



----- How To Make A
classical
Uprising
with Dr. Emily Isaacson



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WELCOME EVENTS TICKETS PROGRAMS PROJECTS



Welcome to Classical Uprising!



ENLIVENING, STRENGTHENING, AND CONNECTING COMMUNITIES BY CREATING IMMERSIVE CLASSICAL MUSIC EXPERIENCES FOR EVERYONE

We believe that classical music enriches lives, inspires souls, and strengthens communities. At the same time, we recognize that traditional concerts may have limited appeal to 21st-century audiences. For some, a traditional concert may feel like an ordeal: put life on hold (kids not welcome), sit quietly in a cathedral-like symphony hall (no chatting, refreshment, or dancing), and observe mysterious rules of etiquette (don't you dare clap between movements!).

Despite the
etiquette,
the music
moved me.

I SWAY
IN THE AISLES



AND CLAP AFTER
MOVEMENTS!

Discovering Best (and Worst) Practices





“The performance of the requiem by the Oratorio Chorale, under the direction of Emily Isaacson, was one of the most moving musical events of the decade.”

— *Portland Press Herald*

“After the final note, and a long standing ovation, the audience didn’t want to go home.”

— *Maine Classical Beat*

Experiences We Create



**The Unexpected
Experience**



**The Children and
Family Experience**



**The Salon
Experience**



**The Concert
Experience**

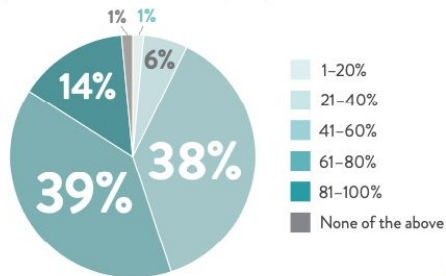


The Problem

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Most Performance-Based Orgs At Between 41–80% Sold Capacity

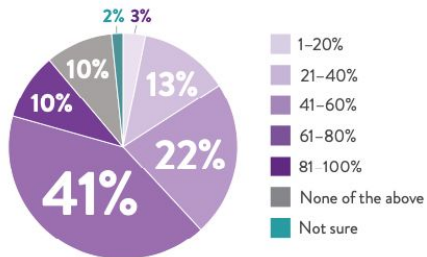
Average % of 2023 house sold capacity (or most recent season)



N=69

Attendee/Visitor Return Rates Around 61–80%

What % of your 2023/most recent season attendees/visitors are return?



N=63

	2017-2022			
	2017	2022	Percentage point (pp) change	Rate of change
Jazz music	8.6%	6.3%	-2.3 pp	-27%
Latin, Spanish, or salsa music	5.9%	3.9%	-2.0 pp	-34%
Classical music performance	8.6%	4.6%	-4.0 pp	-47%
Opera	2.2%	0.7%	-1.5 pp	-68%
Musical stage play	16.5%	10.3%	-6.2 pp	-38%
Non-musical stage play	9.4%	4.5%	-4.9 pp	-52%
Ballet	3.1%	2.0%	-1.2 pp	-37%
Other dance	6.3%	3.3%	-3.0 pp	-48%
Other performing arts	15.0%	21.2%	+6.2 pp	+41%
Art museum or gallery	23.7%	17.7%	-6.1 pp	-26%
Crafts fair or a visual arts festival	23.8%	17.1%	-6.7 pp	-28%
Outdoor performing arts festival	24.2%	18.7%	-5.5 pp	-23%
Park, building, monument, neighborhood visited for historic or design purposes	28.3%	26.0%	-2.3 pp	-8%
Movies ¹⁰	58.6%	43.1%	-15.5 pp	-26%
Film festivals ¹¹	N/A	1.4%	N/A	N/A

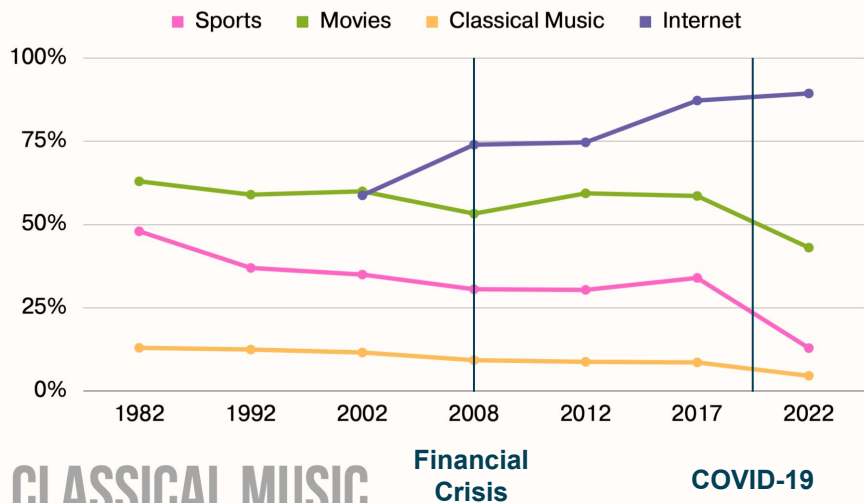
My Personal Experience and the National Data Meet

Classical Music vs. Sports, Movies, Internet



1982 - 2022 CLASSICAL MUSIC ATTENDANCE VS. SPORTS, ETC.

by percentage of the U.S. population



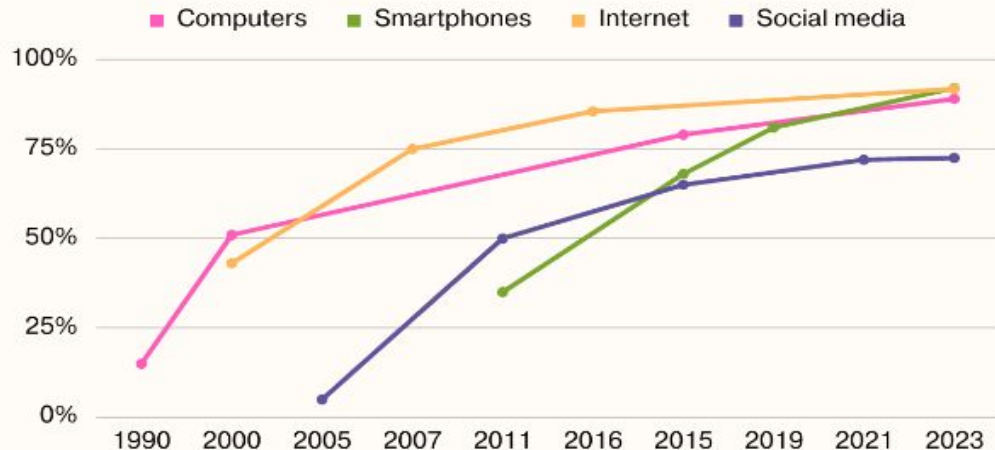
Takeaways

- Minimal change in attendance 1982-2002
 - Decline starting in 2002
 - Decline sharpening in 2017
 - COVID-19 exacerbated, but did not start, the decrease
- Culture of staying home since 2011
 - 42.4% of all Americans
 - 60.1% of high propensity visitors

So, What Happened?

COMPUTERS, SMARTPHONES, INTERNET, AND SOCIAL MEDIA

by percentage of the U.S. population



What People Do at Home...

- 92% Browse the internet
- 86.5% Watch a movie or show
- 52.5% Facetime/Zoom with family and friends
- 48.7% Watch a live sports event
- 41.8% Play a video game



Philosophy

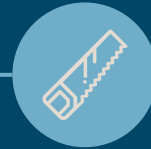
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Don't create concerts, create...



Ichi-go Ichi-es

One moment in your life that will never happen again.



Passover Principle

Why is this night different from all other nights?



Uprising

A challenge to break from predictability, inactivity, & isolation.

Purpose

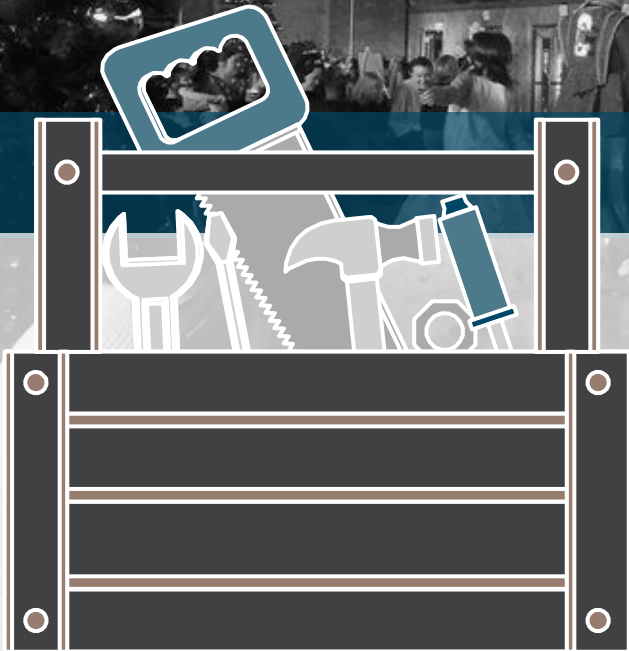
*The point! To create a **shared, meaningful experience** through music.*

Form

*Execution! Used to connect to people's **identity** and shape their **sense of belonging**.*

**What's the problem this event might solve? What larger needs in the world might this gathering address?
What's the desired outcome?**

This is where **Necessary Exclusion can come into play as well.**



Tools to Create a Classical Uprising

Your Tools

Name

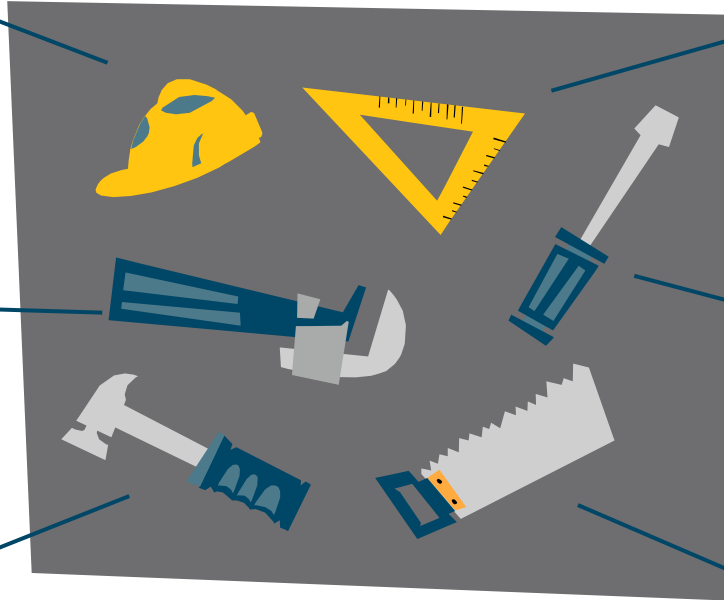
Set the **tone**, establish **expectations** and **give permission** before the event.

Time

When? For how long? Sans intermission? All to create a **singular musical experience**, not multiple.

Place

A room has a **script**. Put classical music in a different room with a different script and... **watch what happens**.



Pairing

Set **expectations**, then **disrupt them!** Create cognitive dissonance and **shake up expectations**.

Dress Code

We don't just hear music, we see it. Reinforce what **state of mind** you desire for your audience with visuals.

Lights

The value of **mood lighting** can't be undersold. Instructions, permission, direction, and emotion— **all without words**.



**Tchaikovsky
Serenade
for Strings,
Op. 48**

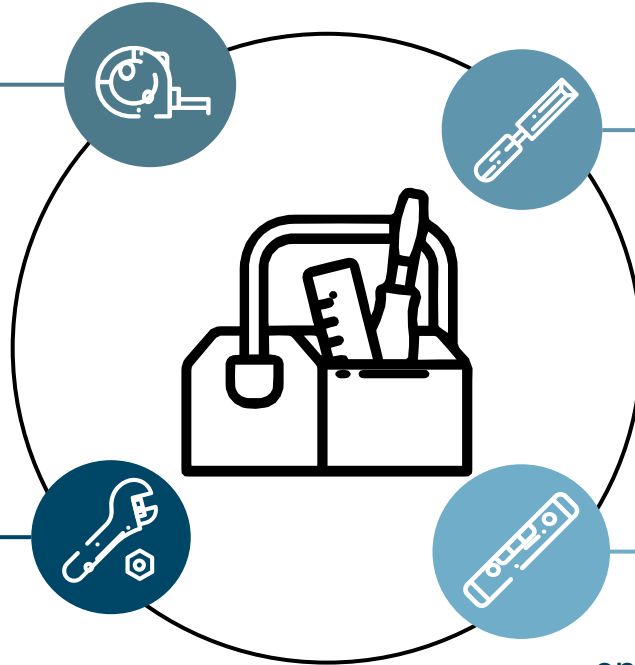
Start & End with Feeling

Choreograph the Transitions

Help people **leave their world** and transition from normal life to the environment that you are creating.

Rules of the Game

Create an **alternative world** for your patrons, by **setting clear expectations** from the beginning.



I Do, We Do, You Do

Telling is one thing. **Doing is another.** People need to see to believe— **model** to give others permission to participate.

Deboarding

We remember beginnings and endings the most, so **usher in reverse.** We've now arrived at our destination.



Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*



It's Not Just A Concert

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Pasadena Symphony

Beethoven Symphony No. 6 "Pastoral"

Tools

- Name
- Pairing
- Time
- Dress Code
- Place
- Lights
- Choreograph the Transitions
- Rules of the Game
- I Do, We Do, You Do
- Deboarding

Purpose

To strengthen community through shared experiences

Form

Outdoor concert in a space that reflects the musical themes

Time

Evening, no intermission.
Shortened:
from 2.5hrs to 85 mins.

Place

Arboretum +
Botanic Garden

Pairing

Flower arranging
pre-concert class,
picnic baskets

Rules

Bring a blanket,
wander the
garden

Deboarding

Send them home
with a boutonniere
or bouquet!

San Bernardino Symphony Orchestra

Tools

- ✓ Name
- ✓ Pairing
- ✓ Time
- ✓ Dress Code
- Place
- Lights
- Choreograph the Transitions
- Rules of the Game
- ✓ I Do, We Do, You Do
- ✓ Deboarding

Purpose

To give the young a lifelong relationship to music.

Form

Kid's Concert!

Name

Movies with the Maestro → Conduct at the Movies

Dress Code

Orchestra + conductor wear costumes

I Do, We Do, You Do

Instruments that aren't playing stand in aisles + conduct

Pairing

Teach kids how to conduct; hand out glow sticks

Time

16 pieces on the program– keep ~1hr + no Intermission?

Deboarding

Encourage kids to conduct along to the radio or when singing "Happy Birthday"

LET'S BACH ABOUT IT.



 SCAN ME!

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Scan above for Tools to
Make a Classical Uprising!



“My mission is to tear down what I see as unnecessary barriers to this incredible music.”

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Questions?



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