

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF MUSIC

# Creating a Positive Future for Art Music

## BACKGROUND PAPER

NASM Annual Meeting 2005

**This paper has been produced as a resource for several NASM Annual Meeting sessions. It is not an accreditation or policy statement of NASM and must not be referenced as such. Attendees are asked to read the paper before attending the sessions associated with this topic.**

The term *art music* has been italicized throughout this paper for the purpose of causing the term to reflect a concept rather than designate a specific set of repertoires. By considering *art music* as a common concept rather than debating over individual definitions, discussion can focus on how to create a positive future for the music included in each person's individual definition.

### I. Introduction

#### A. A Difficult Topic

As the year 2005 draws to a close, most professionals working in NASM member institutions, their colleagues in other institutions, and their colleagues in the professional creation and presentation worlds of classical music and/or jazz and/or any one or more of the other *art musics* of the world, have anxieties about the public future for the kind of musical endeavor that engages them deeply. As this paper will show, there are many reasons for these anxieties. Underlying them, and in part producing them, are the difficulties of talking about the topic that we have chosen to address. Using the term *art music* in these NASM sessions will surely produce an automatic negative reaction in some readers. However, late 20th century critical thinking, as valuable as its insights may be, does not preempt other perspectives or obviate present realities and projections. Words are strung into theories, and theories can be valuable, but neither words nor theories are music. Theorizing is not a substitute for the loss of public presence of certain kinds of music, or the loss of opportunities or incentives for public engagement with a breadth of musical expression. And so, for purposes of this discussion, we ask each person to define the term *art music* in a way that makes them comfortable, or, if necessary, find another term. However terms are formulated and defined, issues remain. Naming questions must not obscure or deny discussion of the issues.

Perhaps it helps to think about *art music* on the basis of what it takes to understand music *as* music. Understanding music *as* music is quite different than understanding or working *with* music in its commercial, sociological, economic, political, or other dimensions. How much understanding of how music functions sociologically, economically, or politically does it take to understand a specific work in terms of how it is structured musically or what it achieves in terms of the art medium itself? The answer is: "virtually none." These other dimensions are useful, fruitful, and important, but music is usually designated and treated as *art* by musicians on the basis of what it achieves in terms of music, not in terms of something else.

Longevity is another indicator typically used to identify *art music*. How long does a particular piece or genre continue to “speak” to listeners? What is its staying power?

Over the centuries, many other indicators have been presented and debated in a search for definitive descriptions of the elements or properties of works of art. Fortunately, this debate continues. We ask our readers to use any of these indicators that are useful to them because in terms of creating a positive public future for *art music*, the rightness or utility of any of these indicators or arguments about them pale in comparison to the cultural challenge ahead.

So, let us begin with the agreement that words and phrases in the conversation are imperfect and set our goal on comprehensive understanding rather than semantic perfection. The topic is difficult to name, but it is even more difficult to address. It seems reasonable to spend the most energy addressing the topic directly.

## **B. Art as Idea, Art as Work, Art as a Work**

A vast range of aspirations seems evident in any field of endeavor. An architect may aspire in one moment to build a four-room dwelling and in another to create a complex laboratory or even a whole new town. The architect will need to bring high levels of intellect, experience, and expertise to conception and creation at any level of inspiration or aspiration. Combinations of artistic and intellectual aspiration and hard work with the craft of the art form to realize an idea are central features of art making. The result is a product, a work of art in some form. So often, when the future of *art music* is considered, the discussion never gets beyond the art as a work or the artist who creates it. In other words, the discussion is based on the artist or the art as a commodity and the potential futures for that commodity. In fewer circumstances, the discussion centers on the work that various arts professionals do. Here, attention is given to the well-being of those who make and/or teach art. Discussions of this nature are based in personal and organizational economy.

It is extremely rare, however, to hear a futures discussion of art and culture that focuses on the nature, content, and trajectory of aspiration. For example, we worry publicly about the future audience for Mozart festivals. We worry about the futures of individuals who have devoted their lives to being able to present the music of Mozart in a credible way. But we don't think or worry very much about the extent to which the aspiration to work artistically or to support work artistically at the level Mozart achieved is being maintained. Therefore, much discussion about current problems and future efforts avoids a focus on the extent to which aspiration at this high level is understood and supported, irrespective of its particular manifestations in various genres and works. In many ways, this is the equivalent of talking about electricity in terms of appliances and transmission lines, and never in terms of power generation.

Of course, selling works of art is important, as is economic and other kinds of support for arts professionals. But ask yourself this question: Beyond the arts themselves, and even within the arts, how many people hold a general aspiration for high artistic achievement (in our case, in musical terms) that is comparable to the aspiration they hold for the idea of high scientific achievement, even if they are not sophisticated about science? This is a clarifying question because it reveals what each of us thinks about the general understanding of and aspiration for music as a vehicle for the highest intellectual achievements. What is the scientific or mathematical equivalent of an Oscar Peterson improvisation? These questions are all sobering because of the relationships between (1) understanding and aspiration and (2) the ability to build and sustain capacities and capabilities.

### C. A Strategic Necessity

This paper presents an overview of a vastly complex set of issues that have an impact on present situations and future developments with *art music*. If we are to make the best individual and institutional decisions, facing this complexity foursquarely is a strategic necessity, especially with the consideration that there is no one best solution for every situation. It is not prudent to pretend that a problem is simple or an aspiration easy to achieve when it is not. It is also imprudent to overestimate challenges and difficulties, or to let their presence become debilitating. Since there are many conceptual forces and policy frameworks creating various present situations and contexts for *art music*, there is no single solution or technical set of steps that will make things better. This is not the kind of statement that most music professionals like to hear. There is a tendency to believe that if we can just do what we are doing *better*, or if we just talk about it or otherwise advocate for or market it more effectively, our problems will be solved. These approaches work partially, but there are indications now that they may not be enough by themselves.

To create a positive future, we need to talk about adding new elements to our repertory of approaches and new understandings about present conditions, future prospects, and ways to make productive steps between them. And so, to be positive, we must face two strategic necessities. One is to be realistic about our situation comprehensively, and the other is to have faith that our own aspirations for *art music* can be better fulfilled if in the aggregate we as a field do many different things. The many things we need to do include things that we are currently doing and new things, some of which are yet to be determined or discovered. No doubt, there are also things we should stop doing.

## II. Purpose and Organization

This paper seeks to present the breadth of issues associated with the future of *art music*. It does so as the basis for individual thought and action. Although not a perfect way to organize material, we have found no better approach than to center our analysis on internal and external conditions and forces. Mentioning something as an issue or force does not mean that it is important or pertinent to every situation. Our purpose here is to deal comprehensively, nationally, and strategically with the present situation and future prospects. The mention of a particular idea, line of analysis, or condition does not indicate that NASM or the writers are in support or agreement. Our goal is an honest assessment of the situation, which includes presenting items that may be troubling to individuals and groups, but that clearly represent ideas and forces in the contextual mix. In most cases, our goal is to report presence rather than assign weight or value. The paper begins with basic questions, continues with lists of conditions, issues, and forces, and concludes with futures issues and recommendations. The paper also contains “interludes” that cite relevant facts or present conditions.

## III. Three Overarching and Interrelated Questions

### (1) What would a successful future for *art music* look like?

This question is posed to be answered in terms of general, overall health in the *art music* field, not just in terms of the welfare of specific music professionals, schools, performing organizations, or support sector efforts. What do you think would need to be in place in order to indicate and support a successful future? What are all the elements of that future: efforts and results in composition, improvisation, performance, education, scholarship, audience development, marketing and distribution, funding, institutional numbers, sizes, scopes, and so forth? In the successful future you project, how would these and other music sectors relate to and support each other? What would be

different? How would you prioritize the weight given to each sector in the successful future you envision in your individual circumstance or within your institution?

**(2) What are the survival factors for *art music*?**

A survival factor is an element or condition that, if removed, will cause something to fail. What must *art music* have in order to maintain a public presence? *Art music* depends, for example, on a continuous supply of highly developed musical abilities in creators and performers. The issue is the high level, not whether the level was achieved through formal education. *Art music* must maintain and expand a body of work or repertory. *Art music* needs listeners and amateur music makers. It needs sufficient understanding and support to create essential financial resources. This support may be public or private, but it must come from those who value *art music*. Take a moment to ponder the extent to which *art music* would die if there were no external financial support. Although a loss to this degree seems unlikely, it is interesting to speculate whether musicians would keep *art music* going even if they had to do other things to support the effort financially. It seems clear that many musicians seeking to work in the fields of *art music* are willing to assume such responsibilities.

As was pointed out last year in a paper on the future of music education, there is a significant difference between survival and health. In developing a policy analysis, it is important to keep the two concepts clear, even though the issues associated with each are related. For example, is it possible that survival of *art music* depends on (a) the continuing birth of individuals who have natural musical gifts and who, one way or another, develop high levels of aspiration for musical endeavor, and (b) the availability of senior musicians who can help newcomers with *art music* aspirations to advance faster than they would be able to by themselves? To what extent are these musicians – young, middle-aged, and old – the core makers and/or the core audience for *art music* in addition to being its core continuers?

Beyond survival, however, it is clear that much more is needed to produce the kind of health that would characterize a positive future. It is important to consider the extent to which the current rhetoric about the death of classical music, for example, is primarily about real and symbolic events and gestures that signify its loss of health, particularly in terms of media attention and market share. Further, to what extent are we substituting the health of institutions and delivery systems for the health of the aspiration, capability, and potential associated with music making? If this analysis so far has merit, one may reach a tentative conclusion: It is not the survival of *art music* that is in question, but rather the health of *art music* in American society now and in the future.

**(3) Who is responsible for the future of *art music*? Or, who is responsible for the survival of *art music*, and who is responsible for the health of *art music*?**

John Perry Barlow, a former lyricist for the Grateful Dead, spoke in the recent past about a shift from “the music business” to “the musician business.” A critically important issue is the extent to which fundamental responsibility for something can be undertaken by those who cannot do or understand “the thing” itself. Reading almost any arts policy analysis, one is struck by a pervading notion that both art and the culture it creates and influences have their sources in planning by individuals who are not artists themselves. Somehow, planning events and projects and making art are conflated. For professionals who make, present, teach, and study an art form, this view seems benighted. Such a conclusion is virtually impossible to articulate because doing so could lead to loss of funding.

To what extent do you believe that the future of *art music*, in terms of its survival, rests squarely on the shoulders of musicians, and that the future, in terms of health, rests on the shoulders of musicians and many others? It is interesting to pose questions about the extent to which higher

education, the private sector, governments, philanthropists, and other sub-groupings within these are responsible for the future of *art music*, particularly in terms of survival and health.

#### **IV. External Issues and Forces Producing Pressures on *Art Music***

Below we have listed many external issues and forces that seem to be affecting the future of *art music*. This is not an exhaustive list, but one of manageable length covering as many major points as we could identify through reading and thinking. Remember, the list is reporting, not evaluating or prioritizing. The order of the issues on the list is random. Remember, too, that every issue or force is not present in all circumstances, and that, in fact, the list contains issues and forces that are contradictory.

- A. Vast downward adjustments in the amount of leisure time available to many with inclinations toward, education in, or interests in pursuing one or more genres of *art music*.** This condition is usually discussed in terms of concert-going or the growth of home-centered leisure, but it also affects other aspects of the *art music* situation.
- B. Explosions of cultural choices and thus, a wider spectrum of opportunities for individual focus.** Individual preferences can be easily narrowed to ever-smaller territories, especially given conditions described in item A. above. Vastness of choice can produce any reaction on the spectrum from heightened interest in exploration to a tighter grasp on the security of the familiar.
- C. Loss of respect and thus, aspirations for a common or shared culture.** The idea of shared culture has been superceded in many minds by the concept of one or more choices between many separate cultures. Among other things, such an approach turns specific cultures into generic commodities in competition with each other. Such competition usually presents “either/or” rather than “both/and” arguments.
- D. Losses of and changes to music education programs in primary and secondary schools.** Philosophical changes have changed orientations to *art music*, and in some cases minimized attention to *art music* genres or aspirations. The loss of music education programs in many large urban areas is seen to have a negative effect on general understanding and support for major *art music* performing groups headquartered in these same large cities.
- E. Time pressures combined with increased buying power and technological innovation result in a culture where music is thought of increasingly in terms of immediate gratification.** Small amounts of leisure time and the technological means for creating one’s own passive musical world can be disincentives to musical exploration. As one music industry executive questioned: How do we get from iPod to “I play?”
- F. Marketing philosophies that tend to deny the value of, or completely ignore, things that occupy the interests of small numbers of people.** Such views tend to equate value with market share. For *art music*, such equations pose difficulties for both advocacy and education.
- G. Marketing philosophies that seek to place people into niches, thus narrowing their perspectives to the extent of making cultural manifestations outside their niche unattractive.**
- H. Political views across the spectrum from left to right that deny the value of *art music* on its own terms, placing other criteria ahead of musical ones in discussing meaning, value, and support.**
- I. Demographic changes.** These produce all kinds of pressures, including arguments that cultural content should follow population proportions or generational changes. Such arguments assume that

cultural-artistic potentials and interests are established primarily by demographic criteria. Such a view can be in conflict with aspirations to produce a breadth of education in music or the other arts.

- J. Economics and futures of entertainment and media.** This includes the huge adjustment to the changing nature of information sources, especially for people who might be oriented toward *art music*. Information flows have changed radically. The nature and weight of major media authority has also changed radically.
- K. Goals in advocacy and philanthropy that tend to focus on the utilitarian values of the arts.** This point is related to item H. above. For about forty years now, the American people have been sold the idea of supporting the arts in terms of economic benefits, improving educational performance in other disciplines, and so forth. The impact is obvious on the kind of aspirations generally held for the arts by artists. A symptom is the current unwillingness to provide comprehensive sustaining support for an organizational mission focused on the making and promoting of art. One result is constant mission shift, or public perception thereof, as applicants and organizations chase funding-justification trends.
- L. Intellectual positions negative toward Western values and cultural achievements.** This condition is important because a significant portion of the world's legacy and capability for *art music* resides in or is associated with the West. In many ways, Western civilization *art music* has been subject to vigorous intellectual attack along with other aspects of Western civilization. Perceptions about *art music* have been affected by intellectual competition between two kinds of multiculturalism: one that embraces the West as a part of the whole, and another that uses multiculturalism as a weapon against the West.
- M. Talent in regard to issues of access and equality in a democracy.** Study associated with *art music* often reveals immediately the considerable differences in natural endowments among individuals. Such graphic demonstrations, especially so early, counter notions that education and other social conditions are sole or primary factors in equity. Reactions to such graphic demonstrations reflect different positions in the nature versus nurture debate. The presence and identification of talent can become politicized.
- The issue of talent also appears to be a stumbling block in that people can come to feel that *art music* is only the province of the talented, that it is beyond the reach of those without innate musical ability. For example, a number of observers suggest that many citizens do not regard talent in *art music*, in the same way as talent in sports. Talent in many other areas does not seem to establish such a barrier.
- N. Battles over the definition of civilization, and the role of culture in it.** There are numerous value-development settings where generic words like heritage, art, culture, and so forth are either attacked or debated in terms of their alleged oppressive significations and characteristics. Whatever side one takes in these debates, the debates themselves reinforce the concept that art or work in one of the art forms is only valuable in terms of something else, whether that be political or social impact, ideological advancement, advocacy, merchandising, and so forth. It is quite a different thing to work in one of the two following contexts: (1) where the term civilization is automatically understood as connoting inclusivity, and (2) where civilization is automatically understood as connoting exclusivity.
- O. Level of perfection reached and therefore expected particularly in the performance of *art music*.** High technical levels of composition and performance combine with advanced recording technologies to produce conditions that impact the preparation and reception of live performance. Individuals can hear what they determine to be the finest performances at any time and under

almost any conditions they choose. They do not have to contribute to the financial or artistic health of current live performers if they do not wish to do so. There is also the view that clinical perfection produces distance, even coldness, and that performance competitions produce uniformity of interpretation with an emphasis on technical perfection rather than expression.

- P. Severe pressures on the recording industry due, in part, to technological advances that permit file sharing and the loss of profits in the recording industry as a whole.** The field-wide effect of present conditions in rock music and other popular genres, where the musicians often make far more money on tours than on the sale of recordings, is an indicator that older recording industry practices are under contextual pressures. Clearly, technological advances have affected and will continue to affect the delivery of music to individuals.
- Q. The changing nature of news and information including an increased presence for infotainment.** This force is apparent in the delivery of news to ever-smaller niches. The difficulty of determining facts in a world of hype and spin is juxtaposed with many individual retreats from the mass information world of big media to the individualized world of blogs and other niche information sources. In this possible progression toward a kind of ever-fragmenting tribalization, there is a loss of common facts, as well as a loss of common interpretations. These conditions change general and individual concepts of importance and value, and produce a greater diversity among the number of conceptual filters individuals use to consider information.
- R. A parallel cultural delivery system on the Internet and through other technologies.** Message boards, newsgroups, e-mail lists, blogging, and other forms of technologically mediated information exchanges essentially bypass old media forms. These technologies have clearly reduced the virtual monopolies of big media and their conventional formats on delivery of cultural products, this in addition to their impact on news, analysis, and other opinion-shaping mechanisms mentioned in item Q. above.
- S. Pervasiveness of belief in technical solutions to every problem or issue.** The predominance of the scientific, but especially technical, paradigm in thinking about all kinds of issues irrespective of their amenability to scientific analysis or technical solution. Though rhetorically discounted, the “one size fits all” concept remains powerful, in part because of its political utility in increasing centralized control.
- T. Efforts to blend “the arts” in all sorts of circumstances irrespective of appropriateness or applicability.** This reduces public and policy focus on specific art forms, and has impacts on educational issues such as development or revision of P–12 arts curricula.
- U. Identity marking and identity politics that filter all choices through relatively narrow perspectives.** One result can be a lack of openness to differences and thus, more individual and group isolation.
- V. Relative paucity of public subsidy.** This issue is often mentioned as a critical reason for a lack of support for *art music*. These arguments have been shaken recently by system-wide decisions at NPR to reduce the presentation of *art music*, the presentation of this music being one of the reasons NPR was founded in the first place.

Another issue arises when *art music* is identified as a category for public subsidy. In a democracy, pressures soon rise to include all music in the *art music* category. It is almost impossible to retain exclusivity for a positive symbol, especially if funding is attached to it. Some will see this as a good thing, and some, not. However, the fact itself is a force. The larger the subsidy, the stronger the force.

- W. Concepts of culture as means of individual retreat far more than issues of advancement of specific civilizations or civilization broadly conceived.** There is reluctance to talk about common civilization building; the focus is on consumption of specific cultural commodities.
- X. Loss of *art music* in the worship patterns of many religious institutions and organizations.** The result is a lack of exposure and experience with *art music* for many millions of people.
- Y. The role of music in youth culture and the role of youth culture in music.** Youth culture values such as the emphasis on sensation, moment-to-moment stimulation, newness, speed, and lack of personal effort are not consistent with many of the values necessary to learn or appreciate or advance the cause of *art music*. The focus of youth cultures is on ever-changing fads that address an extremely narrow range of cultural possibilities, and thus not conducive to education programs in music or any other subject that promotes aspirations for breadth of experience or learning. The youth marketing culture tends to promote personality over achievement, particularly in conditions where many individuals are famous simply for being famous, at least for their allotted time.
- Z. Vast sophistication achieved with techniques of mass manipulation, and the countering backlash as technology makes people increasingly capable of (1) decoupling access to cultural preferences from commercial messages and (2) living in their own aesthetic and cultural world.**
- AA. Intellectual and political opposition to aesthetic evaluation and judgment.** The rise of relativism and the notion that, at least in cultural milieus, hierarchical valuing is a negative, are not consistent with the way music deals with the quality and value of what it does. Problematic conditions are produced by a conflation of (a) elitism as a passion for or appreciation of outstanding work and (b) elitism as condescension and snobbism. Judgment and being judgmental are also regularly conflated.
- BB. High achievements with musical content can be enjoyed or appreciated without knowing anything about music, or understanding “how music works.”** One result is a perception that music in general has no “intellectual” content or structure. This fact about general musical understanding has broad impact on views about the purposes, intensity, and content of general education in music.
- CC. Perceptions and assertions that *art music* is “owned” or “the province of” the wealthy and educated who patronize, and/or subsidize, and/or control various cultural bureaucracies associated with it.** This condition coupled with the relationship of talent to democracy and fairness addressed in item M. above, are major drivers of the elitism as snobbism conflation. Many people using “elitism” as an attack buzzword have little or no understanding of achievement in musical terms.
- DD. The necessity of working in cultural and educational environments that are increasingly driven by pure marketing considerations.** We live and work in a total marketing society where the pursuit of positive images is paramount. Serious imbalances have produced aversions to issues of content or considerations of long-term security, especially in terms of maintaining a strong set of public values that provide a foundation for efforts over time. A constant stream of positive images is all that matters.



## V. Interlude – What Music Can Do

It seems clear to most musicians that if you understand the elements of musical logic, the concept of thinking in music, or if you can think in music yourself, then it is always possible to think of doing more with music or doing music differently than it has been done before, but at equivalent levels of sophistication. Such thinking applies whether sophistication (a) is expressed through simplicity, complexity, or some combination of the two, and/or (b) results in work that is shallow or deep. None of these terms is pejorative. When you understand about thinking *in* music, or you can do it to some extent yourself, complexity and depth in music become interesting, and simplicity and shallowness take on new levels of meaning. For one thing, complexity, depth, simplicity, and shallowness are usually elements in complex works.

One of the fundamental purposes of education is to introduce individuals to things they do not know and help them to become capable across a range of areas. Such capabilities make life more interesting and broaden respect for other people and things in terms that include, but go far beyond the political. Such a concept only works on a mass scale when education is seen as something valuable on its own terms as well as in terms of supporting other individual and societal needs.

One of the purposes of a general education in music, therefore, is to help those who will not be music professionals understand the range of things music can do, beyond the music they know and/or like.

Given the range of external forces listed in section IV. above, and others that may be important to you that have not been mentioned, consider this question: what is the nature of our challenge to help large numbers of people understand what music can do beyond what it does for them at the present moment? And, thus, what is the relationship of the nature of your answer to creating a more positive or healthy future for *art music*?

## VI. Internal Issues and Forces Producing Pressure on *Art Music*

In this section, we identify many issues and forces within the *art music* communities that are combining in various ways and in various circumstances. This list is comprehensive, but not exhaustive. The presence of an issue here is more in terms of reporting and valuing. As was the case with the external issues, not every issue or force is present or applicable to every situation and the list contains contradictory forces.

**A. The highly competitive nature of *art music* at the professional level.** Conditions are such that many are called, but few are “chosen” for careers at the highest observable international level. Unfortunately, in much of the world of *art music*, the highest observable international level is the only level that seems to matter. For example, classical music, in particular, seems to exhibit an internal culture of individual or even institutional failure. If you are not a household word, you are a failure. The competition is so great and so personality driven and the stakes for winning and losing are so high, that a focus on music itself is often difficult to maintain, especially in the ways *art music* is presented publicly.

**B. Internally, much of the *art music* world practices a kind of smug disdain with many professionals exhibiting an internalized hierarchy of values based to a significant degree on symbols that are carefully created and protected.** A community centered on a particular form of *art music* can be the location of tremendous snobbism or condescension to others within or outside that community. Unfortunately, this condition can be observed between proponents of genres as well as across the various types of work associated with the field. There are many tendencies to present value in terms of who we are with (or not with) rather than what we are doing and how it is related to what others are doing.

- C. Inabilities to see and show sufficient respect for the importance of all parts of the systems needed to support optimum health in *art music*.** Designation of teaching as a second-class occupation – a place for failures – is a prime example. An overall lack of sophistication about the whole too often places the parts in counterproductive competition for attention and resources. The creation/presentation, education, and support sectors do not cooperate as they could and should to support a comprehensive future for *art music*. There is much personal reciprocity in the world of *art music*, far less tactical reciprocity, and almost no strategic reciprocity. To what extent is this condition a source of weakness?
- D. The assumption that there is a finite “resources pie” and that the primary policy goal is to prevent more claims for slices of this pie.** This idea produces rhetoric calling for the diminution of the number of professionally prepared musicians and teachers because there are “more than the market will absorb.” There is a failure here to look at the possibility of enlarging the “pie,” and what is needed to accomplish building the field. As a result, rhetoric can promote concepts of social engineering rather than market expansion. When this happens, to what extent is the overall message to outsiders one that exudes a lack of faith in our own future?
- E. Tendencies to engage in genre wars instead of genre competition.** It is natural for *art music* professionals to focus on one or two genres, hone their proficiencies toward excellence in them, and in the process become strong partisans for them. Excellence driven by passion promotes high quality in and across genres, but it can also produce cold and hot genre wars, the denigration of one form of *art music* in order to advance another. The fields of *art music*, and *art music* as a collective whole, are all too fragile to engage in such wars. Such struggles reinforce the notion of music as a commodity and as a means of economic support for music professionals at the expense of the larger foundational message that work in *art music* supports the idea that *art music* is important no matter where it comes from or who does it.
- F. Challenges regarding the content and position of music education in the schools, particularly the extent to which learning goals are focused on building understanding of *art music* in terms of works of music, work in and about music, and *art music* as an idea.** Many of the issues discussed above and below are present in the current position of *art music* in school-based music education. To what extent and in what ways are specialist school music teachers or general elementary classroom teachers seen by themselves or by others as having strong connections with *art music* goals, issues, and efforts? Of course, the answer varies from place to place and teacher to teacher.
- G. Music education in community schools, private studios, and community ensembles is often centered on specific genres, and thus provides focused instruction for school-age participants.** Questions arise, however, about the extent to which these experiences actively develop or promote an understanding of the value of *art music* beyond an individual interest or group aspiration to perform specific pieces or accomplish certain pre-professional goals.
- H. Loss of large numbers of elementary- and secondary-aged students with regard to formal studies in music-making and/or music appreciation.** This problem represents both external and internal forces and is especially acute at the high school level. Even though large numbers of individuals are involved in some sort of curriculum-based musical experience, and a good many are engaged at artistic levels that are high for their age, the vast majority is not involved in the kinds of learning and doing that seem to lead to a lifelong interest in one or more genres of *art music*. Although educational systems associated with *art music* have many features of the systems associated with sports, somehow, in terms of both scale and intensity, the sports field does a better job of translating educational involvement with lifelong participation, attention, and support. Is this

due to the fact that there are more students who have an opportunity to try to play a particular sport than those who have an opportunity to make music? Our children and youth are saturated with music, but vast majorities are not *learning* music in a systematic way, either to play or to be discerning listeners.

- I. **Income is often insufficient to support the *art music* enterprise without public or private subsidy.** This lack of independent resources leads to a division of labor between those who create and teach *art music* on the one hand and those who support it on the other. This condition has enormous ramifications for the future of *art music*. The lack of resources, or the fear of a future lack of resources, drives many immediate policy decisions and can, at times, create conditions where short-term funding gains either slow or obviate long-term advances in artistic growth and public understanding.
- J. **Tendencies in arts support policy, and by extension in *art music* support policy, to focus on extra-musical rationales.** There is little discussion, and thus no sense of common agreement about the basic values regarding *art music* that need to be promulgated over time in order to gain greater understanding of its importance on its own terms. It is a problem when musical development rationales are hardly mentioned in promotional and advocacy contexts. A parallel condition is barely imaginable in the sciences.
- K. **The resources issue is so immediate, constant, and often so overbearing, that it can obscure more fundamental issues of purpose and meaning.** The resources issue is so insistent that there is rarely much conceptual working room for considering approaches that might make things better over the long term if applied with patience, mutual understanding, and parallel effort by creation/performance, education, and support sections of *art music*, and especially across the genres of *art music*. Ironically, the resources issue is a major generator of the tendency to focus on personalities and single events without reference to the underlying idea or purpose.
- L. **Regular messages of decline and failure that have an untold impact on internal morale and external support.** Within the field of *art music*, there has been a virtual community swoon over images of and arguments for decline. Bitter criticism is regularly leveled without the leavening follow through of suggestions for a way forward. Questions such as, “Is this true?” or, “How much does this matter?” are too rarely asked or answered.
- M. **Implosion of repertory, especially in the major presentation venues for classical music.** Although not just controlled internally, outside of professional music and training in higher education, there is tendency for the largest most well funded ensembles to perform a limited repertory over and over again. Associated with this concern is the difficulty of getting a second public hearing for new music. The result is that much of the *art music* establishment is regarded as a museum dealing with the past rather than an art form where the excitement is generated from what is new and both intellectually and emotionally powerful.
- N. **A star system that produces winner-take-all conditions, and worse, that drives the price of star appearances to the point where they often create a backbreaking financial burden for performing organizations.** To what extent is *art music* more than a small branch of show business? Is it anything more than entertainment? These are not rhetorical questions.
- O. **Continuing, highly published disagreements in local communities that pit working *art music* musicians against managers and citizens who provide subsidies and access to resources.** The result can be an institutionalized split between artistic and business leadership. The impacts on repertory, messages regarding purpose, and the images of art and artists and the general health of the field are considerable.

- P. Development of financial support structures and commitments that often require an *art music* organization to have more individuals in development and promotion than in the performing ensemble.** This condition grows from the interaction of such issues as ticket prices, time commitments, artist fees, the need to generate subsidy and cash flow, and other resource issues.
- Q. Attitudes toward talent and opportunity that, in a public relations sense at least, deny the artistic credibility of all but a few.** The result is a focus on *art music* as the province of a small set of “official virtuosi” more than on *art music* as musical expression that engages a large number of professional practitioners.
- R. Unwillingness to face the fact that much of the qualities essential to *art music* – its creation, performance, and reception – are either problematic or inimical in terms of the values expounded by most contemporary American marketing.** This results in ideas for “solving” the resources and audience-development problem by making symbolic changes, or pretending that *art music* is not *art music*, or relying on small-scale imitations of advertising and promotion techniques used by major corporations and governments, all of which have resources many orders of magnitude above those available to *art music*.
- S. A resources and support situation that continues to provide fertile ground for conditions that pit against each other visiting artists (formerly artists in schools, now teaching artists) and career professional music specialists, especially in public education.** For more than three decades and continuing today, there are two competing visions of arts education; one is curricular and led by specialist arts teachers, the other is experiential based on the presentations of visiting artists with assistance from classroom teachers. Despite the efforts of some analysts and leaders to join the two visions, the dichotomy remains. Reading the professional literature of either teaching artists or music specialists, it would be hard to know that the other field existed.
- T. A policy/resources/advocacy problem coupled with the necessity for professional musicians and teachers to spend their time with *art music* rather than policy analysis or other non-musical action.** This situation regularly leads to failure to ask the following question about ideas for increasing understanding and support: “Why is this idea or approach good on its own terms?” Asking why something is good on its own terms is quite different than asking if it is good because we think, know, or are told that someone will support us, at least for the short term, if we will say or do that thing: “We will provide the image necessary to obtain support even if we do not find the image accurate or supportive of our point of view or cause.” There is little time to develop a culture of analysis that can evaluate the nature of the thing proposed, what its messages are teaching, and its ramifications for the future. The fact that it seems to support advocacy and/or fundraising trumps all. Several results can be identified: increased reliance on desperation tactics; gravitating toward messages thought to be effective that are either half true or not proved, or unwitting collusion in producing the impression that music has no value in and of itself.
- U. Lack of distinction between doing and promoting *art music* on its own terms, and the concept of art for art’s sake.** Of course, *art music* has many connections with other purposes. However, these connections are only possible because *art music* exists on its own terms. Professionals in the field approach the *art music* central to their work on its own terms. They must do so if they are to be successful. Every subject taken seriously by an individual or community is taken seriously both on its own terms and in terms of other things. It is not just taken seriously in terms of how it is useful to other things. By taking something seriously on its own terms, one does not obviate taking it seriously in terms of other things. To the contrary, taking something seriously and accomplishing it on its own terms enables the connection with other things to be made operationally, not just rhetorically, symbolically, or conceptually.

**V. Musicians in training do not learn the full range of skills they need to be successful.** Our conservatories, colleges, and universities provide an extremely high level of musical training and education. Are these musical skills enough? Many are increasingly concerned about the need to develop a kind of entrepreneurialism among young professionals. Pursued comprehensively and thoughtfully, entrepreneurialism can be extremely positive, especially if part of the goal is to be entrepreneurial on behalf of the idea of *art music* as well as its products and individual practitioners. If the concept of entrepreneurialism extends into all areas necessary to promote a positive future for *art music*, it holds significant promise for the future.

**W. Overall, there is not as sophisticated an understanding of the total context and its conditions and issues as is needed to be effective.** There is too much of a tendency to identify one small piece of the way forward, and to promote that one small piece as the total or major solution, using the same bursts-of-hype promotion techniques as for an artist, concert, or series.

**X. *Art music* professionals tend to seek technical solutions to problems.** There is often a tendency to seek models for imitation in favor of developing local solutions for unique circumstances. There is also a tendency to focus on *how* to do something rather than *what* to do, or to simply imitate with little to no analysis regarding applicability or effectiveness.

Within specific genres of *art music* and throughout *art music* as a whole, there can often appear to be serious divisions between purposes, particularly regarding questions of how to present a body of music and its value to the public. Therefore, there is a tendency to extrapolate isolated, tactical successes into general, strategic solutions without careful analysis of the probabilities present and applicable in different circumstances. Under such conditions, the technique can become the product, an approach *art music* professionals would not accept for creating or performing the music itself.

**Y. The intensity required to create, perform, study, and teach *art music*, leaves little time for anything else, particularly in the developmental years.** This condition can leave individuals in *art music* bereft of knowledge and understanding of contextual issues. The result can be discomfort with the flexibility and patience needed to work with dynamic local or national conditions. This condition is especially problematic for young professionals.

**Z. A proliferation of competitions accompanied by a proliferation of questioning the value of competitions.** For example, does the number of competitions dilute the value of competition winning? Do competitions encourage sameness in interpretation and approach? Do they substitute issues of winning for issues of artistry, particularly in the public mind? What weight should they have as gatekeepers for serious career development?

**AA. The over-intellectualization of contemporary composition, particularly composition in the past 60 years.** Correct or not, there are widespread feelings that there is no new music as good as the old music and that contemporary composers and creators have little or no consideration for public interest. These conditions and their development have coincided with other pressures on audience development for *art music* outlined above. There are continuing charges that *art music* composers have “abandoned their audiences.” These charges should be considered with the following three points in mind: There are notable exceptions; there are new trends in composition; late 20th and early 21st century music has a small, but committed following.

**BB. Artistic visions narrowly described in terms of competition with others, economic viability, and market share, rather than transcendent artistry, even though it is the latter that makes much of art powerful, and thus desirable, and thus marketable.** Those focused on *art music* solely as a financial venture are undermining the most valuable resource of their product or genre and the idea of high-level music making that supports it.

## VII. Interlude – Some Advertising Facts

As indicated in section IV. above, the media, and therefore the advertising and promotion delivery system, in the United States is changing. The facts and figures below, derived from a number of sources and analyses, provide a general understanding of at least the basic elements of the situation. This information is important to track and understand because of its relevance to decisions about justification and promotion, particularly the resource base of major advertisers.

Arts administrators, and administrators in higher education, have been moving for some time toward a business model that emulates the successful advertising habits of what have commonly been labeled “megabrands.” A megabrand, or range brand, encompasses several various products in an effort to show unique relationships among those products, which makes the brand more marketable, more attractive, and ultimately more profitable. A common argument from both non-profit arts organizations and higher education is, “If corporate America and these megabrands can sell their products with large-scale advertising campaigns, then so too should the arts or higher education be able to achieve such results on a smaller scale.” Unfortunately, non-profit organizations including colleges and universities tend not to have the financial resources of these megabrands and money is the fuel that keeps the advertising fire burning.

Consider the following chart from the July 18, 2005 issue of *Advertising Age*.

### TOP 25 MEGABRANDS

Ranked by U.S. measured media spending in 2004

RANK	MEGABRAND	PARENT COMPANY	MEASURED U.S. AD SPENDING
1	Verizon	Verizon Communications	\$1,505.9
2	Ford	Ford Motor Co.	948.0
3	Nissan	Nissan Motor Co.	901.0
4	Chevrolet	General Motors Corp.	895.2
5	Sprint	Sprint Corp.	857.4
6	Cingular	SBC Communications	833.7
7	Toyota	Toyota Motor Corp.	792.7
8	Dodge	DaimlerChrysler	707.6
9	Dell	Dell	625.0
10	McDonald's	McDonald's Corp.	614.0
11	AT&T Wireless	SBC Communications	591.2
12	Wal-Mart	Wal-Mart Stores	578.4
13	Honda	Honda Motor Co.	565.1
14	Sears	Sears Holdings Corp.	560.9
15	Citibank	Citigroup	549.7
16	Chrysler	DaimlerChrysler	540.9
17	Hewlett-Packard	Hewlett-Packard Co.	530.6
18	Macy's	Federated Department Stores	530.5
19	Target	Target Corp.	523.2
20	Home Depot	Home Depot	518.3
21	GM corporate	General Motors Corp.	508.8
22	T-Mobile	Deutsche Telekom	440.5
23	JCPenney	JCPenney Co.	430.4
24	American Express	American Express Co.	395.6
25	Best Buy	Best Buy Co.	387.6

Notes: Dollars are in millions. Measured media from TNS Media Intelligence's Strategy

The spending documented on this chart, whose scope is only that of the top twenty-five megabrands, accounts for more than \$16 billion worth of annual advertising in the United States. But that is not even one quarter of the \$135 billion in measured spending from all advertisers in the United States last year. The list continues through 200 of the top spenders, but even toward the end of the list,

companies are spending upwards of \$50 million. The resources for the non-profit arts community pale in comparison to big business, making advertising of this magnitude out of our collective reach. To put the resources into perspective: The combined total of the annual operational budgets of all NASM member institutions is \$1.7 billion, slightly more than the annual advertising budget for Verizon Communications.

The advertising models of the megabrands are successful in large part because of the volume of advertising. It is very different to keep ones message before the public constantly through various advertising media – the corporate way – and to rely primarily on such things as periodic mass mailings, telephone contact, and other means on a smaller scale – the non-profit way. But would a huge advertising campaign, such as Verizon’s “Can you hear me now?” effort, be beneficial to a positive future for *art music*? Note that the Verizon campaign is based on the idea of communication. The message directly reflects both the product and the idea behind it. What is the counterpart idea for *art music*? Who would be the target audience? What would the messages be? What would be the target advertising medium?

### **VIII. Interlude – Futures of New and Information Media**

A slow change has been occurring through the past decade. The three major media outlets where megabrands place their advertising (TV, radio, and newspapers) are steadily becoming less popular sources of news and information. The Internet has provided electronic means, specifically blogs (short for “Web log;” an on-line journal published by anyone with access to the Internet and viewed by that same audience) and podcasts (downloadable MP3 files that serve as private, or pirate, radio broadcasts), that have become much more popular as sources of information in recent years. Advertisers show an awareness of this trend as ad spending on the Internet increased by more than 20% from 2003 to 2004 while ad spending in national newspapers and cable television combined increased by 20% during that same time. Local radio ad spending gained 1% while national spot radio ad spending fell 1%.

Perhaps the standard media outlets are not the best way to affect cultural attitudes toward *art music*. These new means of obtaining news and information seem not only to be gaining in popularity, but closer to the heart of tracking and making changes in American culture. It is easy to see the lack of *art music* represented in the standard media formats and become skeptical about a positive future, but we must be careful about over-lamenting the loss of systems, where it was often hard for us to be effective or find presence, at the expense of failing to adapt to new technologies, media, and ever-changing culture. More important than an awareness of what is new and how *art music* can benefit from it, we should be conscious of not continuing to rely on older methods if they will no longer fulfill our communication needs.

The following chart from the Spring 2005 edition of the Wilson Quarterly contains figures that represent some interesting trends. Remember that the current U.S. population is approximately 280 million, in 1990 approximately 250 million, and in 1980 approximately 230 million.

## *The Shrinking News Audience*

### Daily U.S. newspaper circulation

1990:	62,327,962
2003:	55,185,351

### Number of daily U.S. newspapers

1990:	1,611
2003:	1,456

### By age group, percentage of American adults who read a newspaper "yesterday"

18-29:	23
30-49:	39
50-64:	52
60+:	60

### Circulation of *The New York Times*

1990:	1,108,447
2004:	1,121,057

### Circulation of *The Washington Post*

1990:	780,582
2004:	746,724

### Circulation of *The Wall Street Journal*

1990:	1,857,131
2004:	2,106,774

### Circulation of *The Los Angeles Times*

1990:	1,196,323
2004:	902,164

Time spent per day by 8-to-18-year-olds with all media: 6hrs. 21mins.

Time spent per day with print media: 43 mins.

### Combined viewership of network evening news

1980:	52 million
2004:	28.8 million

### Viewership of network evening news, by program

<i>NBC Nightly News</i>	11.2 million
<i>ABC World News Tonight</i>	9.9 million
<i>CBS Nightly News</i>	7.7 million
<i>PBS News Hour</i>	2.7 million

Median age of network evening news viewers: 60

### Percentage of people who believe "all or most" of what's on

Network news	24
CNN	32
Fox News	25
C-Span	27
<i>PBS News Hour</i>	23

Percentage of radio audience listening to news/talk: 16

Percentage of news/talk listeners ages 12-34: 15

Percentage of news/talk listeners age 50 or older: 65

Number of active blogs (updated in the last two months): 6.8 million

Number of abandoned blogs: 13.1 million

Percentage of bloggers under age 30: 48

Percentage of Internet users who have read a blog: 27

Percentage of Internet users who don't know what a blog is: 62

*Sources: Newspaper Association of America, Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, World Almanac and Book of Facts 1992, Audit Bureau of Circulation, Project for Excellence in Journalism, Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, Perseus Development Corporation, Pew Internet and American Life Project.*



## **IX. Interlude – Our Foundation for a Positive Future**

The *art music* community in the United States has considerable resources, and a substantial base for advancing itself. These resources must not be underestimated if we are to develop the most positive future for *art music*. It should be clear from information provided in sections VII. and VIII. above that the *art music* community cannot match the spending of large corporations to keep their message and/or product constantly before the public. It is interesting to speculate what it would take to raise revenues to the point where even a modest effort to achieve this kind of coverage would be in the realm of possibility. Along with the rest of the arts, the *art music* community does receive a good deal of free coverage in certain media, but such coverage is not nearly as continuous or comprehensive as a regular commercial media campaign.

Just because the *art music* community does not have the same commercial advertising capability as some of its other cultural competitors, it does have tremendous resources, some of which are unique to itself:

- A. *Art music* is home to many gifted, capable, and effective people. These people produce the substance and content of *art music*, analyze it, teach it, teach others to teach it, and fulfill many other functions. Some of these individuals work alone. Many are gathered together in organizations that create, present, study, and teach. Some of these organizations are large and historically effective.
- B. There are facilities ranging from good to outstanding all over the nation for the public, live presentation of *art music*. Many of these venues are associated with institutions of higher education. Indeed, without higher education the footprint of *art music* in the general cultural scene would be much smaller than it is.
- C. There is an excellent geographic dispersion of *art music* expertise throughout the nation, again due to the presence of *art music* objectives and aspirations throughout education, but particularly in higher education.
- D. There are 1,800 orchestras, 200 opera companies, and many other amateur and professional organizations associated with art music in places of worship, community centers, and in many other types of institutions across the United States. The most accomplished of these are among the best in the world.
- E. *Art music* is the home of a large teaching enterprise. Art music is introduced in some form to a large number of children and youth. Significant numbers actually study in order to perform in one or more genres of *art music*. Many adults also study some form of *art music*.
- F. There is significant intellectual attention to art music. A large, distinguished scholarly enterprise continues in such fields as theory, musicology, and ethnomusicology.
- G. There is a dedication to art music among many directors of professional and amateur ensembles who see music as more than entertainment and act accordingly.
- H. There is an expansion in the understanding of the scope of art music in the various cultures and ethnic groups of the world. Scholarship and performance have expanded our vision and our opportunities for breadth.

- I. There is a relatively small, but still significant, economy surrounding the work of art music in our society. Art music also contributes economically to communities and other industries. It continues to evoke powerful images of quality and commitment.
- J. And of course, there is the tremendous heritage of art music and the constant expansion of that heritage and its effects by continuing efforts of art music practitioners, teachers, and support sector personnel.

The challenges faced by *art music* are large. Each major challenge has many dimensions. It is hard to comprehend and act wisely when there is a need to take into account so many dimensions and so many interdependent factors. However, the size of the challenge in general, or specific challenges faced by individuals and groups in local situations, should not diminish our understanding and utilization of the tremendous resources available to develop a positive future for *art music*. There are significant positives and great intellectual power that can be harnessed to improve both individual situations and the overall health of the *art music* field.

## **X. Considerations Regarding Next Steps and Ways Forward**

- A. Maintain and continue to intensify the pursuit of excellence in *art music*.** Among other things, this means ensuring that opportunities, challenges, and support efforts do not get in the way of pursuit of excellence either philosophically or operationally. This also means the pursuit of excellence in every aspect of the *art music* system, not just composition and performance.
- B. Stop transmitting or echoing messages of overall defeat or forthcoming dissolution.** There have most certainly been setbacks, at least in terms of what the field of *art music* has seen in the past. There have been losses in certain kinds of media coverage and opportunities for presentation, and there are significant and growing pressures. But to create a positive future, it is essential to keep distinctions between survival and health in mind, and to avoid extrapolating ourselves to a position of defeat when single or even multiple losses are suffered in a particular area.
- C. Avoid postures of apology, either in word or deed, for the achievements of *art music*.** For example, it is critical not to let the use of elitism as a synonym for snobbism, create an apologetic framework for the production and reception of *art music*. We ought never to accede to efforts to talk us out of musical and verbal advocacy for the great achievements of *art music* in any of its forms, past or present, or the virtual certainty of such achievements in the future. Attacks on achievement in music are attacks on the idea of achievement in anything, and those concerned with *art music* should respond accordingly.
- D. Seek new ways of speaking truthfully about any and all aspects of *art music* in a manner that is effective in an era of over-sensitivity to the syntax used in any discussion or presentation about cultural matters.** This means finding new and effective ways to deal with the nature of *art music*, including what it takes to do it, understand it, and discuss it even at the most basic level. *Art music* is a gift, not a mandate, and in the vast majority of cases, it is a force for good in the world as a whole.
- E. Avoid succumbing to the argument that rises and falls of market share represent rises and falls in the validity or value of the *art music* enterprise and all of its dimensions.** *Art music* is a transcendent enterprise in the same way as many other areas of the sciences and humanities. We don't stop doing theoretical physics because few people understand it.

**F. Focus on the major strengths of the field, in part as the basis for new discoveries about the realities of building a larger support base for *art music* that is consistent with and supportive of the natures of *art music*, both in the various genres and with regard to *art music* as a whole.**

**G. Look at the educational component of *art music* differently and help others to do the same.** The geographic spread of educational capability for *art music* throughout the United States is a tremendous strength. Indeed, the future health of *art music* depends in large part on how this educational system influences values and preferences regarding the role of *art music* in individual lives. The *art music* community, in general, has already convinced itself that more education is necessary for a healthy future. This is an excellent first step, but further steps must include considerations of what kinds of education can place the best possible educational base under the future of *art music* in specific circumstances and willingness to accept and respect multiple approaches and solutions.

**H. The orientation of all musicians, whatever they do, to their responsibilities for teaching.** These responsibilities include teaching itself, but also unwavering support for the idea of teaching, the profession of teaching, and the necessity of teaching if the future of *art music* is to be strong.

On this same subject, there is a serious need to gain realistic understandings about the relationships between exposure and education. Of course, exposure teaches something, and it is critically important. Musical exposure introduced by explanatory words is an important means for advancing the cause of *art music*. More of this exposure is needed. However, these approaches, as attractive as they are to performers and patrons, do not accomplish the same thing for *art music* that consistent, regular, curriculum-based instruction in music can accomplish. The entire field associated with *art music* needs to take stock and face with honesty the extent to which curriculum-based instruction of some kind is connected to the future health of *art music*.

**I. Make arts advocacy and policy efforts as sophisticated as *art music* itself.** Great care needs to be taken, lest programs and messages lend support to issues and forces that are diminishing public valuing of *art music*. In the push for greater individual capabilities for entrepreneurialism, it is important to ask, “What are we selling? Is it simply the individual musician or ensemble? Or is it that and more?” If the answer to the latter is yes, then what is included in the “more?” What large lessons are we trying to teach about the value of *art music* year after year?

As we further develop and evolve advocacy and policy positions, it is equally critical to avoid intensifying those internal conditions outlined above in section VI. that are creating negative pressures on the future development of *art music*.

To be truly simple, it is important to ask ourselves to what extent our advocacies and policies are supporting the idea of *art music*, as well as specific works, or the necessity of support and subsidy. It is important to remember that those selling soap are always selling the idea of cleanliness as well as a particular product to produce cleanliness. How do we do a better job at selling both the idea and the product at the same time?

**J. Accept and celebrate the different genres and approaches to *art music* without (1) making demands regarding general or individual acceptance of particular music or philosophical views about music, or (2) suggesting that everyone must value everything within *art music*, or within any particular music for that matter, exactly the same.** Such expectations of lock-

step values and valuing are not only unrealistic, they appear coercive and are thus easily discountable and dismissible in a free society.

Likewise, it is important to accept and celebrate the differences and connections among various purposes for music, but never failing to include and celebrate the artistic purposes and music-on-its-own-terms features that are usually intrinsic to *art music*.

**K. Improve mutual support and reciprocity among various professional groups associated with *art music*.** In general, we need to ask ourselves rigorous questions about the health of the relationship between the composer and performer, and the relationship between music professionals whose primary employment is performance and those whose primary employment is teaching. *Art music* is far more than a vehicle for the work and glory of performers. Education in *art music* is far more than building a market for performers. Notice that we use the words “far more.” Of course *art music* is a vehicle for individual and ensemble performance, and of course education in *art music* is an important ingredient in building a market. But composition and education are more than these things. They have a broader role, and greater understanding and respect for these broader roles seems critical if the performance supporting roles of these activities are to be effective. There is too much isolation for optimistic, positive action.

**L. Find ways, in the field of *art music* as a whole and its various components, to address critical issues that blunt the thrust of its efforts and reduce public understanding of its value.** These issues include, but are not limited to, areas opened for consideration by the following questions:

1. To what extent should composition be pursued as musical communication or music that creates an understandable syntax, at least to people already engaged with *art music*? Is there an observable trend or position among composers on this issue?
2. How do we address the fact that individuals are increasingly buying and consuming culture at their convenience and on their terms rather than the terms established by arts organizations and artists? For example, to what extent will systems such as Internet radio, satellite radio, iTunes, aggressive niche marketing, blogging, Web publishing, etc. change or replace current approaches?
3. How do we deal with aspirations for and discussions about quality in the public square in ways that do not result in isolation or otherwise produce unwelcoming symbols?
4. How do we work with the issue of talent, particularly to reduce the impression that *art music* is only accessible to the talented?
5. How can we reduce unfortunate associations that connect *art music* with economic or social position or educational attainment, thus, primarily for image reasons, denying it a presence in the composite heritage of human achievement that should be available to all?
6. How do we deal with an eroding knowledge base about cultural matters in general? Increasingly, it appears that for many, culture is a matter of personal experience and not a field of knowledge. Individuals with higher levels of education may be in a different position, but in our society there is significant pride in knowing nothing or appearing to know nothing about cultural achievements at the highest level.

7. How do we deal with the issue of time and the feeling among many that everything added together is just too much? Such considerations must address issues of time available and how choices are being made, especially with regard to expenditures of leisure time.
8. How do we deal with the fact that *art music* is not being heard as much as it used to be in all sorts of settings? How do we keep the sound of various genres in *art music* before the public? How do we encourage people to be more adventurous in their listening and participation? What is needed to help more people see music as a vast opportunity for adventure?
9. What about issues of repertory choice? What does repertory implosion or fragmentation do to the future of *art music*?
10. How do we deal with fragmentation of cultural choices? We note that there is fragmentation in competition among pop genres. The entire market is extremely fragmented. This in turn produces a type of narrowness, and perhaps more fear of choosing. To what extent do MP3 players, the iPod, and even mobile phone technology promote a kind of musical isolation? Or, to the contrary, do they promote a new kind of community that needs our attention?
11. Among the major *art music* genres, to what extent are their names problematic? This question seems especially poignant with respect to “classical” music, and perhaps with respect to “world” music.
12. How do we deal with the fact that within our highly competitive society, every term that gains a positive connotation is immediately co-opted and used out of context? This makes issues of meaning and communication extremely difficult.
13. How do we face and work with the presence of grave problems in our youth culture? One of these – massive failures to develop literacy and numeracy in the elementary schools – has led to the imposition of educational programs that narrow educational opportunities and possibilities for students in order to address fundamental skill-building necessary for future education and advancement. There are many additional issues here including problems of family, the nurturing roles of parents, schools and religious organizations, and advertising practices that become ever more sophisticated in marketing many students away from concerns about learning except in the most utilitarian terms.
14. How do we remediate the culture of rejection and condescension that we find so much in the operational worlds of *art music*? How do we ensure that this culture does minimal damage to conditions of individual, group, and field-wide reciprocity that are essential for a positive future?
15. How do we bring greater genuine respect and dignity to all who are laboring to create, perform, teach, and support *art music*, whatever their position and whatever they do? It will be hard to create a positive external future for *art music* if we cannot create a more positive internal future, based in part on reciprocity, but going far beyond.
16. How do we deal with the realities produced by the presence and application of extremely sophisticated means for mass psychological action and values development? The significant and observable values divides in our society should not obscure the presence

of these extremely sophisticated means of opinion formation, used by any groups with the resources to do so.

- M. Develop greater understanding among all members of the *art music* community of the necessity for initiating and simultaneously supporting a variety of positive efforts.** This means remembering the need to sustain certain efforts over the long-term even as we address issues, forces, and concerns in the short-term. There is an urgent need to give greater consideration to the probability that different messages and approaches are needed for different groups and markets. In other words, we need to face the high probability that there is no single silver bullet, no single solution, no single approach or project that will make things better.
- N. As we promote and market *art music*, look at the messages conveyed, not just the techniques employed.** A slick advertising campaign is empty without a carefully considered message or purpose. There is a need to consider the cumulative message and any second- or third-tier lessons our messages are teaching.
- O. Consider to what extent we should be (1) positioning the world of *art music* as a legacy of achievement and aspiration that holds opportunities for all, (2) indicating that access to these opportunities is a privilege, and (3) actively responding to arguments and positions that demean the achievements and characteristics of *art music*.**
- P. Consider how we work within a highly conflicted political climate where every idea is assigned to a political category and praised or damned accordingly.** Pervasive "taxonomitis" is problematic because it narrows discussion and debate, and at times, destroys it. Matters of culture are extremely conflicted at present. There is a reason for the term "culture wars." But few seem to understand that one reason these wars are so fierce is the current overemphasized relationship between art and politics, the view that art is only to be considered in terms of its political impact. Music on its own terms has little or no priority in such a concept.
- Q. Consider the presence and placement of *art music* in religious observances, films, cartoons, and other media/venues.** Involved here are large questions about the purposes for and relative importance of music in these settings.
- R. Address the resources issue in a way that works long-term as well as short-term.** How do we address issues of file sharing, reliance on contributed income, promotional costs, artist fees, and so forth? How can resource questions become drivers of reciprocity as well as competition? How can the resources "pie" be enlarged? Thought experiment: if the audience and non-professional student clientele for *art music* were doubled instantly, would we have the capacity to accommodate such growth? What if it tripled? Quadrupled?
- S. Assist professionally-oriented music students prepare both for the world they will face and to improve the world they will face in terms of developing a positive future for *art music*.** Is there a way to preserve high aspirations and achievements in performance, composition, scholarship, and teaching while addressing the vast educational and promotional imperatives we see ahead? Is it possible to change aspirations for careers by changing the internal image of those careers? Can goals such as being an international star performer coexist with goals for service to the whole field or to the idea of *art music*? Can teaching become more respected?
- T. Find a better, common internal understanding about relationships between marketing and advocacy on the one hand and teaching and learning on the other.** Both are needed. Can people engaged in each learn to work together based on the fact that at times, it is useful to think

and act toward something in one way, and at other times, it is useful to think and act from another perspective? Serious education in music may be a slow way to build support, but it seems to be effective and long lasting. If long-term efforts are needed, how do we promote them in an age that has little patience and wants to abandon any effort that does not show instant success?

- U. Consider the difference between being market and mission driven, and thus being market or mission evaluated.**
- V. Develop public understanding that the music field is associated with intellectual curiosity.** Is this a way we can truly be considered in the same light as science and math? Intellectual curiosity means exploration. Do new technologies help create a better climate for personal exploration than before? What impact could this have on the present cultural fascination with things visual? Can our marketing here focus on helping individuals grow adding to and getting beyond simply selling an album, a concert, a personality, etc.
- W. Consider how many more people we need to engage in one or more genres of *art music* to produce a whole new situation.** The consideration is applicable within genres as well as across genres since the resulting solutions may be different from case to case. How do we produce this level of engagement? How long would the program you envision take? Do we have the patience to sustain the effort? What resources of all kinds would be needed?
- X. Consider the promotional and developmental resources we have that others influencing cultural choices do not have.** For example, what about the millions of students engaged in music study? Their families? What about the fundamental human interest in music, and the generalized interest of parents in music study for their children?
- Y. Consider how various sectors of the *art music* community and the community as a whole can work more in parallel on general values development.** Is there a way to produce more of an interactive professional community, particularly on large strategic questions? To what degree do the parties and people involved see and thus have a shared mission? What are the roles of NASM member institutions in working on issues of community in this sense?
- Z. Consider how we can work on these issues as a field in a realistic way, respecting the role of musical expertise and giftedness in *art music*, but also recognizing the essential business of contextual cultivation.** Even the best seed will not grow if the ground has not been properly prepared. How can we find places of respite from marketing and advocacy to do strategic thinking about how we can best prepare the ground? How can we advance the cause of our own piece of the whole, and the whole at the same time? How can we honor and support individual genius in ways that support the entire effort? Others have done this; we have done it to some extent. To have a positive future for *art music*, we must learn to do it better, and quickly.

## **XI. Policy Positions of NASM**

The member institutions of NASM, and NASM itself, have worked for more than eight decades to support and advance the cause of *art music*. Over time, due to the work of musical artists and scholars, there has been a conceptual expansion of what is included in *art music*, and the member institutions of NASM and the Association itself have played important roles in that expansion. These positions regarding support, advancement, and expansion are only natural because NASM and its members are primarily concerned with the education and training of professionals ready to work in music at the highest levels in various areas of the field. They prepare individuals to deal with music from a knowledge and skill basis that enables deep engagement with complex and sophisticated

musical content. NASM institutions are working, in part, to develop the capacities of individuals to produce, teach, and study musical art in whatever forms they choose.

Of course, nothing cultural exists without context, whether or not the context is perceived or understood. Liberal arts- or professionally-oriented preparation does not exist in a vacuum. NASM has always tried to assist the field in developing comprehensive understanding of the contexts for all sorts of musical endeavor and how teaching and learning are connected to and influenced by other things. In this present effort, the Association is attempting to gather information and analysis about an enormously complex issue, trying to get the parts of the complex entirety in view. This effort will continue for some time. A lot of thinking is needed. Strategic approaches to improvement must be found if we are to move beyond the status quo. Unfortunately, the status quo includes certain kinds of visible losses that create symbols of failure, dysfunction, and dissolution that may overstate the dangers facing the *art music* field. One reason we posit this is that the current discussion is focused more on the loss of certain delivery systems than on the loss of content or talent, both of which are present in abundance.

It is no secret that others in the fields of classical music, jazz, and world music are concerned and making their own analyses. It is the policy of NASM to continue trying to understand the entirety of this topic as deeply as possible, and to provide information, analyses, and questions that help individuals and schools in their own decision-making processes. As the foregoing paper suggests, at the moment, there does not seem to be a single way forward or a grand program that makes sense. The external and internal forces, many of which have been building for a long time, present a daunting challenge. But the resources available to all of those concerned with *art music* are expansive. A critical, transcendent need is to remember and communicate that we are concerned about the *idea* of *art music* and the continuation and development of that idea at least as much as we are concerned about particular pieces, works, personalities, institutions, organizations, or venues. Our mission is centered in an idea, not just in operations. It has been, and remains today, the policy of NASM to focus on the idea or function first, and the means second. It is clear there is much to consider and even more to do in developing a positive future for *art music* for years to come.

## **XII. Four Culminating Thoughts and Questions**

- (1) Someday, the engineering and technical phase of the digital media revolution will recede from being a user consideration. The faster this recession proceeds, the more the digital media world will be reliant on the work of artists and other providers of content. To what extent and in what ways will the *art music* world be anticipating this development in terms of both machine-to-human and human-to-human communication and engagement? What implications do various answers to this question have for curriculum development?
- (2) Someday, intellectual fashions will change from what they are today. To what extent can the *art music* community create and sustain an internal sense of mission centered on the *idea* of *art music* that transcends such changes, especially considering that the fashion of any particular time may include denying an intellectual or cultural presence to the art forms except in terms of something else? In a positive future, *art music* is respected on its own terms as well as in terms of its relationship or contribution to other things.
- (3) Someday, present social, economic, and political patterns will change. What does a combined artistic, educational, and business model for *art music* sustainability look like? How should we be preparing for the effects of a culturally supersaturated world produced by expanding markets worldwide plus technological advances plus marketing fervor plus struggles in all sectors and at all levels between forces of decentralization and centralization? What are the educational



implications inherent in such preparations irrespective of the genre or area of *art music* that engages particular individuals, groups, and institutions?

- (4) Someday, the overall cultural focus will change. How do we best prepare students for the possibility that current cultural concepts will be overturned at least once in their careers? A thought experiment: Characterize for yourself the various conceptual bases for mass culture today? What conceptual bases are their opposites? To what extent are we preparing students to work in a world where the rotations between conceptual opposites may be on a faster cycle than in the past, or where many opposites are in play at once? To what extent will one role of artists in the future be helping specific individuals design their own personal cultural world in a variety of media and parameters? Depending on your answers to all these questions, what core learning seems necessary for future music professionals?

### **XIII. Opportunity and Imagination**

There has probably never been a time when there was so much opportunity for *art music*. Schools and departments of music are in a position to unleash creativity on its behalf in all sorts of productive directions. What is more, schools and departments of music have all or most elements of the field represented. The possibilities for new combinations of effort among specializations are almost unlimited. One of the most wonderful aspects of art is that the new comes alongside the old rather than replacing it. Field-wide, we do not have to stop one thing to do another. To move forward, let us imagine a positive future and work together for it. Indeed, this would just be an extension of what we have always done, but now we must do it in new times and under new conditions. And if we will do so, we will have confirmation that *art music* cannot be stopped by talk or conditions, that it will continue as long as musicians continue to make music. Therefore, since continuing is the first step, let us continue, and in the process grow wiser, stronger, and more able to contribute in ways unique to the powers of *art music*.

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This paper was prepared by Samuel Hope, Executive Director, at the request of the NASM Executive Committee. Catharine Clarke provided research assistance, and Mark Marion provided research, textual, and editorial assistance. This paper is primarily an overview in reporting the presence of facts and concepts. It does not necessarily reflect the personal opinions of the preparers or the NASM Executive Committee. It is not an official position of NASM.