FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF MUSIC

GUIDELINES TO REACHING AN AUDIENCE:
A STUDY OF THE EXTRAMUSICAL ASPECTS OF MUSIC PERFORMANCE

By
MARCOS HUGO VIVES

A Treatise submitted to the
College of Music
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Music

Degree Awarded:
Fall Semester, 2013
Marcos H. Vives defended this treatise on October 29, 2013.
The members of the supervisory committee were:

Gregory Sauer
Professor Directing Treatise

Evan Jones
Outside Committee Member

Eliot Chapo
Committee Member

Melanie Punter
Committee Member

The Graduate School has verified and approved the above-named committee members, and certifies that the treatise has been approved with university requirements
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .............................................................. iv  
1. INTRODUCTION ..................................................... 1  
2. MEDIA ECOLOGY AND ITS APPLICATIONS IN THE MUSIC WORLD .... 6  
3. THEATRICAL INTERPRETATION .................................... 17  
4. PROGRAMMING A RECITAL ........................................ 28  
5. THE ENTREPRENEURIAL APPROACH ............................... 52  
6. CONCLUSION .......................................................... 56  
BIBLIOGRAPHY ......................................................... 58  
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH ................................................ 63
ABSTRACT

The image of classical music is not what it used to be. The development of a variety of styles and images in the realms of pop and rock music have drawn audiences away from classical music concerts. The performers in these popular genres of music incorporate elements to their shows that allow them to reach their audiences and make them more easily relatable. This has left classical music with a following that is increasingly smaller.

The purpose of this treatise is to understand the current state of classical music’s appeal to modern audiences. Different aspects outside of the musical style will then be presented and studied for possible applications to the field of classical music. The goal will not be to set strict rules but rather to create a series of guidelines that can easily be adapted by the reader to his or her own musical endeavors.

This treatise will be divided into six sections. Chapter One will introduce the issue of declining interest in classical music. Chapter Two will define Media Ecology and relate the concept to the field of classical music. Chapter Three will address the concept of theatrics and different acting techniques and their utilization in a musical concert setting. Chapter Four will present outlines of successful popular music concerts and apply their programming tactics to a chamber recital. Chapter Five provides advice for business approach to this and other performance ventures. Chapter Six will conclude the set of guidelines presented in the treatise.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The research and commentary by leading critics and analysts indicates that over the last fifty years there has been a decline in the interest that audiences show for classical music. Even though there are many factors that affect the attendance and ticket sales to classical events and make it difficult to accurately assess the situation, statistics provided by institutions like the National Endowment for the Arts in its “Survey of Public Participation in the Arts” and the League of Orchestras’ “Audience Demographic Research Review” indicate there is, in fact, an overall decline.\(^1,2,3\) Therefore, an ongoing debate has arisen in regard to how further decline could be prevented, and to what extent or cost an effort should be made to increase the genre’s appeal and to reach broader audiences. Renowned classical musicians, critics, and music enthusiasts have addressed the issue and offered contrasting points of view as to what the reasons are behind this phenomenon. Articles ranging from Alex Ross’ “The Fatal X,” in which he discusses proposed solutions to this decline, to Jay Gabler’s “Why we shouldn’t do a damn thing about the decline of classical music” show just how contrasting the views on this issue are.\(^4,5\) Opinions are wide-ranging as to what needs to be done to avoid what seems like a slow but persistent relegation of this music to the status of an outdated art form that possesses a much larger historical significance than a current one.


The challenges that classical musicians currently face in their quest to reach audiences are far greater than ever before. The popular music scene has evolved from street entertainment to an industry that invests millions of dollars every year into the design and implementation of projects to capture the widest possible range of listeners and viewers. The access to communication and technology through the internet has allowed the great majority of people to expose themselves to a virtually unlimited amount of information at all times, which has resulted in a shortening of their attention span and patience. In addition, the advances in other forms of entertainment like video games and cinema have made it possible to create three-dimensional, surround-sound experiences capable of overwhelming their senses. This situation combined with the constant growth in the number of well-prepared classical musicians poses the challenge of having an increasingly competitive field where the difference between the number of applicants and the number of available jobs becomes larger. This makes the task of attaining a professional career a more difficult proposition every year that passes for the aspiring musician.

While examining this information, some questions come to mind: What is causing this decline? Is it the music itself? Are there other aspects of the performance that affect the attendance? Certainly, what we call “classical music” is not usually linked to the latest fad of popular culture but is instead a collection of music from different periods of time that has grown to become a timeless genre. For this reason it is normal that it does not “sell” as well as the latest hit of a pop or rock artist, but this should not mean that, in the words of Mr. Gabler, “The sky is going to fall, and no number of Chicken Littles, no matter how loud they shout, will be able to prevent it.”

To try to answer these questions, and since the music itself is what classical musicians are trying to preserve, I will look at the way classical music is presented in comparison to the popular music of today. Mainstream pop music of the last fifty or sixty years has undergone many changes in the hopes of adapting to the current times and its target audiences: A concert by someone like Elvis was very different than one by

---

7 Gabler, “Why We Shouldn’t do a Damn Thing about the Decline of Classical Music.”
Metallica or Maroon 5. Society and its favorite medium changed, and the most successful forms of entertainment changed as a result. This is why, when comparing the extramusical aspects of performances of pop music and those of classical ones, one finds some stark contrast. The style of performance and type of venue used for classical music have undergone few changes since the heyday of musicians like Mozart and Beethoven, and if anything, it could be argued that they have become even more conservative than they were back then.\(^8\) The styles of performance that included flamboyant outfits and fancy, gimmicky presentations from virtuosi like Paganini and Liszt became less utilized and were replaced by a more sober standard of performance.\(^9\) The greatest exceptions to this standard in current days have mostly been relegated to the occasional pop concerts (in which the repertoire is also altered to be “less Classical”) or isolated initiatives like “Symphony in Blue Jeans” among others, which aim to remove the formal feel of the performance.

Since the very purpose of pop music is to remain popular and relevant, and the artists involved in it make great efforts to achieve that purpose, a study of their techniques will be a great source for the research of ways to make classical music more attractive to larger audiences. In addition, studies in the area of media ecology are helpful in determining the factors that cause changes in society, and would provide an understanding of the process of adaptation that entertainment must undergo in order to remain popular. The expectation is that a combination of these elements could provide useful insight in the design of a classical recital that is geared towards attracting a designated audience.

Understanding the necessity to research audiences and adapt, the majority of the mainstream forms of entertainment like pop music use focus groups in order to establish what type of product will sell well with a designated target audience.\(^10\) These focus groups consist of a number of people of different backgrounds and ages that are gathered

---


together and exposed to different products, and are then asked to provide their feedback. The data gathered helps executives understand what product will fare well with a specific demographic and decide whether to market it to the intended audience. The use of focus groups is an example of the research that is being done when trying to reach audiences.

The purpose of this treatise is to use similar techniques to understand the circumstances of our contemporary audiences and to design a set of guidelines to help reach them through classical music. This will allow an expansion of classical music audiences beyond its current incidental target demographic. The latest research done by the League of Orchestras’ “Audience Demographic Research Review” points out that even though classical musicians are not necessarily aiming for a specific target demographic, they do have one, and an aging one at that.11 In order to try to reach outside of this audience group, rather than trying a variety of things to determine what works, I will be approaching the issue as scientifically as possible. This approach will consist of two main parts: research of the audiences and their circumstances including the entertainment that they currently consume and the practical application of this research in the design of a performance. Since many of these techniques will deal with the identification of the audience with the performers on stage, this treatise will focus on a chamber-sized setting, as the smaller number of performers and more intimate atmosphere will best facilitate this desired identification. The first part will be accomplished by looking at the studies done by different authors in media ecology in order to understand the impact that the evolution of communication technology has had in society on attention span, and as a consequence, on entertainment. The second part will be to use that information to understand the key to the success of pop music in order to learn how to make classical music more accessible to audience members untrained in the genre.

The expectation is the ability to combine the information attained through this research and use it to create a set of guidelines. The aim of these guidelines is to create a more engaging style of performance and a more attractive setting while still allowing for

---

the creative input of each individual performer. It is not the goal of this treatise to establish a rigid, step-by-step set of directions controlling every aspect of a performance but rather to provide information and guidance designed to help the success of a given classical performance.
CHAPTER TWO
MEDIA ECOLOGY AND ITS APPLICATIONS
IN THE MUSIC WORLD

For musicians and performers, the first step to reaching the current audiences is to understand the differences between the current social environment and that of classical music’s period of success. For that reason, the purpose of this chapter is multi-faceted: Learn what research tells us in regard to the characteristics of society itself, specifically how it has been affected by technology, and then look at what types of musical entertainment are successful with the modern audiences and why. Much has been said about audiences of the twenty-first century having a shorter attention span, but in order to deal with this issue, it is important to understand the reasons for this decrease in their capacity for concentration.\textsuperscript{12,13,14} There are studies that indicate that this shortening of the attention span may be linked to changes that are triggered by our environment but that affect us even as far as a physiological level. Author Nicholas Carr, who was interested in addressing the specific impact the internet has on our ability to sustain our concentration, wrote an article titled “The Web Shatters Focus, Rewires Brains” in which he points out: “When we go online, we enter an environment that promotes cursory reading, hurried and distracted thinking, and superficial learning. Even as the Internet grants us easy access to vast amounts of information, it is turning us into shallower thinkers, literally changing the structure of our brain.”\textsuperscript{15}

Although recent changes have been monumental, technological breakthroughs in communication have affected people and society through time. In fact, there is a science

\footnotesize
\begin{enumerate}
\item Carr, “The Web Shatters Focus, Rewires Brains.”
\end{enumerate}
devoted to the study of the changes in the way we transmit information and its impact on people and societies: media ecology. The term media ecology was first used by Neil Postman, but the concept was developed by Marshall McLuhan before that. McLuhan proposed the idea that technological development, when devoted to the transmission of information, influences every aspect of a society. Furthermore, he divided the major changes in the history of these developments and their impact on society in four epochs. Here is a brief description of each epoch compiled from McLuhan’s book and the work of Julia T. Wood.

1). The Tribal Epoch (beginning - 2000 B.C) is the time when the main means of communication was the spoken word. People interacted almost exclusively face to face, and a reaction to the passing of information was immediately received. Most societies relied on oral traditions to pass on their history and for both organization and entertainment purposes. According to McLuhan, the sense that was predominantly used by people depended on the main means of communication. In the case of the Tribal Epoch, hearing was that sense.

2). The Literate Epoch (2000 B.C – 1450 A.D) is the era where the introduction of the alphabet in writing gave people the ability to write down their thoughts and ideas. This, as a means of communication, signified that messages could be transmitted to other people without the need of being in the presence of one another. It also allowed for mass transmission of messages. The development of the written alphabet caused the rise of sight over hearing as the primary sense of this era. It also meant the ability to preserve a written message to re-read allowed for more accurate retransmission. This means of communication caused a restructure of the mind, as it required less use of memory and promoted more linear thinking (letter after letter, word after word).

3). The Print Epoch (1450 - 1850) started with the invention of Gutenberg’s printing press. This machine made it possible to print thousands of copies of a book or

---

document with comparatively much less cost and effort. This caused the grounds of cultural knowledge to be leveled; a much larger number of people gained access to culture and information distributed through writing. As a result, two opposing phenomena occurred: a unification of thought caused by the distribution of the same books or documents to thousands, and a separation of societies, because people could now read in the privacy of their own homes.

4). The Electronic Era (1850 - present) began with the development of long distance forms of communication. The telegraph was the first in a line of developments that shifted the sensorial prominence back to hearing, followed by the radio and later the television which integrated seeing and hearing. These technological advances changed society once again into what McLuhan called the “Global Village,” a worldwide community where any person can know what is happening across the globe at any time. It was a big change in society to have access to news and events almost immediately, and to be able to see the faces of the people involved. Even though we do not have McLuhan’s direct insight on the impact of the internet and portable devices in our society, other authors have, whether intentionally or not, continued his research into the twenty-first century.

One example of this type of research applied to the media technology of our time is the work of Nicholas Carr and his previously cited article in which he takes an in-depth look at the personal and physiological changes that are produced by communication in the human being. What McLuhan alluded to as shifting among prominently used senses can now be studied with the help of technology. Nicholas Carr cited a study conducted by UCLA professor Gary Small that reveals how certain areas of the brain are stimulated by the use of the internet, causing the brain to rewire in order to make progress in multitasking resulting in an increasingly shorter attention span. The ability to open several websites at once, augmented by social media and instant messaging that bombard people with incoming notifications, make a perfect combination for a constantly distracted focus that shifts between several tasks. On this subject, Carr writes:

The Net’s ability to monitor events and send out messages and notifications automatically is, of course, one of its great strengths as a communication
technology. We rely on that capability to personalize the workings of the system, to program the vast database to respond to our particular needs, interests, and desires. We want to be interrupted, because each interruption—email, tweet, instant message, RSS headline—brings us a valuable piece of information. To turn off these alerts is to risk feeling out of touch or even socially isolated. The stream of new information also plays to our natural tendency to overemphasize the immediate. We crave the new even when we know it’s trivial.

The article also cites studies done on the use of hyperlinks as a means of enhancing the transmission of information; what started as a way to connect articles to expand the research on a given subject resulted in a further dissipation of the focus of attention. Even when readers did not click or follow the hyperlinks, their understanding of the text was slower just by the temptation and distraction those hyperlinks represent.\footnote{Carr, “The Web Shatters Focus, Rewires Brains.”}

To link this research to the field of music performance one needs to consider how different means of communication have changed society and human beings themselves over time and how, because of these changes, music and entertainment have had to adjust in order to retain audiences’ attention. The competition in the field combined with technology and globalization have lead to efforts dedicated to pinpoint in detail what makes a given audience attracted to a certain type of music or presentation. The most successful music performers of our era are those that have a team devoted to study what appeals to a targeted audience and design every aspect of a performance in accordance with the results of those studies.\footnote{Before the Music Dies, directed by Andrew Shapter.}

McLuhan is often quoted for his phrase “the medium is the message/massage.”\footnote{Eric McLuhan, “Why is the title of the book 'The Medium is the Massage' and not 'The Medium is the Message'”? Accessed October 30, 2013, http://www.marshallmcluhan.com/common-questions/.'} He liked the subtle change of meaning that derived from the change of one letter, but in both cases it implied that the medium, the means of communication for a given message, had just as big an impact and was as important as the message itself. In the case of the word “message,” the meaning is that the vehicle for the message is what ultimately defines the message itself; when permuting to the word “massage” it hints at the fact that
the means by which we convey a message serve as a massage for the consciousness of the receiver and elicits a certain response. During his research, McLuhan also mentioned how the different means of communication and their evolutions impacted the forms of entertainment. Since entertainment is so closely related to and reliant upon communication, entertainers in all fields have had to adapt to whichever the most prominent sense of an epoch was as well as to the advantages and limitations of the means of communication of the time.

Just by looking at the limitations in communication of a given epoch, one could imagine the restrictions that would apply to the forms of entertainment of the time. For example, during the Tribal Epoch in which communication was restricted almost exclusively to face-to-face interactions, this limitation would make a specific type of performance available only to a small group of people. In the Literate Era, we could expect the addition of written entertainment for the sole purpose of reading and the expansion of audiences and time frames for performances, with less need for improvisation thanks to the added ability to script a performance. The Print Era would have allowed for a much larger distribution of entertainment both written and performed. In the case of music, it would have allowed for a piece of music to be performed by many different ensembles at any time, generating the circumstances for publishing companies to be created. The Electronic Era is the current focus, as the creation of digital communications is again greatly modifying the ways art and entertainment are consumed.

Neil Postman, author of the book Amusing Ourselves to Death, supported and further elaborated upon the ideas of McLuhan. He exemplified the notion that the medium holds a wealth of importance through a comparison of how a presidential campaign was designed before and after the creation of television. He described how the emphasis that was before placed on the written words of a candidate was shifted to how he came across on the television (a shift in senses from hearing to sight). Postman also proposed the notion that any information that is communicated through audiovisual means and is designed to draw attention (and increase ratings), intrinsically becomes entertainment. It was of particular interest to him how the news delivered through the
medium of television adjusted to this mold at the expense of seriousness and, sometimes, accuracy.\textsuperscript{22,23}

In terms of musical entertainment itself, the development of the “Global Village” (where information can be transmitted immediately to anywhere in the world) allowed for the creation of a pop star of international proportion. In other words, the ability to present a show or product to almost everyone in the world at once would mean a potential market that is much larger, and to exploit that potential it is necessary to produce a style of musical entertainer that appeals to a vast number of audiences around the world. When combining these observations by McLuhan with the study mentioned in Mr. Carr's article, it would seem that in order to create a form of entertainment that will be broad enough in its appeal to be pleasing to the greatest possible number of audience members during this Electronic Era, two elements would need to be addressed: it would have to cater to both sight and hearing as the main senses of the audience, and it would have to be divided into short units that reset the attention span.

Some of these theories are apparently practiced in the realm of pop music; some of the top-selling pop stars at a global level are produced or manufactured artists that have become increasingly pre-designed, sometimes at the expense of artistic originality. The meaning of the phrase “the medium is the message” seems to be well exemplified in the practices of some performers in the way that a song is delivered: The looks, moves, instrumentation, voice type, etc. are designed to fit their medium and have gained importance over the song (message) that is being delivered. This is in many cases expanded to the point where the message itself became an accessory designed just to fit its medium.\textsuperscript{24}

The 2006 documentary \textit{Before the Music Dies} directed by Andrew Shapter addresses the issue of musical originality and exemplifies through an exercise the way pop music has evolved into an industry that manufactures “hits” and “stars” through a careful process of study and design. In the documentary, forty-five-year-old song writer

\textsuperscript{23} Neil Postman, \textit{Amusing Ourselves to Death}, (New York, Penguin, 2006), 100-103.
\textsuperscript{24} \textit{Before the Music Dies}, Directed by Andrew Shapter.
Steve Poltz, who has written many hit songs for artists like Jewel among others, lends himself for an experiment to demonstrate the process that is sometimes used to create a pop star. He quickly improvises a simple catchy tune called “Momma is not Home” which is then sung and recorded by seventeen-year-old model Taylor Hannah. The recording is then processed and auto-tuned at the studio in order to compensate for the young model’s vocal shortcomings and later accompanied by a video that features Hannah performing in a seductive manner.

This documentary, which intends to raise awareness of the increasing lack of substance in the music we currently consume, provides an excellent example of an industry that appears to have embraced the ideas of McLuhan and has manipulated them to its own advantage. This example featuring Poltz and Hannah illustrates how the pop industry places such a great emphasis on the means by which a message is delivered. While this may seem uninspiring and a manipulative application of the principles of media ecology, it is worth noting the great success achieved through this means in capturing the attention of voluminous audiences.

The idea that the messenger or the medium might be more important than the message itself is a concept that represents a stark contrast with the ideology of a great number of classical musicians. Many musicians who are devoted to their art often work hard as vehicles of music in an attempt to stay out of the way in order to convey as clearly as possible the intentions and style of the composer. They intend to achieve greatness by bringing the attention of their audience to the music they play, not themselves. The famous violinist Gidon Kremer wrote a letter to the director of the Verbier Festival when withdrawing from the 2013 gathering explaining that the type of mindset that is aimed at pleasing audiences did not create an environment in which he wanted to participate:

Having all my life served music and composers, a repertoire which is established as “classic” and one which, for decades I had to fight for to be heard, I now feel that I need to make a choice. I simply do not want any more to be part of “parties for the sake of parties. (…) I simply do not want to breathe the air, which is filled by sensationalism and distorted values. Let's admit – all of us have something to
do with the poisonous development of our music world, in which “stars” count more than creativity, ratings more than genuine talent, numbers more than sounds. (...) This is not anymore “my” time. I leave it to those who believe in it, be it the audiences or the new breed of performers, who have overwhelming capacities to please crowds, but who are often themselves quite EMPTY and artistically lost, chasing a hunger for recognition over ability.  

One could argue that this letter by Mr. Kremer further illustrates the theories of McLuhan. He believes the message needs to be the most important thing being passed on and feels out of place in an era where the predominance of an audiovisual medium is making the traditional setting of classical music less appealing to bigger audiences, slowly allowing for more consideration to other aspects of a performance.

There have been a few different approaches in the search of ways to attract larger, more diverse audiences on the part of classically trained musicians. Some performers have made strides in the inclusion of classical string instruments in pop and rock music while others have found success within the classical music scene by fulfilling a more pop star-like role in their careers. Examples of the first category include ensembles like Apocalyptica, 2Cellos, Bond and Vanessa Mae. These performers have found success by performing rock and pop music on classical instruments. They often re-arranged or wrote music that had already proven popular with a current audience demographic and then created an image that suited that environment. In the case of the cello quartet Apocalyptica, which performs covers of bands like Metallica or music of the same style, the focus is placed on the audience of heavy metal, and the presentation is planned accordingly. They adopted a stereotypical “metal” look of long hair, exclusively black clothing (often shirtless), pale makeup with black around the eyes, and tattoos that complement the “dark gothic” stage setting and imagery of their albums. They then added gimmicks to their performing style like head banging while playing and violent moves on stage to solidify their product.  

A second, even more straight-forward example is the

---

string quartet Bond, which was created by music producer Mike Batt and promoter Mel Bush on the simple premise of assembling a quartet of beautiful girls who could play string instruments well. They hired composers\(^{27}\) to write some techno-based tunes for the group, a musical style that would be played at a fashion show or club, the attendees of which was their target audience.

The second category, the one that still relies on their traditional classical repertoire as their message, is comprised of young soloists that innately have an image that is fresh, cool, and ultimately “pop-like” in terms of the presentation of their performance. These stars of the classical world put less emphasis on the presentation than those of the first category by not altering the staging, lighting, or outfits, but still creating their presentation in a way that fulfills the expectations of the modern classical audiences. Many of the stars of the classical music scene today are not only top level performers of their instruments, but they are also attractive, charismatic performers with a theatrical sense and a capacity to relate to their audiences outside of their field.\(^{28,29}\)

This is somewhat unlike the great masters of the twentieth century like Jascha Heifetz, Janos Starker, Mstislav Rostropovich, David Oistrakh and many others who chose to have very expressive playing and show their virtuosic technique with a veil of sobriety. These masters often lead reserved personal lives and kept an image of eccentric personalities whose devotion to their art was so absolute as to have had taken over every other aspect of their lives. In contrast, some of the most famous soloists of today, the likes of Julia Fischer, Hilary Hahn, Joshua Bell and Daniel Muller-Schott among many others, have adopted an image that resembles that of a pop star. There are articles like “Hilary Hahn: Doing it Right” and “Joshua Bell: Pop Star or Classical Artist?” that address the sometimes extramusical factors that have made some of these artists as successful as they are. These attractive, talented musicians work within the standard realm of classical performances, but in addition to their playing they bring their good looks and charisma. They are also more theatrical and expressive in their demeanor while playing, both


physically and in their facial expression, which gives a sense of greater personal
involvement. As part of their adaptation to the current times, they also make use of
technology to keep an off-stage connection with their audiences. Most of them maintain a
personal website and a regularly updated presence in some form of social media, like
YouTube channels, Facebook, or Twitter. Often these blog entries or “status updates”
reflect facts of their personal lives that help them come across as relatable, average guys
and girls. This would make sense in an electronic age where visual stimuli and
fragmented, superficial thinking are the main characteristics derived from technology in
communication. In other words, if people are increasingly replacing their long-term
memory and deep thinking with constant reminders and small units of information, then it
becomes increasingly important for anyone who wants to be kept in mind by their
audiences to have a presence in this visual environment filled with "notifications."

After this analysis of a few different types of commercially successful musical
products, we can see that they have something in common: all of them place significant
attention to the medium in which their message is being delivered. Furthermore, numbers
seem to indicate that the more the product is suited for aesthetical enhancements through
the audiovisual medium, the more it sells. For example: In January of 2010, Hilary Hahn
made a television appearance on “The Tonight Show” to promote her CD “Bach: Violin
and Voice.” That week, the charismatic performer hit number one on the Billboard Chart
of traditional classical music with 1,000 album sales and downloads. By comparison, in
February of that year Lady Gaga, who is famously known for her extremely forward
sense of fashion and outrageous videos, sold over 1,000,000 copies of her album “The
Fame Monster.” Furthermore, the string quartet Bond, an example of the second
category, proudly advertises itself as the “best selling string quartet in the history of the
music industry.”

---

30 Carr, “The Web Shatters Focus, Rewires Brains.”
31 Midgette, Anne, "Classical artists such as Hilary Hahn chart big on Billboard with little sales," accessed
32 "Searchable Database-Lady Gaga," accessed October 30, 2013,
By studying the environment in which the modern audiences exist and the musical entertainment that appeals to them, we can see a direct correlation between these aspects. If a musical product has a greater capability for adaptation to its audiovisual medium, then it also holds a greater potential for marketability. As the overall purpose of this treatise is to generate a set of guidelines to help make a classical performance more appealing to the non-trained audiences, the next step will be to find a way of using this research to help develop those guidelines.
CHAPTER THREE
THEATRICAL INTERPRETATION

After researching the state and tendencies of current audiences from the perspective of a classical musician, the next step is to find a way to use the results of this study to the genre’s advantage. It seems that the idea of diverting attention away from the music to place it instead in the environment around it is a rather cynical proposition. The intention of this chapter is to propose a new, more comprehensive approach to the interpretation of music.

Through the study of performers, especially in other genres, it was established that the majority of successful artists devote attention to every aspect of their show with the objective of providing a performance with mass appeal. In order to make that possible, it is necessary to establish a new order of priorities in regard to the goal of a performance. The new top priority has to be to communicate with the audience and to make sure that the message in the performance is clear to the public at every moment. Personal satisfaction with the level of the execution should not take precedence over the audience’s perception of it. It is the natural tendency of the profession and art to want to play as correctly as possible, and while this is extremely important, the attention that is put into it should not become an obstacle in achieving the aforementioned first goal of communicating a clear message.

The concept of “theatrical performance” stems from that idea. When a performer gets up on a stage, he or she immediately becomes an audiovisual means of communication. Unless you requested your audience to close their eyes, it is not possible to detach the “audio” from the “visual.” This means that anything that is not being used to convey the message becomes a distraction that takes attention away from it. A reverse example of this phenomenon is an art form like the circus. In its case, the most emphasis used to be placed on the visual aspect when the audiences were marveled by the skills of the acrobats that participated in it. In the mid 1980’s, the Cirque du Soleil would change the face of North American circus forever. This circus presented "themed productions with strong circus-type acts that are steeped in theatricality, complemented by
exceptionally high production values, incredible costumery, high-tech lighting, and an original score played on a rock concert-quality sound system." These changes allowed the company to achieve a success that helped it "boast more than a dozen traveling units and operate stationary productions in Orlando, Tokyo, New York, and Las Vegas."  

In his article “The sound of music…is irrelevant” for the Ars Technica online magazine, John Timmer cites a study conducted by Chia-Jung Tsay that indicates the importance of the visual aspects specifically in classical music. The subjects involved in the study were shown clips of a classical music competition and asked to predict the winner. In order to do so, they could request audio only or video only clips, or to pay a small sum to get the full clip. Interestingly, the people that chose the video only clips were by far the most accurate with a 46% success rate, versus a 35% success rate for the people with the full clip, and a 29% success rate for the ones with the audio only. While the title of the article may seem rather bold, and soundless performances would likely not work at all, this study should be at least serve as an indication of the degree of importance of the visual aspects that audiences perceive during a concert.

The study by Chia-Jung Tsay exemplifies the importance of the body language of a music performer. Musically speaking, even if the technical challenges were overcome and the musical phrasing was accurate, these two aspects (especially the latter) can sometimes be overlooked by audiences that can be distracted by the body language of the performer, in which case the intended expressive effect is lost. Here is an example to think about in regard to successful performances: When people attend a rock or a pop concert, they are generally unconcerned with the worries that come from technical challenges. Rather, they go to see a band and experience their show. The bands in these types of shows appear to always be completely involved with the music, propelled by an adrenaline rush and seemingly enjoying themselves on stage as much as the audience is around them. This may involve jumping around the stage, dancing, and conveying an array of emotions like nostalgia, romance, anger or whatever the mood of the songs they are playing during the stretch of one evening. As one may imagine, this type of

---

performance cannot be achieved simply by naturally occurring inspiration; these performances take place during tours in which the same concert is played over and over again on consecutive days, sometimes for months at a time. In addition, whether singing, playing instruments, or performing carefully rehearsed dance moves, the concerns over technical execution are very much still present.

Here is an illustration of these techniques at work: Throughout my career I had the unique opportunity of sharing the stage as a backup musician with three artists of totally different genres, all three artists performing for sell-out crowds. Giora Feidman, clarinet soloist and member of the Israeli Philharmonic; Ian Anderson, former member of the famous band Jethro Tull; and Carlos Galvan, famous solo bandoneonist of the Buenos Aires tango scene were the artists. Of course, as in any concert tour, in every instance our performances were repeated on consecutive days due to high public demand, which led me to the following discovery: Every single one of these performers had some plotted “gimmicks” to amuse the audience and create a relaxed atmosphere. Whether it was a planted cell phone ringing in the audience followed by several jokes by Mr. Feidman, a pretend flute malfunction in the case of Mr. Anderson, or a moment to suddenly stop playing and praise a solo by a backup player on the part of Mr. Galvan, it became clear they all used these creative tricks as a way to lighten the mood and get the audience “on their side.”

So the question is this: How do they produce those performances time and time again, ostensibly putting aside all the difficulties of nerves, personal mood, or tiredness. To shed some light on the matter, and hopefully find an artistically fulfilling adaptation of the techniques, I will look at an art form that relies completely on the ability to overcome these issues: theater. In theater, to convey emotions and tell a story is even more important than in any other form of performance. This is why it is even truer in its case that if the audience were to notice the personal affects of an actor that are unrelated to the emotions of the character he or she is portraying, the effect would immediately be lost. Since theater has been dealing with the issues of how to communicate emotions and stories for as long as it has existed, it constitutes a unique source of tools that can help in achieving this goal of communication.
The good news about this idea of utilizing theatrical techniques to improve a musical performance is that the issue at hand is not as cynical as it may have sounded thus far. When taking into account the aforementioned issues in regard to how to reach bigger audiences, the idea of “acting” a performance may seem gimmicky or fake, but after a deeper look at what it involves, the notion becomes more appealing. Konstantin Stanislavsky (1863-1938), an actor and director famous for developing a system of acting that has served as the basis for the majority of the great masters that came after him, said on the subject of reaching audiences through a realistic theatrical interpretation:

(…) actors of genius (…) stand out from the rest of the actors in the play by the special rhythmic harmony of every part they perform and by the amazing freedom of all their physical and psychological actions. They break through the walls of the stage conventions, annihilate the distance that separates from the auditorium, and find their way straight to the hearts of the audience, carrying the spectator along with them right into the life of each instant of time during which they are creatively active on the stage, just because they have grasped the true nature of the passions they are portraying; they do it because they have succeeded, by means of the action of their artistic intuition which is so indivisibly linked with their genius, in bringing out the true value of each word, which they never fling at the spectator unless it is simultaneously expressed in true and correct physical action.⁶

From the point of view of musicians, it is possible to recognize in this quote some elements that are similar to our own ideas of artistic interpretation. Just as Stanislavsky admired actors of genius, classical musicians look up to the great artists of their field that seem to have found clarity, ease, and understanding in their musical interpretations and who are able to use that to reach the hearts of their audiences and carry them along throughout a whole concert. None of these concepts are really new to the average trained classical musician except for one: the idea that “they never fling a word (or in the case of a musician, a note) at the spectator unless it is simultaneously expressed in true and correct physical action.” The obvious question that this proposition raises, both in the

---

case of an actor and especially in that of a musician is: What constitutes “true and correct physical action?”

It is in the process of answering this question that one will find some extra help with the issue of both being and appearing committed to the performances regardless of the situation. Towards the end of his career, between 1934 and 1938, Stanislavsky devised a compilation of techniques in order to help an actor become able to invoke believable emotions; this compilation became known as the Stanislavsky System, and its main component is what he called the “Method of physical actions.” This method proposes the idea that one can use an action or a sequence of actions in order to trigger specific emotions within oneself, in order to be able to portray them in front of an audience. This stems from the notion that emotions come from the unconscious and they cannot in any other way be brought to the consciousness on command, but that by mapping a series of actions, an actor can incite his own emotions to surface at the time that they are needed. The goal of this chapter is to provide an insight into this method and to adapt it, when necessary, to make a useful tool for the musician.

This method designed by Stanislavsky is divided in sections, the order of which varies sometimes depending on the interpretation or skill set of the actor, or in this case musician. The sections or aspects that could be applied to music performance are the Objective and Superobjective, the Magic If, Imagination and Subtext. Following is a brief description of each one of those items compiled from the works of Stanislavsky himself, John Perry and Perviz Sawosky, and their adaptation into music performance.

**Objective and Superobjective**

Generally, one of the first things to do according to this method is to establish the Objective of the character in a given Unit and then the overall Superobjective in the play. Units, as Stanislavsky called them, are the sections of a scene that contain one specific objective. The objective established for each unit needs to derive from the question

---

38 Stanislavsky, *On the art of the Stage*, 92-94.
“What do I want?” and from answering that question by means of an active verb, creating the need for action. In addition, the action needs to be directed to another person in order to produce an interaction with him, so there has to be an intention and a desired effect produced. The Superobjective is the overarching goal of the character in a play. When thinking of one's character within the plotline, it is necessary to establish his or her final Superobjective and how all the Objectives of every Unit tie together in order to achieve it.

It may seem like a challenging task to apply these principles outside of theater, but they are in fact relevant to the field of music. Musicians are often encouraged to think of a “plotline” or a direction that they want to go within a piece, a movement of a piece, or a phrase; each of these elements could be paralleled to a play, a scene or a Unit. Depending on the work or the ensemble, they may have more or less access to “dialogue” between characters on stage, and based on that they can choose to direct their Objective and consequential action to one of the other musicians on stage or directly to the audience. For example, when thinking of the opening phrase of a piece musician should ask himself: What do I want? The answer should be an active verb, in this case, directed towards the audience. I want perhaps to enchant them, to startle them, or to confuse them. If instead I established a dialogue with a second instrument (or character) on stage, then the answer could be directed towards them in order to enhance the feeling of interaction between performers. That question and its answer are the elements that will affect not only the execution of that phrase but also the accompanying physical action.

After establishing the Objective, Stanislavsky indicated a required analysis of the action. This analysis is achieved by answering questions as the character: What do I do? Why do I do it? The purpose of this analysis is to establish what the actions are that the character should take in order to achieve his or her goal.

Magic If

Another section of the method has to do with what Stanislavsky called the “Magic If.” The purpose of this Magic If is to provide a realistic portrayal of the character in his or her situation that generates the illusion of truth on stage or “scenic truth.” Since an actor does not actually believe that the events of a play are real, this tool allows him or
her to put themselves in the place of their character. The way to achieve this is by asking questions like: What would I do if I were in the situation of my character? What would my character do if the circumstances were different? This way, an actor can achieve a greater understanding and involvement and a more “truthful” performance. In the case of the application of this technique to a music performance, the Magic If can be used in a different aspect of the presentation. As will be addressed in the next chapter of this treatise, when dealing with shaping the program, one may sometimes (depending on the type of performance) act as designer of his or her own character or plotline. This means that one may determine that a certain piece of music has an attached meaning of choice, and may also determine that the whole program has an attached theme or plot. In either case, by the time one goes on stage there will be a plan of action and a character that will be best suited to the plotline. It is in order to make this character appear real that one should ask the questions of the Magic If. An example of this application will be best understood later on when addressed in combination with the issue of plotting of a program which involves the design of a character and a story.

**Imagination and Subtext**

The next aspects that the Stanislavsky System contemplates are the issues of imagination and subtext. Stanislavsky emphasized that since there is no such thing as reality on stage, imagination is a key ability in order to achieve “theatrical realism.” Imagination is necessary throughout all the steps of the system but is especially critical when dealing with subtext. Subtext is the term that refers to the intentions that exist under the dialogue of a scene and that are conveyed through the nuances in facial expression, voice inflection, body language, and action. Again, if the musical equivalent of the written dialogue in a play is the written notes and dynamics of a piece of music, then the subtext one would add as interpreter is the musical phrasing, body language, facial expression, and direction to whom each line is addressed. As in theater, there is prime importance in the use of the imagination to make situational decisions in regard to this subtext.
Relaxation

Stanislavsky thought that relaxation was an essential part of the preparation for an effective performance. He believed that only when an actor is totally relaxed can a convincing performance be achieved. This is a subject that is widely addressed throughout musical training on any instrument, and many techniques are used to achieve it. There is an aspect of relaxation that is still worth mentioning in this specific case, and it has to do with achieving mental and expressive relaxation. This means to be able to clear the mind of concerns related to the technical aspects of the performance and allowing it to focus on the expressive side of it. This begins with physical and muscular relaxation, but it does not end there. In the realm of performance, physical relaxation alone can be impressive from a technical standpoint (as when someone seems to overcome difficult passages of a piece with ease), but it is only through mental relaxation and focus that expressiveness can be achieved. If one only pays attention to the relaxation of the muscles, then there is a risk for a static, low energy performance with little expressiveness. A music performer has to be able to portray all kinds of emotions on stage and that can only happen through focus and some degree of mental relaxation because the tension and concern over the technical aspects can be hard to conceal.

Concentration

This is an area of preparation that is common to all the performing arts. Stanislavsky, just like most performers, was aware of the distraction produced by a live audience and the negative effects this could have on the ability to perform. He did not find a viable solution in ignoring the audience altogether, as he considered it to be an active part of the creative process. His approach to dealing with this issue was to reeducate the performer to realize that the same actions he could do in rehearsal, he could do in front of an audience through what he called the “circles of concentration.” These circles are imaginary areas surrounding the actor or performer where all of his or her focus should be. Depending on the circumstances of the scene, these circles could be of different sizes, from the area immediately around oneself to involving all the other actors that are interacting in the scene. This process is no different for a musician on stage: In
the case of a music performance, these circles would also vary to adjust to the ensemble that is performing and where the attention needs to be placed at a given time.

Next, Stanislavsky encouraged actors to train their ability to sustain both external and inner concentration. At all times, attention should be focused on the objects and actors with whom one is interacting and in the motivation and objectives of the character that was designed through the previous steps.

**Tempo-rhythm**

This is an area of the actor’s preparation in which Stanislavsky himself drew parallels to music. He used the terms tempo and rhythm to refer to the relation between the internal emotions and their outward physical expression. In his book *On the art of the stage*, he expressed an interest in sharing his experience and applying it to opera. He likely decided to do this as he found himself frustrated by the lack of attention paid by singers to the issue of the tempo-rhythm relation between internal emotions and the physical actions to express them. In his book *Building a Character* he makes mention of the absence of harmony that occurs when singers “sing in a certain rhythm, walk in another, move their arms in a third, and live their emotions in a fourth.” In addition, Stanislavsky drew comparisons between the different kinds of musical articulations and the actions and speech of an actor. Much like in music where one should aim for the cleanest possible playing, even though Stanislavsky focused on a sense of natural ease and expression to any character on stage, he also had little tolerance for actors whose speech was difficult to understand.

After taking a look at the techniques devised by Stanislavsky, we can see that the art of theater places a great deal of importance on creating a plan of emotions and the accompanying physical actions to both trigger them and express them. Even when we see actors on stage perform their actions and play their parts with natural ease and expressiveness, this does not mean that inspiration has happened to come to them at the right time and place. This level of expressive performance is instead the result of a very rigorous process of preparation and design combined with a largely developed capacity for relaxation and concentration. These aspects that we ordinarily put into practice for the

---

41 Stanislavsky, *On the art of the Stage*, 91.
musical and technical preparation of our repertoire also need to be applied to the emotions and physical expression during a musical performance.

In a theatrical performance applied to music, it is ideal to introduce most of the pieces of the repertoire by means of a brief speech. The reason for this is that it would make it easier to convey the plot to the audience in an otherwise wordless piece. When doing this, the role of the central character or characters will be divided into two main areas, both of which will have particular types of interactions with the audience. During the playing parts of the performance, this interaction will more likely resemble that of a character in a play, exchanging lines with the other characters on stage while “feeling” the presence of the audience and carrying them to their world of emotions. During the talking parts, the interaction will resemble more that of a stand-up performer, who interacts with the audience directly. It is important to remain in character during these times, as these speeches will set the mood for the upcoming piece and tell the story that the audience is supposed to be able to imagine and follow during the performance.

In the *Encyclopedia of Acting Techniques*, John Perry provides a few techniques in order to achieve a greater degree of comfort during these times. His ideas of how to talk to the audience go along the lines of Stanislavsky’s concept of “stage truth.” It states that one should “relate to them (the audience) truthfully as characters of the play,” by talking to them while remaining in character. He also offers a solution to the problem of where to direct our speech in terms of space through a technique called “sectoring.” This entails selecting a small number of spectators in separated areas of the audience and making occasional eye contact with them. The people around them will perceive the attention is being directed to them, and this creates a sense of involvement for everyone in the room.\(^{42}\)

Lastly, Perry points out that it is important to remember during any of these instances of a performance that “the audience is your mirror.” By that he means that the audience will be inclined to feel however you are feeling. He writes on the subject:

---

When you are on stage, the audience mirrors your feelings. If you are confident, so are they; if you are embarrassed, so are they; if you think you are awful, you are.

It is for this reason that it is critically important to care for every aspect when it comes to a performance, especially in regard to creating a comfortable dynamic with the audience. He then adds:

The audience needs to be safe, and held in the play’s world by the actor. It has no interest whatever in the actor’s difficulties, or in the actor’s mistakes (…)  

(…)Imagine always that your relationship with your audience is adult to adult. It will not protect you, like a parent, but neither will it question your right to stand on the stage, unless you do.⁴³

These affirmations about theater coincide with the observations made about successful performances in most musical genres. When applied correctly, the theatrical aspects in addition to the performance contribute to the ease and excitement of the audience. The feeling of confidence and involvement that is conveyed and then mirrored by the spectators makes it possible to express an array of emotions and stories in a more convincing manner, creating the sought-after “stage truth.” In addition, this aligns with the idea that for contemporary audiences it is necessary to provide an audiovisual experience in order to more effectively capture and maintain their attention.

⁴³ Perry, Encyclopedia of Acting Techniques, 105.
CHAPTER FOUR
PROGRAMMING A RECITAL

Having addressed the issues of communicating with the audience in performance and the importance of a well-rounded combination of audiovisual means in music playing, acting and stage setting, it is now necessary to turn attention to the programming of the concert or recital. This chapter will focus on analyzing the techniques and strategies in programming that are used in successful concerts in other genres and adapting them to classical music. There are sources that delve into the subject of programming a classical or orchestral “pops” concert, but when it comes to the programming of a rock or pop concert, it is a different story. For that reason observation becomes the only real source of understanding the techniques employed in programming concerts in these genres. Having achieved an understanding of the techniques used in these other genres, I will focus on their application to a solo or chamber-sized recital, as the smaller number of performers on stage will facilitate parallels and translate some of these tools to the classical realm. While large-sized ensembles have advantages in delivering thrill and a more imposing presence on stage, they also present different challenges in regard to repertoire and identification with the audience. In terms of communicating feelings theatrically, a chamber setting makes it easier to generate a sense of intimacy with the audience that allows for a more personal connection. If used correctly, this connection can lead to a degree of identification with and sympathy for the characters on stage and cause the audience to be more engaged in the performance. It is for these reasons that this chapter will focus on understanding the methods of rock and pop music and translating them into a chamber recital-style setting.

When working on designing a program, it is important to keep in mind the same guidelines that apply to the issue of theatrical performance. The objective of the performance is to engage the audience and communicate stories and emotions, and I have found that in order to do so one needs to create characters. The program of the concert then becomes the plotline of the play and each piece in it, a scene. According to the studies in media ecology and the research regarding attention span, it would be safest to
aim for shorter separated units or scenes in order to capture and sustain the audience’s attention.

There is an initiative called Classical Revolution\(^44\) that is devoted to bringing classical music to people at unconventional venues like bars and restaurants. This initiative has found success in several cities of the United States and Europe, drawing enough attention to have articles about it published in newspapers like the \textit{New York Times} and \textit{Houston Chronicle}, among others. In an interview I had with Sarah Robinson from the Classical Revolution Los Angeles chapter on January 26, 2013\(^45\), she revealed that some of the techniques her group uses to grab an audience’s attentions include playing isolated movements of works and talking between them, focusing on making the message of their speech either touching or funny. The Classical Revolution initiative started in San Francisco while experimenting with the idea of casually hosting chamber music “readings” at a bar and studying the reaction of the attendees. The techniques in programming that Ms. Robinson and her group in Los Angeles use in their show are the result of their observations of the audiences’ reactions. In the process of building an audience base, they found success through the emphasis on shorter units by playing isolated movements of pieces and by generating the sense of personal involvement with the music. These results coincide with the research on attention span and the approach used in theater to provide further support and make an even stronger case for the application of these techniques.

In order to build on the basic principles of character design, it is important to further understand some of the techniques used by the musicians of popular genres when they create their concert programs. To gain this understanding, the approach used in this chapter will be to study three notably successful concert tours by different artists and to look at the programming techniques applied in them. Through this type of observation it is possible to understand the elements that make these concerts successful. In the case of a performance designed through this method, there is a very close relationship between character development and programming as one will be creating both. It is for this reason

that this study of the programming will be focusing not only on the flow of the performance but also on the character developed by (or for) a given artist and how this character is used in the creation of the program.

The concerts selected for this study are U2’s “360° Tour,” Justin Timberlake’s “FutureSex/LoveSounds Tour,” and Britney Spears’ “Oops…I did it again Tour.” All three of these concerts were among the top grossing tours of their respective years, with U2’s 360 Tour being the highest grossing concert tour of all time.\(^{46}\) In order to be able to compare them and to draw patterns used in the programming, I will create a list with the songs performed, their key, rhythmic type scaled in slow, neutral, and fast (with variations or combinations of those categories), and a brief summary of the meaning and/or mood of the song. This will allow insight into the programming technique employed according to the style of each of the performers.

Here is a set list commonly used by U2 during its “360 Tour”:

- “Space Oddity” (David Bowie song) played as a recording during the introduction and arrival of the band on stage.
- “Even Better than the Real Thing” key of A, neutral tempo, a love song of regretful mood, asking for one more chance (Remix version).
- “The Fly” key of E, fast tempo, this has a dark mood and a theme of dissatisfaction.
- “Mysterious Ways” key of A, neutral tempo, upbeat mood, reflective and optimistic.
- “Until the End of the World” key of B minor, neutral tempo, dark mood, theme of regret after breaking someone’s heart.
- “Out of Control” key of D, fast tempo and upbeat, few lyrics, about being eighteen and the situations that escape his control.

---

• “Get on Your Boots” key of G, fast tempo and upbeat character, trivial theme, about ignoring bad things and being sexy with a girl.
• “I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For” key of G, slower tempo, reflective and intense mood, searching for satisfaction in life (with "The Promised Land" snippet).
• “Stay (Faraway, So Close!)” key of E, slower and calm tempo, sad mood, about a friendship with someone and the impossibility of a relationship.
• “Beautiful Day” key of A, fast tempo and upbeat mood, intensely optimistic (with "Space Oddity" snippet).
• “Elevation” key of E, fast tempo and upbeat, not lighthearted but rather intense.
• “Pride (In The Name of Love)” key of B, faster upbeat tempo, intense theme, tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
• “Miss Sarajevo” key of G minor, slow tempo and heavy mood, dedicated to a pageant winner in Sarajevo during a siege.
• “Zooropa” key of A, slower neutral with a faster section at the end, encouraging the union of Europe and using the metaphor of the zoo to express the diversity in the continent.
• “City of Blinding Lights” key of A, fast tempo and upbeat character, nostalgic about the innocence that is eventually lost as a person ages (with "My Kind Of Town" snippet).
• “Vertigo” key of A, fast tempo and upbeat character; optimistic, free and energetic.
• “I'll Go Crazy If I Don't Go Crazy Tonight” key of C, faster tempo and energetic, fun mood.
• “Sunday Bloody Sunday” key of B minor, neutral tempo, angry and sad, written to commemorate Dublin’s “Bloody Sunday.”
• “Scarlet” key of E, slow tempo, reflective, ponders the question “Does God need a salesman?”
• “Walk On” key of D minor, neutral tempo, heavy mood, dedicated to the leader of Burma and her struggles to free her country (with "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" snippet).
• Encore:
• “One” key of A minor, slow tempo, about the people of Germany unifying once again after the fall of the Berlin wall.
• “Where the Streets Have No Name” key of D, faster tempo, intense mood, as an impression that Bono (leader of the band) had after visiting Ethiopia (with "Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow" snippet).
• Encore 2:
• “Hold Me, Thrill Me, Kiss Me, Kill Me” faster tempo, exciting, deals with the struggles and responsibilities of being famous (with "My Kind Of Town" snippet).
• “With or Without You” key of G, slower tempo, big hit, about Bono giving himself completely to the band and its audience.
• Moment of Surrender” key of A minor, slower tempo, about realizing all the things that one has done and surrendering to a higher authority, possibly God (with "One Tree Hill" snippet).  

In order to understand how the aspects of the concert program are covered, it is necessary to know the specific character of Bono and how it is used throughout the plotline. U2 is an exciting band, but not just in the “fun” sense of excitement. Their show is full of thrilling effects, set on a stage in the middle of the crowd (hence the 360° name), and with plenty of lighting ornamentation and spectacle. The excitement generally comes from intensity rather than lighthearted fun. Bono is well known as an activist who devotes most of his time to addressing different problems of the world in developing nations and collaborating with the United Nations. That is his character, and that is the motivation of his character throughout the story or stories told throughout U2’s concert. The plotline then deals with his role as a humanitarian combined with his personal life and profession.

When I talk about “creating a character,” it doesn’t mean that it has to be created from scratch. There are different ways to approach the creation of a plotline and a character, and those will depend on the goal that one is trying to achieve. Even if the character is largely based on one's own personality, it needs to still be a character, or it would otherwise be impossible to go on stage time and time again and deliver the same type of performance. Having said that, basing the character to some extent on one's own personality would naturally make it easier to answer the questions related to the Stanislavsky System. In the case of U2, even though Bono and the other members of the band write their own songs and are in fact involved in humanitarian matters, it would be unreasonable to expect them to deliver the same emotional performance for every show they give just by the feelings they have. When we look at other artists, we will see examples of characters created from the ground up.

The two most relevant aspects of designing a program like this are making the storyline consistent with the character and observing an alternation of moods in order to create a seamless experience that grabs and sustains the audience’s attention. In the case of U2, and since they write their songs based on their personal experiences, the consistency in the storyline becomes a little easier to achieve.

This concert of the 360° Tour can be divided into sections, each of which is assembled to convey a certain emotion or series of emotions. The first section starts with a song of neutral tempo and a love theme with a regretful mood. The song “The Fly” follows, increasing the intensity with a theme of dissatisfaction on a faster beat but a darker mood. “Mysterious Ways” then slows this progression by taking a step back, with a neutral tempo, more relaxed rhythm, and optimistic mood. The song “Until the End of the World” closes the first section, returns to a neutral type of rhythm and sadder mood and continues the theme of regret over breaking someone’s heart.

The next section is comprised of four songs that are to provide extreme contrast in moods: “Out of Control” and “Get on Your Boots” are happy and lighthearted songs that would get an audience excited, and they provide the first “break” during the concert in terms of intensity of mood. Following those two, “I Still Haven’t Found What I’m Looking For” and “Stay” are, in contrast, blatantly sad, with slow tempi that create a
reflective atmosphere and a sense of more personal connection between the artists and the audience.

The third section, which is comprised of the songs “Beautiful Day,” “Elevation,” “Pride,” “Miss Sarajevo,” “Zooropa,” and “City of Blinding Lights,” is a particularly well-assembled section of the concert in terms of the programming goals which were previously set. The first two songs are intensely upbeat and optimistic major hits in preparation for a more politically centered part of the concert. The song “Pride” acts as a segue, as it is another well-known, intense, and entertaining song that has a political message, as the concert moves into a sadder mood to show some of the world’s political problems through “Miss Sarajevo” and “Zooropa.” The section ends with “The City of Blinding Lights” which, with its loss of innocence theme, serves as a suitable reaction to the themes of the songs right before it.

After this section, the second “break” takes place which is also two songs in length. “Vertigo” and “I’ll Go Crazy if I Don’t Go Crazy Tonight” once again provide a time for more lighthearted fun before heading into the final section of the concert’s main set which is heavily loaded with political message. This last section, consisting of the songs “Sunday Bloody Sunday,” “Scarlet,” and “Walk On”, is of reflective nature and includes very clear messages that are emotionally loaded with tempi that oscillate between neutral and slow.

The band comes back for the first encore in the same vein as they finished the main set. The two songs used during this encore provide variety by being of contrasting style, and at the same time they continue the theme of political message and overall awareness.

The second encore kicks off in a very different style, with an overall theme of personal revelation in which the songs are meant to create emotional identification between the band (specifically Bono) and the audience. In terms of alternation of musical styles, the song “Hold Me, Thrill Me, Kiss Me, Kill Me” provides the last moment of upbeat energy before the final farewell songs of the evening which are of reflective and spiritual tone.

This is one possible view of the strategy employed in terms of program organization, but it points at elements that would draw the attention of U2’s audience.
The set list of this concert has defined themes and moods, and it alternates them in a way that would not allow to have too much of the same at any moment. In terms of rhythm and moods, it allows for measured sections devoted to a specific type of emotion and it alternates them enough so as to not become monotonous at any point. The same is true in regard to the themes addressed by the different songs; they tell stories that are closely related to the characters on stage while mixing them with lighthearted sections that generate excitement. Lastly, U2 uses a very limited number of closely related keys that unify the performance; characteristically, they often use major keys during sad-themed songs as if they were trying to keep an underlying positive attitude in face of the tough realities.

In the search for a contrasting style with that of U2’s, consider the concert tour made by pop star Justin Timberlake. His 2007 concert tour “FutureSex/LoveSounds” was the third highest grossing of its year\(^49\). Here is the set list he used during this tour:

- Opening Conversation

- "FutureSex/LoveSound" key of A, slower neutral tempo, introductory nature, has a whisper quality and almost no melody, sexual theme.

- "Like I Love You" key of B minor, faster tempo and similar character, description of a girl being attracted to him in a dance club.

- "Let Me Talk to You" (Prelude)/"My Love" key of E minor, slow tempo but rhythmical in nature, declaration of love and an invitation to start a relationship.

- "Señorita" key of B, slower neutral tempo, about declaring love to a girl who is dating a guy that doesn’t deserve her.

• "Sexy Ladies" key of A minor, neutral rhythm similar to "Señorita", almost whispered with little melody, about telling a girl to make a move soon while bragging about having other girls waiting for him.

• "Until the End of Time" key of D, slow ballad tempo, sad love song highlighting the disasters in the world in contrast with the beauty of a girl.

• "What Goes Around.../...Comes Around" key of A minor, slower tempo, sad mood, addressed to an ex-girlfriend that is with another man.

• "Chop Me Up" (feat. Timbaland) key of G# minor, slower tempo rap, light-hearted, inviting a girl to dance and spend time together.

• "Intermission" (feat. Timbaland) Video and interview about two minutes long dedicated to reinforcing the idea of legitimacy in the process of composition of music and the friendship between the two artists.

• "Rock Your Body" key of E minor, neutral tempo and upbeat character, about dancing and hanging out with a girl at a club.

• "Gone" key of B minor, slow, sad *NSYNC hit, regretful mood, dedicated to a lost girlfriend.

• "Take It from Here" key of C, slower ballad tempo, declaration of love, asking to be the answer for this girl from now on.

• "Last Night" key of Bb, neutral tempo, about the attitude he is adopting after a girl broke up with him the night before.

• "Damn Girl" key of G minor, neutral faster tempo, about having been with a lot of girls but seeing something special in the one to which the song is addressed.

• "Summer Love" key of D minor, faster upbeat tempo, about picking up a girl for a short term summer affair.
"Losing My Way" key of E minor, slower tempo but rhythmic beat, tells a story about the consequences of doing drugs.

"Cry Me a River" key of B, slower neutral tempo, about a girl who left him for someone else and is now trying to him back.

"LoveStoned" key of A# minor, fast tempo, describes the situation of seeing a girl for the first time and being immediately attracted to her.

"SexyBack" (feat. Timbaland) key of A, neutral faster tempo, very little melody or harmony, about a girl that is so attractive that he feels immediately trapped by her.

"(Another Song) All Over Again" key of E, slow tempo and subdued character, regretful mood, about having wronged a girl and asking for another chance.

Goodnights and Credits

From this set list we can already see that the style of Justin Timberlake is very different from that of Bono and U2’s. This singer has a much more manufactured style of character design: Justin was a member of the band *NSYNC during the 1990’s, which was the high time for boy bands like Backstreet Boys and 98 Degrees, among others. After his band fell out of fashion, he was able to launch a solo career. Having grown up since his boy band years and with the spotlight focused on just him, it became easier to design a character that suited him and pleased a larger fan base. His image developed into a “heart-throb:” a fun guy devoted to going out, spending time with friends, singing, dancing, and picking up girls, while still sensitive and capable of commitment. This image of fun and confidence helped him earn the following of mostly young girls that found him attractive and some guys that liked the idea of relating to that image.

Another thing to infer from this set list is that the show relies on a simpler character, hence offering a smaller variety of themes. While U2 offered a broader array of

---

50 "Justin Timberlake – FutureSex LoveShow (Show Completo),” YouTube video, 2:01:19, posted by "Dibaizin,” December 4, 2011, www.youtube.com/watch?v=gDNSoO0D-k.
emotions through music and themes, Justin Timberlake’s show is focused on a lighter style of entertainment, focused mainly on having fun and relying on looks and dance to compliment the performance. Even though the themes derived from his character are few, it is still possible to see a structure to the show in terms of tempi and moods. While the subjects of the songs do not vary much between having a care-free, fun attitude with girls and having serious feelings for someone, the exception is “Losing My Way” where the moods and emotions do vary. When analyzing the program, it is easier in this style of performance to determine the structure because the themes and emotions are rather simple and very clearly outlined.

As a starting point when looking at the songs, a striking example of this simplicity is all the songs that touch on the subject of serious relationships are in the slow or slower neutral tempo realm, but all the songs about casual encounters and trivial subjects are in the faster neutral to fast tempo area. This is contrary to U2’s repertoire, in which they sought to convey more complex emotions through combinations of styles and moods. For the analysis of this particular concert, I will divide the moods of the songs into “serious” and “fun.” This way, Justin Timberlake’s concert can be divided into small sections the following way:

The first two songs act as introduction and attention grabber respectively, with their faster tempo and fun nature. The themes of the following six songs that lead to the intermission go in a pattern of serious, serious, fun, serious, serious, and fun (the last one featuring the guest artist, Timbaland). This, like U2’s concert, points at a strategy of delivering sections of emotional (or “serious”) content with breaks for fun or release. In the case of Justin Timberlake, the overarching tempo of the performance is faster than U2’s in term of alternation of moods, meaning that the “emotional” sections tend to last two songs and the “fun” sections one, versus four and two respectively for U2.

After the intermission, the concert features a program that contains more songs in the “fun” category, pointing towards a growth in intensity and excitement. The format of this half starts in similar fashion as the beginning of the concert, bringing out Timbaland once again for an “attention grabber” song before moving onto the first “emotional” section. This way the format of this half becomes (attention grabber), serious, serious,
fun, fun, fun, serious, serious, fun, fun, and serious. The overall progression of the concert that, in this half, grows in numbers of fun themes and excitement, leads to the major hit “SexyBack” featuring guest Timbaland one last time before returning to a reflective mood as a goodbye and concert closer with “(Another Song) All Over Again.”

Another point in terms of character development is the intermission which consists of a pre-recorded video interview of Timberlake and Timbaland together. This interview not only serves as a break for the concert, but it is also designed to send the audience a message of legitimacy. Here is an excerpt of that interview:

Timberlake: “…It wasn’t like we were trying to establish a sound, but that’s what ended up happening…”

Timbaland: (about Timberlake) “…me and him together, they tried to shake us, they tried to break us down…”

Timberlake: “my record label was like, you’re crazy, this song will never work…” and “our parameter for our record, for success, is if we like it…”  

As pop stars are often questioned in regard to their emotional commitment, compositional ability, and even their personality, this type of video is used to reinforce the belief that these stars are actually friends and that they write their own songs. This is a fact that further illustrates the importance of showing emotional engagement with the music, as well as committing to the character in a convincing way in order to engage the audience.

Lastly, here is a look at a concert tour by Britney Spears, an artist who constitutes an example of character development to the greatest extent. She was the most successful pop star of her time, and her fame has allowed her to remain relevant even today, fourteen

---

years later. Her concert tour titled “Oops… I Did It Again Tour” was the second highest
grossing by a solo artist in the year 2000.\(^{53}\) Here is the set list used in said tour:

"The Britney Spears Experience" (Video Introduction)

- "(You Drive Me) Crazy" key of C minor, faster tempo and upbeat character, about
  being heavily infatuated with a guy.

- "Stronger" key of A minor, faster tempo and more intense mood, about getting
  over someone that hurt her and having grown less innocent.

- "What U See (Is What U Get)" key of D minor, faster tempo, addressed to a
  hypothetical boyfriend telling him to accept her how she is and not to try to
  change her.

- "From the Bottom of My Broken Heart" key of E minor, slow ballad tempo, about
  missed opportunities, directed to an ex-boyfriend whom she misses.

- "What Would You Do to Meet Britney?" (Video Interlude).

- "Born to Make You Happy" key of B minor, neutral tempo, about trying to
  understand what went wrong in a failed relationship.

- "Lucky" key of C, neutral tempo and sad mood, about the struggles of being
  famous and loneliness that comes with it.

- "Sometimes" key of G, neutral tempo and innocent character, about girl being
  reluctant and afraid of letting a guy move forward (physically).

- "Don't Let Me Be the Last to Know" key of E, slow tempo and romantic mood,
  about asking a guy to come out and declare his love for her.

---

\(^{53}\) Margaux Knox, "'Oops!...I Did It Again' World Tour Kicks Off," June 20, 2011, accessed October
• "Meet the Band" (Performance Interlude).

• "The Beat Goes On" fast tempo, fun dance-like and trivial mood.

• "Don't Go Knockin' on My Door" key of E, neutral tempo and angry mood, shows her resentful after a bad breakup.

• "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction" (Rolling Stones), faster beat, being unsatisfied.

• "Meet the Dancers" (Dance Interlude).

• "...Baby One More Time" key of A minor, faster tempo and naïve mood, regret over having let go of guy she loved and asking for a second chance.

• "The Britney Spears Experience II" (Video Interlude).

• "Oops... I Did It Again" key of A minor, faster tempo and naughty mood, big hit, about purposely leading guys on when she has no intentions of pursuing any love interest with them.54

In terms of programming, this concert tour provides perhaps the best insight in regard to the connection between the themes of theatrical performance and design of the concert program. In the previous chapter we learned about the preparation an actor should do when playing a character in terms of his or her motivation within the plotline. In addition, when discussing the documentary “After the music dies,” we learned about conveyor belt-style artists and how a whole team can work to create the image and style of a pop star. Britney Spears’ career involves all of those elements. These elements include songs made by many writers like Max Martin, among others.55

After her child stardom with the Mickey Mouse Club, Britney leaped to fame as a teenage pop star when she was seventeen years old. In order to make this transition between child star and teen icon, the character designed for her was that of a teenager

who was sexy yet naïve and innocent; this covered all the bases to appeal to a wide-ranging, young audience. Over time, her character was to evolve reflecting the stages involved in growing up into an adult. The themes and stories of her songs were then designed to reflect this plotline. Much like in a play or a movie, every aspect of her character was paid attention: make up, wardrobe, speech (concealing her native Louisianan accent both on and off the stage), choreography, and voice coaching. Furthermore, in order to convey this character convincingly, her record company made sure to advertise through interviews and articles some “life choices” of this character, most notably the decision to remain celibate until marriage. This persona was so convincing and fundamental for her career that in time, as rumors about her life started spreading through leaks and news reports, they generated huge controversy. Some news articles like the Daily Mail’s “Britney started drinking at 13, lost her virginity at 14 and took drugs at 15, says her mother in shocking new book” are a testament to this fact.

Just as in the other examples, understanding these situations and motivations of her character are necessary in order to analyze her concert program. By taking a look at the selected songs while paying special attention to the themes addressed and the rhythmic character of them, it seems that in this case, even more than in the others observed, the strategy seems to be quite apparent: First, there is not a lot of room for complex nuances. The songs that deal with sad, regretful themes or the issue of growing up are by default of slow or slower neutral tempi (with one major exception found in “Baby One More Time”). In contrast, all the songs about being naughty or playful, angry or fun are all in faster neutral to fast tempi.

The second aspect to observe is the distribution of these moods and rhythms throughout the show. The extra element to look for in this analysis that is especially important in the case of Britney Spears is the placement of songs in regard to how big a hit they were on the radio. Almost the entire show is comprised of released singles that were very successful at different times and for that reason are expected to have a special effect in the audience. With all of that in mind, the program or set list can be divided into three sections as follows:

56 "Britney Spears."
The first section is comprised of songs of an upbeat, fun character that winds down and closes with a slow, sad song as a segue to the next section. Rather than by the themes of the songs, what defines this section is the rhythmic character and excitement aided by the familiarity of each song. “Drive Me Crazy” and “Stronger” were both pretty major hits, as was “From The Bottom,” which leads to the second section of the concert. This second section is the sad and romantic part of the concert where the artist comes across as more vulnerable and dreamy. The songs in this section are all from neutral to slow tempi and address themes of being rejected, regretful, or naïve and vulnerable in some way. As it has been with every aspect of this artist, the character of this section is well defined by the mood and lyrics of every song included in it.

Finally, the last section is just a build-up from high energy to even higher energy. The first two songs in this section are relatively unknown but upbeat in rhythm and musical character (the themes of the more energetic songs are usually either fun, proud, or sexy), and from then on, all the songs selected are the most well-known, energy-boosting pieces of her career, leading up to the tour title song “Oops….”

The last aspect to mention regarding this concert is the video interludes that divide each section. These are an especially well-designed part of the concert that serve the purpose of providing an engaging break for both the performer and the audience. In addition, the “meet the band” and “meet the dancers” interludes provide the dual effect of giving the other people on stage a proper introduction while making the star of the show seem more accessible for providing the time in the spotlight for everyone else.

This type of research study can be applied to any particular performer or type of artist. It is important to observe at least three in order to see if these principles, in fact, apply to a variety of successful artists. By taking this very close look and analyzing the concert tours of these performers, we can see how every part of the programming of each of them is designed to capture and sustain the audience’s attention and to get them emotionally involved with the artist on stage. As previously mentioned, the elements of programming and character design are closely related, and for that reason two main elements need to be considered when designing a program: The flow of the performance in regard to the moods of the pieces and the emotional connection that these pieces will generate between the audience and the characters on stage. In adapting these ideas to a
classical music recital, it will most likely be up to the performer’s creative outlook to invent a relatable character and to design a program with good flow. As learned from research and study, audiences are more likely to be receptive of shorter pieces and of the personal feelings attached to those pieces by the artists or characters on stage. In the case of a chamber group, strategies commonly used by bands when introducing their members and the video interludes used by pop artists point to a good reception of the introduction of different members at different times. Just like in a play at the theater, it will be most efficient to have only one or a few main characters, but it seems like a good idea to create variety by changing the composition of the ensemble and ceding the spotlight on occasion to a different member of the group. This could be achieved by programming a solo performed by one or a few members other than the main characters.

In order to help better understand the application of these ideas to a chamber concert, here are a few basic examples of a program (or set list) constructed with a character and a target audience in mind. For the purpose of demonstrating how to use speeches to introduce the music as well as to portray the character, I will provide one scripted example and suggestions for the subjects of the others.

The first step is to decide what target audience for which to aim and how to reach them. For the purpose of this example, I will direct my attention to an audience of young adults to adults of higher middle class who are on vacation. My assumption in this case is that the easiest way to reach a group of these characteristics would be through the selection of a venue like a bar or restaurant that is in or close to a nice hotel in a tourist destination. In reality, market research should be done to determine which audiences are most likely to attend a particular venue.

The next step is to construct a character. As mentioned in previous chapters, it is easier to base the character on one’s own personality as it helps with the portrayal of emotions and sense of truthfulness for the audience. For example: I am from Buenos Aires, Argentina, which is apparent in the way I look and speak, so I will construct my character around that fact. This will make it easier to create a convincing story than if I created someone completely unrelated to my own personality. It will also facilitate handling techniques like Stanislavsky's Objective and Superobjective, Text and Subtext, and the Magic If. Thus, my character will be an Argentine cellist who is easy-going and
passionate and enjoys playing music and sharing it with people. The character’s main motivations are to travel and interact with different cultures, but he is also nostalgic of his home town. This may seem like a rather general construction, but it covers enough aspects that it can be used to answer the questions regarding Stanislavsky’s concepts when applied to the setting of a music performance. In this case, the rest of the group will play the same role as the musicians of a band. Their characters do not need to be very elaborate as they will not be talking on stage, and their main function will be to interact with one another through gestures and body language during the performance to create a sense of involvement and community.

The last step is to assemble and script the program. This example will show a program for piano quintet (string quartet and piano). In order to help with the flow and keep the audience's attention, the concert will be divided into sections, each of them introduced by means of a brief speech and it will have a break in the middle. It will also include an array of ensemble configurations to create variety and bring attention to the different members of the group, and the program itself will feature some fragments of works to act as introductions or "attention grabbers.” The speeches between sections will be loosely scripted within a theme, and they will serve as an introduction to new parts of the program as well as create a mood. The speeches will also reveal personal qualities of the main character. Lastly, the program will make mention of a few lighting cues that apply to the flow of the performance. They are as follows:

- Prelude: Robert Schumann’s Piano Quintet in E flat major Op. 44, 2nd mvt. (Fragment to be performed with dim lights that will fade out on cue for the beginning of the show.)
- Opening: Robert Schumann’s Piano Quintet in E flat major Op. 44, 1st mvt. (Beginning at recapitulation when the show lights are turned on)
- First speech introduction (childhood memories)
- Antonio Vivaldi’s Concerto Alla Rustica in D major, 1st mvt.
- Georg Frederick Handel’s Largo from Xerxes
- Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s Eine Kleine Nachtmusik, 1st mvt.
- Second speech introduction (movie music)
- Gustav Mahler’s Piano Quartet
• Felix Mendelssohn’s Piano trio in D minor Op. 49, 3rd mvt.
• Break
• Niccolo Paganini’s “Mose-Fantasia” for cello and piano (arr. Luigi Silva)
• Third speech introduction (sad and hopeful memory)
• Sergei Rachmaninoff: Sonata for cello and piano in G minor Op.19, 3rd mvt. (dim lights)
• Ludwig Van Beethoven’s Piano sonata No 8 in C minor Op. 13, 2nd mvt. (dim lights, spotlight on the piano)
• Fourth speech introduction. (Argentina, funny theme)
• Carlos Gardel’s “Por Una Cabeza” for string quartet (arr. David Burndrett)
• Carlos Gardel’s “El Dia que me Quieras” for string quartet (arr. Omar Gutierrez)
• Last speech, goodbye. (Farewell)
• Astor Piazzolla’s “Adios Nonino” (arr. Omar Gutierrez)
• Encore:
  • Dmitri Shostakovich’s Piano Quintet in G minor Op. 57, 3rd. mvt.

Since this program is inspired by the design of the set lists of U2, Justin Timberlake, and Britney Spears, here is a breakdown of its design:

The first two fragments, belonging to the Schumann Quintet in E flat major, are placed at the start of the concert for the purpose of engaging the audience from the very beginning. The slow music of its second movement, mostly piano in dynamic, will create an expectation of what is about to take place on stage. The following piece, the recapitulation from the same piece's first movement, will serve the function of creating surprise and excitement. Since at this point the show has not yet been introduced, only the recapitulation will be performed as to not let too much time pass before the first formal introduction. This is a similar strategy to that used by U2 in their concert, which involved snippets of music by David Bowie as an introduction before the actual beginning of the show.

The first speech introduction will lead to a section comprised of simple pieces for string quartet from the Baroque and Classical periods. In order to present this section in a way that helps the audience relate on a personal level with the character, the speech will
contain elements that refer to the life and past of the character rather than a presentation of historical facts. It will also be worded in a friendly and informal way in order to create an atmosphere of relaxation and stay in line with the easy going personality of the character. Here is a possible script for that introduction:

"Hello everyone, thank you for joining us tonight; we are really excited to be here. We have prepared a great show for you this evening. The next three works in the program are short pieces from a long time ago. I wanted to share them with you because they bring me some really great memories. When I was a teenager and going to music school—around eighteen, nineteen years old—I couldn't really afford to go on vacation with my friends, so we formed a string quartet and got a gig at a café by the beach where we would play every evening and they would just pay us with a place to stay and the meals. The place was really nice, and this way we got to enjoy that beautiful environment which would have been impossible otherwise. The next three pieces were some of the pieces in that program that we chose because they were simple, yet elegant and beautiful, and I wanted to share them with you. As a bonus, I have the feeling that you might recognize the third one."

The section is comprised of music with varying tempi and the pieces, if combined into one work, would resemble a concerto: Allegro, Largo, Allegro. Each work movement is short, which makes the section go by quickly with a good amount of variety.

The second speech will lead into the Mahler Piano Quartet, which is the last section before the break. The theme of this introduction will be linked to this piece as movie music. Since the work was featured in the film Shutter Island, the movie itself will work as a good way to create an image and a story for the audience. The theme of the first speech was a happy memory, so in contrast, this one will be serious. After asking the audience to raise their hands if they have seen the movie, the character of the performance will share his own impression of it, emphasizing the scene where the Mahler piece was featured. On a personal level, this speech can also be used to bring the new perspective of someone who played the piece before, and exemplify how watching the movie and the scene affected his way to view and perform the music.

After the break, the Paganini “Mose-Fantasía” will provide a moment of relief; it is a crowd-pleasing piece that also showcases the technical skill of the performer. This
will serve the purpose of showing another dimension of the easy-going character in terms of his devotion to practice and developing his skills on the instrument. After this, the third speech introduction will lead to the most intimate section of the show: the Rachmaninoff and Beethoven pieces are of great emotional depth, and for that reason they will serve as the equivalent of the “sad, romantic or melancholic” section of the concerts previously analyzed. This third speech needs to be delivered in a more solemn mood than the previous ones, and it can be about a variety of possibilities, ranging from a dedication to the victims of a tragedy, to a personal story of lost love or a missed close person that is no longer around. The goal is to generate a mood and add a story or meaning to the music that will enhance the audience’s identification with the character and perception of the music in terms of emotions.

The last section will be devoted to show the Argentine side of the character. The speech to introduce this section will be lighthearted and descriptive of the tango traditions. In the case of these particular two pieces, there is a funny irony to mention in regard to their themes: tango is, for the most part, a genre based on nostalgia but with a wide range of themes for it. In the case of these pieces, one of them (“El dia que me quieras”) is a description of “the day you love me” and how wonderful the world will be when that happens. The other one (“Por una cabeza”) is a lament over losing a big bet at the horse racing tracks. The performance of these two pieces will then be followed by a brief speech saying goodbye to the audience and presenting the last piece in the program, “Adios Nonino,” which is a farewell song. During the bow, the pianist, who has been absent during the last section of the program, will rejoin the stage to salute the audience, providing a hint that there is in fact an encore in the plan. The performance of the Shostakovich piece will then start abruptly and will serve as an exciting, passionate, and short piece that includes the whole group as the last work performed.

For a second example here is a different, simpler hypothetical scenario. This one is a violin and piano recital where both performers are female in their early or mid-twenties. The venue is a bar frequented by young adults in a big city like Boston or New York. The young women’s characters are friends that grew up together in a small town. This creates a sense of community between them and allows them access to stereotypes
commonly associated with young girls (like those perpetuated by Britney Spears) as well as with people unaccustomed to life in a big city.

The programming principles have the same flow as those in the previous example with alternating moods to keep the attention span of the audience. The same lighting variations will be utilized in this example, as well. Following is a sample beginning to the program:

- Georgy Catoire's Elegy for violin and piano (with lights fading in shortly after the beginning of the piece)
- Fritz Kreisler's Praeludium and allegro
- First speech introduction (High school Love)
- Jules Massenet's Meditation from "Thais"
- Frederick Chopin's Waltz for violin and piano Op. 64 No. 2 in C# minor. arr. August Schulz
- Second speech introduction (Life in the Big City)
- Antonio Bazzini's La ronde des lutins

This excerpt from a hypothetical program follows the same ideas as the previous example. A soft, soothing first piece serves as introduction and is followed by an impactful second work that is more dramatic and grabs the audience's attention with its intense character and display of technical ability. The first introduction leading to the Massenet piece will introduce the naïve, feminine quality of the violinist character with a story of young love. When the character was in high school, she fell in love with a boy in her class. Back then she was very shy and didn't know how to show him that she loved him, so she spent her afternoons in her room daydreaming about this boy. One day, she heard the Massenet piece on the radio and felt it illustrated just how she felt when she was around this boy, so she insisted to her violin teacher that they worked on it. Even though this was some time ago, the intense feelings of that young love have stayed with her, and she is reminded of them every time she hears "Meditation." After the Massenet piece, the "Waltz" by Chopin will continue the romantic, easy going mood of the section.

Following these two works, the second speech about moving to a big city leads to the Bazzini. The violinist would introduce this piece with a speech about how the
unsettled feeling of this piece reminds her of her first day in the big city. The Bazzini work will close the first half with an upbeat, fun, and exciting mood.

The last example is a show created for an audience of children. During the theatrical interpretation chapter, I mentioned there are a few options when creating a character for a show. So far, the characters have been created to mirror the performers themselves. However, it is also possible to use a story that has already been written and the characters therein.

In this example, the performer will tell a few children's stories that the children will think about while listening to the music. The segments for this will be much shorter than in previous examples, and each story will be told through one piece of music to achieve continuity. Here is one example of that concept: There is a short story called "Sleepy Kittens" by Cinco Paul and Ken Daurio with illustrations by Eric Guillion. This story was featured in the movie "Despicable Me" and became very popular so it is immediately recognizable by a lot of kids. The story will be set alongside Paganini's "Moses Variations" for violin or cello and piano. The performer will then decide which variations best describe each section of the story and alternate the narration of the story with music. The variations could be repeated or the order be manipulated to better reflect the story. In addition, if available at the venue, the illustrations could be projected on a screen to complement the experience.

Here is a possible pairing of the different verses of the story and variations of the Paganini piece:

Three little kittens loved to play,
they had fun in the sun all day.
(Tema, Tempo alla Marcia)

Then their mother came out and said,
"Time for kittens to go to bed."
(Introduzione, Adagio) up to the key change.
Three little kittens started to bawl,
"Mommy, we're not tired at all."
(Variazione II)
Their mother smiled and said with a purr,
"Fine, but at least you should brush you fur."
(Introduzione, starting at the key change)
Three little kittens with fur all brushed said,
"We can't sleep, we feel too rushed!"
(Variazione I)
Their mother replied, with a voice like silk,
"Fine, but at least you should drink your milk."
(Introduzione, minor)
Three little kittens, with milk all gone,
rubbed their eyes and started to yawn.
(Introduzione, major)
"We can't sleep, we can't even try."
Then their mother sang a lullaby.
"Good night kittens, close your eyes. Sleep in peace until you rise. Though while you sleep, we are apart, your mommy loves you with all her heart."\(^{58}\)
(Variation III)

This simple example is constructed by pairing the kittens with upbeat or awake variations and using the introduction to reflect their mother's subdued character. The connection does not need to be very precise as it mostly is meant to reflect the moods of the different verses of the story. The most difficult part is to pair the last variation which is very active to the mother's lullaby, but that could also be viewed as a reflection of the happiness the kittens feel about being so loved.

These three examples illustrate a few possible applications of the guidelines presented in this treatise. There are endless possibilities when it comes to the design of a performance, and it depends solely on the goal of each performer. When creating a program, it is important to pay attention to the details which will result in engaging the audience's attention allow them to relate to the characters on stage.

CHAPTER FIVE
THE ENTREPRENEURIAL APPROACH

In this treatise, I will use the expression “entrepreneurial approach” to refer to the mentality and strategy that is applied to the aspects outside of the performance itself that will help make the show successful. These aspects can include the selection of a venue, the marketing strategy of the show, and the creation of an identity through that marketing and other components. While the techniques described in the previous chapters address how to engage the audience in attendance, this chapter will discuss possible ideas to get them there.

The first aspect to consider when designing a recital is how to sell it according to what the target audience is and how to get them interested in attending ahead of the performance. Advertisement techniques are subject to the creativity of musicians or their teams and can be employed through a variety of means, from radio and newspaper articles to email newsletters and flyers. What means of distribution to use can be decided according to the specific group or demographic one is trying to reach. Especially connected to the issues in this treatise are the creative decisions made to generate anticipation through these advertisements. These decisions are made in regard to the elements on and off the stage in order to create a distinctive image and identity for the show, and they are very closely related to the creation of a character and a plotline. For this reason, after working on the design of the characters and program, one should have decided the type of show to be presented and the audience it is directed to, and one should be ready to begin the process of ‘selling’ it.

In his book *The Savvy Musician*, David Cutler discusses the many aspects of being entrepreneurial as a musician, and as previously mentioned, many of them are closely related to the show development discussed in this treatise so far. It is for this reason that some of his ideas could be very useful in marketing the show created. For example, one of the first aspects he addresses is the concept of “building your brand.” On this subject he writes:
McDonald’s, Nike, Obama, Trump, Juilliard, Steinway, Marsalis, Yo-Yo. After hearing each name, a distinctive connotation probably arises, thanks to their strong brand identity. As a result of unique products and/or marketing, you have a well-defined idea about what each stands for. When someone hears your name, what comes to mind?\(^{59}\)

This concept can be directly linked to the idea of creating a character. Cutler states that creating and building a brand is very important since it will cause people to hear or read a name and immediately associate it with an idea of what that product, show, or person represents. Mr. Cutler then explains how to choose a name, a slogan, and a logo that convey the image that one wants to attach to the product. He cites the example of the food chain Wendy’s and the use of their slogan “Waaay better than fast food” as a technique to differentiate themselves from the competition.\(^ {60}\) Another example could be a brand like Panera which through their own marketing scheme consumers have come to associate with a more refined, healthier, and a little more expensive dining experience than other food chains in the style of McDonald’s or Burger King.

The same principle can be applied to the design of a show; the brand built through name, logo, or slogan will need to be consistent with the character and program created while keeping the target audience in mind. Here is an example; if the character we created is a traveling Bohemian violinist that plays folk tunes from the places he or she visited, and we want to target a younger audience that frequents bars, then the attire, stage setting, venue, and whole marketing campaign would be very different from the choices we would make if the character was a high-class, elegant musician that plays music for couples during a fancy and romantic dinner. In either case, the name, image, and venue, as well as the marketing campaign would have to be consistent with the character and repertoire in order to create a memorable brand. Studying the shows of U2, Justin Timberlake and Britney Spears, presents examples of how brand building works for rock and pop stars. Each of them had a character that they maintain on and off the stage. These characters, which are designed to appeal to a specific audience, dress, move, talk and act according to the attributes assigned to them in order to create an association between their


\(^{60}\) Cutler, *The Savvy Musician*, 40.
names and the type of music and culture they represent. In the cases of these major stars, the level of public exposure makes it necessary to remain in character for the majority of the time; for that reason, they provide great examples of how to build a brand and sustain it consistently.

In order to draw attendees, it is especially important to consider what venue will be most appealing to the target audience. When looking at the shows by commercially successful artists, we can see that the setting allows for people to sing along, dance, make comments about the show to their friends, and eat or drink if desired. In the same fashion, the shows by groups like Classical Revolution which take place at bars and other unconventional venues often provide similar liberties. At the time of researching the target audience, one should find out what type of atmosphere is most appealing to them and what type of complimentary activities would work as an enhancement for the show in their own taste. Allowing these types of liberties may seem like inviting distractions to take attention away from the show, but one should keep this thought in mind; the main goal is to entertain and communicate with the audience. Therefore, as stated during the theatrical performance chapter, the performer must get the attendees to sympathize with him or her. To help accomplish this task, the selected venue and setting need to have a balance of two aspects; it must draw attention to the show but not force or impose it upon the audience by means of too many rules and restrictions.

The last aspect to discuss in regard to the elements outside of performance is the business aspect of the preparation. In a way, this issue encompasses all the others, since the manner in which it is handled will demonstrate commitment and ultimately decide the outcome. This mentality is especially important because in order to create a successful product, one must have confidence in it. Since the guidelines and order of priorities set in this treatise for creating a show are directed to producing something appealing and commercially successful, few things will better demonstrate belief and commitment than the willingness to personally invest in it as much as possible. To accomplish this, the show itself needs to be treated as a business as much as it is a show, so drawing audiences and engaging them will translate into personal and financial success. An example of this mentality is the way tango houses operate in Buenos Aires, Argentina. A tango house is a venue that is set up as a restaurant with a bar in it and has a
prominent stage where a tango show that includes playing, singing, and dancing takes place. I was once hired to play for one of the shows at the famous “El Viejo Almacen” house, and when I arrived, I met with the owner, group leader, and musician crew. The show was very carefully planned, and there was no real invitation for the rest of the musicians to have any creative input. I was handed a tuxedo to wear on stage and was briefed on what my role in the show was. After the performance, I was handed a check for the agreed fee and went home. This same scenario was true for me regardless of the technical execution of the group, attendance of the audience or how much they spent at the place. If my performance was not satisfactory, I simply would not be called again. The venue manager and show leader were assuming the risks and reaping the rewards of any possible outcome.

Having this type of responsibility will undoubtedly provide motivation to create the most successful product possible and to advertise it as much as possible. These tango houses are successful by applying many techniques that are similar to what is described in this treatise including designing a show that is appealing to their target audience. Following their business structure would mean for the performers and show creators to team up with an investor, manager or business specialist rather than a group of other musicians.
CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSION

The technological advances in communication have produced changes in society through time. Since their creation, television and, more recently, the internet have allowed for the immediate transmission of audiovisual information. This has contributed to a decrease in the average attention span and patience of audiences. As a result, the way music entertainment is delivered and consumed has undergone changes, as well. The best-selling artists of the popular music industry currently possess bigger audiences than those of any other genre because have successfully adapted many aspects of their image and performance style in order to be appealing to the current audiences.

For classical musicians, understanding this process of adaptation is an important first step on the path to reaching audiences. There are aspects of the performance outside of the music itself and the level of execution that contribute to gaining and sustaining the attention concert attendees. By observing how these aspects are addressed in the most successful form of music performance today, it is possible to tailor these techniques to the realm of classical music. In addition, studies of theatrical techniques to trigger and communicate emotions provide great tools to create a similar sense of spontaneity in pop concerts.

This treatise offers insight into the factors that affect an audience's ability to focus attention and how different techniques can be used in a classical chamber music concert to engage and sustain their focus. It also provides ideas on how to design a character and create a program geared toward a specific demographic. These techniques and ideas are not restricted to a specific target audience but rather are applied in a variety of ways depending on the creative outlook of various performers and their objectives.

Further research can include studies of different schools of acting, ways to build a script to achieve different interaction with the audience, and programming techniques of genres other than the ones covered here. There can also be further research into the specific ways of advertisement designed to attract a certain demographic to a particular show or venue. From the perspective of building a career, market research can be useful
in determining what specific audiences or demographics would provide the best potential for higher revenue. Finally, an account of the experiences of different classical performers in their respective concert settings, including the type of ensemble, venue, city and other factors that affect audiences' attendance, could help create a set of formulae that are applicable when seeking to attract different target audiences.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


"Justin Timberlake – FutureSex LoveShow (Show Completo)," YouTube video, 2:01:19, posted by "Dibaizin," December 4, 2011, www.youtube.com/watch?v=gDNSoO0D-k.


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Marcos Hugo Vives is a native of Buenos Aires, Argentina. He obtained his Bachelor’s degree from Escuela de Bellas Artes “Carlos Morel” before moving to the United States and earning a Master’s from Pennsylvania State University. He is currently finishing his Doctorate in Cello Performance at The Florida State University as a student of Gregory Sauer.

As a cellist, Vives has performed with many notable ensembles such as The Permanent Orchestra of the Teatro Argentino, The National Symphony Orchestra of Argentina, and The Tallahassee Symphony. He has been featured as a soloist with many groups including The Penn State Philharmonic Orchestra, the Southern Chamber Orchestra of Argentina, The Academy Chamber Orchestra of the Teatro Argentino, and the City of Buenos Aires Orchestra. As an educator, Vives maintains a private studio in the Tallahassee area and is currently an adjunct faculty member at Darton State College in Albany, Georgia.