

A SURVEY OF MUSIC APPRECIATION EFFORTS  
IN THE DALLAS/FORT WORTH METROPLEX

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IN THE DALLAS/FORT WORTH METROPLEX

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines how three orchestras in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex adapt music appreciation using technology. Music appreciation aims to educate classical music audiences to better understand and enjoy concerts. Orchestras constantly update and improve how they perform music appreciation to better reach their audiences. To explore how orchestras of different levels adapt music appreciation, this thesis analyzes what resources the Dallas Symphony, the Fort Worth Symphony, and the Fort Worth Civic Symphony provide to educate their audiences. It focuses on three forms of music appreciation: program notes, preconcert talks, and educational programs.

## INTRODUCTION

Professional musicians are often asked if the arts are dying. The clear answer is no: the arts are very much alive. If one asks specifically about Western classical music dying, however, the answer becomes more complex. Western classical music could feasibly end up like many other bygone musical traditions, forgotten from popular memory. As culture in the United States begins to value classical music less and less, musicians and the institutions who support them do not simply give up and accept defeat.

But what exactly *is* Western classical music? While idiosyncrasies prevent its definition from being very specific, this paper will define Western classical music as art music derived from European traditions. This encompasses both vocal and instrumental genres, however this paper will focus specifically on the European orchestral tradition. Orchestras as they are defined by standard traits such as instrumentation and administrative structure began in France, Italy, Germany, and England between approximately 1680 and 1740 and continued to develop throughout the eighteenth, nineteenth, twentieth, and now twenty-first centuries.<sup>1</sup> Orchestras, of course, did not exist in a vacuum. As the ensembles and their traditions grow and change, so do the circumstances surrounding them and their resulting culture.

Beginning in the early twentieth century, many orchestras created organized efforts to counter the problems of shrinking and aging audiences. Part of these efforts were the educational programs collectively known as the “music appreciation movement.” The conclusion members of the classical music community drew was that since the classical repertoire could be hard for new audiences to follow (ever tried sitting still and paying attention

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<sup>1</sup> John Spitzer and Neal Zaslaw, “Orchestra,” *Oxford Music Online*, accessed March 10, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.20402>.

for an hour to something you know nothing about?) audience members would need to be educated about not only the content they were listening to, but the artistic merit it possessed.<sup>2</sup> If that reads as hyperbole, it should; both then and now, Western classical music was supported by socioeconomic elites who believe it to be inherently better than popular musics, and who struggle to grapple with wanting to popularize the genre without it losing its elite associations.<sup>3</sup>

Thanks to technological advancements, music appreciation is thriving today in ways that would have been inconceivable to early twentieth-century audiences. The internet has enabled classical music institutions to offer an increasing amount of both in person and online resources. For example, institutions can make information about their organization easily accessible by uploading it to their website. These efforts are additionally enhanced as orchestras in the United States increasingly aim to supplement music education that has been cut from schools as government funding turns away from the arts in favor of STEM subjects.<sup>4</sup> While true, the above statements are somewhat broad. To examine exactly how music appreciation has been adapted to modern needs, we must narrow our focus.

To explore how music appreciation has changed for American orchestras in recent years, and how available resources have affected that evolution, this paper examines three orchestras located in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex. To represent a cross section of orchestras, I have chosen three ensembles of different professional tiers: the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, and the Fort Worth Civic Orchestra. Because the scope of this

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<sup>2</sup> Kate Guthrie, “Democratizing Art: Music Education in Postwar Britain,” *The Musical Quarterly* 97, no. 4 (Winter 2014): 575–615, <https://doi.org/10.1093/musqtl/gdv001>.

<sup>3</sup> Mark Katz, *Capturing Sound: How Technology Has Changed Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 54–56.

<sup>4</sup> Michael M. Kaiser, *Curtains? The Future of the Arts in America* (Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2015), 50–52.

study is so narrow, its results cannot be generalized to all orchestras without significant further inquiry. However, I hope that these findings will suggest some directions for future research.

Before delving into the specifics of how these orchestras incorporate different elements of music appreciation, I will provide a brief overview of each ensemble. The Dallas Symphony Orchestra, or DSO, is the highest-level orchestra included in this study. It was founded in 1900 and grew alongside its city, becoming a professional orchestra in 1945. Continuing to grow and thrive, the orchestra completed its own state-of-the-art concert hall, the Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center, in 1989. As a world-class orchestra, the DSO has served under the baton of award-winning conductors, has toured both nationally and internationally, and has made numerous recordings, many of which were produced on their own record label, DSO Live.<sup>5</sup>

One step behind the DSO is the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, or FWSO. The FWSO gave its first performance in 1912, but was disbanded during World War I before being reestablished in 1925. It boasts many of the same accomplishments as the DSO, including several recordings and international tours beginning in the 1980s, as well as award-winning conductors and composers in residence. The orchestra's home, Nancy Lee and Perry R. Bass Performance Hall, was completed in 1998.<sup>6</sup> More so than the Meyerson, Bass Hall hosts several other organizations, including Texas Ballet Theatre, Fort Worth Opera, Van Cliburn

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<sup>5</sup> "Mission Statement," About the DSO, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, accessed April 14, 2019, <https://www.mydso.com/missionstatement>.

<sup>6</sup> "Significant Events," Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, accessed April 14, 2019, <http://www.fwsymphony.org/about/events.asp>.

International Piano Competition, Cliburn Concerts, and Broadway at the Bass.<sup>7</sup> In the 2016–2017 season the orchestra boasted an annual budget of over ten million dollars.<sup>8</sup>

The final orchestra this study will be examine is the Fort Worth Civic Orchestra, or FWCO. This orchestra has decidedly different origins from the DSO and FWSO. To begin, the FWCO originated as a volunteer orchestra which was then made into an official institution in 1977, much later than the DSO and FWSO. Secondly, this orchestra caters toward adult amateur musicians rather than the professionals that comprise the DSO and FWSO.<sup>9</sup> It exists on a smaller scale and is more locally focused as well. In the 2018–2019 concert season the FWCO had only six scheduled concerts compared to DSO’s Classical Concert series of 65 concerts and FWSO’s symphonic series of 30.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, the FWCO plays comparable high-level repertoire. For example, all three orchestras programmed the same work, Aaron Copland’s *Appalachian Spring*, in their respective 2018–2019 seasons. Regarding concert venues, the FWCO does not operate on the same scale as professional orchestras. It currently performs at the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, with which it became associated in 2009. The orchestra both rehearses and performs there, and seminary students who participate as players

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<sup>7</sup> “Bass Performance Hall,” Bass Performance Hall, accessed April 14, 2019, <https://www.basshall.com/about/bass-performance-hall/>.

<sup>8</sup> “Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra: Season in Review 16/17,” Program Book, available on Issuu, accessed April 14, 2019, [https://issuu.com/fwsymphony/docs/season\\_in\\_review\\_2016-17\\_single\\_pag](https://issuu.com/fwsymphony/docs/season_in_review_2016-17_single_pag).

<sup>9</sup> “History,” Fort Worth Civic Orchestra, accessed April 14, 2019, <http://fwco.org/history/>.

<sup>10</sup> “Calendar of Events,” Dallas Symphony Orchestra, accessed April 14, 2019, [https://d15gc4eof6ew0j.cloudfront.net/files/18\\_19%20Chron\\_FINAL.pdf](https://d15gc4eof6ew0j.cloudfront.net/files/18_19%20Chron_FINAL.pdf); “FWSO Announces 2018-2019 Season,” Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, accessed April 14, 2019, [http://www.fwsymphony.org/about/press/releases/2018\\_01\\_26\\_fwso\\_announces\\_2018\\_2019\\_season.pdf](http://www.fwsymphony.org/about/press/releases/2018_01_26_fwso_announces_2018_2019_season.pdf).

receive class credit. Unlike the DSO and FWSO, FWCO concerts are free to the public, however their website encourages donations which enable them to be so.<sup>11</sup>

Now that we have introduced the orchestras that will be the focus of this investigation, let us look more closely at how each of these symphonies has adapted forms of music outreach for present day audiences. I have organized this examination into three sections, each addressing a different form of music outreach: the first section will focus on program notes, the second on preconcert talks, and the third on educational programs.

### PROGRAM NOTES

Program notes developed in the nineteenth century alongside programmatic music. Generally referred to as program music, this is a genre of instrumental music that is defined by its having extramusical associations. For example, a piece could depict a particular setting or story.

Programmatic music presents a dilemma to composers and performers: without lyrics, how are listeners supposed to discern the music's story? The typical answer to this question is through program notes—essentially a pamphlet with a printed explanation of a piece's extramusical references.<sup>12</sup> By the end of the twentieth century, having program notes at orchestral concerts became common practice regardless of whether the repertoire was programmatic. Depending on what is most relevant to a given piece, these program notes can include biographical information on composers, historical circumstances in which the pieces were composed, stylistic and formal

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<sup>11</sup> "History," Fort Worth Civic Orchestra, accessed April 14, 2019, <http://fwco.org/history/>.

<sup>12</sup> Roger Scruton, "Programme music," *Oxford Music Online*, 2001, accessed April 14, 2019, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/0-mo-9781561592630-e-0000022394>.



musical analysis, and sometimes important moments in a piece's reception history.<sup>13</sup> For example, at a FWSO concert I attended in November 2018, the repertoire included Franz Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody No.2*. The program notes about that piece detail how Liszt collected Hungarian folk tunes and subsequently used them as the musical basis for the work. By contrast, the program notes about another piece played that night, Richard Strauss's Oboe Concerto in D Major, described the concerto's structure and detailed the composer's relationship with the American oboist John de'Lanci, who encouraged Strauss to write the work.<sup>14</sup> These two examples illustrate how program notes can be tailored to provide whatever information the author believes will best help audience members engage with the music.

By their very nature, program notes are intended to help listeners who are already interested in classical music—or at least curious enough to attend a concert. Rather than growing classical music's audience base, then, program notes aim to help concert-goers enjoy the concerts they attend by becoming better-informed listeners.<sup>15</sup> With this goal in mind, orchestras are creating new ways to distribute and adapt program notes which both accomplish this goal and expand upon it by making them more appealing and accessible.

Unsurprisingly, all three of the orchestras being studied have found ways employ technology to make program notes more accessible and engaging. One way orchestras can make program notes more readily accessible is by making them available online. The DSO, FWSO, and FWCO all have websites where audience members can access additional information about their orchestras and their current season's repertoire. Of these websites,

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<sup>13</sup> Richard Wingell, *Writing About Music: An Introductory Guide*, 4th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009), 108–110.

<sup>14</sup> Ken Meltzer, Program notes for Fort Worth Symphony, (November 9–11, 2018).

<sup>15</sup> Wingell, *Writing About Music*, 105–106.

<https://www.mydso.com>, <http://www.fwsymphony.org>, and <http://fwco.org> respectively, the first and the last post the entirety of their concerts' program notes. While the FWSO does post some information about their upcoming programs as they approach, these blurbs are usually limited to promotional material rather than educational information. For example, the page for one the FWSO's March 2019 concerts, *Spano Conducts Mahler 5*, reads:

Be there when world-renowned conductor Robert Spano leads the FWSO in Mahler's monumental Symphony No. 5. And soprano Jessica Rivera will soar in Strauss' sublimely beautiful Four Last Songs. This is a not-to-be-missed event!

The most detailed information about the pieces here is when the author calls Symphony No. 5 "monumental" and Four Last Songs "sublimely beautiful," neither of which accomplish program notes' goals of educating audiences. By contrast, the FWCO website has a page for a concert called *#womencompose*, which explains not only why the concert was programmed but also includes details about each piece such as their composer's background, the circumstances surrounding their commissions, and their musical attributes. Taking advantage of the online medium, FWCO even includes links to YouTube videos of listening examples for select pieces.

The DSO's program notes, titled *Pulse*, are also posted online, but compared to the FWCO, theirs are difficult to find and are posted in a less approachable format. Where the FWCO posts their notes on the same page where concert goers can look up a particular concert, the DSO *Pulse* booklets are uploaded to a page linked in the press room section of their website. Its title is inconspicuous to people who may not know the title of the program booklet, and because it is uploaded in the same format as the actual book, readers must click through pages of

advertisements and other information in order to find the program notes, unlike the FWCO's website which only includes the notes.<sup>16</sup>

While the FWCO has most effectively adapted program notes by uploading them to their website, the FWSO and the DSO have expanded program notes using another online medium: mobile applications, or apps. In 2018 both the FWSO and the DSO have released mobile applications for their respective organizations. Both orchestra's apps were developed by the company InstantEncore, which self-identifies as the "leading provider of mobile solutions to performing arts organizations around the globe."<sup>17</sup> InstantEncore develops apps with features catering to arts organizations, including digitally sharing video, music, and photos, linking with social-media accounts, and sharing event information. Arts organizations can choose the features they need and customize their app without paying for an individual developer to create it for them.<sup>18</sup>

According to its description in the Apple App Store, "the Fort Worth Symphony App is the easiest way to follow the Fort Worth Symphony" and provides users with "access to Fort Worth Symphony's events at anywhere." The only difference in the DSO app's introduction paragraph is the symphony name. Both applications can be purchased in Google Play and the Apple App Store and both applications have similar features including pages featuring videos, a description about the orchestra, links to their social media accounts, and links to browse and purchase tickets for upcoming concerts.

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<sup>16</sup> Dallas Symphony Orchestra, *Pulse*, accessed April 19, 2019, <https://www.mydso.com/about-the-dso/press-room/pulse>.

<sup>17</sup> "About Us," InstantEncore, accessed April 17, 2019, <https://www.instantencore.com/Learn/Home/OurTeam>.

<sup>18</sup> "InstantEncore," accessed April 17, 2019, <https://www.instantencore.com/Learn/Home>.

Focusing on program notes, both applications claim to give audience members access to program notes ahead of their corresponding concerts. Upon inspection, however, these “program notes” are the same promotional excerpts linked from the orchestras’ websites rather than full copies of what would be in a concert program like the program notes on FWCO’s website. The DSO application posts some of the orchestra’s recordings, and of the five posted as of April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019, one includes the link to “program notes.” However, the linked pdf only contains a paragraph-long biography about the recording’s featured soloist rather than full-length notes about the repertoire.

Although in this regard neither applications accomplish expanding the availability of content to educate audiences, some differences between the applications reveal efforts to do so. Aside from purely aesthetic design choices, the main difference between the two is that the DSO’s app includes additional features: the ability to watch live concerts and read interactive program notes. The live program notes, which do not include the same content as the printed programs, are integrated into the app through a feature called LiveNote. Produced by the same company as their application, LiveNote debuted at the DSO during its 2018–2019 concert season. Out of the forty-five programs scheduled for their forty-two-week long season, five featured individual works employing LiveNote.<sup>1920</sup> These real-time program notes are a clear step towards making educational content more readily available to technologically-minded concert audiences.

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<sup>19</sup> “Dallas Symphony Orchestra to Debut LiveNote - Interactive Program Notes for Mobile Devices,” Dallas Symphony Orchestra, October 18, 2018, accessed April 17, 2019, <https://www.mydso.com/about-the-dso/press-room/press-releases/livenote>.

<sup>20</sup> “Calendar of Events,” Dallas Symphony Orchestra.

LiveNote was created in a collaboration between the Philadelphia Orchestra and Drexel University in 2011, and premiered in the Philadelphia Orchestra’s 2014–2015 season. In 2018, the Philadelphia orchestra joined forces with InstantEncore to release an upgraded version. These real-time program notes use negative text, have slides with pictures or short “Twitter length” notes, and change slides at most every thirty seconds, all in order to augment the live concert experience without distracting from it.<sup>21</sup> Multiple sets of notes can be made available for the same piece, allowing both novice and veteran concertgoers to select the set of notes they would find most appealing. Organizations that purchase LiveNote can pay to use notes from their stock content of over seventy symphonic works, or can compose their own for free.<sup>22</sup> While it is groundbreaking, LiveNote is not the only online adaptation of program notes on the market. Encue, an app developed by two professors at the University of Maryland, and Concertcue, a mobile website developed by a professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in collaboration with the Boston Symphony, are two more examples of products that seek to make classical music education more accessible through adapting the concert program medium.<sup>23</sup>

In March 2019, I attended DSO’s concert featuring Richard Strauss’s tone poem *Don Juan*, Op. 20 and followed the accompanying LiveNote program notes. Compared to the printed program notes, LiveNote provided significantly less information. Whereas the printed ones included information on Strauss’s inspiration and the level of difficulty of the piece, as well as a summary of the how the music connects to the story line, the digital notes only focused on the

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<sup>21</sup> Jeremy Reynolds, “Notes on the Go,” *Symphony*, Spring 2018, 25-28, [https://americanorchestras.org/images/stories/symphony\\_magazine/spring2018/Notes\\_on\\_the\\_Go.pdf](https://americanorchestras.org/images/stories/symphony_magazine/spring2018/Notes_on_the_Go.pdf).

<sup>22</sup> “LiveNote,” InstantEncore, accessed April 17, 2019, <https://learn.instantencore.com/livenote>.

<sup>23</sup> Reynolds, “Notes on the Go.”

extramusical narrative.<sup>24</sup> Example 1 displays three examples of LiveNote slides from the DSO concert I attended. The bottom of each slide shows how the piece is divided into sections. White dots indicate when each new slide appears. Short lines of text detail what is the music signifies without drawing the listener's attention away from it for too long. The brevity and specifically musical content of these examples show how they supplement, rather than replace, traditional program notes. Adapting technology in this way shows how music appreciation efforts are expanding and working to make classical music knowledge more easily accessible.

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<sup>24</sup> René Spencer Saller, "Pines of Rome," Program notes for Dallas Symphony, (March 7–10, 2019).

THE MUSIC

**DON JUAN THEME**

The Don's first flirtation foreshadowing a new musical theme.

LIVE 3 of 25

This screenshot shows the first note in a series of 25. The note is a green circle with the text 'DON JUAN THEME' and a description: 'The Don's first flirtation foreshadowing a new musical theme.' The interface includes a back arrow, a title bar 'THE MUSIC', and a progress indicator at the bottom showing 'LIVE 3 of 25'.

THE MUSIC

**LOVE SCENE**

The first love scene is depicted by a lustrous melody for clarinet and horn.

LIVE 6 of 25

This screenshot shows the sixth note in the series. The note is a red circle with the text 'LOVE SCENE' and a description: 'The first love scene is depicted by a lustrous melody for clarinet and horn.' The interface includes a back arrow, a title bar 'THE MUSIC', and a progress indicator at the bottom showing 'LIVE 6 of 25'.

THE MUSIC

**CARNIVAL AND DEPRESSION**

The Don finds himself at a masked ball where he reaches the height of his glorious debauchery before an inevitable fall.

LIVE 13 of 25

This screenshot shows the thirteenth note in the series. The note is a blue circle with the text 'CARNIVAL AND DEPRESSION' and a description: 'The Don finds himself at a masked ball where he reaches the height of his glorious debauchery before an inevitable fall.' The interface includes a back arrow, a title bar 'THE MUSIC', and a progress indicator at the bottom showing 'LIVE 13 of 25'.

**Ex. 1:** LiveNotes for a performance of Richard Strauss, *Don Juan*, Op. 20 (1888) at the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, March 2019. Screen captures by the author.

The three orchestras in this study have to some extent enhanced traditional program notes with new technology, with varying degrees of success. By some measures, the FWCO is the most successful despite its financial limitations. By uploading the program notes for their entire orchestral season to their website an accessible part of their website in advance, the FWCO makes them readily available to audience members as well as *potential* audience members, thereby fulfilling their goal of making classical music education readily available. This method also expands the purpose of program notes since it does not limit their distribution to patrons already attending the concert. Anyone with an interest in learning more about the pieces can read these and perhaps be inspired to attend a FWCO concert when they might not have previously. However, because only people with some degree of interest will likely visit their website, the notes are still catered to an already-invested group of classical music enthusiasts. It is noteworthy that the FWCO can adapt their program notes in this way, because they operate on a much smaller scale than the FWSO and the DSO. With significantly fewer concerts per season, the FWCO has the opportunity to develop their online program notes farther in advance and to post them on the same page as their concerts' promotion information. It is not surprising that the FWSO and the DSO then cannot take the same straightforward approach since it would be harder for them to plan enough in advance to write nearly two dozen programs before their seasons begin. FWSO and DSO programs include program notes for multiple concerts, so it would be an additional step for the orchestras to separate out pertinent information and post it to a given concert's promotional page.

While their online notes are less available, the FWSO and the DSO have successfully adopted another approach to adapting program notes with current technology. They adapted their program notes to their mobile applications. While they each use this same method, the



FWSO is less successful in making their program notes more accessible since the “program notes” included on their application bear more resemblance to marketing material. The same is true of the DSO’s application except that theirs includes an additional feature, LiveNote, which provides live program notes for select pieces in their season. In contrast to the FWCO, the DSO’s method of updating program notes supplements their printed program notes instead of including the same content as them. LiveNote program notes can only be viewed as long as the piece they are about is being played by the orchestra where the FWCO online notes can be viewed at any time throughout their entire concert season. Additionally, being live, their program notes are limited to audience members already at a given concert and therefore do not expand the target market like the FWCO does. Instead, LiveNote increases program note accessibility by fusing them with mobile technology, which makes them more appealing to audience members who are accustomed to and excited about that technology. This shows how different approaches to adapting program notes lead to different populations gaining interest in them.

### PRECONCERT TALKS

Pre-concert talks are another medium used deliver content similar to what is typically found in program notes, to engage audiences with the music they will hear in a given concert. The speech format of pre-concert talks allows them to include more detail than program notes by incorporating different types of resources. For example, in a preconcert talk the presenter may play a recording of excerpts from a piece, or invite a musician from the orchestra to play an important motive to help them explain how it contributes to the piece. If a concert program

includes contemporary music, the composer may be invited to explain their compositional process and what the music means to them.

It is difficult to pinpoint exactly when pre-concert talks originated since little research has been done on the subject and the resources necessary to do so are beyond the scope of this project. There are, however, several precursors to pre-concert talks that can be identified as possible origins for the practice. One of these was a concert-lecture series given by the American composer William Henry Fry in 1852, inspired by a similar series given by François-Joseph Fétis in Paris in 1832–33. While the motivations behind giving Fry’s lectures were different from those fueling preconcert talks today, the lectures included many similarities to preconcert talks. Fry had travelled abroad and gave this series upon his return not only to share his acquired knowledge, but also to showcase his own compositional ability and prove that American composers (especially himself) were just as capable as those across the sea. Subsequently his lectures included several topics which remain relevant in preconcert talks today including breaking down important musical motifs, explaining which instruments will be important to the repertoire, and going into detail on music theory and how it pertains to the construction of a piece.<sup>25</sup> Another possible contribution to the evolution of the pre-concert talk was early classical music broadcasting. Radio broadcasters began to include explanations of the classical music before playing it to educate their audiences.<sup>26</sup> Both the Fry and radio broadcast lectures share important similarities to preconcert talks in that they take advantage of speech format to engage their audiences with classical music.

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<sup>25</sup> Vera Brodsky Lawrence, “William Henry Fry’s Messianic Yearnings: The Eleven Lectures, 1852-53,” *American Music* 7, no.4 (1989): 382–411, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3051912>.

<sup>26</sup> Paddy Scannell and David Cardiff, *A Social History of British Broadcasting: Volume One 1922–1939 Serving the Nation* (Cambridge: Basic Blackwell, 1991), 195.

Compared to the orchestras' efforts to adapt program notes, their efforts to adapt preconcert talks have been minimal. Rather than making them more widely available, preconcert talks by the FWSO and DSO use technology to enhance their content. For example, a preconcert talk I attended at a DSO concert in March 2019 featured the pieces *Fountains of Rome* and *Pines of Rome* by Ottorino Respighi, tone poems depicting specific fountains and forests in and around Rome, Italy. Rather than describing these scenes only verbally, the presenter put pictures of each fountain and forest onto a slideshow and explained how the music described each of them. Taking advantage of visual presentations is one of the ways the DSO makes their preconcert talks more engaging and informative. Another more common way both the DSO and the FWSO incorporate technology is by using musical examples during their preconcert talks. Using a phone or laptop connected to a speaker, presenters explain key musical elements in a piece and then play excerpts of them. This allows their audience to understand what to listen for in the accompanying performance and what its significance is. Similar to the use of visual aids, adaptation of technology augments the relatability of a preconcert talk without changing what type of content will be included in the talk or who will likely attend it. These minimally adapt preconcert talks since they only expand upon pre-existing content and make it easier to engage with.

Notably, as of their 2018–2019 season, the FWCO does not offer preconcert talks. This poses some interesting questions as to why. Can they not afford it? Do they not think enough people would attend? Do they not think preconcert talks are worthwhile? These are reasonable questions considering that of the preconcert talks I attended researching for this paper, no more than thirty people attended any one of them. Is that enough to warrant paying a presenter to research a concert program and present on it for an hour? Is having preconcert talks important to

the culture of higher-ranking orchestras? While these are all good questions, answering them would likely not be straightforward and is ultimately beyond the scope of this project. These only pertain to the FWCO, yet more questions are presented by the DSO and FWSO's treatment of preconcert talks.

It is interesting that neither the DSO nor the FWSO have adapted preconcert talks to other mediums. Similar to their approach to program notes, they could livestream the speeches or record them and make them available on their respective websites. Arguably, videos of preconcert talks that retain the unique advantages of the speech medium would be as easy to produce and sell as program notes. Perhaps in the future these will appear, or perhaps preconcert talks will disappear and be replaced by live program notes. Live program notes like those detailed in the previous section serve a similar purpose to preconcert talks. They can display relevant photos and point out important musical moments. If they reach a larger audience, it is conceivable that live program notes could replace preconcert talks altogether.

In conclusion, the ways in which the DSO and FWSO adapt preconcert talks leaves more questions to be asked than their and FWCO's treatment of program notes. Rather than looking to expand its target audience, using technology within preconcert talks allows presenters to detail relevant information with greater depth. Concertgoers are more informed, but potential concertgoers are left to seek online information in other forms. This medium of musical outreach poses the most questions for more study. Perhaps a survey could be conducted to see why resources are allocated elsewhere, and if more potential audience members would be tempted to join the fold if preconcert talks were more made more appealing and accessible to the technologically-minded.

## EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

The final form of music appreciation in this study, educational programming, has a different goal than program notes and pre-concert talks. Educational programming seeks to grow a new base of classical music lovers rather than to engage people who are already audience members. These programs can be geared either toward children or adults and can take numerous distinct forms.

In the past, music education for children mostly took place in schools rather than in concert halls. Classical music education has been a staple in many school curriculums. Children learned how to read, play, and listen to music in school. In the United States today, educational values are shifting away from the arts towards STEM subjects and government funding is being cut. This shift has caused orchestras to increasingly supplement educational resources that would have been provided in school music programs.<sup>27</sup> Resources can include anything from musical performance tips to educational concerts and teaching guides.

All three orchestras in this study value education as essential to their institutions. Both the FWCO and FWSO specifically mention offering education in their mission statements.<sup>28</sup> The DSO's mission, "To inspire and change lives through musical excellence," does not specifically mention education, yet educating their audiences does align with this statement. Educational programming is perhaps the most straightforward ways to engage audience members with music and therefore to inspire and change them. Despite their not specifically mentioning education in their mission statement, the DSO offers the most online educational resources and other

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<sup>27</sup> Kaiser, *Curtains?*, 18.

<sup>28</sup> "Mission," Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, accessed April 19, 2019, <http://www.fwsymphony.org/about/mission.asp>; "Mission," Fort Worth Civic Orchestra, accessed April 19, 2019, <http://fwco.org/our-mission/>.

programming. In fact, offering educational programming is the only section of this study in which the amount orchestras offer directly correlates to their available resources.

The FWCO operates on a smaller scale than the DSO and the FWSO and offers significantly less educational programming. According to their website, the two educational programs they offer are their Carol Contest and their Young Musicians' Concerto Competition. These are both geared towards youth and neither involve offering online resources. The Carol Contest is a competition where elementary students submit Christmas carol compositions and the winner's song is performed by the orchestra during their December concert.<sup>29</sup> The concerto competition is open to students in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade or below from either Tarrant, Parker, Johnson, Hood, Ellis, Wise, or Denton counties. If selected after both a video and a live audition, winners get to perform their concertos with the orchestra during their May concert.<sup>30</sup> Rather than offering teaching resources online, the FWCO approaches educational programming by offering creative opportunities to students. These may not inform them about specific pieces or classical music history facts, but it does help them to improve their performance skills and can encourage them in their music-making and overall classical music involvement. This being said, the FWCO does not offer as many or as diverse educational programming as the FWSO and the DSO.

The FWSO offers more educational programs than FWCO; however, similar to the FWCO, their educational programming almost exclusively caters to children. These include several types of programs, some of which are exclusively in person and others of which are

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<sup>29</sup> "Education & Community," Fort Worth Civic Orchestra, accessed April 5, 2019, <http://fwco.org/education-community/>.

<sup>30</sup> "Young Musicians' Concerto Competition," Education & Community, Fort Worth Civic Orchestra, accessed March 13, 2019, <http://fwco.org/education-community/young-musicians-concerto-competition/>.

online. The orchestra partners with several programs such as Carnegie Hall's Weill Music Institute Link Up Program, the Glen Rose ISD Cultural Partnership, and Symphony in Your School, all of which bring the orchestra to students by integrating it into nearby schools' curriculums. They do so in a variety of ways, such as bringing principal players to give masterclasses, bringing the orchestra to give performances at the schools, or bringing the students to the orchestra's Bass Hall performances, including the FWSO's educational concerts.<sup>31</sup> Educational concerts at the FWSO cater to two separate age groups; kinderconcerts cater to children ages three to six and educational concerts cater to children ages six to thirteen.<sup>32</sup> Concerts and school programs expose children to and potentially interest them in classical music. If a child knows and loves classical music, they are presumably more likely to buy concert tickets as an adult. By this logic, these programs fulfill music outreach's goal of expanding classical music audiences by making classical music more approachable.

The FWSO employs their website to augment their educational programming for children. They post study guides about their educational concerts for teachers to discuss with students and links to Spotify playlists so that teachers can listen and learn with their students before attending the concerts. At the time of this study, their website has three study guides, two playlists, and one five-minute informational video. The video advertises the February 2019 concert *Aesop's Fables* and includes the concert's conductor and composer each giving some background on the orchestra and the music along with some musical examples and explanations

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<sup>31</sup> "Education Partnerships," Education and Outreach, Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, accessed April 7, 2019, <http://www.fwsymphony.org/education/partnerships.asp>.

<sup>32</sup> "See it. Hear it. Live it. FWSO Education Concerts," Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, accessed April 7, 2019, [http://www.fwsymphony.org/hld/brochures/fwso\\_education\\_1819.pdf](http://www.fwsymphony.org/hld/brochures/fwso_education_1819.pdf).

of how they tell each fable.<sup>33</sup> Essentially the video is a truncated pre-concert talk for young students. Making this video, the study guides, and the playlists available online shows how the orchestra adapts educational programming to be more widely accessible. These online components are free to potential audience members and both encourage education and future concert attendance. For example, the study guides are informative, but they are also more meaningful if the student attends the correlating concert.

The FWSO does offer some additional resources to older students, but these are not as expansive and do not incorporate the online medium to the extent the above-mentioned programs do. Similar to the FWCO, the FWSO hosts the Young Artist Competition, a concerto competition where student ages eighteen and below can compete for a five-thousand-dollar scholarship and the opportunity to perform as a soloist with the orchestra.<sup>34</sup> Additionally, the orchestra plays a concert side by side with the Fort Worth Youth Orchestra.<sup>35</sup> These two performance opportunities for high school age students encourage them to engage with classical music by advancing their own musical skills. For high school and college age students the orchestra also offers discounted student tickets for all their concerts as well as open rehearsals for select ones. During their 2018–2019 season four dress rehearsals were open to students.<sup>36</sup>

Compared to the FWSO, the DSO offers similar educational programming for younger children but in greater quantity. Their Cecil and Ida Green Youth Concert Series consists of

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<sup>33</sup> “Resources for Teachers,” Education & Outreach, Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, accessed April 7, 2019, <http://www.fwsymphony.org/education/teachers.asp>.

<sup>34</sup> “Fort Worth Symphony Young Artist Competition,” Education & Outreach, Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, accessed April 7, 2019, [http://www.fwsymphony.org/education/young\\_artist\\_competition.asp](http://www.fwsymphony.org/education/young_artist_competition.asp).

<sup>35</sup> “Education Partnerships,” Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra.

<sup>36</sup> “Open Rehearsals,” Education & Outreach, Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, accessed April 7, 2019, [http://www.fwsymphony.org/education/open\\_rehearsals.asp](http://www.fwsymphony.org/education/open_rehearsals.asp).



twenty-four concerts and their website has links to forty-seven resources and lesson plans.<sup>37</sup> The section of their website dedicated to children’s education, DSO Kids, offers practice tips, instructions to build basic instruments, and even a coloring book that introduces what a concert is like and how various instruments look.<sup>38</sup> Similar to both the FWSO and the FWCO, the DSO hosts Lynn Harrell Concerto Competition, the difference being their concerto competition caters to the entire South Central United States rather than solely the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex.<sup>39</sup> Like the FWSO, the DSO partners with several programs to bring classical music to schools and schools to classical music. These include *Symphony Yes!*, *Music Memory* and *Amazing Music Workshops*.<sup>40</sup> All of these programs aim to bring young students into the classical music fold by making music fun and approachable. Because the DSO offers more of these programs and makes them easily accessible online, they can reach more potential audience members.

The biggest difference between the DSO and the other orchestras’ approaches to educational programming is that the DSO offers significantly more music programs for older students and adults. Unique in this study, the DSO website is home to the DSO Studio, a “site [designed] for the musically passionate teen. It includes videos, a way to ask questions directly to our musicians, scholarship, competition and audition information, special DSO opportunities for teens, and more!”<sup>41</sup> Interestingly, these resources cater toward teens already heavily involved

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<sup>37</sup> “Education Programs at-a-Glance,” DSO Kids, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, accessed April 13, 2019, [https://d15gc4eof6ew0j.cloudfront.net/res/PDF/DSO%20Education%20Programs%20At%20a%20Glance\(1\).pdf](https://d15gc4eof6ew0j.cloudfront.net/res/PDF/DSO%20Education%20Programs%20At%20a%20Glance(1).pdf).

<sup>38</sup> “DSO Kids,” Dallas Symphony Orchestra, accessed April 13, 2019, <https://www.mydso.com/dso-kids>.

<sup>39</sup> “Education Programs at-a-Glance,” Dallas Symphony Orchestra.

<sup>40</sup> “Education Programs at-a-Glance,” Dallas Symphony Orchestra.

<sup>41</sup> “Studio DSO,” Dallas Symphony Orchestra, accessed April 13, 2019, <https://www.mydso.com/educate/studio-dso>.

with classical music. The site's target audience is not people attending a concert like those viewing preconcert talks and reading program notes must be, but a student interested in watching an online masterclass or learning about classical music scholarship opportunities is more likely a seasoned audience member than a first-grade student attending an educational concert. Instead these resources seek to provide additional educational opportunities for high school and college age students that help them to further their pre-existing passion. Having online resources allows the orchestra to do this in a way that is easily accessible to students everywhere; they need only have an internet connection and a degree of curiosity.

For adults, the DSO offers two educational programs: Bach's Lunches and Speaker's Bureau. Bach's Lunches are free lunches hosted at the Meyerson where a musician or musicologist gives a presentation on a classical music topic.<sup>42</sup> This series is attractive both to regular concert-goers and anyone who likes free lunch. While likely only those already interested in classical music will know about these events, they may invite friends who would not have attended otherwise. In this way, this adult education program fulfills educational programming's goal of increasing the amount of potential audience members. The Speaker's Bureau offers to bring someone from the DSO to present about the orchestra or a related topic at the interested party's organization. This fulfills a similar function to bringing speakers to surrounding schools in that it provides education to those who might not have gotten it otherwise. Neither the Speaker's Bureau and Bach's Lunches have significant online components, however their approaches to adult education still fulfill educational programming goals.

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<sup>42</sup> "Adults," Dallas Symphony Orchestra, accessed April 13, 2019, <https://www.mydso.com/educate/adults>.

In conclusion, all three orchestras provide music education programs, however the types and amounts of programs vary. While all three orchestras gear most of their educational programs towards younger children, only the DSO has programs specifically for adults. This could be because children are the most logical target audience to one seeking to expand classical music audiences. Adults already have established interests and schedules and may be less susceptible to changing their habits to involve enjoying, understanding, and attending classical music concerts. Interestingly, this is the only type of music appreciation in which the amount of funding each orchestra has directly correlates to the amount of programming they provide and the degree to which that programming is adapted to be widely accessible. While beyond the scope of this study, the correlation here poses questions for further study. For example, as each orchestra clearly holds providing educational opportunities to be an important part of their role within their communities, does the correlation between the amount of educational programming they supply and the amount of resources they have available signify that each orchestra puts as much of their resources as they can into providing educational programs?

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings on this study, an orchestra's ability to adapt and develop their musical outreach efforts does not always correlate to the amount of resources they have available. For example, the FWCO integrates their program notes into their website more effectively than the FWSO and the DSO despite their smaller annual budget. While the FWCO does not offer preconcert talks, neither does the FWSO nor the DSO expand their accessibility beyond incorporating visual and musical examples within their presentations. This data proves that with

or without a large budget, orchestras can educate their audiences using creative solutions that work for their unique organization.

Only in offering educational programs does the quantitative and qualitative data correlate to the size of each orchestra. Rather than negating that each orchestra can adapt their music appreciation programs and expand their audiences with creative solutions, this poses some questions for further study as to why. Based on speculation, the reason for the FWSO offering less educational programs than the DSO and the FWCO offering less than both of those could be how smaller orchestras view their role within their community. If the FWCO does not interpret themselves as needing to educate students in their area about classical music past what schools in their area already do, then it would make sense that they only offer performance-opportunity based programs. Similarly, if the DSO views their role within their community as larger, they may perceive the moral obligation to educate any and all children and adults they can feasibly reach. This being said, the answer to why this section of the study correlated may be as simple as each orchestra is providing as much as they can since they each value educating people as a way to recruit new audience members and to further engage pre-existing ones. Further study would be necessary to find the best hypothesis about the subject.

Looking at how each orchestra adapts music appreciation provides some insight to their operations, but what is more important to observe is what it means if these adaptations are successful. Music appreciation at its core is helping audiences to understand and therefore appreciate classical music. Making program notes, preconcert talks, and educational programs more engaging either by incorporating them with technology to appeal to younger generations and the technologically savvy or by making them more engaging by adapting them to new mediums can reach new audience members and better retain old ones. The genre will last as

long as there are people who love it, and if orchestras can help people to love classical music than it will not fade from cultural memory.

What does this mean for orchestras everywhere? It means being conscientious and intentional of how they engage their audiences can keep them thriving. Solutions do not have to be over-the-top expensive. Programming a concert with educational content costs the same amount as programming one without, and yet it can entice more family-friendly minded people to come. In a volunteer orchestra, why not ask for a musician to volunteer to give a preconcert talk? In a university setting a graduate assistant might benefit from presenting these and trying to adapt them to reach a larger audience. If one believes in the benefits of classical music then creative solutions to continuing to share it with others should not be far behind.

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