

Understanding Audiences Working Paper 2
February 2011

What Classical Musicians Can Learn from Other Arts about Building Audiences¹

April 2012

John Sloboda and Biranda Ford
Guildhall School of Music & Drama, Silk Street, London EC2A 8LT, UK²

We aim to address six questions:

- 1) Why do classical musicians need to build audiences?
- 2) What do audiences seek by engaging with a live event?
- 3) How are classical music events different from other arts events?
- 4) How can more of what audiences seek be added to live events?
- 5) Why are classical musicians, and those who promote them, not as focused on audiences as some may argue they might be?
- 6) How can conservatoire training be enriched to equip musicians with more audience awareness?

1) Why do classical musicians need to build audiences?

Attendance at live classical music events has declined, both in absolute terms and relative to other arts. Two survey sources of evidence, one from the USA and one from the UK support this assertion. The US National Endowment for the Arts undertakes periodic surveys of public participation in the arts, and it has done this in 1982, 1992, 2002 and 2008. This provides a unique picture of comparative trends. Table 1 below presents some figures taken from the 2008 report. They show the percentage of US adults reporting attending different arts events at least once in the twelve months preceding the survey. We have added a final column on the right, which is the percentage decline from 1982 to 2008. As you can see, attendance at classical concerts, opera and ballet has declined by around 30% over the period. There

¹ A version of this paper was first presented at a conference in the Music and Brain series entitled, "Why Music? Is Music Different from the Other Arts?" held at the Institute of Neurology, Queen Square, London, 7th October 2011 (<http://www.themusicalbrain.org/events>)

² contact details: johns.sloboda@gsmd.ac.uk, biranda.ford@gsmd.ac.uk

has also been a decline for drama attendance, but considerably less, with musicals holding up particularly well. Attendance at museums and galleries has not declined at all.

The NEA survey also looks at demographics. One of the most striking contributors to this decline is the changing age profile of audiences. The average classical audience is getting older. Greg Sandow, a US based composer and music critic, has been commenting on this phenomenon through lecturing, writing and a widely read blog, and in chapter two in his book in progress entitled *Rebirth: the Future of Classical Music* he comments on the NEA data as follows:

‘In 1992 the largest age group in the classical music audience was 35-44. In 2002 the largest age group was 45-54. The same people, in other words, who were the largest age group in 1992 have now grown ten years older.’³

Table 1

U.S. adults attending an activity at least once in past 12 months

Source: 1982, 1992, 2002 and 2008 Surveys of Public Participation in the Arts.

Percent of adults attending/visiting/reading

	1982	1992	2002	2008	Decline
Performing arts					
Jazz*	9.6	10.6	10.8	7.8	19%
Classical music*	13.0	12.5	11.6	9.3	29%
Opera*	3.0	3.3	3.2	2.1	30%
Musical plays*	18.6	17.4	17.1	16.7	11%
Non-musical plays*	11.9	13.5	12.3	9.4	21%
Ballet*	4.2	4.7	3.9	2.9	30%
Other dance	NA	7.1	6.3	5.2	27%
Art museums/ galleries*	22.1	26.7	26.5	22.7	0
Art/craft fairs and festivals	39.0	40.7	33.4	24.5	38%

From National Endowment of the Arts, 2008 survey of public participation in the Arts. <http://www.arts.gov/research/2008-SPPA.pdf>

This age profile is reproduced in the UK. Data from the Office for National

³ *From Rebirth: The Future of Classical Music by Greg Sandow. Chapter 2 – Dire Data. <http://www.artsjournal.com/sandow/2007/01/rebirth.html>*

Statistics showed that while 16% of the 55-64 age group had attended a classical concert, the figure for under 35s was around 5%. This compares with 90% attendance from that same cohort for films and pop concerts⁴. One of the most public consequences of audience decline is the increasing diversification of art forms in flagship classical venues. More and more frequently, non-classical events are held in London's Royal Festival Hall, the Barbican Concert Hall and the Royal Albert Hall. There are just not the audiences to sustain the frequency of classical concerts that these venues were once able to mount.

2) What do audiences seek by engaging with a live event?

What is it that people seek from live events? How do we find out? What does the research tell us? If you seek answers to these questions from regular attendees to concerts you're likely to get a confirmation of the status quo; these are the people who are happy with things just the way they are. What is needed is information from people who don't go regularly to concerts, and this is harder to obtain. One of the most interesting attempts to do this is a recent research study by Melissa Dobson⁵. She recruited nine culturally aware 25-34 year olds who were regular attendees at arts events but had not attended any classical concerts recently. She persuaded them to attend three classical concerts and then interviewed them afterwards about their experiences and reactions⁴. Two of these concerts were rather traditional symphony concerts, one with the London Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican and one with the London Chamber Orchestra at St John's Smith Square. The final concert was the Night Shift series of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. Dobson describes the Night Shift thus:

'It is promoted as an informal event. Audience members are informed that they can talk, drink, move around the auditorium while the concert is in progress and that they can applaud whenever they wish. Verbal provision of information is key to the Night Shift's concept. Audience members are provided with a free programme sheet, rather than full programme notes, but a significant proportion of the concert's running time is devoted to discussion by the performers, facilitated by a presenter.'

Here is a typical response from one of the participants comparing the LSO concert to the OAE one:

"I did like yesterday (OAE) a lot. The fact that, I don't know, in the Barbican (LSO) it was like they were playing, and the feeling was like, if we were not there it would have been exactly the same - yeah? Whereas yesterday, it's like we were all in one thing - it's like we were a part, and were completely a part of it. And I did, really did, like that

⁴ *Young Audience Development and Aesthetics: John Dewey's Pragmatist Philosophy and its Implications for Orchestra Management*. Njordur Sigurjonsson
http://neumann.hec.ca/aimac2005/PDF_Text/Sigurjonsson_Njordur.pdf

⁵ Dobson, M.C. (2010). New audiences for classical music: The experiences of non-attenders at live orchestral concerts. *Journal of New Music Research*, Special Issue: Understanding Audience Experience, 39(2), 111-124.

feeling. It was like he was really talking to us, and telling us: ‘This how it is, this is how it will be, this is how I’m going to do it, and I hope you like it’. I don’t know, it was like, yeah, making us *part* of that, and I did love it, absolutely, it was great.”

Dobson argues that this strongly emphasises the points of inclusion and participation, and we could draw from such studies a working hypothesis; that the potential audiences for live events want something special from their attendance. They want to be part of a unique event, an encounter. It’s not enough to know that some people rate this work, or this performer highly, they want to know what going to this concert in this room on this night will bring them that they can’t get by staying at home and listening to the same work on CD. They want to meet the performers and each other, as well as the work.

3) How are classical music events different from other arts events?

Our third question asks what dimensions do live events vary on, and where does classical music lie within this? We propose some key dimensions noticeable in live events, and some comments on where classical music events tend to lie on these dimensions in relation to other arts. They are not the only dimensions, neither do we claim any particular originality in their formulation, but they do seem to us to encapsulate major distinctions that pervade both informal experience and scholarly thought

The first dimension is *established work versus new work*, and in what proportion. Established work means work in repertoire of tried and tested value, often by authors or composers no longer alive. In general the programmes of major classical venues concentrate on established work. Indeed, a festival like The Proms takes pride in the pedigree of each work performed and will list in the programme for a particular year how many previous years it was performed in. In contrast, programmes of major theatres, for example The National and many of the West End venues, have a very high proportion of new work alongside the established. Even art galleries that major on established work and work of dead artists, such as London’s National Gallery, tend to have major exhibitions of relatively recent work or work not exhibited before.

The second dimension is *predictable versus unpredictable*. This is determined by such factors as the nature and order of the programme, whether known in advance or not, and the level of improvisatory or ad-libbing moments to be found. Very often there is no advance programme at a pop, folk or jazz concert. Plays tend to be highly predictable -audiences go to see a named play, but elements of the production are often highly unpredictable, for example operas and plays restaged to contemporary settings, with contemporary ad libs. For example, in The Globe Shakespeare plays, actors have been seen to use mobiles – to general audience approval . Other productions vary sets, lighting, costume.

Classical concerts by contrast, are often highly predictable. The programme specifies exactly what will be played, in what order, and the degrees of freedom for the performers are quite limited. What they play, how they are arranged on the stage, how they behave, what they wear, is very similar from event to event. Ad libs are minimal

and often squeezed to the margins, as in encores, which in some ways could be seen as the acknowledgement from the performers that the main event failed to meet some important audience need. The more predictable, the less easy it is to generate the sense of an event – something special.

In an art gallery there is a real sense in which you can create your own special event every time you go, by the choice of exhibits you decide to visit and the order in which you do so. No visit is like any other.

The third dimension is *personal versus impersonal*. This relates to the level of personal engagement of the projection of performers and also to the level of engagement of audience members with each other. There are considerable differences across performances regarding how far performers stay in strict performer roles, or step outside the role and project themselves as people. One kind of projection is talking directly to the audience either from the stage, or more informally, before or after the performance. Another kind of projection relates to the degree of self-conscious acting e.g. projection of emotional and other qualities through such things as body movement, facial expressions, or vocalisations. In classical music this is often restrained or idiosyncratic. Either performers try to be neutral and invisible, or, as in the case of some well-known soloists, they engage in exaggerated gestures, which are often highly similar across different performances – a kind of gestural personal signature. In opera and theatre these things are generally highly consciously managed as part of the stagecraft.

There are also variations in the degree to which personal projection of audience members is allowed and encouraged. In theatre and cinema for instance, vocalisations such as laughter are not only allowed, they are expected. This not only communicates to the performers, but also is a form of audience-to-audience interaction, and a form of emotional contagion - a responsive audience that laughs a lot can usually enhance the experience of drama. In contrast, the average symphony concert encourages impersonalisation. The general rule is: ignore your neighbour and don't draw attention to yourself. Concentrate on the event.

Fourthly, *active versus passive*, which is about the level of audience behaviour and communication. Live arts vary considerably in what is permitted or expected of the audience in terms of active engagement. In some events active behaviour is allowed, or encouraged. In some forms, such as pop, opera or jazz, it is perfectly acceptable to clap or cheer at points where you feel someone has done something particularly excellent or moving. In classical concerts you generally wait until the end of a work, even if the work has multiple movements. Then there are the so-called promenade events where it is permitted or encouraged to move, be it dancing, moving in one's seat, or actually moving around the space. In this sense, art galleries are permanent promenade venues and provide a lot of autonomy and agency to the visitor, but many performance contexts discourage any movement or indeed sound. There are issues of authority, which impinge upon many venues and events. A lot of art places audiences in the position of a humble viewer, coming into the presence of greatness. In this mode, the audience may feel it has nothing to give, only to receive.

It wouldn't be unfair to say that classical music events are, in general, established, predictable, impersonal and passive, by modern standards, in comparison to what else

people can pay to go to. Audience inclusion and participation is more likely to occur at events, which contain elements of the new, the unpredictable, the personal and the active. This means that classical events struggle to give many types of audience the experience which they want and seek.

How can more of what audiences seek be added to live events? We'd like to argue that one way to do this is by shifting the event along one or more of the dimensions identified above. Let's take two examples of classical music, which are successful at building and maintaining audiences, which include younger audiences: the BBC Proms and the previously mentioned Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment's Night Shift.

Why do the Proms work so well? There are several things that are very consciously supported and maintained: to build inclusion and participation beginning with the sociability of the queue outside, continuing in the promenade spaces where the absence of seats encourages a democratic and fluid sense of being part of something larger than yourself; the ability to sit or lie also increases the sense of informality or connectedness to others. Then there is the power one draws from one's sense of being at the centre of a globally broadcast event in real time and the presenters have a strong role in connecting the audience and the performers in the hall to the outside world; also, the knowledge that you might be on camera or be interviewed. All this presupposes top quality performances of well-chosen works, but these factors provide an added extra.

Inspired by Melissa Dobson's research, one of us sampled a Night Shift performance in an action research mode. This was part of the Spitalfields Festival, which is held in a trendy nightclub in Hoxton. The classical element of the evening was a one-hour concert running from 9-10pm. However, one's £8 entry ticket bought one the whole evening in the club, from when the doors opened at 8, right through to the small hours, and there was only one hour that classical music took place in. By 9pm, the venue was packed with several hundred people. There were no seats at all, so people were either sitting on the floor, or standing around the walls, already most with beer or wine in hand. Almost everyone in the room was under 35.

The programme was Handel, concerti grossi and operatic arias. The twelve-piece orchestra stood on the small stage. The entire programme was compèred by a very informal and engaging presenter with a radio microphone who went among the performers between each piece interviewing them about their instruments, the challenges of playing in period style or of these pieces, and eliciting their sense of engagement with, and enthusiasm for, this music. There was lots of potential for audience response, laughter, and conversations with neighbours, freedom to move around the space. There was very much a party atmosphere. The playing and singing were first rate and it was noticeable that during the playing and singing there was pretty much absolute silence. The applause was frequent, vocal and enthusiastic, and was clearly buoying the performers up as well as the whole room. I felt I'd not only met Handel and a wonderful performance of his works but I had met the performers and their enthusiasms and I had met my fellow audience members in a quite unique way.

When engaging the audience in this way one might ask how much of this is the

responsibility of the musician? The received conservatoire view of the earlier-mid 20th century perhaps, is that the musician's job is to play to his or her best ability; all the other stuff is done by someone else. Which someone else? How trained? How in communication with the musicians or audience? These are interesting questions, whose traditional answers place this responsibility at the door of the impresario, the producer, the venue manager, the orchestral manager, the public relations person, the critic, and the programme note writer. On a traditional model, all, or most of those will have had little or no contact with the musicians as such, who just show up, get their instruments out of their cases and play. Our perspective is that the musician needs to be a part of this team: receptive to what is being asked of them and in some contexts, playing a more engaged role.

5) Why are classical musicians, and those who promote them, not as focused on audiences as some may argue they might be?

We're going to argue that it's not part of the values or discourse around classical music to focus on the audience. The audience is not the most important issue in classical music. Rather, it is the work. So far we've mainly considered the relationship between the performer and the audience, but more important than that to classical music is another relationship, namely the performers' relationship, or sense of duty if you like, to the composer and the work.

It is apparent, through even a brief engagement with musicians, their practices and academic literature, that the score is regarded as an authority, and through scrutinizing the score, performers aim to access the composer's intentions. This concern of musicians for the composer's intentions as manifested through the score was part of a shift in musical values which came to full force in the nineteenth century. Music went from being used primarily as an accompaniment to something else – church ceremonies, theatre, dancing, social occasions – to be revered in, and of itself, an art for art's sake. With this, music became an object to be reproduced, rather than an ephemeral practice.

During the course of the twentieth century improvisation went out and interpretation came in. The fate of improvisation illustrates particularly well a point about the relationship between performer and the audience. Up to Mozart's time, performers were expected to improvise as a mark of their musicianship. We have mentioned contemporary audiences' wish to experience live music as more of an event, and this is a historical example of just that, as audiences in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century came to hear the improvisational prowess of performers rather than a particular work or composer. But as musical values changed in the nineteenth century it was not so much the performers that the audiences came to hear, but the works of particular composers.

Both performer and audiences came to concerts primarily, not to have a relationship with each other but to realise a relationship with the composer and his great works. The performer became a medium, the conduit for the voice of the composer. Even today, as Nicholas Cook has pointed out (1998, 25), performers are said to have given good performances if they have effaced themselves and brought out the composer's intentions. At its most polarised, this view is put forward by Stravinsky when he

distinguished between performers, who are ‘executors’ and those who are ‘interpreters’, cautioning that interpreters subject to ‘criminal assault’ the ‘faithful transmission of the composer’s will’, ‘sinning against the spirit of the work’ (1947, 163).

If this was a caution about a performer exercising too much charisma, Stravinsky’s great modernist rival Schoenberg also had his suspicions about paying too much attention to audience response. Schoenberg took to sidestepping the conservative general public of Vienna, who greeted his works with incomprehension, instead preferring to present new works to small member only societies. Through the writings of Adorno, audiences were characterised by having the worst kind of popular taste, symptomatic of the commodification of culture. They couldn’t be relied upon to know what was good for them. If the audience failed to recognise great music when they heard it, then what could musicians do? So, by the twentieth century, composers could be seen as separating themselves off, both from performers and audiences. The performers’ mission came to be a medium for the composer’s voice, and the audience, which was not to be trusted, was kept at arm’s length.

These values, a duty to the composer’s score rather than the audience, were reproduced and institutionalised in education. The Paris Conservatoire opened in 1795 and its continued development reflected embodied changes in musical values, providing the model for how we train musicians. The curriculum they used then is still familiar to us today. Getting the composer’s score right was a hallmark of the new conservatoire education which also saw the shift from performers as ornamenters or improvisers or composers, to being faithful interpreters of other people’s music.

This was encouraged through an emphasis on specialism in a single instrument or vocal type, a pursuit of virtuosic technique, to be able to accurately realise the composer’s score, and a standardisation of musical performance. One method of standardisation was that acclaimed professors at the Paris Conservatoire were required to publish their teaching manuals. This meant that all students in the school could use the same teaching materials. So, where previously the teacher’s individual artistry and idiosyncrasy would have driven lessons and the musician’s ability to do a job or please an audience would have been the most important marker of success, now standards were being established and maintained by adherence to official standards as monitored through exams and prizes. By the end of the nineteenth century, rather than being seen as a professional training school or a route to employment, conservatoires, which had mushroomed in every European country, America, Russia and beyond, were seen as protectors of certain musical standards, both of technique and in interpretation.

This worked for nineteenth century audiences who were happy to receive canonical works from great composers via technically accomplished performers acting as mediators, according to the relatively narrow parameters of accepted interpretation. However, the majority of today’s younger audiences, as mentioned above, want something different. In the absence of deference for these cherished works and composers they are seeking a relationship with the performer. One further example, in addition to those listed above, are the LSO’s events designed to meet the performer, which have enjoyed popular success. From wanting to know more about the work through a pre-concert lecture, audiences now would prefer to meet the performers

themselves. The emphasis it seems has shifted back from the composer to the performer. But as music students prepare for the professional world, do we encourage them to think about their audiences as well as the composer or the work? Does our current advanced education, still largely following a nineteenth century model, prepare them for this? This is a question that some at the Guildhall School have been applying their minds to.

6. How can conservatoire training be enriched to equip musicians with more audience awareness?

One approach being tried at the Guildhall, capitalising on its status as both a music and drama school, is to involve musicians in projects where they work alongside drama students. Before we present the outcomes of some empirical research based on interviews with students involved in these collaborative projects, we will outline some of the findings from a literature review comparison of values in music and drama.⁶ We found that drama had completely different attitudes towards audience and their equivalent of the score, the text, than musicians. Firstly, performance to an audience is thought of as being an inseparable part of theatre, whereas in music it is possible to play in private for your own personal enjoyment. There are whole genres of keyboard music or chamber pieces, designed to be played only for the benefit of the people in the room. Theatre, practitioners tell us, unlike reading, requires an audience to be theatre at all. So let's compare the differences this brings about.

We have already touched on conventions of audience behaviour. Theatre audiences it seems, never lost permission to show appreciation or response while the performance is taking place. By contrast, audience members at classical music concerts are regarded as backward if they start clapping between movements of sonatas or symphonies, let alone during the middle of a performance. When one of us raised this issue as a discussion topic with students in a class, a student was heard saying 'yeah, you know at concerts when those really stupid people start clapping between movements'; that's the sort of feeling there is even in the younger generation of performers if an audience member wants to show their appreciation.

This anecdote forms a bridge to our next point, that music and drama differ in whether they see the audience as collaborators, an integral part of the performance, or as something separate or incidental. In the acting and theatre studies literature there are constant references to the concept of the audience as being a collaborator in a performance. There isn't a notion of an ideal type performance existing in the text or somewhere out there that the performers were trying to realise, but rather it seems that the audience finished off the process of theatre. They were seen as being integral to the performance. This contrasts with both the literature about and the practice of music performance, where the audience is very much seen as separate from the process of performance; the performance is already fully formed in terms of the musicians working out their interpretation and then it's presented to the audience who are seen as an extra-musical element. While the performance is happening 'over here', the audience are seen as 'out there', an incidental rather than integral part of the

⁶ Ford and Sloboda, 2012 'Learning from artistic and pedagogical differences between musicians' and actors' traditions through collaborative processes' in H. Gaunt and H. Westerland *Collaborative Learning in Higher Music Education: Why, What and How?*, (Ashgate).

experience of live performance.

Developments in twentieth century avant-garde theatre and music have taken these two different ways of thinking about the audience in opposite directions, so theatre has been concerned with ever more active forms of audience participation where in some instances audience members through their participation actually become the subject. Though these experiences can be disorientating as well as empowering for audience members, they signal a clear desire on the part of theatre-makers to create new relationships between audience and performers.⁷ It is hard to find an equivalent in music; whilst mainstream pop music culture embraces fans' vocal or physical participation, avant-garde 'art' music, by and large presumes a traditional seated, silent audience.

It appears that these attitudes to audience are reproduced in training too. Whilst musicians are taught through the principal study system in one-to-one lessons and are then expected to engage in individual solo practice to improve and learn repertoire, actors train in groups. Though music students do rehearse in ensembles, the majority of their practice time is spent alone, so the experience of performing to others often feels unfamiliar. Although actors are expected to do some voice work and learn their lines on an individual basis, the bulk of their learning, skill acquisition and rehearsal of repertoire takes place in groups. Thus throughout their training, they have a sense of performing to an audience, even if it is just the company of actors in the room.

The Guildhall School projects which brought together music and acting students collaboratively lead to some new discoveries for the musicians taking part. The distinctive element of all these projects was the onstage interaction of musicians and actors. Rather than sitting hidden or offstage, the musicians, as well as performing music, took part in the stage action, becoming part of the actors' ensemble. Actors either took part in the musical performance through song or vocal soundscapes and it was a creative challenge to see how music, musicians and their instruments could be incorporated into the dramatic action. Rehearsals took place together, intensively, as a single company over a period of several weeks. This contrasts with other more traditional models of collaboration for opera or musicals where actors prepare separately from the orchestra and are then joined by musicians at a late stage, often, because of economic or timetabling constraints, for the first time just in the dress rehearsal.

The different kinds of actor/musician collaboration that took place at the Guildhall and that the empirical data was gathered from ranged from text-based, that is realising a play with a musical score and a text, to fully devised work, so performers through improvisation workshops devised either the play or the music, or sometimes both. This devised work has also included input from a composer and dramaturge to guide improvisation workshops or to knit improvisatory fragments into a larger structure to come up with the final work to be performed. Research was undertaken on these collaborations so that musicians and actors were interviewed both before and after the projects began, and we draw on data from three projects here. One was text-based and the other two were devised. There were both artistic and educational benefits recorded from these musician-actor collaborations, and we use the earlier outlined categories of

⁷ See Freshwater, 2009 *Theatre and Audience* (Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke) p. 55.

established versus new, predictable versus unpredictable, impersonal versus personal and inactive versus active, to discuss the results of what the musicians reported working alongside actors.

We first look at the “established versus new” dimension. From a *modus operandi* of performing off-stage using a score, musicians had to revise their roles. For example, a cellist who was playing onstage throughout a song became implicated as a character from the drama. Whilst providing the musical backdrop, she also became the character the actor was singing about and by the end of the song she became part of the action. With the devised projects, there was a further departure from the established norm of performing canonical repertoire, which was cast aside as musicians adopted roles of improviser-composer, making them think about the role of music in relation to the narrative or stage action. Musicians reported finding ways to be creative as improvisers which felt like they were exercising different creative muscles because they weren’t thinking solely in terms of interpretation.

Our next category: predictable versus unpredictable. Music students reported discovering a sense of spontaneity in their performance, through both improvisation and being in contact with actors. They contrasted this against their mainstream studies where they said that the goal was perfection; as one student said 'in classical performance, perfection is everything'.⁸ When interpreting works, a student described his experience of performance as:

You have been working on a piece and then you have to go and deliver it. There is no interaction from different people and everything is quiet. You go in there and you play [...], everything has been prepared and practiced for many, many hours.

However, through improvised performance, students reported a renewed sense of spontaneity. In this, they were also influenced by the actors' attitudes towards risk-taking and creative play in rehearsal. In opposition to the classical music quest for perfection, the director of one project said 'for actors it's fundamental to their process to accept that they must fail and fail again'.⁹

Some students said that they'd managed to carry the spirit of spontaneity back across to their mainstream classical repertoire, so after they'd had these experiences with actors they felt that they'd reconnected with that initial impulse of fun that they'd had when they were younger. There was one student in particular who said that just before he went onstage he remembered the spirit of risk-taking and playfulness of what he'd done with the actors and tried to recapture it in classical performance. Another student who had reported being profoundly affected by collaborative work also said his teacher had noticed a difference of her students who were taking part in the project and asked 'what are you [...] doing there?'

⁸ See also Biranda Ford, 2011, *What are Conservatoires for?* Phd thesis, IOE, University of London, p. 128/153 for a discussion of the aesthetic and pedagogical drivers behind perfection as a cherished musical value.

⁹ John Sloboda, 2011, *What do musicians and actors learn by working together? 'The Last Five Years': A Case Study*. Guildhall School of Music & Drama, Research Working Paper, 11/01, p. 5. <http://www.gsmd.ac.uk/understandingaudiences>). Accessed 18.04.12.

Thirdly, impersonal to personal: this manifested itself in how music students were thinking about their audiences. Music students said that they found actors' warm up routines, where all students were in a circle doing exercises to connect with each other embedded the notion of preparing for public performance into their regular practice. Instead of preparing their interpretation of a work in a practice room in an abstract sense and only thinking about the audience near to the time of the concert or not at all, students said they were more inclined to think about their audiences, and how to project their ideas across to them during their regular practice.

Musicians also found another way of communicating with an audience, a regular concern of actors, through physical presence. A music student commented on this saying that in collaborative work:

‘...presence was much more important here, and we were incredibly aware of our bodies and how we act with our bodies as well. Whereas in a classical concert you are just here as a violinist, you’re incredibly focused on what you’re doing up here, and in performance you don’t really think about the rest of you, whereas with actors I’m really aware of where I am in the space and how I’m projecting outwards.’

This had an impact on how musicians thought of not just the sound that was coming out, but also the physical motions that they used to convey that message.

Finally passive versus active. Music students reported feeling closer to the audience as the theatre audiences were more immediately responsive. Speaking at the outset of collaboration, some said they had no way of knowing what audience members felt in classical concerts until they clapped at the end, and some said that even the clapping at the end they felt to be quite uniform and perfunctory from concert to concert. So students were saying ‘well, I turn up and I play, and audiences just clap as they’re scripted to do’. They didn’t report noting a difference between audiences’ response in a good performance or a bad performance. However, with taking part in collaborative work, music students noticed a difference in audience reaction. This might have been because the performance space was extremely small so that the audience was in close proximity, but the musicians said that they actually noticed the audience reactions during the performance - for some musicians they declared this was the first time they’d actually felt a relationship with the audience during a performance. A student remarked: ‘you’re used to sitting on a platform and it all gets very serious and very professional, so it was great to actually feel a closer relationship with the audience.’

In conclusion, we have attempted to look at difference facets of how classical music can be said to differ from other arts in respect to musicians’ relationships to audiences and audiences’ relationships to classical music events. We’ve presented some of the historical background of why musicians aren’t focused on their audiences, and by outlining some of the projects that have been happening at the Guildhall school, we have suggested how musicians can learn different ways to be onstage and different ways to communicate with audiences. What musicians can do to bring classical music to new audiences is admittedly going to be a complex task but we hope to have provided a few pointers.