoff established the NBC Symphony Orchestra at NBC, placing Arturo Toscanini at its helm. Toscanini, who defied Hitler at Bayreuth, became a personal icon for Sarnoff. Despite Toscanini's temperamental nature and limited symphonic repertoire, the NBC Symphony garnered a nationwide radio audience every Saturday evening, reflecting a growing middle-class audience across the United States.[1]

## Challenges and Transformations

By the mid-1960s, many orchestras extended their seasons, hired additional players, and increased musicians' salaries. Generous public and private investments, such as the founding of the National Endowment for the Arts, the development of the Lincoln and Kennedy Centers in New York City and Washington, and the Ford Foundation's $85 million gift to American orchestras, facilitated this growth. However, in 1966, esteemed Princeton economists William Bowen and William Baumol published *The Performing Arts: The Economic Dilemma*, predicting a challenging financial future for orchestras. They argued that a perpetually inflating economy would make it difficult for orchestras to achieve productivity gains to offset inflation, as orchestral salaries and related expenses would rise while efficiency could not be increased simply by playing Beethoven symphonies faster with fewer musicians.

To illustrate, if the American economy inflates at a rate of 3 or 4% per year, an orchestra spending 4% of the five-year moving average of its endowment may seem financially stable. However, at a more conservative institution like the University of Texas, a 5% drawdown has only recently been reached, raising concerns about sustaining this rate. When I began as Eastman School director in 1972, the endowment draw amounted to 4.5% of the five-year moving average, while the University of Rochester drew 5.5%. By 1996, Eastman's percentage increased to 6.25%, and the overall endowment draw rose to over 7%. Currently, many American orchestras have endowment draws of 7% or higher.

Edward Arian, a Curtis Institute graduate who studied with Anton Torello and Marcel Tabuteau, presented a bleak outlook for the future of orchestras in his 1971 book, *Bach, Beethoven, and Bureaucracy: The Case of the Philadelphia Orchestra*. A remarkable individual, Arian served as the associate principal bass in the Philadelphia Orchestra under Ormandy from 1947 to 1967. He then pursued a doctoral degree at Bryn Mawr in 1969 and

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1. Margaret Grant and Herman S. Hettinger's 1940 book *America's Symphony Orchestras and How They Are Supported* captured this era of expansion and envisioned a future with more cities hosting first-class symphony orchestras.

subsequently founded one of the earliest arts-administration degree programs at Drexel University. According to Arian, the Philadelphia Orchestra managed to survive until 1971 through a process he called bureaucratization. He argued that this approach led to "a deep alienation on the part of some orchestra members from both the work they perform and the management of the organization in which they perform it." Another consequence, he claimed, was "a lack of service to the community." Arian observed that the Philadelphia Orchestra primarily catered to small, elite audiences, neglecting "the disadvantaged and the young people."

Arian posited that the orchestra faced a fundamental dilemma: it had to rely on bureaucratic practices of economy and efficiency to survive, yet these practices threatened its existence. He attributed this conundrum to two factors: 1) the orchestra's status as a non-profit organization forced to depend on its own resourcefulness within a private market economy, and 2) the same policies perpetuated a small upper-class elite in the orchestra's leadership, from which they derived prestige, social recognition, and the ability to serve their class's cultural and social needs. Arian concluded that three steps were necessary to rescue the orchestra: substantial public subsidy, a new type of arts administrator, and a representative board of directors.

As the twentieth century drew to a close, many symphony orchestras faced severe financial challenges, struggling to maintain fifty-two-week seasons without substantial endowments, well-developed pops seasons, or summer homes like Tanglewood or the Hollywood Bowl. Orchestra members, whose education often doesn't include financial management, tend to view the endowment as a seemingly endless source of funding. In contrast, trustees understand their responsibility to preserve the institution for future generations. This divergence in perspectives has led to numerous strikes and lockouts since the 1980s and 1990s, as musicians and boards clash over financial matters.

Declining demand and extended seasons marked a difficult era for American orchestras. The Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra rebranded itself as the Minnesota Orchestra in 1968 amid internal dissent, and later experienced an eighteen-month lockout from 2012 to 2014. The Seattle Symphony left the American Federation of Musicians in 1988. The Denver Symphony transitioned into the Colorado Symphony in 1989, and the New Orleans Philharmonic became the New Orleans Symphony in 1991. The San Jose Symphony transformed into the Silicon Valley Symphony in 2002. The Honolulu Symphony ceased operations in 2009 and subsequently failed as the Hawaii Symphony in 2011. The Philadelphia Orchestra declared Chapter 11 bankruptcy in 2009 but was later saved by a $55 million endowment gift. The New Mexico Symphony collapsed in 2011. Detroit and Atlanta faced long strikes, and the New York City Opera went out of business entirely. Chicago

endured a seven-week strike, with orchestra members losing $50,000 in salary each and little progress made. Baltimore faced a lockout for several months in 2019. These attempts to restructure often resulted in shorter seasons, reduced salaries, and fewer musicians.

Robert J. Flanagan's *The Perilous Life of Symphony Orchestras; Artistic Triumphs and Economic Challenges*, published in 2012, offers little optimism for the future of orchestras. Flanagan, a Stanford economics professor and music lover, concludes that "No undiscovered silver bullet—a single solution that eliminates these challenges—emerges from the analyses of the financial and operating data of US symphony orchestras." He asserts that individual solutions will not suffice in the face of the numerous economic obstacles orchestras face. Flanagan writes: "Most orchestras cannot achieve economic stability solely by selling out their concert halls, increasing marketing expenditures, prudently drawing from their endowments, or relying on direct government support. While some readers may find this obvious, many orchestras still focus on single solutions like building audiences or finding a major donor." Flanagan emphasizes that the inability of single solutions to address the challenges faced by US symphony orchestras indicates that there is no single "devil" responsible for their plight. His analyses, however, do not excuse managers, musicians, or trustees from their responsibility to contribute to the orchestras' security. Instead, Flanagan demonstrates that no single group can solve the problem alone.

Over the past twenty-five years, most American orchestras have seen declining subscription rates and attendance numbers. Optimal acoustics for orchestral music typically require auditoriums with a capacity of no more than 2,500 seats, due to the initial time-delay gap phenomenon. Filling a venue with 800 empty seats presents both financial and psychological challenges. Consequently, orchestras have had to hire more marketing and fundraising personnel, further straining their budgets. It has become common for large orchestras to have 95 musicians and 125 administrators, increasing endowment draws and highlighting Baumol's concept of a lethal cost-disease.

A variety of factors contribute to the declining demand for orchestral concert tickets. First, orchestral music has its roots in Europe and flourished in the United States during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, partly due to European immigration. As cultural tastes and migration patterns change, symphony orchestras struggle to maintain interest in this European-derived art form. Shifts in leisure and labor patterns also play a role, with the proliferation of less costly leisure and entertainment alternatives in cities and the increasing tendency to spend leisure time at home through personal computers and streaming media.

The decline of music education in public schools has greatly impacted musical literacy in the United States. Increased competition for philanthropic dollars from various social issues like poverty, homelessness, healthcare, education, climate change, and pandemics

exacerbates the problem. Additionally, the difficulty some audience members have in engaging with a thirty-minute symphony contributes to the challenges faced by orchestras.

A complicating factor is the overproduction of music-degree graduates by collegiate schools and departments of music, resulting in a supply-demand imbalance for well-trained musicians. In Austin, Texas, for example, the Austin Symphony Orchestra, despite sounding excellent under Maestro Peter Bay, has musicians who must have day jobs due to low salaries. This oversupply of musicians is further evidenced by the fact that there are more openings for US senators every two years than there are openings for full-time symphonic clarinetists during the same period.

The situation is further exacerbated by the belief among musicians that dedicating their lives to the practice room is the key to success. While practice is crucial, both Leonard Slatkin and Robert Schumann emphasized the importance of practicing only as long as one can maintain full attention and focus on the music being produced. Schumann suggested that, when focus lags, musicians should engage in other activities such as walking, napping, or reading to gain a broader understanding of the world around them.

At the Eastman School of Music, students are provided with an extensive library and a knowledgeable faculty who understands the importance of nuanced reading, writing, and articulate communication. This well-rounded education is further enhanced by the fact that over 50% of Eastman's students voluntarily enroll in the School's Institute for Music Leadership. This institute produces annual case studies based on real-world problems faced by orchestras, chamber groups, and the development of new ensembles and festivals, inspired by the Harvard Business School's approach.

Through the Institute for Music Leadership, music students learn administrative skills that help them maintain existing musical institutions or create new ones, broadening their skill set and increasing their ability to contribute to the long-term sustainability of the music world. By cultivating both musical talent and a more comprehensive understanding of the world, musicians can be better prepared to navigate the challenges of the modern music landscape and contribute to the growth and success of their profession.

The Eastman School of Music's approach has produced excellent entrepreneurial thinking among its graduates, demonstrating that there are various employment opportunities for young musicians beyond symphony orchestras. This is exemplified by the Ying Quartet, a talented family string quartet that successfully integrated themselves into the small town of Jesup, Iowa. Their unique approach to engaging with the community and sharing their music has left a lasting impact on the town. The Ying Quartet's experience in Jesup is an excellent example of how musicians can explore alternative career paths and make a difference in communities beyond traditional orchestras. The quartet's success

caught the attention of national media and even Congress, eventually leading to their appointment at the Eastman School of Music as successors to the renowned Cleveland Quartet.

The Ying Quartet's journey serves as an inspiration for other musicians, showing that, with creativity and dedication, it is possible to change the artistic landscape of small-town America and bring music to the lives of people in communities that might not have access to it otherwise. This example also highlights the importance of teaching the next generation of musicians not only the technical skills but also the entrepreneurial and community-building skills necessary to thrive in today's diverse and changing musical landscape.

The examples of The Breaking Winds and Rob Kapilow showcase the diverse career paths and opportunities that can emerge when musicians think creatively and entrepreneurially. In smaller communities, where resources and opportunities may be more limited, musicians are often forced to forge their own paths and create new markets for their skills.

The Breaking Winds, a bassoon quartet, has successfully crafted a niche for themselves by developing an inventive repertoire and a unique performance style, combining their talents as musicians, comedians, and arrangers. They have effectively broadened the appeal of bassoon music and created new opportunities for themselves and their instrument.

Rob Kapilow took his passion for music theory and used it to create an innovative presentation format aimed at making classical music more accessible to a wider audience. His approach has not only brought him success as an author, host, and composer but has also enabled him to work with some of the world's leading orchestras.

These examples highlight the importance of adaptability and creative thinking in today's musical landscape. By embracing their unique talents and interests, these musicians have been able to create new opportunities for themselves and contribute to the evolution of classical music in the twenty-first century. These innovative approaches also demonstrate the value of a comprehensive music education that encourages students to explore diverse paths and develop a range of skills that extend beyond mere performance.

My intention in reviewing these cases is to remind readers that young musicians can acquire a variety of skills that may support the future of American orchestras. These skills include audience development, fundraising, accounting, and the creation of new repertory. However, not all American music schools are equally open to change. As the president of the New England Conservatory, I proposed in my inaugural address in 1997 a new undergraduate curriculum where, during their freshman and sophomore years, an instrumental major would focus on their instrument, such as violin or oboe. Afterward, at the end of their sophomore year, they would be encouraged to meet privately with a senior

advisor, not their teacher, to discuss for an hour their newly developed sense of how their abilities as instrumentalists compared to the skills of their classmates. The cellist who decided they were the least skilled among the thirty cellists in the school might choose to become a cello minor, majoring instead in music history or theory, or in the management of musical enterprises, thus decreasing the vast oversupply of unemployable cellists.

Despite the decision to participate being left entirely up to the student, the idea never got off the ground. I was immediately confronted by Russell Sherman, a fine pianist, a great teacher, and a liberal-arts graduate of Columbia University, who addressed the faculty and staff in a xeroxed memorandum as follows:

> Culture faces a dilemma; if it is profound and noble, it must remain rare; if common, it must become mean. The recently released results of the 1990 federal census indicate that 5% of the American public attends opera, while 1% plays classical music. The divide between general culture and high culture is unfortunate, undemocratic, and largely intractable. NEC must have programs that reach out to the community. NEC should include in its curriculum courses that help certain students develop careers in various para-musical fields related to the actual creation and performance of music. However, NEC should not adopt an accommodationist agenda—however well-intentioned—which dilutes our charter and tradition to facilitate jobs and improve our image. That task should be left to other schools.

The reader will recognize that there is much in that paragraph with which I profoundly disagree, but I hesitated to confront Sherman's assault head-on. I believe that the repertory Russell and I so cherish is precariously clinging to its place in America, and that the very greatest artists—people emulating Leonard Bernstein, Leonard Slatkin, Charles Rosen, Gunther Schuller, Laurence Lesser, Russell Sherman, Robert Winter, Malcolm Frager, and Yo-Yo Ma—are not only gifted musicians but also compelling writers who can communicate music's message to a broader public in multiple ways. While the repertories for piano and violin may be so extensive and challenging as to discourage greater aspirations, the repertories for other acoustic instruments are neither as broad nor as difficult, rendering single-minded dedication to the practice room unnecessary. I believe that Sherman misunderstands the historical derivation of the word "conservatory" and the breadth of the implications of the term in our time.

The word "conservatory" was first used in Venice in the early sixteenth century to describe musical institutions designed for the conservation of feminine virtue, serving as a type of artistic convent for young women whose parents could not provide some of their

daughters with sufficient dowries for marriage. Reflecting on the use of such terms in our own era, Juilliard, Eastman, Indiana, and Yale—all quite different institutions—call themselves schools, while Curtis, Cleveland, and MIT are named institutes, and NEC, Oberlin, San Francisco, and Colburn refer to themselves as conservatories. After two years at NEC, I was asked to resign for "having tried to turn NEC into a liberal-arts college," according to a member of the executive committee of the board.

Our school programs in music education, now known as music teaching and learning, have focused for too long on providing marching bands for football games without adequately considering their responsibility for developing a population that appreciates a wide range of excellent music, including repertoires taught in music schools. Teaching music in our K–12 sector should be seen by musicians as a fantastic opportunity to introduce young people to great art and to foster attention spans in children and adolescents, rather than merely as a fallback option should their dreams of onstage stardom fail to materialize.

Furthermore, during the 1950s and '60s, composers of serial music, an academic orthodoxy at the time, produced music that drove audiences away, prioritizing academic freedom over the development of national musical literacy. "Who Cares If You Listen?"—the title assigned to a famous article by Milton Babbitt in *High Fidelity* (February 1958)—was not Babbitt's own choice. However, he was the composer of *Transfigured Notes*, an orchestral piece so difficult that the Philadelphia Orchestra, which had commissioned the work, was unable to perform it due to the excessive rehearsal time required. In my view, fortunately, composers since the 1970s have embraced a much broader array of distinct and appealing approaches to music composition, though a significant number of potential audience members remain unaware of this shift.

It is crucial that musical instruction be reintroduced in our public schools, not only in support of the music industry but also with the aim of enhancing overall academic performance. James Catterall's study of 20,000 school children, *Doing Well and Doing Good by Doing Art* (2009), shows that children and adolescents engaged in artistic activities in school perform notably better in their other academic subjects, regardless of their socioeconomic backgrounds. The same groups, studied over two decades, graduate from high school at higher rates, enroll in college at higher rates, perform better in college, and secure better-paying employment than those who do not engage in artistic activities. The reasons for this are not entirely clear. In my own experience, the discipline of practicing piano and oboe, combined with the demands of a rigorous secondary school, left no time for getting into trouble. The discipline of practicing—not merely repeating the same material but paying close attention to one's actions while determining how to improve—contributes significantly to learning how to use one's time effectively.

The necessity of striving to make a piece of music sound better tomorrow than it did yesterday also plays a role in these positive outcomes. For instance, when playing the piano, one must learn to manage events that do not occur simultaneously. While a pianist is performing the first measure of a piece, they are also thinking about how to transition to the sixth measure, for example. At the same time, they must learn to disregard any mishaps that may have occurred, focusing instead on what lies ahead. At a recent meeting of the National Center for Music and Medicine at the Texas Medical Center in Houston, Lieutenant Lex Braun of the Air Force, who oversees a military drone program, presented a report on two operators working on an aircraft carrier in the Persian Gulf. One operator concentrated on synthesizing two dozen incoming audio signals from the drone, while the other handled the synthesis of two dozen incoming video signals. However, by the time the two operators communicated their findings to each other, the drone had crashed, resulting in collateral damage and a $10 million loss per crash. Eager to prevent such human and financial waste, the Pentagon invested substantial resources in determining which young Americans could best synthesize massive amounts of data under pressure and quickly. The answer, unsurprisingly, turned out to be pianists.

Learning to play a piece of music inevitably teaches one to listen attentively, a valuable skill for those who tend to talk excessively and a crucial ability for understanding a piece of music or the development of an argument aurally. Imagine yourself as a five-year-old who has not yet learned to read music but can sing "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" from memory, both aloud and in their imagination. (This exercise is one I learned years ago from Jeanne Bamberger while we were both teaching music at MIT, and I highly recommend her book *The Mind Behind the Musical Ear: How Children Develop Musical Intelligence* [Harvard, 1991].) The teacher begins by asking a student how many chunks they can perceive in "Twinkle." A chunk is intentionally not a musical term but a noun meant to introduce the notion of a discernible part of a larger whole. The teacher's Socratic goal is to guide the child to recognize that "Twinkle" consists of six chunks, each of which can be described as six shorts and a long.

"Well then," the teacher might ask, "how would you describe what happens in the first chunk?" The student is led to the idea that the first chunk consists of an upward leap followed by a step up and then one down. "Well, how about the second chunk?" The perceptive child suggests that the second chunk comes back down. "Back down to where?" The suggested answer: back down to the place from which "Twinkle" began. "How about the third chunk?" That, too, comes down by step, but not as far down as chunk 2. "How many times would you have to sing chunk 3 to get to the end of the tune?" Answer: you could sing chunk 3 a hundred times, and it would never end the tune. Aha! Chunk 3, which

is repeated by chunk 4, sounds like a middle. "How about chunks 5 and 6?" Now the student realizes, perhaps after a few attempts, that 5 and 6 simply repeat 1 and 2. This leads the teacher to an even more significant idea. "How about thinking of 'Twinkle' as a tune with three larger segments, each comprising two chunks, something like ABA?" Now we are on our way to a Haydn minuet and trio with da capo, a Mozart concerto rondo, and a variation set. By the time the child is 15, he or she is ready for Music in the Air (MITA).

MITA, or Music in the Air, is a groundbreaking online app developed by UCLA's distinguished presidential professor of music, Robert Winter, and his computer colleague Peter Bogdanoff.[2] The app ingeniously integrates music history, theory, and listening into a single discipline. It features a comprehensive history of music, allowing users to click on any unfamiliar word. For example, clicking on "appoggiatura" not only produces a human voice pronouncing the term but also provides a dropdown menu defining it, followed by a series of audible musical examples with red lights alternately flashing "dissonance" and "consonance."

An alphabetical glossary of terms defines a wide range of terms and concepts, from "a cappella" to "zesty." The interactive scores section enables users to study a listening guide for each musical piece before listening to the composition while watching the score unfold. A light blue rectangle, known in MITA as a "bouncing block," surrounds each successive measure as the music plays, ensuring that inexperienced score readers do not get lost.

MITA not only covers the history of the Western musical canon but also includes 300 years of popular music history and a substantial amount of non-Western music. It currently features four historical interludes: "Europe Takes the World," "Indigenous Peoples and American Colonists," "Africa out of History," and "The Face of Colonialism," along with four pathways: "Orchestral Music," "Jazz," "Women in Music," and "Indigenous Music." The app is available in English and Chinese.

MITA tells the story of remarkable musicians such as J. S. Bach, who left us with more than 1,100 exceptional pieces from a life in which he composed over 1,500 works. Bach was also the best organist of his time, a skilled string player, an expert on the construction and maintenance of church organs, a teacher, and the father of 20 children. His achievements are partly attributed to his lineage of church musicians but also to his dedication to working hard and staying focused on producing superior results.

2. https://www.artsinteractiveinc.com/.

## Rethinking the Future of American Orchestras

In days gone by, the music director alone auditioned candidates for his orchestra. When my father first auditioned for Koussevitzky in 1942, he had just signed what turned out to be an unbreakable year-long contract with the Rochester Philharmonic and Civic. As a result, Koussevitzky asked my father not to sign further contracts in Rochester. Although the process took three years, the much-anticipated letter of appointment from Symphony Hall arrived in February 1945, and we moved to Boston almost immediately.

During the second half of the century, the audition process evolved, with committees of an orchestra's members conducting auditions behind a screen. This was done to ensure that only the quality of an auditioner's playing was taken into account. The fortunate winner would be awarded a one-year trial contract before being granted tenure in the orchestra. While this process aims for fairness, it presents several problems. Deciding whether one player in a group of 200 auditioners is the best of the bunch is inevitably a subjective decision. The year-long, pre-tenure trial period can cause difficulties for both the players and the previous orchestra that the player has left behind. The process fails to consider any extramusical talents or shortcomings that an auditioner may bring to the orchestra. For example, the New York Philharmonic did not take into account Joe Robinson's abilities as a fundraiser when they hired him as principal oboe; nor did the Cleveland Orchestra consider the Harvey-Weinstein-like personal habits of their otherwise brilliant new concertmaster when he was appointed in 1995.

As a result, I strongly recommend giving serious consideration to a new auditioning process. The initial auditioning process would still begin behind a screen. However, instead of choosing one person for a year's trial, the auditioning committee would select the best five players, each of whom would be given a trial period of a month. This procedure would not only reduce the hardship on the orchestra being left behind but also provide the new ensemble with an opportunity to get to know the new player in person, similar to how any first-rate string quartet would want to become familiar with a new player as a human colleague. How good is the new person at making compromises? How well does the new player collaborate in chamber music? Can they imagine building individual friendships with board members, management, and audience members? What kind of teacher is the new person? How do they fare as a fundraiser? Are they capable of organizing chamber-music events in schools, churches, prisons, or civic centers? How skilled is the candidate at delivering captivating two-minute talks that engage the audience in the work about to be performed? The winner would be chosen from the five finalists by the music director and

the executive director, who would want to consider at least some of the extramusical skills and shortcomings just mentioned.

With an ensemble that included both performers of the first rank and highly intelligent and multiskilled musicians, the orchestra might wish, if necessary, to reduce the annual calendar from fifty-two to forty weeks of symphonic concerts—without, however, reducing the musicians' annual compensation. Four of the eliminated concert weeks might be dedicated to paid vacation. Two of the remaining eight weeks, say, might be dedicated to repertories of music for strings only (Bach, Handel, Corelli, Vivaldi, and newer music), or for winds and brass only. (The growth of the musical repertory for the latter has been enormous and very positive since Frederick Fennell founded the Eastman Wind Ensemble in 1952.) The remaining six paid weeks would be devoted, if respective orchestral members wanted to be compensated for their time, to activities designed by management and the players to benefit both the players and the ensemble itself. These activities might include chamber music concerts, fundraising activities, service on the board, audience development events, and musical entrepreneurial activities of a musician's invention. (Think of what Joe Robinson's feature-length film, "Heroes of Conscience," contributed to the New York Philharmonic!)[3] In modifying future orchestral members' roles in the orchestras they serve, one should do as much as possible to publicize the roles of the musicians as members of the musical community. Their pictures and biographical sketches should appear, two at a time, say, in the weekly program booklets. Especially the principal players should be featured on a regular basis as soloists (or even as guest conductors) with the orchestra. The musicians' input should be regularly elicited on choices of repertory, guest conductors, soloists, board members, and on the appointment of leading American composers to in-residence terms of three years each. Management, board, and players should consult at least twice a year on how best the orchestra might serve the community of which it is part. Music directors should be encouraged by the board and management to commit themselves to at least thirty weeks a season with their home orchestras, and to championing American composers and conductors, giving special attention to women and minority group members. Orchestral members who wish to develop careers as soloists or as chamber-music players should be encouraged to take unpaid weeks of leave in order to follow their own dreams. The new availability of many members of the orchestra to undertake part-time administrative work must encourage the management to make corresponding cuts in the number of administrative personnel. Each orchestra should schedule, at least once a year, a session with

3. The film, about the Protestant theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who resisted Nazism, is now available at https://www.artsinteractiveinc.com/.

all interested players on how best to consider their fiscal investments for eventual retirement. (The academic world embraced the idea of self-directed IRAs [that recently so embroiled the Chicago Symphony] half a century ago.)

It is important to acknowledge that while humans may live to be 90 or 100 years old, their musical abilities may naturally decline as they age. This decline varies among individuals, and it would benefit the orchestra if musicians' skills were regularly assessed through chamber-music activities in the schools as they grow older. Notable composers such as Verdi and Stravinsky remained artistically vibrant at the age of ninety, whereas Rossini and Sibelius experienced a decline. Recognizing the aging process in an ensemble such as an orchestra would likely encourage more consistent practice among tutti players.

The discrimination rooted in America's troubled history with race and the misguided notion that enslaved people were incapable of creating great art led to the exclusion of ragtime and jazz from American music schools until the mid-1960s, when civil-rights legislation was passed. It also contributed to the perception of orchestral music as a "highbrow" art form, the belief that only popular repertory should involve audience participation and drinking, and that movie music is inferior due to its supportive role in unfolding dramas. The world of music would be healthier if we stopped using the adjective "classical" as a descriptor for music to be performed in concert halls. Doing so would help pave a future where music lovers can discriminate between good music and the other stuff, without unnecessary labels.

A recent event in the history of the Houston Symphony Orchestra illustrates how future orchestral programming and planning might reflect a more inclusive America.
Mark C. Hanson, a former cellist who studied at Eastman and graduated from Harvard, became the executive director of the Houston Symphony. In response to fiscal pressures faced by the orchestra, Hanson sought help from Larry Faulkner, then-president of the Houston Endowment.

Hanson proposed appointing a Hispanic music director who would perform more Hispanic music, conducting a national search for talented African-American musicians to join the orchestra and staff, and ensuring that the board represents the whole of Houston. To support this vision, Faulkner gave the orchestra $3 million, with the condition that the orchestra use the gift to double the number of major donors. Following this success, Hanson moved on to become the executive director of the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra.

Hanson's accomplishment in Houston is indeed reminiscent of a story recounted by documentary filmmaker Ken Burns and his co-author Geoffrey C. Ward in their book, *Jazz* (2000). They tell the story of an evening in October 1931 at Austin's Hotel Driskill, when a

University of Texas (UT) freshman attended a dance, hoping to meet girls. He invited a friend, a senior at Austin High School, for moral support. Unbeknownst to them, the music that night was performed by Louis Armstrong and his band. During the intermission, the UT freshman commented on the superb quality of the music they had been listening to. However, the high-school senior responded with a racist remark about African-Americans. The story takes an interesting turn when Burns reveals that the UT freshman, after graduating from law school, played a significant role in the landmark Supreme Court case Brown v. Board of Education. This case resulted in the desegregation of public schools across the nation in 1954. This story, like Hanson's experience in Houston, serves as a powerful example of how music and the arts can help bridge divides and promote understanding among people of different backgrounds. It demonstrates the potential for music to inspire and shape the beliefs and actions of individuals, and ultimately, to contribute to a more inclusive and harmonious society.

Let me summarize what I've said above: in envisioning a future for the orchestral culture in the United States, it is important to consider the potential impact of embracing the diverse musical influences present in the country. As Gunther Schuller observed, the influx of musicians from various parts of the world has resulted in a rich tapestry of musical styles and ideas, which could be incorporated into the orchestral repertoire to create a truly American representation of the nation's diverse identity. To achieve this goal, the orchestral culture should prioritize the development of American conductors and promote the performance of music by American composers, reflecting the variety of musical traditions and influences present in the country. Additionally, symphony players should view their orchestras as integral to the development of their cities, fostering a stronger connection between the orchestra and the local community. Orchestral members would assume a more active role in the administration and decision-making processes of their organizations, working collaboratively with dedicated board members who are passionate about music and the orchestra's future. By fostering a diverse and inclusive orchestral culture that celebrates the myriad musical influences present in the United States, orchestras can create a richer and more meaningful musical experience for audiences. In doing so, they can contribute to a more unified and harmonious society, leaving "the other stuff" to those who are not willing to embrace the potential of a truly American orchestral culture. The suggestions presented here will not immediately bring about a musical utopia. However, we hope that these ideas will inspire constructive discussions, leading to a better understanding among musicians of the challenges outlined by Bowen and Baumol more than half a century ago.

Keywords: music, orchestra, musical life, economics of music, conducting, serious music, classical music, concert life, music education, Eastman School of Music, American composers, Houston Symphony, women's representation in music, minority representation in music, #MeToo, entrepreneurship.

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