#CLASSICAL: AN ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING IN THE CLASSICAL MUSIC INDUSTRY

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Declaration of Authorship

I Annabelle Angela Lan Lee hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

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Date: 28 April 2017
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Abstract

With the re-emergence of social media in the 2000s and the increased worldwide usage of mobile devices, the impact of social media still cannot be ignored. From corporate businesses to popular culture, social media are now used in many sectors of society. Not least among these is the classical music industry. Artists and organisations have keenly capitalised on social media in the face of increasing budgetary reductions in the arts and long-held elitist perceptions of classical music. In addition, the classical music business has used social media to profit from economic growth, audiences, and public profiles, and to market accessibility, relevance, and value to a wider audience, notably, younger demographics and non-attenders. As a result, the classical music scene tries to engender technological determinism and digital optimism, ideologies reflecting discourses around Web 2.0/social media. Simultaneously, a so-called ‘digital divide’ is at risk. Various factors, for example, socioeconomic strata, greatly influence how classical music is marketed and branded on social media networks, however, they are barriers to access and enjoyment of the art, online and offline.

Drawing on these discursive frameworks, this thesis is a critical analysis of social media marketing within the classical music industry. The core of my dissertation is a case study approach: social media branding of opera singer Joyce DiDonato and concert pianist Stephen Hough, social media marketing of a concert hall, namely, Wigmore Hall, and classical music apps. Furthermore, the research questions and broader implications do not just deal with industry marketing approaches or the mechanics of classical music’s e-strategy (electronic media strategy) but extend to key scholarly areas: media behavioural theory, sociology, political economics, creative geographies, socio-spatiality, sociotechnology, and post-digitality. It is anticipated that my PhD research will be able to instigate public dialogue and debate within the classical music and wider cultural sectors.
Acknowledgements

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Chapter 1: Introduction

With more than ten years since the launch of Facebook and YouTube in 2004 and 2005 respectively, these social media platforms are currently the top two sites after Google.¹ There is no doubt that, in 2017, the impact of social media in all aspects of life cannot be ignored. The number of worldwide social media users has exponentially grown and it is estimated that there will be approximately 2.95 billion by 2020, about a third of the Earth’s population, up from 1.59 billion in 2013.² One only needs to remember the 2016 Brexit vote³ and American presidential elections⁴ to realise the powerful influence social media are having on contemporary life. Social media networks are exploited by many types of sectors and businesses, from the corporate market to the fitness industry to universities and to commercial radio stations.

From recreation to recent news and even dating apps, social media are used for a variety of purposes. Not least among these is marketing. To emphasise this point, an initial discussion of the concept of ‘marketing’ is warranted via several definitions from the existing literature. According to Chris Anderton, Martin Dubber, and Martin James, ‘The ‘marketing mix’ is a range of activities, tools and strategies that a company uses in order to communicate with and satisfy the perceived needs of a defined target market’.⁵ Social media and digital technology are among the ‘tools and strategies’ used to communicate to a target audience, whether they are core audiences or marginal audiences, who are new to the product. A similar definition comes from David Kusek

and Gerd Leonhard, who account for marketing in terms of distribution. In that sense, companies, brands, and public figures implement major social media channels (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram) to distribute marketing messages about their product offerings to loyal and potential fans. Subsequently, social media act as distribution channels for finding out about and buying branded products, which are themselves marketable commodities.

With specific reference to music, Tad Lathrop indicates that ‘the marketing of music is a carefully planned process, with specialists in the areas of artist development, sales, distribution, promotion, and publicity joining forces in a single, methodical effort to break an artist and build a long-term following’. To apply his definition to social media, the tools are used by artist agencies, record companies, and PR firms to try and promote their clients, increase their fan following, and ultimately, generate sales for the artists. Finally, Philip Kotler, Gary Armstrong, Lloyd Harris, and Nigel F. Piercy provide a normative definition of marketing, ‘The process by which companies create value for customers and build strong customer relationships to capture value from customers in return’. Apropos of social media, organisations use the technologies to attract audiences to their products (i.e. ‘create value for customers’) in the hope that they will become fans and continue to invest in them (i.e. ‘build strong customer relationships to capture value from customers in return’). Customer relationships are also created by fans’ social media messages, for example, positive tweets and Facebook messages about the products, which act as customer reviews.

Together, the just mentioned definitions of marketing confirm that social media form a component part of a marketing campaign. The following examples in this opening subchapter actualise these definitions. Such is the impact of social media marketing that, according to the 2016 Social Media Marketing Industry Report, 90 per cent of

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marketers claim that social media is important to their business, their main benefits being to increase exposure (89%), increase traffic (75%), and develop loyal fans (68%).

In the face of budgetary reductions and long-held perceptions of the arts as elitist, the arts and cultural sectors have keenly adopted social media to ascertain value for money, improve the respective audience experience, and ultimately, increase audience size and engagement. One area influenced in these ways is the classical music industry partly due to the so-called classical music ‘crisis’, usually interpreted as the simultaneous ageing and declining of the audience, as well as the traditional formats and ways of experiencing classical music. In this vein, classical musicians and organisations implement social media as an audience development tool; to market their products to ‘Digital Natives’ or ‘Millenials’, who are on social media more than any other age category.

By way of illustration, in June 2014, the Facebook Insights of the Metropolitan Opera indicated that its most ‘Engaged Users’ were aged 25 to 34 years old. As Head of Content of Sinfini Classical (a classical music editorial site, featuring audio-visual content, social networks, blogs, online articles, news, and artist interviews), Freya Hellier joined the website’s team in May 2015. She was responsible for growing its audience by 33 per cent within seven months, with over 50 per cent of traffic from those under 45; a middle-aged person was the average age demographic for classical music.

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10 Ibid., p. 17.


before the rise of social media. Artists such as violinist Ray Chen and mezzo-soprano Joyce DiDonato, have a younger online audience base, which has been cultivated via certain social media marketing strategies, including Chen’s YouTube video tutorial on violin technique and DiDonato’s ‘#AskJoyce’ question and answer session on Twitter, which attracts aspiring opera singers.

Another major contribution social media have made to audience development is the trend of online televisual streaming. Spearheaded by online video portals and the consistent efforts of orchestras, opera houses, and conservatoires, special events, concerts, opera productions, and masterclasses are streamed in real time, on demand for free, or for a small payment. Launched in 2007, Medici.tv claims to be ‘the leading classical music broadcaster in the world’, webcasting over 100 live concerts and 1,800 programmes, with 300,000 members from 182 countries, checking into the service from mobile devices and connected TV applications, and approximately 500,000 fans on social networks. Since launching in August 2014, the Apple app for the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra’s Digital Concert Hall (the Orchestra’s online video streaming service for its concerts) has had 700,000 downloads. From December 2015 to December 2016, London’s Royal College of Music (UK) had viewers from over ninety countries, listening to its musicians live, and its YouTube channel over half a million views.

To engage newer audiences to classical music, one further social media marketing technique the classical music industry uses is what Atholl Swainston-Harrison, Chief Executive of the International Artist Managers’ Association, terms ‘industrialising intimacy’. Variegated parts of a person’s private and personal lives are presented to fans

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via social media. Against a backdrop of ‘classical music in an age of pop’, ‘industrialising intimacy’ is typified by actors from popular culture, for example, Justin Bieber and Kim Khardashian’s Instagram selfies.

In a similar way, Sarah Willis, horn player in the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, was one classical musician to ‘industrialise intimacy’. She used the app Periscope to live stream to her Twitter account videos of her in various situations: practising her instrument on the train, washing a car, and spending time with her pet cockatoo. Countertenor Iestyn Davies has posted selfies with celebrities such as Academy-award winning actor Eddie Redmayne (Iestyn Davies - Countertenor, Facebook, 6 December 2015), soul singer Beverley Knight, and his wife (@iestyn_davies, tweet, 3 April 2016). Additionally, he has tweeted photos of when he made homemade burgers for dinner (@iestyn_davies, 8 January 2017). Some of these occurrences are trivial but are equally important in helping to humanise the formal image of a concert artist. Gareth Davies, Principal Flautist in the London Symphony Orchestra, recalls of the Orchestra’s blog, ‘it became apparent that a lot of people enjoyed finding out about what went on behind the scenes and also having a more personal relationship with the players’. ‘People also seem to like pictures of the rehearsal from a different angle than they are used to seeing’. What is more, ‘industrialising intimacy’ ‘could result in greater notoriety for them, leading to more concerts because promoters know that they have a fan following (i.e. the ability to sell tickets and merchandise)’.

In fact, social media have been instrumental in augmenting online traffic and sales within the classical music industry. Having implemented a new digital strategy for the Austin Lyric Opera, Marc van Bree indicates that Facebook has been the second largest


\[\text{\textsuperscript{23}}\] Ibid.

\[\text{\textsuperscript{24}}\] J. Eifert, op. cit.
referral source to the opera company’s website, and a Facebook message and Facebook advertisement acted as direct sources for sales. With regards to the Detroit Symphony Orchestra’s live-streamed concerts on the Internet, the Orchestra’s Chief Executive Anne Parsons recollects that, ‘Pre-strike attendance was about 50 percent of capacity […] Now we have more than 90 percent of the hall sold on a regular basis’. ‘Ticket sales, donations, all the trends are up […] The digital strategy has been very important in communicating the health of our organization, which is important to people making decisions to attend and to invest’. In March 2015, concert pianist Emmanuel Vass launched a campaign on crowdfunding site Kickstarter to raise the costs for recording, marketing, and producing his album Sonic Waves, with his target met in under five days and at 165 per cent funded. The advanced CD sales from crowdfunding placed the disc in the top ten in the classical charts. To finance her work as a freelance Baroque cellist, Emily Davidson has created many YouTube videos with the assistance of crowdsourcing sites Patreon and GoFundMe.

In addition to the aforementioned engagement, audience, and revenue strategies, the classical music industry utilises social media in order to adjust to the changing media climate. Soprano Lesley Garrett, who in an interview for Saga Magazine had expressed her reticence towards Twitter, did her first Twitter Takeover on 15 February 2015, a question and answer session via the Welsh National Opera’s Twitter account to promote a production she was starring in with the company. Florence Eves, Digital Marketing

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28 Ibid.


Manager at classical music agency Intermusica Ltd, reveals that its artists are put on a digital marketing training programme for a minimum of three months and a maximum of six months. Along with traditional marketing materials, artist agencies are aware of social media’s role as a free or low-cost tool in an overall public relations (PR) kit. Today, there are agencies dedicated to digital marketing communications of classical music, notably, 21C Media Group in New York and its sister company Albion Media in London and Berlin.

Paul DiMaggio and Walter Powell would term these just mentioned occurrences ‘institutional isomorphism’, whereby the same processes from other organisations are adapted due to competition, institutional legitimacy, social and economic fitness, organisational pressures, cultural expectations, and uncertainty about the future of the business. Many industries have become homogenous because it is the norm to use social media within a marketing strategy, however, this chapter has demonstrated that the classical music industry does not use social media gratuitously.

As the beginning of this chapter highlights, social media are part of a marketing strategy. However, this doctoral research renders it important to recognise the role of social media within wider discourses, outside of marketing, and to ascertain how academia perceives the role of social media within marketing. In preparation for the next chapter, the Literature Review, a brief survey of the literature examines these key questions.

**Literature review and the research gap**

The above examples render social media marketing of classical music a timely area of research, although the discourse has radically changed over the duration of my studies. Hence, there are several strands of literature to negotiate. On the one hand, a number of arts marketing texts are outdated because at the turn of the century, classical music and the arts were marketed on pre-social media technologies, namely, email, mobile phone

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32 Florence Eves, meeting with the author, 6 December 2016.


34 Ibid., pp. 147–148.
texts, and websites. On the other hand, much of the social media literature has turned its focus to key areas: popular culture, entertainment, education, business, citizen journalism, humanitarian issues, and government and politics. These areas are typified by several key texts, including: Charlene Li and Josh Bernoff’s *Groundswell*, Clay Shirky’s *Here Comes Everybody*, Axel Bruns’ *Blogs, Wikipedia, Second Life, and Beyond: From Production to Produsage*, and Jamie Notter and Maddie Grant’s *Humanize: How People-Centric Organizations Succeed in a Social World*. Furthermore, when scholarly concern has turned to social media and music, it has concentrated on popular music. Such readings include: René T. A. Lysloff’s ‘Musical Life in Softcity: An Internet Ethnography’, Jimmy Sanderson and Pauline Hope Cheong’s netnography about the death of pop singer Michael Jackson, Bas Grasmayer’s undergraduate thesis about digital marketing solutions for vocal house and independent music record label 2AM, and Ole J. Mjo’s empirical research on social media in electronic music. During my doctoral research, though, a prolific body of literature on the role of social media in classical music has accumulated from academe, the industry, and the arts marketing discipline, as more people realise the effectiveness of the tools for this supposedly bygone art form and evaluate them. At present, the classical music sector’s digital marketing techniques are fully represented within the discourse and include written contributions from: orchestras, opera companies, chamber musicians, concert halls, broadcasters, agencies, and website development. Compared with five years ago, when sources about social media marketing of classical music were steadily accruing, the gap in the literature is obsolete because e-strategies (electronic media strategies) are fully functional within classical music marketing.

How my dissertation situates itself, then, is by assuming a scholarly critique of the field because a number of commentators, social media consultants, and digital marketers, influenced by social media optimism, tend to have a different focus. They greatly

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36 Full details of such texts are found in the Bibliography.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid.
support social media because they understand their place within the development of marketing, however, their methodologies are often one-sided and focused on the marketing perspective. A prime example is the terminology those working in the social media marketing industry use to describe the tools: ‘conversational’, ‘interactive’, ‘engagement’, ‘social’, ‘participatory’, ‘democratic’, and ‘authentic’.

On closer examination, these terms reflect a particular outlook towards digital technology. Social media marketing is not solely about the industry’s perspective. By way of illustration, the strategy of market segmentation is transferable to the digital sphere and links to scholarly disciplines such as sociology, political economics, and in the case of classical music, musicology. Internet marketing provides researchers with an insight into fan communities, which are created by the online presence of a brand or public figure. There is an opportunity to carry out in depth ethnographies and textual analyses, and to find broader theoretical frameworks to decentre my research from the monotheoretical approaches of social media marketing. These methods are necessitated due to the paucity of critical engagement within the social media marketing and classical music industries towards digital technology.

**Definition and exploration of the field**

Reflecting on this introductory chapter up until now points to certain ways of thinking about the keywords of this thesis: classical music, social media, and marketing. While they are accounted for in greater detail in the next chapter, it is worth drawing attention to them to provide a theoretical context and to explore some of the repercussions on my research. The term ‘classical music’ has been taken for granted because it is a catch-all term and it conflicts with various musicological slants. Generally, historical musicology accounts for classical music in terms of the ‘Classical Style’ of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and their contemporaries. From ethnomusicological and musico-historical perspectives, the Western Art Music or Western Classical Music tradition concerns repertoires from the pre-Medieval period to the present day and what would be termed

the ‘historical classical canon’. \textsuperscript{40} There is also a category of classical music that is no longer limited to musical snobbery. It is epitomised by the playlist of commercial classical radio broadcaster Classic FM, in which classical crossover, movie scores, and video game music are played, alongside ‘a decreasing legitimacy and a growing popular familiarity’ \textsuperscript{41} with populist classical music.

In contrast, the popular cultural sphere tends to associate classical music with the ‘bourgeois concert hall’. \textsuperscript{42} Following this line of thought is one episode of the BBC News programme HARDtalk, which reflected the mainstream media’s ongoing assertion of a classical music ‘crisis’. \textsuperscript{43} The interviewer Sarah Montague listed off the clichés of opera as too expensive, little attended, and difficult to understand; it requires homework to know what is happening and it is set in a foreign language. It was the responsibility of the interviewee, acclaimed baritone Thomas Hampson, to refute these points.

Given that online content has been exploited as a business model, the art form of classical music has spawn an industry sector in its own right. Yet, not all classical music actors use social media solely to generate economic growth. In his ethnography of a Mozart anniversary industry, Eric Martin Usner defines the Kunstmusikwesen, the practice of Western art musicking in Vienna, as ‘all customs, people, institutions, discourses and representations of classical music in Vienna’. \textsuperscript{44} The Kunstmusikwesen includes amateurs and the everyday person on the street, who may not be concerned

\textsuperscript{40} Mike Savage and Modesto Gayo, ‘Unravelling the omnivore: A field analysis of contemporary musical taste in the United Kingdom’, Poetics, 39.5 (2011), 337–357 (p. 344). It is beyond the scope of this thesis to fully define and consider Western Art Music, although many commentators allude to or extensively discuss the ontology of this term. See Denise Von Glahn and Michael Broyles, ‘Art music’, in Grove Music Online <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/A2227279?q=art+music&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit> [accessed 1 May 2015].

\textsuperscript{41} M. Savage and M. Gayo, op. cit., p. 340.


\textsuperscript{43} BBC Hardtalk, Thomas Hampson - Opera Singer (29/7/13), online video recording, YouTube, 30 July 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A8Nyec833tqA> [accessed 1 May 2015].

with generating income from their enjoyment of classical music (e.g., amateur music performance).45

Acknowledging academic and industry discourses, my definition of classical music is a varied musical genre, comprising repertoires mostly based in, though not restricted to, the Western Art Music tradition. It concerns serious, contemporary, and light musical genres. As the term ‘classical music’ is understood more easily by the commercial music industry, I am mostly using this term throughout this thesis. However, the scholarly preferences of the terms ‘Western Art’ and ‘Western Classical’ are utilised when discussing a musicological interpretation of the classical music sector’s social media marketing, which is explained in later chapters. This dissertation accounts for the classical music industry in a similar way to Usner’s representation of the Kunstmusikwesen as a larger cultural ecology because this is how social media content manifests itself within classical music circles and beyond. Simultaneously, the corporatisation of classical music’s social media marketing must be taken into consideration.

A normative definition of social media is as follows, ‘Social media employ mobile and web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms via which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content’.46 Yet, as demonstrated by Brian Solis and JESS3’s model ‘The Conversation Prism’,47 social media exist within a greater ‘Social Web’.48 Hence, this thesis accounts for the platforms as part of the full range of digital and Internet technologies, and as a result, extends social media marketing to them, for instance, online streaming services and mobile apps.49 Email marketing has a similar function to social media

49 It should be clarified that the term ‘digital’ refers to the source, whereas the Internet and social media are the conduits for digital technology.
The power of traditional online marketing, namely, a website, should not be underestimated; an organisation’s website is its ‘primary corporate presence on the Internet’, to which email mailing list subscriptions and social networks are integrated.

Driven by discourses and rhetoric around social media marketing, the arts and cultural sectors emphasise the participatory, democratic, and collaborative language of digital optimism, as illustrated by a statement from the Warwick Commission Report:

The digital revolution is transforming culture, just as it is transforming other aspects of our lives. It has increased levels of participation in informal cultural and creative activities, created new networks and forms of interaction, transformed the production and distribution of established art forms and allowed new art forms to emerge. An increasing number of arts, cultural and heritage organisations are exploiting the possibilities offered by new digital technologies to develop, reach and communicate with audiences in innovative and creative ways.

Yet, the kinds of wealthy, educated, and cultured audiences who regularly engage in classical music in real life and online underscore issues of a ‘digital divide’ that are no longer based on physical access to the Internet but a complex array of factors, highlighted throughout this thesis: digital, human, social, economic, geographic, educational, and cultural inequalities, all of which impact the ‘virtual’ and ‘real’ world.

This notion of a ‘digital divide’ points to three stages of critique of social media and Web 2.0; how digital media have been, and continue to be, subjected to technological determinism and/or fetishism within the arts and classical music, to how the Internet has created faux online democracies (i.e. the ‘digital divide’), to their acceptance within (post-) humanist and post-digital ways of thinking. The Literature Review expounds on

32 Warwick Commission, Enriching Britain: Culture, Creativity and Growth (University of Warwick, 2015), p. 56.
these stages, which also make themselves known within the upcoming case study chapters.

As mentioned earlier, Kotler et al. define marketing as ‘The process by which companies create value for customers and build strong customer relationships to capture value from customers in return’. Although social media marketing is typically accounted for as a marketing type known as relationship or relational marketing, classical music marketing has more often than not adopted the strategy of push or interruption marketing, even via social media channels. The product (e.g., an artist’s CD, concert, or media appearance) is promoted via constant advertising, PR, and sales motives. While the marketing literature has shifted its focus from selling the product and pushing whatever the company produced to marketing to the customer/consumer and satisfying customer wants and needs, consumers are very sensitive to being ‘marketed to’ via social media sites.54

To illustrate this point, the London Symphony Orchestra’s social media policy stipulates the ground rule of ‘NO MARKETING!!’55 Jo Johnson, the Orchestra’s Digital Marketing Manager, asserts that ‘Endless selling is a turn off’.56 By extension,

[S]ocial media is NOT really a ‘marketing tool’. It’s a relationship tool, or a brand awareness tool, or a customer service channel. Therefore, the style of posts you will see on the LSO social media pages are not geared towards selling a ticket. Why? Because the audience is global. Probably 50% or more of the people that Like our Facebook Page are not based in the UK, and will never be able to come to a concert in London.57

Nonetheless, ‘economic fitness’58 is a priority because the classical music industry is tight on funding and it is still a relatively niche market, unlike its pop music counterpart.


57 Jo Johnson, email to the author, 17 June 2013.

58 P. J. DiMaggio and W. W. Powell, op. cit., p. 150.
Hervé Boissière, Founder and Managing Director of Medici.tv, recognises that ‘classical music does not have the mass appeal that, say, persuades American Express to back a Lady Gaga tour, but with relays from La Scala, the Glyndebourne Festival, and Carnegie Hall, it does draw a moneyed and enthusiastic audience’. Classical music actors, then, inevitably utilise social media for marketing and promotional purposes, despite attempting to do so covertly. Classical consumers are aware of being ‘marketed to’, nevertheless, they still buy into marketing strategies because they make up a loyal segment. It is telling that the classical music sector has spawn a full-time industry out of digital marketing and communications. For instance, classical PR firms and artist agencies state on their websites that they are responsible for marketing messages and ‘corporate communications’.

**Overview of the thesis**

This chapter has been contextual up until this point and so a chapter-by-chapter account of the dissertation is warranted, as well as an exposition of my research questions and an account of my contribution to knowledge. The main objective of this thesis is to examine how and why the classical music industry uses social media marketing. This primary research question is answered using descriptive, analytical, and evaluative accounts, which at a surface level identify fundamental questions: what social media classical music marketers use, how the technologies function, and why they are utilised. Yet, the study investigates long-term debates such as the role of social media in audience development to cultivate marginal and core classical audiences. Further longitudinal topics include in person and online classical attendance and the overall digital life of the classical music scene. These kinds of sub-questions include the following:

- Do social media attract new audiences, not yet schooled in classical music?

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60 ‘Do please come along to our @wigmore_hall debut 18th Jan!’ (@MyrthenEnsemble, tweet, 3 January 2013).

61 ‘@EMIClassicsUS Ooh! Move over, @AnnaNetrebko: for one night only, @JoyceDiDonato takes over @Chopard brand ambassador duty @bbcproms’ (@sasherka, tweet, 3 September 2013).


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• Do social media help to combat the classical music ‘crisis’, if there is one? Do they provoke the interest of a younger audience and instigate a positive change in attitude among first-time and less frequent classical audiences?

• What is the role of social media marketing for individual actors in the classical music industry, and in turn, what is the collective role?

• What are the underlying ideologies, values, and motives behind the e-strategies of classical music?

• Do classical music marketers favour traditional media, digital/social media, or an aggregation of these types?

• Subsequently, do social media marketing strategies risk alienating an existing customer/client base?

• By transferring classical music marketing into the mainstream digital landscape, do social media dilute or enhance the cultural product?

• By marketing the social media experience in terms of liveness (e.g., web-streamed performances), can digital mediation be equated in value to the in person experience of classical music?

• Significantly, in light of Walter Benjamin’s claim, ‘that which withers in the age of mechanical reproduction is the aura of the work of art’,63 does social media marketing enhance, complement, or devalue the classical music experience?

• How does the classical music industry’s experience and use of social media marketing differ from other online milieus (e.g., popular music culture)?

Chapter 2 is the Literature Review. My interdisciplinary research renders it systematic to structure the chapter topically and so it explores discourses within the three key headers of classical music, social media, and marketing, the last of which encompasses arts marketing, digital/social media marketing, and classical music marketing. It is anticipated, though, that a topical organisation will not delineate the above headings too much but interlink them as and where appropriate, for instance, social media literature within classical music and the arts. Inevitably, the literature survey incorporates numerous examples from classical music in order to appropriate the research but they

are also from other areas. This cross-disciplinary integration is relevant. On the one hand, it positions my research within broader contexts because today’s social media marketing industry handles a vast gamut of subjects and contemporary issues. Key academic disciplines, too, evidence a range of discourses to survey: musicological, aesthetic, technological, sociological, business, marketing, arts marketing, music marketing, cultural, empirical, and statistical. On the other hand, it is anticipated that the Literature Review will illuminate well-known concepts within the social media and marketing disciplines by drawing on an intertextual approach.

Yet, a topical organisation of a literature survey functions as ‘a means to an end, and not […] an end in itself’. 64 ‘Novices may think that the purpose of a literature review is to determine the answers about what is known on a topic; in contrast, experienced investigators review previous research to develop sharper and more insightful questions’. 65 Rather than posit formal answers or conclusions at this stage, it is preferable to draw together the varying strands of the literature to ascertain the direction for this thesis’ output. In my case, it is an academic and critical perspective towards the research fields of social media marketing and the classical music industry. Additionally, my fieldwork analyses do not always uphold approaches or terminologies, suggested by the commercial marketing industry or digital marketing practitioners, but examines them in greater detail.

Chapter 3 is the Methodology, which reasons my data collection and fieldwork analyses. With the ever-increasing number of artists’ and organisations’ digital marketing strategies documented, it is beyond the scope of this research to study every facet of the classical music industry’s social media marketing. The bulk of my literature survey and fieldwork took place from late September 2013 to mid-March 2017 and so the study is inevitably selective about all of the episodes presented. There will be new developments after this dissertation and the social media marketing industry is in a constant state of flux, meaning that a certain phase in the classical music sector’s digital marketing is being documented.


65 Ibid.
In short, my methodology takes a multiple case study approach, comprising certain areas of the classical music industry as the units of analyses such as artists, concert halls, and fans. This method is suitable because evidence from many case-based examples makes the findings convincing and lends more robustness overall, compared with one single case study. In addition, case study research is appropriate because my research questions wish to explain a present circumstance (how or why a social phenomenon works) and they are concerned with a comprehensive description of a social phenomenon.

Consolidating the case studies are primary and desk research. Among the primary research methods are autoethnography (personal self-reflection on my involvement with social media and classical music), together with email correspondences and first-hand meetings with actors from the classical music industry, including senior staff, digital marketers, artists, and fans. Other primary literature is taken from articles, interviews, and blogs about the work of digital classical music marketers and executive staff in the classical music business. These sources are readily available on arts and cultural websites (e.g., Culture Hive and the Guardian’s Culture Professionals Network), as well as online marketing sites (e.g., New Media Knowledge and Wildfire PR). They are very helpful because they have a practical application and are about current social media marketing activities within the classical music scene. Secondary sources include academic literature around the focus of each chapter, as well as white papers, empirical reports, and statistical information. Significantly, the social and technological methodologies render it crucial to address research ethics, data protection, and scholarly referencing practices in online media.

Chapters 4 to 6 are the case studies, which form the core of my research. Against a backdrop of digital and cultural ecosystems (models transferable to the classical music industry’s social media strategies), I am examining three contrasting yet interconnected areas: performers, venues/presenters, and classical music apps. Chapter 4 centres on one marketing technique — branding — and how it relates to social media marketing of classical musicians. The chapter’s two main units of analysis are mezzo-soprano Joyce

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66 Ibid., p. 53.
67 Ibid., p. 4.
DiDonato and concert pianist Stephen Hough. Both have been early adopters of social media and they have been involved in numerous online content strategies, which I have followed. While I am not scrutinising all of their social media activities, the data sample enables a detailed analysis of the artists’ brand identities (the identity a brand aims to convey to consumers) and audience’s/fans’ responses to them. Further, the broader implications warrant attention because there is a need to reframe social media branding with approaches not upholding marketing, whereas this need has not been the case in both academic and industry literature.

Chapter 5 considers social media marketing in relation to the classical concert hall. The chief example is London’s Wigmore Hall (UK) (henceforth, the Hall), ‘the world’s leading chamber music venue’, and somewhere that has firmly established its digital presence in the classical music network within the last three to four years. Concert halls, moreover, are no longer physical venues but active investors in artistic curation and programming. They are originators of content and centres of activity and carry institutional weight, which resonates differently in a policy, community, or cultural landscape. Hence, I am not just discussing the role of the concert hall in promoting its events online and in person attendance. Other phenomena to analyse are the Hall’s role in larger cultural and business environments, making a classical presenter more than the sum of its parts.

In preparation for Chapter 5, it is worth giving several instances of this ecosystemic approach. The Southbank Centre uses Twitter not only to promote its classical music programming but also the food market outside of the Royal Festival Hall, its location on London’s South Bank (e.g., the skateboard park), and a cluster of neighbouring arts organisations such as the National Theatre, British Film Institute, Hayward Gallery, and Rambert Dance Company. They cross-promote each other to increase productivity.

Given the location of King’s Place, a relatively newer and smaller classical music and cultural presenter, one tweet, retweeted onto its account, links to a round-the-clock live

69 ‘Our food market’s open today and tomorrow! We’ve got our eye on @SambalShiok’s satay chicken + lentil burgers’ @soutbankcentre, tweet, 22 December 2015).
70 ‘Our new ticket & info office is now open alongside our friends at @southbankcentre. Pop down and say hello!’ (@NationalTheatre, tweet, 12 May 2012).
stream of King’s Cross’ redevelopments. An Instagram photo promotes King’s Place’s Rotunda restaurant and bar by Regent’s Canal, where City workers can have meetings and a drink outside (Figure 1-1 to Figure 1-4). From November 2016, the Barbican Centre (London, UK) appointed an Instagrammer in Residence for each month, whose pictures not only showcase the Centre’s concert auditorium (the Barbican Hall) but also the Brutalist architecture, the surrounding area, and panoramic views of the City. They imply the Centre’s long-standing ties with other cultural organisations; on the featured blog for the Instagrammer for January 2017, there are images from English National Ballet, Sadler’s Wells, London’s Victoria Miro Gallery, and Milwaukee’s Wild Space Dance Company.

In addition to this ecosystemic approach, the Hall has used social media to foster a loyal online fan community. It has done so via a strategy Alistair Croll and Benjamin Yoskovitz term the ‘one metric that matters’, whereby one online metric, data, or marketing type is used as the main focus to improve a business’ performance; in this case, the Hall’s ‘one metric’ is Twitter. The Hall’s social media marketing goes outside of the classical concert itself and it is structured around variables (e.g., interests, activities, and opinions) that indicate more about the venue and its audiences than its musical activities.

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Reflecting on the digitally optimistic standpoint of social media marketers, as well as my empirical findings on social media users and classical music attenders, one must ask whether concert halls attract both new in person and online audiences, who are less familiar with classical music. Illustrating this point is the Hall’s organisation of its ‘Twitter Party’, an in-person, post-concert social gathering for some of ‘our favourite tweeps’ (@wigmore_hall, tweet, 22 March 2015) at the venue. More worryingly, the repeat attendance, wealthy, educated, and (in the words of the Hall’s former Digital Content Administrator) ‘knowledgeable’74 audiences, who tweet and visit the Hall in person, underlie a ‘digital divide’. These patrons link to branding discourses, critiqued in Chapter 4.

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74 Rylan Holey, interview with the author, 10 May 2013.
Given the increased usage of smartphones, phablets, and tablet computers in the arts, culture, and in general, the importance of mobile Internet and social media usage must be acknowledged. It has been reported that there are more mobile devices in the world than humans and there will be over twelve billion (including phones and tablets) in 2018, two devices per user. Following in this vein, Chapter 6 is about the market of apps, applications or files, which are downloadable to a computer device and serve a purpose, in this case, experiencing classical music. Of particular attention is the strategy of market segmentation, in which distinct groupings or segments of people are identifiable according to their ages, experiences of, and attitudes towards digital technology and classical music.

To illustrate this point, there are classical music apps designed for children. Naxos Books’ My First Classical Music App introduces children to the world of musical instruments, ‘great composers’, and differing functionalities of classical music (e.g., weddings, concerts, and dancing). Then there are apps, which play a similar role to a museum audio guide and take listeners through a structural analysis of a piece in the classical canon, notably, Amphio’s app The Liszt Sonata, based around Liszt’s Piano Sonata in B minor. Tom Weightman, a software engineer for the app, writes that the audience is ‘a pretty engaged Liszt fan […] and those people are used to paying a similar price for CDs etc.’ With one in two users streaming music on mobile

76 Arts Council England et al., op. cit., p. 9.
77 Tom Weightman, email to the author, 4 January 2017.
devices, there is now a sizeable choice of streaming services, which include classical music. As the typical classical consumer is already informed about the music, Composed was a music streaming app that intended to readdress ‘the needs of casual listeners rather than diehard classical fans’.

But in contrast to industry-based marketing strategies (e.g., market segmentation), Garry Crawford et al.’s empirical research into Student Pulse (a nationwide ticketing app for discounted classical and orchestral concerts targeted at college and university students) proposes an adoption of critical methodologies when researching app technologies,

[Our analysis elucidates the broader potentials and limitations of social-media-enabled apps for audience development and engagement beyond a marketing paradigm. In the case of UKSO [a UK symphony orchestra], it appears that the technologically deterministic discourses often associated with institutional enrolment of participatory media and networked publics may not necessarily apply due to classical music culture. More generally, this work raises the contradictory nature of networked publics and argues for increased critical engagement with the concept.]

With a lack of scholarly appraisal of classical music apps, it is necessary to explore stances towards app and mobile usage other than marketing and branding (e.g., sociotechnological) and what the ramifications are for the classical music world. This method is important because autoethnography entails a self-critical account that is not solely about one’s own opinion; I will not account just for personal experience of the apps I tested for the chapter.

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Chapter 7 is the Conclusion, which fulfils the ‘book closing’ role for larger theses. It pulls together the main discoveries of my research but telescopes them for a final assessment of the classical music industry’s social media marketing strategies. It signals their relevance to wider contexts such as socioeconomic factors, changes in musical customs, and aesthetic concerns (e.g., notions of liveness within the digital sphere). Corresponding issues for future academic research are also suggested in this last chapter.

**Contribution to knowledge**

This thesis makes a number of contributions to knowledge. First and foremost, it is a critical analysis of the field. With my insider involvement and current status as a doctoral candidate, I am in a suitable position to critique my research areas from an academic perspective. This stance is paramount because many classical music and arts marketers account for digital and social media from their practical, hands-on experience, and in so doing, reflect on their work in a subjective and ideological manner.

Yet, Christopher Small’s idea of ‘musicking’, ‘to take part, in any capacity, in a musical performance’, suggests that I can think of myself as part of the field. I have learnt musical instruments since I was a child, played in the school orchestra, and sang classical repertoire in the senior school choir. I took the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music’s graded performance exams, as well as GCSE and A Level Music. I read an honours degree in Music at Durham University and the MSt in Music (Musicology) at the University of Oxford, where numerous modules centred on the study of Western Art Music. I was a Publicity Officer for the Musicon Concert Series (Durham University) and I undertook a placement at classical music agency Askonas Holt in August 2011. I presented and produced the classical music programmes for the radio stations of Durham and Oxford Universities, promoting the programmes via word

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of mouth, email, Facebook, and Twitter. I frequently go to classical concerts and keep up with the classical music scene’s activities through social media sites and the Internet.

Hence, my findings are supported by personal experience through reflexivity, a vital qualitative research method because the researcher is the vessel for the field of study.84 ‘If you adopt a self-critical stance [...] the study will become more reliable and valid, in other words, more trustworthy and authentic’.85 Marius Carboni, a former press and promotions manager for EMI Classics and Decca Classics, and a former consultant at Warner Classics, reflects in his PhD thesis about the classical music business in a similar way:

the ‘so-called’ subjectivity has a fundamental underpinning in providing a rich contextual background as a participant observer in the sector. The examination and corroboration of material offered by these practitioners of my initial conclusions in being part of the Four Seasons [Nigel Kennedy’s 1989 CD recording] campaign gives my research an objective analysis.86

I warn readers from the classical music and digital marketing industries in advance that I am necessarily critical because I have been encouraged to adopt this thinking throughout my academic studies and to reassess personal experiences of the field when writing up the findings of my fieldwork. Having researched the classical music marketing discipline, I fully respect the time, effort, and methodologies that go into the making of an e-strategy. While it may seem that I am being pessimistic or judgemental at times, I only wish to draw attention to matters the field can tackle for its own benefit so that it may develop in the future. Notably, in the time span of my PhD studies, there has been little confrontation of the ‘digital divide’ within classical music and the arts, a cause for concern if the classical music industry wishes to make the art form accessible.87

85 Ibid., p. 101.
87 Fay Hield adopts a critical stance towards her PhD research into folk singing communities. See Fay Hield, ‘English Folk Singing and the Construction of Community’ (published doctoral thesis, University of Sheffield, 2010), p. 9.
A second contribution to knowledge is a longitudinal perspective. Given the constantly changing nature of my research field, it has been essential to keep up to date with the latest digital and social media trends. For example, the baritone Gerald Finley used to post Vine videos of his stage by stage makeover into different opera characters before performances. Yet, Vine is somewhat outdated in light of recent micro-video developments, notably, Instagram video, and the classical music industry continues to devise new digital media marketing strategies. Hence, it has pertained to observe the role of social media over time, as well as any modifications to classical music marketing over a long-term period.

Finally, my research’s interdisciplinary nature aims to impact numerous locales both within and outside of academia. Digital computer and web technologies are now fully acknowledged as a research tool and object of research within the musicological sphere. Other domains this thesis wishes to contribute to are the mainstream digital landscape, e-consultancy, media studies, cultural geographies, the spatial humanities, the ethnomusicology of Western art music, classical music PR, and the role of classical music and marketing in the digital humanities. My research also reflects what René Lysloff and Leslie Gay term an ‘ethnomusicology of technoculture’, ‘an ethnographic study of musical culture with emphasis placed on technological impact and change’.

Indeed, musicology has tended to adopt a work-centred approach, whereby classical music is analysed in terms of its formal structure and cultural context. ‘[T]he text-centric history musicology has inherited has meant that the social context of classical

music has often been neglected’. Readdressing this gap in the literature is a steadily growing body of research that takes Western art musicology outside of its traditional work-centred context and re-examines the discipline socioculturally. Notable examples are the Sheffield Performer and Audience Research Centre’s ethnographies of classical concert audiences and Nicholas Wilson’s 2013 account of the early music business. By ‘understanding that social media is [...] more about anthropology, sociology, and ethnography’, my dissertation fits into this recent musicological subdivision, which is crucial for the future of the discipline. In 2017, researchers must not be afraid to take risks, create new possibilities, and push the boundaries of classical musicology beyond traditional conventions.

Most meaningful to my research is the desire to make a contribution to the classical music, arts, and cultural industries. It is anticipated that my thesis will offer a critical yet different insight into one major development of their work, and consequently, it will help to continue discussion and debate on social media marketing strategies among a range of industry representatives. They may include: senior staff, digital marketers, classical music critics, agents, consultants, PR firms, record companies, media, performers, audiences, and fans. I hope that this research will provoke classical music actors to rethink their own attitudes towards social media. It is a call for those in the business to instigate actionable change that will allow all people to come into contact with classical music via social media, irrespective of their circumstances and facilities with digital technology. If ‘audiences are increasingly fractured, disaggregated and self-aware’, then a greater understanding of how to attract core and marginal audiences via social media marketing serves as a sound practical and theoretical foundation for the classical music industry.

93 Stephanie E. Pitts, Melissa C. Dobson, Kate Gee and Christopher P. Spencer, ‘Views of an audience: Understanding the orchestral concert experience from player and listener perspectives’, Participations: Journal of Audience and Reception Studies, 10.2 (2013), 65–95.
95 B. Solis, op. cit., p. 3.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Classical music

The term classical music has commonly been taken as a given or conceived as ‘something ontologically solid existing’.¹ As a result, ‘classical music’ has a convoluted understanding within the discourse. In many instances, ‘classical’ has become a generic marketing label; it is a heading consistently given to a type of music in broadsheet newspaper columns and on arts websites (e.g., The Times and the Guardian).² Conversely, ‘classical music’ has been adopted by academic literature, particularly, sociology, historical musicology, music analysis, and ethnomusicology. In recent years, many opinion pieces have been published within mainstream media circles, some of which are referred to in this chapter. They are partly responsible for constructing a classical music ‘crisis’.

On closer examination, three distinct strands of classical music literature are identified, all of which are explained in greater detail in the following subchapters. Firstly, literature that focuses on the classical music genre is mostly based in the musicological sphere. Secondly, literature concerning a particular classical music culture derives from empirical research, as well as scholarly discourses and popular media commentaries. Finally, the idea of a classical music industry is presented in academic and commercial texts. While a tripartite model risks simplifying a rich and complex subject such as classical music, this chapter still aims to present a detailed discussion of the classical music literature.

The classical music genre

The historical musicological literature accounts for the classical music genre in two ways. Typified by Charles Rosen’s book The Classical Style: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, the ‘Classical idiom’ of the Viennese School forms a component part of

music history, alongside the Renaissance, Baroque, and Romantic periods. However, there is a discourse, which interprets classical music as a universal music history or a set canon of works. Notable examples are: Donald J. Grout’s *A History of Western Music*, Richard Taruskin’s *Oxford History of Western Music*, and Howard Goodall’s *The Story of Music*, tomes which aim to provide historiographies of music from the pre-Medieval period to the present day.

The ethnomusicological literature suggests that there is a geographic perspective on the classical music genre. Ethnomusicologists criticise terms such as ‘Western Art Music’ or ‘Western Classical Music’ because they are perceived as essentialist and culturally superior. In addition, ethnomusicology has been viewed as diametrically opposed to musicology, the latter of which has focused on Western musical repertoires (i.e. classical music). These criticisms are located in Judith Becker’s article ‘Is Western Art Music Superior?’, Nicholas Cook’s chapter in *The New (Ethno)musicologies* (‘We Are All (Ethno)musicologists Now’), and Laudan Nooshin’s contribution to a themed issue of *Ethnomusicology Forum* (‘Introduction to the Special Issue: The Ethnomusicology of Western Art Music’).

By contrast, a number of commentators indicate that the classical music genre is no longer limited to highbrow cultures. Mike Savage and Modesto Gayo’s multiple correspondence analysis of British musical tastes reveals that ‘a genre of ‘light classical’ that includes familiar forms of classical music alongside other mainstream musicians is now a powerful force, and that this is identified as different from a more contemporary classical music that is closer to jazz’. Where a musically pluralist definition of classical music is prominent is in mainstream media texts because they wish to prove that

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programming diverse repertoires under the ‘Classical’ label has positive effects, notably, it attracts a wider audience. For instance, the BBC Media Centre’s report of the 2013 BBC Proms states that the concerts ‘Doctor Who at the Proms’ and ‘John Wilson’s Hollywood Rhapsody’ increased online traffic, up 30 per cent year on year.\(^7\) In a similar way, Sam Jackson, Managing Editor of Classic FM, tweeted a graph, with a spike in engagement on the station’s Twitter feed during a programme about video game music, broadcasted in September 2014 (@classicjacko, tweet, 22 September 2014).

**The classical music culture**

The idea that classical music is a specific culture or habitus to be appreciated over time is upheld by a range of sources. The mainstream sociological literature, namely, Pierre Bourdieu’s *Distinction*, suggests that an interest in classical music begins at a young age; children are introduced to the music or learn an instrument under the encouragement of school teachers or family members.\(^8\) Empirical research confirms this cultural standpoint. As Melissa Dobson concludes in a research article on first-time concertgoers, ‘understanding, appreciating and engaging with classical music performance is a gradual process [. . .] one single exposure to a classical concert is unlikely to ‘convert’ new audience members into dedicated attenders’.\(^9\) Similarly, the commercial literature advocates a certain schooling into classical music, for example, the Barbican Centre’s classical music brochure for February to July 2017 writes, ‘We know that a love of music starts at an early age’.\(^10\) Governmental sources (such as the Department for Education’s report ‘The Importance of Music: A National Plan for Music Education’ and the statutory guidance for National Curriculum music in England) posit that ‘Music teaching starts in the early years’.\(^11\)

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\(^7\) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2013/proms-final-figures> [accessed 2 November 2016].


many pupils will have to study music will be at school’. 12 ‘Pupils should be taught to sing and play musically with increasing confidence and control’ and ‘listen with discrimination to the best in the musical canon’. 13

In contrast to these life trajectory narratives, the musicological discourse presents a work-centred approach towards classical music culture, for instance, Theodor Adorno’s concept of ‘structural hearing’ 14 and Julian Johnson’s idea of ‘musical literacy’. 15 Likewise, a perusal of several course outlines for the first year of an undergraduate music degree in the UK indicates that students are trained in Western music analysis, aural, classical harmony, counterpoint, and basic musicological concepts. 16 The ethnomusicology of Western Art Music literature has criticised this type of classical music schooling, notably, Bruno Nettl’s ethnography of the conservatoire system (Heartland Excursions: Ethnomusicological Reflections on Schools of Music), ‘music theory curricula still hang on to four-part [harmonic] structure and the music most associated with it’. 17

Compared with the above mentioned readings, the ethnographic literature depicts a behavioural perspective on classical music culture. A noticeable example is Christopher Small’s autoethnography of attending a classical concert (Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening), which identifies a set of rules classical music audiences are expected to conform to during a performance (e.g., sitting still and supressing coughing). 18 In the same way, Henry Kingsbury’s ethnography of a conservatoire

12 Ibid.
18 Christopher Small, Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1998), pp. 26–27.
observes the ‘ritual silence’\(^\text{19}\) of a student recital. Interestingly, these sociocultural stances on classical music culture are supported by a number of pieces, published on social media and the Internet. These include several blogs, reporting on the vehement audience reaction to a mobile phone ringing during a concert by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra.\(^\text{20}\)

Where the notion of a classical music culture is heavily reiterated is a body of literature that bemoans a classical music ‘crisis’. The mainstream media tends to have a set way of thinking about classical music and so numerous opinion pieces have been published, which portray the culture surrounding classical music in a negative light (e.g., the ageing and declining audience, the formalised nature of concerts, the elitist and expensive nature of the art form, and the need to assume prior knowledge of the music before attending a performance). They include: Greg Sandow’s blog ‘Portrait of a crisis’, Mark Vanhoenacker’s article for Slate (‘Requiem’), and Will Self’s article for the Guardian’s online music column (‘Will Self: Opera remains the preserve of the rich’).\(^\text{21}\)

Interestingly, the empirical and sociological research presents the findings that suggest the presence of a classical music ‘crisis’, rather than accounting for classical music from a position of confirmation bias. By way of illustration, Stephanie Pitts’ evidence-based research on audiences at Sheffield’s Music in the Round Festival indicates that they engage in contextual activities to help them to understand classical music deeper, for example, amateur music-making, listening to recordings, and researching composers.\(^\text{22}\)

Similarly, a co-authored research article about the City of Birmingham Symphony

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Orchestra’s audiences reveals that they are over fifty, relatively affluent and educated, and middle class. Bourdieu’s *Distinction*, though, gives personal opinions about classical music, for instance, he would characterise concert-going as a bourgeois practice, pointing to ‘the irreproachable exhibition of wealth’ or symbolic capital over ‘intellectual’ taste.

Drawing together the various strands of the literature mentioned in this subchapter, an area that warrants attention is a scholarly discourse about the impact of social media marketing on classical music culture. This research gap is pertinent to my thesis. As the digital marketing industry has developed, literature from the classical music and arts marketing businesses has endorsed the role of social media in ameliorating classical music culture. Notably, case studies published by the Arts Marketing Association try to prove that social media marketing attracts younger, marginal audiences to classical music and the tools remove the perceived formality surrounding the art form. Commercial literature, however, aims for a certain value judgement — a digitally optimistic one — because these texts are usually authored by industry-based practitioners rather than academic researchers. Additionally, the goal of an industry is to generate economic growth, which is why commercial organisations promote the effects of social media marketing within written accounts. Therefore, a critical approach towards the classical music industry’s social media marketing is needed for the existing discourse.

**The classical music industry**

As Adorno suggests in his notorious criticism of the ‘culture industry’, capitalist processes transfer to creative ones, which include the commercialisation and standardisation of popular music and basic classical forms (e.g., the Classical minuetto

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23 Stephanie E. Pitts, Melissa C. Dobson, Kate Gee and Christopher P. Spencer, ‘Views of an audience: Understanding the orchestral concert experience from player and listener perspectives’, *Participations: Journal of Audience and Reception Studies*, 10.2 (2013), 65–95 (p. 72).

24 P. Bourdieu, op. cit., p. 279.

This idea of a cultural or creative industry links to the clustering of the creative arts, a thesis located in two books: Richard Florida’s *The Rise of the Creative Class: And How It’s Transforming Work, Leisure, Community, and Everyday Life* and Elizabeth Currid’s *The Warhol Economy: How Fashion, Art, and Music Drive New York City.*

Current literature about one aspect of the cultural and creative industries — the music industry — tends to equate the term ‘music industry’ to the popular music industry. The objective of Chris Anderton *et al.*’s book *Understanding the Music Industries* is to ‘[address] the rich variety and scale of the music industries by examining the most important aspects of those industries, and considering effects of technological, social, cultural and economic change upon them’. While the book accounts for industrial processes within music such as publishing, record production, music promotion, distribution, and consumption, the majority of examples are taken from popular music genres rather than classical music.

For want of a comparison, the second edition of *The Music Industry Handbook* was published in 2016 but it has one chapter specifically dedicated to the classical music business, which includes practical advice for classical artists about social media marketing. Reasons why there is a paucity of scholarly literature about the inner workings of the classical music industry are uncertain. One possible reason is the fact that the classical music sector is still a niche area of society that is seen as slow to catch up with the developments of other music industries (e.g., popular music’s social media marketing).

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Yet, in recent years, a sizeable body of academic research has steadily developed. This literature survey identifies two examples. The first is Usner’s PhD dissertation, which is an ethnography of the Kunstmusikwesen, a concept he defines as ‘all customs, people, institutions, discourses and representations of classical music in Vienna’ (see Chapter 1, ‘Definition and exploration of the field’ and Figure 2-1).30 The second is Carboni’s doctoral thesis about the classical music business, which integrates findings on: marketing, PR, advertising, digital media, record stores, broadcasters, professional musicians, artist managers, concert promoters, instrument manufacturers and insurance, organisation of concert venues, patronage, recording sessions, record companies, and cultural funding initiatives. He also recognises the role of ancillary services, not originally associated with classical music, such as selling classical CDs in Sainsbury’s supermarket, hotel and transport services for travelling concert artists and audiences, and joint venture deals of classical broadcasters with commercial companies.

Figure 2-1 - The Kunstmusikwesen in Vienna

Usner’s diagram

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30 A similar application to the arts is found in Howard Becker, Art Worlds (Berkeley, Calif.; London: University of California Press, Updated and expanded edition 25th anniversary ed., 2008).
Social media

Many commentaries on social media and the Internet have a digitally optimistic narrative. To illustrate this point, Tim O’Reilly and John Battelle’s report ‘Web Squared: Web 2.0 Five Years On’ implies that users are meant to participate and interact more on the Internet, and that they are to be engaged in Internet technologies beyond the ‘read mode’ of Web 1.0, ‘The Web is no longer a collection of static pages of HTML that describe something in the world’.31 Henry Jenkins has, too, written about the potential of digital media to ‘[enable] new forms of participation and collaboration’.32

Similarly, commercial research regularly advocates web-based ideologies. For instance, Forrester Research’s ‘Social Technographics Ladder’ appears to favour an active and participatory approach towards social media usage over a passive and voyeuristic one (Figure 2-2).33 This is because the percentage of users that is more active on social media is positioned at the top of the ladder and the activities that are perceived as more passive are placed towards the bottom of the ladder. It is striking to observe, though, that there is research within the academic sphere, which is technologically deterministic.

A noteworthy example is a paper by Jan Kietzmann, Kristopher Hermkens, Ian McCarthy, and Bruno Silvestre, which is associated with the Kelley School of Business, Indiana University.34 The authors’ definition of social media (‘Social media employ mobile and web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms via which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content’)35 has been widely cited by the scholarly literature, however, the article incorporates approaches and terminologies, characteristic of social media ideologies.


These include: the shift from traditional media to digital media, as well as rhetoric such as ‘communities’, ‘user-generated content’, ‘conversations’, and ‘relationships’. This tone of voice is attributed to the business school aspect of the article, and as a result, is written from a practitioner’s point of view rather than from an academic analysis.

*Figure 2.2 – Social Technographics
Source: Forrester Research, Inc

Another case in point is the *Oxford Internet Survey 2013 Report*. It mainly concerns statistical information about Internet usage in Great Britain but the authors summarise

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36 Ibid., p. 243.

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their findings using biased statements, ‘There has been progress on narrowing digital divides with a rise in Internet access for lower income groups, people with no formal educational qualifications, retired people and individuals with disabilities’. Likewise, ‘Social network sites have transformed the online experience for many people’. In this case, the report was sponsored by Ofcom, a major media corporation, and so the research had to have a commercial element to it, by celebrating the democratic reach of social media.

As indicated in the previous chapter (see Chapter 1, ‘Literature review and the research gap’, the academic literature on social media has concentrated on key areas, outside of music. These include: popular culture, entertainment, education, business, citizen journalism, humanitarian issues, and government and politics. Where there is scholarly discourse about social media and music, readings have mostly concerned popular music, although Joshua Fineberg, a former Associate Professor at Harvard University, includes a chapter about technology in his book Classical Music, Why Bother, an extract from which is provided:

[T]echnological innovations could facilitate many things that are not new. They might make existing processes better or cheaper in ways that might alter the situation meaningfully [. . .] We could reach far-flung virtual audiences and perhaps render viable art that could not command enough of a public in any one city or country. Moreover, we may need these new facilities to replace the vanishing infrastructure of publishers, orchestras that play new works, stores that stock new works (or even more generally classical music) in score or recording form, and so on. What is important about Fineberg’s book is that it was published over a decade ago and so the implication for the existing literature is to account for how recent technologies, namely, digital and social media, are utilised by the classical music industry for certain purposes such as marketing, distribution, and broadcasting. Yet, the above extract reflects a technologically deterministic ideology that has become common in recent literature on the role of social media within the arts and music industries (including the classical music industry). Some further examples of this literature are warranted.

38 Ibid., p. 36.
Published in 2005, the main argument of David Kusek and Gerd Leonhard’s book *The Future of Music: Manifesto for the Digital Music Revolution* is that the music industry must adopt to a paradigm shift towards digital marketing and distribution.40 Relatedly, the Warwick Commission Report has advocated the power of digital technologies to transform culture and people’s lives, and to increase participation within the arts, cultural, and heritage sectors.41

Taking into account the different types of social media literature described in this subchapter, only a few academic sources have attempted to provide a scholarly and critical account of the classical music and cultural sectors’ approaches towards social media. They include: David Hesmondhalgh’s textbook *The Cultural Industries*, which critiques digital optimism within the wider cultural and creative industries,42 one co-authored research article about the Student Pulse app (published in the academic journal *Information, Communication & Society*),43 and Shzr Ee Tan’s chapter in *The Oxford Handbook of Music and Virtuality*, which comprises a critical ethnography of the YouTube Symphony Orchestra’s performance at Carnegie Hall.44 This paucity of literature renders an academic perspective on web-based ideologies within the classical music industry overdue.

**Marketing**

There are three areas of marketing literature to consider. The first of these is academic marketing, which deals with the marketing discipline as a whole rather than a specific sector (e.g., music). Neil H. Borden’s article in the *Journal of Advertising Research*, ‘The Concept of the Marketing Mix’, provides a helpful explanation of the component

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parts of an overall marketing campaign, including branding, channels of distribution, advertising, and promotions.\footnote{Neil H. Borden, ‘The Concept of the Marketing Mix’, \textit{Journal of Advertising Research}, 2 (1964), 7–12 (p. 9).} A more recent resource is \textit{Principles of Marketing}, a textbook targeted at marketing students and teachers to help their school or university studies.\footnote{Philip Kotler, Gary Armstrong, Lloyd Harris, and Nigel F. Piercy, \textit{Principles of Marketing}, 6th European edn (Harlow: Pearson, 2013).} Hence, the book features definitions of key concepts in marketing, as well as case studies, model answers, and set tasks to be carried out in tandem with assignments or research projects.

Secondly, there is literature from the arts marketing discipline. As one might expect, a substantial body of information about social media marketing in the arts, including classical music, has been made available on the Internet. This encompasses the following websites: Arts Council England, CultureHive (the Arts Marketing Association’s online content resource), Pew Internet, Wildfire PR, New Media Knowledge, Digital R&D Fund, \textit{Kensington, Chelsea & Westminster Today}, Albion Media, Musical America, Final Note Magazine, and Classic FM. The situation, however, is different for offline arts marketing literature. While examples from classical music marketing are included (e.g., Peter Fraser’s chapter on opera marketing in the textbook \textit{Arts Marketing}), they are outdated because at the turn of the century, classical music and the arts were marketed on pre-social media technologies, namely, email, mobile phone texts, and websites.\footnote{Peter Fraser, ‘The marketing of opera’, in \textit{Arts Marketing}, ed. by Finola Kerrigan, Peter Fraser and Mustafa Özbilgin (Oxford: Burlington, MA: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann, 2004), pp. 68–97 (pp. 79–82).} Another case in point is Julie Aldridge’s report for the Arts Marketing Association, ‘Word of Mouth: Practical Online Marketing’. As this report was published in 2002, prior to the prolific use of social media marketing within the arts and cultural industries, she promotes website and email as the two main forms of online marketing arts practitioners should utilise.\footnote{Julie Aldridge, ‘Word of Mouse: Practical Online Marketing’ (London: Arts Marketing Association, 2002).}

The third area of literature centres on music marketing, which is in turn subdivided into commercial literature (i.e. practical marketing advice to music professionals) and
scholarly research on the subject of music marketing. An example of the former subcategory is Tad Lathrop’s *This Business of Music Marketing & Promotion*, a practical guide to marketing and promotional techniques targeted at musicians, entrepreneurs, and business practitioners. However, the book was published in 2003 and so the advice is outmoded, namely, he promotes emails, chat rooms, and online forms as key music marketing tools.\(^4^9\) Furthermore, he acknowledges the function of the Internet in marketing classical music\(^5^0\) but the book considers marketing techniques as applied to the commercial music industry in general rather than marketing strategies specific to classical music. For example, he refers to using the Internet to promote ‘gigs’\(^5^1\) and offer song lyrics.\(^5^2\)

Indeed, the topic of music marketing, particularly, of niche musical genres, has held a peripheral position within the academic corpus. This literature survey identifies two case-based research articles by Timothy D. Taylor (‘World Music in Television Ads’ and ‘The Changing Shape of the Culture Industry; or, How Did Electronica Music Get into Television Commercials’)\(^5^3\) and three books (Bethany Klein’s *As Heard on TV: Popular Music in Advertising*, Timothy D. Taylor’s *The Sounds of Capitalism: Advertising, Music and the Conquest of Culture*, and Mark Laver’s *Jazz Sells: Music, Marketing, and Meaning*).\(^5^4\) For the most part, case studies from Andrew Leyshon’s book *Reformatted, Code, Networks, and the Transformation of the Music Industry* position digital technologies within the areas of creativity, production, and distribution. Greater attention is warranted for the subject of music marketing as he recognises that

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\(^5^0\) Ibid., p. 123.

\(^5^1\) Ibid., p. 154.

\(^5^2\) Ibid., p. 158.


artists have used social media such as MySpace and YouTube as channels to reach a larger audience.  

**Conclusions about the literature review**

Reflecting on the different types of literature described in this chapter, the research gap is a critical and scholarly approach towards the fields of social media marketing and the classical music industry. This is because commentaries about social media and classical music are either technologically deterministic or they have been authored by digital marketing and industry professionals, who draw on practical and personal experiences of using social media, rather than analyse their work from an academic perspective. What is more, the classical music marketing literature that exists away from the Internet is outdated and there are relatively few examples from classical music within the offline arts marketing and social media discourses (e.g., academic textbooks). Hence, an updated account of the classical music sector’s social media marketing techniques is overdue. Analytical and critical methods are needed for my case-based research as well, and these approaches are explained in further detail in the next chapter, the Methodology.

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Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

I am utilising a range of sources: primary research, autoethnography/personal reflexivity, desk research, scholarly literature, a theoretical perspective, and academic critique. My research design is based on mixed methods: a case study approach, ethnography, including a ‘blended’ ethnography/netnography,¹ autoethnography, and by extension, auto-netnography. This chapter is a rationale for all of the above and is organised under four main headings: sources, scope of research, research methods, and the challenges, limitations, and logistics identified over the course of my research. Each of these headings is accounted for in separate subchapters.

Sources

Primary data comes from the staple social media channels of Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, as well as other social media sources: Instagram, Reddit, Vine, blogs, GIFs, and memes. Business networks, namely, LinkedIn, confirm the overall research scope and showcase insider information, unofficially presented on an organisation’s website. This information includes: the specific responsibilities of a digital classical music marketer, facts and figures, and success stories of the company’s e-strategy. Due to the privacy options of LinkedIn, I am citing from the accounts and pages that have been made publicly accessible. As social media overlap with all media types, data gathering comes from other kinds of digital and online resources such as slides from classical music apps. Industry-based conferences are making presentations by senior staff available in audio and/or video form on the Internet, which is especially helpful for those who are not attending in person. Executive staff and digital marketers have given interviews for websites, online articles, magazines, and newspaper features. Digital classical music marketers have uploaded computer slide presentations about their work.² Contributions from those directly involved in the cultural and creative industries are found in such sources as the Journal of Arts Marketing (the magazine of the Arts

Marketing Association) and Culture Professionals Network, a subsite of the Guardian’s official website.³

All of this content is substantiated by emails, in person interviews, telephone conversations, and Skype chats with persons from the classical music world. My sample comprises the following:

Email

- Jo Johnson, Digital Marketing Manager of the London Symphony Orchestra.
- Adrienne Stoltz, former e-strategy Manager of Carnegie Hall.
- Alex Ross, classical music writer and music critic for the New Yorker magazine.
- Stephen Hough CBE, international concert pianist.
- Patrick Abrams, Associate Director of Bärenreiter Music.
- Neil Kennedy, Treasurer of Berkhamsted Music, a concert organisation based in Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire.
- Tom Weightman, software engineer for Amphio’s The Liszt Sonata app.

Interview

(in person unless indicated otherwise)

- Rylan Holey (telephone), former Digital Content Administrator of Wigmore Hall.
- Atholl Swainston-Harrison, Chief Executive of International Artist Managers’ Association.
- Frances Wilson, who blogs on classical music and pianism at ‘The Cross Eyed Pianist’ (<http://crosseyedpianist.com>).
- Jaimie Appleton (Skype), a classically trained singer and fan of Joyce DiDonato.

• Paule-Elizabeth Jackson (Skype), a voice major student and fan of Joyce DiDonato.
• Eric Whitacre, Grammy-award winning composer and conductor, who I met when present at Royal Holloway for The King’s Singers Summer School in 2015.
• Dr Mark Berry, writer and blogger of classical music and opera.
• John Gilhooly OBE, Chief Executive and Artistic Director of Wigmore Hall
• Ben Rayfield (telephone), Managing Director of Rayfield Allied, a classical music artists’ agency in London (UK).

Informal conversation/meeting
• Florence Eves, Digital Marketing Manager of Intermusica Ltd.
• Ian Bostridge CBE, international classical tenor, who I met at his Humanitas Oxford symposium ‘Voice, Memory and Song’.
• Rebecca Ryland-Jones, Royal Holloway music graduate.
• Mirjam Frank, classical singer.
• Kyle McDonald, Senior Social Media Editor at Classic FM.

Insights from all of these correspondents act as a fundamental ‘insider’ core while pertaining to the secondary literature from current viewpoints. Some independent research such as Wilson’s survey about classical musicians’ social media usage is similar in intent to an insider’s perspective. But while online data collection is integral, Christine Hine characterises virtual ethnography as ‘wholeheartedly partial’. ‘Virtuality also carries a connotation of ‘not quite’, adequate for practical purposes’. Hence, my online data-searching helps but only goes so far for analyses, evidence-based suggestions, and theoretical applications, hence the need for raw data from insiders themselves.

6 Ibid., p. 65.
This is especially the case when I have sought specifics about an artist or organisation’s social media, information that is hard to locate unless performing an extremely thorough online search or asking people directly, the latter of which has facilitated the research process. Relatedly, I have wished to ask critical questions, answers to which are not entirely disclosed on the Internet because the person is publicly presenting themselves or the company in a positive light and online articles may have been edited accordingly. As well as posing general questions such as why said artist or party utilises social media, a sample gives an idea of the kinds of matters into which I have hoped to glean insight:

- Who are Joyce DiDonato’s and Stephen Hough’s target audiences online?
- Do said artists have any social media training?
- Who maintains their social media or do they manage them by themselves?
- How important to DiDonato is staying ‘true to yourself’ and being authentic in person and on social media?
- When fans have emailed or tweeted her, is this contact the same when meeting her in person?
- Who are Wigmore Hall’s core audiences?
- Why did Wigmore Hall change its tone of voice on Twitter?
- Who was the target audience for The Liszt Sonata app?
- How does the pricing structure of the app operate?
- How/whether app developers would tailor design strategies to a musical audience.
- Would app developers need special training to deal with musical input issues?
- Does classical music need to be saved?
- If correspondents are concerned about the exclusive club image that the media presents of classical music.
- How do the classical music industry’s social media differ from social media usage in the wider world?
Autoethnography, ‘an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyse personal experience in order to understand cultural experience’, is employed as a supplementary primary source because I have classical training and have regularly used social media and the Internet. When I was young, I learnt musical instruments. As I am British-born Chinese, my mother encouraged me to take up the piano and violin, cultural competencies typical of East Asian/Chinese parents, who privilege said instruments and classical music in their children’s musical education and extra-curricular activities. The musical education I received at school and university was primarily centred on Western art music. The GCSE and A Level Music syllabuses had, and continue to have, a work-centred approach. I read Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Music at British universities, where a certain proportion of the course content is based in the Western art canon, including the canonisation of popular, jazz, and contemporary music. Indeed, the ethnomusicological discourse has addressed the rift between ethnomusicology as ‘low or cultural Others’ and Western art musicology, ‘which has dominated university music departments’ and assumed a position of authority.

I would also be categorised as a ‘Digital Native’ because I was born in 1990, the year the World Wide Web launched. People of my generation have made social media part and parcel of their lives, ‘Generation Y (the millennials) are entering the workforce with

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10 <https://www.dur.ac.uk/music/undergraduate/courses/> and <http://www.music.ox.ac.uk/assets/Masters-Courses-leaflet-for-entry-in-20163.pdf> [both accessed 31 July 2016].


12 Ibid.

13 Nicholas Cook, ‘We Are All (Ethno)musicologists Now’, in The New (Ethno)musicologies, op. cit., pp. 48–70 (p. 52).
unprecedented knowledge of how to communicate with one another using social networks, micromedia communities, text messages, blogs, and all things social’.14

Indeed, having worked in the classical music sector himself, reflective practice was a major component of Carboni’s PhD dissertation and contacts from the music business encouraged him in this vein.15 ‘[T]he ‘so-called’ subjectivity has a fundamental underpinning in providing a rich contextual background as a participant observer in the sector’ (see Chapter 1, ‘Contribution to knowledge’), what Gilbert Ryle and Clifford Geertz term a ‘thick description’.16 With my thesis in a related topic, I am incorporating self-reflexivity or autoethnography. Christine Daymon and Immy Holloway propose that it is an essential ongoing tool for qualitative research because the researchers ‘are part of the phenomenon to be studied’.17

Secondary sources comprise statistical data, reports, documents, and surveys. Information is taken from many resources and bodies, including: the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, BBC Trust, National Endowment for the Arts, Arts Council, Digital R&D Fund, Oxford Internet Institute, Pew Research Center, Classic FM, CultureHive, YouGov Profiles LITE, Forrester Research, Social Media Examiner, Ofcom, GlobalWebIndex, Statista, and London Real. Complementing this industry-based research is secondary literature from core domains for my thesis topic: musicology, cultural sociology, academic critique of social media/Web 2.0, and the academic marketing discipline. To prevent the research from overly supporting commercial methodologies, there is an opportunity to utilise a transdisciplinary approach within the case study chapters.

Scope of research

As suggested above, the combination of primary research, an insider practitioner focus, case-based research, a theoretical underpinning, and a critical analysis offers a ‘thick

14 B. Solis, op. cit., p. 9.
description’. Yet, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to examine every aspect of social media marketing and classical music. One reason for this is future-proofing. Bearing in mind last year’s trend for the augmented reality (AR) mobile game Pokémon Go, the digital technological landscape is developing rapidly and so what is seen as current will soon be outdated. Hence, my dissertation is a reflection of the field at a particular time.

While the desk research and data collection occurred over a three to four-year period for the PhD, these activities occurred beforehand. My voluntary work experience as a Publicity Officer for Durham University’s Musicon Concert Series and as an intern at Askonas Holt has enabled invaluable practical insight of the field. I integrate findings from my MSt dissertation about the Facebook and Twitter marketing of Wigmore Hall.\textsuperscript{18} Experiencing the classical music activities at Durham University as a music undergraduate has informed a sociocultural understanding as a participant observer. Informal conversations with Royal Holloway music students affirmed my opinions of university classical music culture. Attending classical concerts and cultural events, listening to classical radio, and browsing the Internet and social media for play all feed into the wider picture and so these recreational activities are not time-wasting, as one may assume.

In terms of scalability, focusing on case studies from the Anglo-American world is concurrent with traditional frameworks about the Western Classical Music tradition. Yet, China and India have been identified as potential world markets for classical music. They are, too, important markets for social media; both are the top two countries contributing to more than half of the year-on-year growth in social media in 2016. China had 134 million new social media users and India 55 million.\textsuperscript{19} In post-doctoral research, there is the scope to undertake a cross-cultural study and it is already possible to detect synergies between the Asian market and my findings. Statistics for KLASSIKOM on Wechat (a classical music and opera news channel on China’s dominant social networking service) indicate that most subscribers are devoted fans or


those in the music industry. These statistics verify an interest in classical music that is cultivated beforehand and entailed in its own lingua franca, irrespective of one’s cultural background.\textsuperscript{20} According to classical guitarist Veda Aggarwal, an interest in classical music in India has been attributed to ‘a before-and-after YouTube story in the history of Western classical music in India’\textsuperscript{21} but her claim is to be contested with reference to the Literature Review and my fieldwork analyses.

The following subchapters justify the research methods of this thesis, which include: case studies, human ethnography, netnography, and autoethnography. These methods encompass aforementioned data collection processes, for example, participant observation, personal correspondences with industry practitioners, and desk research.

**Research methods**

**Case studies**

The main body of my doctoral research derives from the case studies. According to Yin, a case study explains the ‘how’ or ‘why’ of a present circumstance; likewise, my research questions warrant an extensive, in-depth description of a social phenomenon. As my research involves the role of social media within a business context, evidence from multiple cases renders the findings more compelling and robust (see Chapter 1, ‘Overview of the thesis’). In addition, my analyses and conclusions from social media and classical music-based case studies provide a contribution to knowledge.

Case studies can consist of any mixture of quantitative and qualitative data.\textsuperscript{22} Therefore, my quantitative data deals with social media metrics (e.g., number of online followers and analytics sites) and statistics from primary and desk research. Qualitative data are personal correspondences with industry representatives and descriptive sources such as expert interviews and social media messages. According to Harvey Maylor and Kate Blackmon, case study research incorporates multiple forms of data gathering via

\textsuperscript{20}Rudolf Tang, ‘We were read by 1.4 million people in China’, in *KLASSIKOM* \<http://www.gramophone.com/cn/?p=2891\> [accessed 31 October 2016].  
\textsuperscript{22}M. Carboni, op. cit., p. 19.
interview, observation, and archival research and my case studies have all three (Table 3-1, Table 3-2, & Table 3-3).  

As Table 3-3 indicates, what is striking is how social media have developed as online data archives. Although social media are accessed in real time, they have an inestimable function within research. Embedded search facilities track down posts from previous years and by specific keywords, phrases, and usernames. I have been able to use Twitter Search and the search box for past messages directly placed on public Facebook pages for these archival processes. Indeed, YouTube is the second largest search engine after Google.

Before justifying why I have selected my case studies, a theme they share in common is the classical music industry’s e-strategy. That is, this dissertation examines differing yet interlinked parts of the classical music business’ digital marketing: a singer, an instrumentalist, venues, and apps (associated with a concert performer, record companies, and a classical music radio station). A macro picture is warranted for a certain breadth of demographics and psychographics:

1. Gender. Joyce DiDonato is female and one of her most prominent social media segments is aspiring opera singers, who are teenage girls or females in their twenties. Hough is male and homosexual and most of his Twitter followers are men (64%). Both artists use their social media to present gendered texts, for example, DiDonato is a visually beautiful and feminine opera diva and Hough presents himself online via a classic gentleman’s look. They both support gay rights through their online content. A certain proportion of the musicians’ social media fans identify themselves as non-heterosexual, however, the performers interact with both genders and sexualities.

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**Data collection methods**

*Table 3-1 - Data collection: Personal correspondence (e.g., interviews)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 4</th>
<th>Chapter 5</th>
<th>Chapter 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conducted fan interviews with Appleton and Jackson via Skype.</td>
<td>Telephone interview with Holey.</td>
<td>Emailed questions to Weightman.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson read my netnography about Hough.</td>
<td>In person interviews with Wilson, Berry, and Gilhooly.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emailed questions about DiDonato’s social media to Ross.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emailed questions about Hough’s social media to him.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3-2 - Data collection: Observation (e.g., netnography)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 4</th>
<th>Chapter 5</th>
<th>Chapter 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Netnography (see below).</td>
<td>Netnography (see below).</td>
<td>Netnography (see below).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listened to media interviews with DiDonato and Hough (on radio and YouTube).</td>
<td>Attended numerous concerts at Wigmore Hall prior to the PhD and went to three during the time period of my doctoral studies (autoethnography).</td>
<td>Tested the three main apps by hand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 4</strong></td>
<td><strong>Chapter 5</strong></td>
<td><strong>Chapter 6</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Read online articles about DiDonato’s e-strategy and brand identity, including her answers (e.g., features in the <em>New York Times</em> and <em>Opera News</em>).</td>
<td>Read online articles about Wigmore Hall’s digital strategy and social media, including answers from Gilhooly.</td>
<td>Searched online information about the apps (e.g., articles, user reviews, and interviews), including answers from senior staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracted messages and/or comments from DiDonato’s Facebook and Instagram pages.</td>
<td>Extracted messages and/or comments from the venue’s Facebook and Twitter.</td>
<td>Consulted the social media of Composed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identified relevant videos from her YouTube channel.</td>
<td>Consulted the website of the concert hall’s publicity agent Albion Media.</td>
<td>Used Twitter Search to mine messages about The Liszt Sonata.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulted the websites of her artist agent Askonas Holt and publicity agent Albion Media.</td>
<td>Used Twitter Search to mine audience and fan messages.</td>
<td>Found analytics for The Liszt Sonata on Sensor Tower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Found previous blogs on DiDonato’s Blogspot site and official website, as well as Tumblr blog posts from fans.</td>
<td>Found the Hall’s website analytics on Similar Web.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Located Hough’s blogs for <em>Telegraph Media Group</em> and readers’ comments to these blogs.</td>
<td>Looked at the social media messages of other concert halls.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 4

Used Twitter Search to mine fan messages and data by keywords and phrases (e.g., ‘#letJoycesing’).

Found both artists’ Twitter analytics on Klear.

Chapter 5

Chapter 6

2. Geography. A focus on British-based case studies is in line with a Euro-American understanding of classical music and what is practical for the research scope and data gathering in the time span of the doctoral study. I have referred to the international audience of DiDonato, Hough, and Wigmore Hall in the relevant chapters.

3. Age. Both artists’ social media fans vary in age range, from young people to older audiences. Alongside middle-aged persons and retirees, Wigmore Hall welcomes younger concert-goers (see Chapter 5). I investigate one classical music app for the children’s market and how app developers could improve the technologies for both children and older users as they form important classical audience segments.

4. Class. This is a difficult area because the classical music genre typically deals with a particular segment of society. In that sense, I extend notions of class to related areas such as segmentation and sub-genres of classical music.

5. Segmentation. Case studies pertain to the interests of core classical and marginal, non-classical segments, for example, the brand values of Wigmore Hall vis-à-vis Classic FM and how they are channelled via digital marketing. Again, segmentation includes younger audiences, who are vital for the future of classical music. It overlaps with musical sub-genres such as specialist, popular classical, and associated audiences for both.

6. Size of community. DiDonato, Hough, and Wigmore Hall all have a fan following and strong online presence. As of 24 April 2017, DiDonato has 660,904 video views on her YouTube channel, 87,878 Facebook likes, 38,400 Twitter followers, and 28,800 Instagram followers. Hough has 19,700 Twitter
followers and his former blog for Telegraph Media Group had between 8,000 to 16,000 hits per week. Wigmore Hall has formidably increased its Twitter presence from 5,000 to 40,000 over six months, and has 50,400 Twitter followers and 14,991 Facebook likes. The Apple Store has over 80,000 apps in a designated ‘Kids’ section, which justifies analysing a children’s classical music app. Amphio has had over a million downloads of its Beethoven’s 9th Symphony app. Composed had a sizeable social media presence: approximately 74,000 YouTube video views, 11,804 Facebook likes, 899 Twitter followers, and 210 Instagram followers. There was an opportunity to promote the app’s benefit statement to Classic FM’s listenership of 5.6 million.

DiDonato is one of the earliest classical artists to self-market on social media, having started a Blogspot blog since 2005 in concert with her official website. She is someone whom those in the classical music industry see as a chief social media personality. F. Paul Driscoll, Editor-in-Chief of the Metropolitan Opera Guild’s Opera News magazine, describes her as ‘opera’s most connected singer’. Countertenor and colleague David Daniels attests that she does all of her social media. A large part of her career is associated with the UK. She owes much of her career to Simon Goldstone,


32 OPERA America, In Conversation with David Daniels, online video recording, YouTube, 24 April 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7C9VVUq5IAQ> [accessed 1 August 2016].

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an agent from IMG Artists in London, who wished to represent her,\textsuperscript{33} and her artist agency Askonas Holt and publicity agency Albion Media have offices in London.

For the case study chapter on social media branding, she maintains a delineated identity, the self-penned ‘Yankee Diva’, aligning on much of the Internet and social media she is represented on. Maintaining this brand confirms that strategic marketing and branding are key to her online content. Furthermore, she appears to know comprehensively how they increase one’s audience/fan engagement, public profile, brand equity, and customer loyalty.

In contrast, Hough has been involved with social media since they started to gain more traction and so he blogged for \textit{Telegraph Media Group} from December 2008 and has tweeted as himself since February 2010. His press materials promote him as a renaissance man or polymath.\textsuperscript{34} This channelling of a perpetuating polymath differs from DiDonato’s glamorous image, similar to the appearance expected of women in an online photogenic culture. Indeed, both artists’ social media engagement is analysed from the perspectives of gender and sexuality, popular topics in musicology and Internet studies.

My initial rationale for the Wigmore Hall was how a more traditional concert hall exploits current digital technologies to attract audiences outside of its core classical base. It does promote several branches of events on its social media such as contemporary, late night concerts, jazz, world music, family, education and learning, schools’ concerts, and community outreach, and these strands are all integral to the venue’s annual programming. But following in its historical and cultural legacy, it has always been first and foremost a classical chamber music presenter. Its core audience online reflects this genre, hence a focus in this thesis on the Hall’s classical music engagement.


Within the last four years, the Hall has established itself as a ‘social organisation’, in which social media are fully integrated into all areas of a business. On Gilhooly’s advice, a dramatic change was made to the venue’s tone of voice on Twitter because, for him, it was becoming too self-congratulatory, a constant of ‘product-push’ or shameless self-marketing. The new style has been deliberately informal, conversational, and light-hearted. Subsequently, its Twitter followers were increased by 400 per cent over two years. Its leap in followers impressed Twitter executives and in November 2014 was the only London arts organisation invited to Twitter All Access, an invite-only event for small businesses, which Twitter sees as leading the way in social media (@wigmore_hall, tweet, 5 January 2015). But given that the venue has 50,400 followers on Twitter and follows 47,000 Twitter accounts, one could argue that it has augmented its follower count by following many accounts that would likely take an interest in the concert venue.

The Hall claims to be the first venue in the world to host a ‘Twitter Party’ (@wigmore_hall, tweet, 30 June 2015). Over the summer of 2015, the Hall underwent a £2.1 million refurbishment to expand its ‘digital infrastructure’, through which ‘we will be equipped to stream, broadcast, record, and present every facet of our work digitally’. On 28 January 2016, it followed in the live-streaming phenomenon, by making selected concerts and events viewable on the Hall’s website, Medici TV, and YouTube. During my PhD, I have followed the concert hall’s digital marketing activities and it marked a milestone in 2016: its 115th anniversary. With all of the above, there is a timely opportunity to re-examine this important classical music presenter from various angles, not just digitally.

The classical music app market has developed prolifically and a number of classical music apps were released during my doctoral research; Amphio’s The Liszt Sonata was

36 John Gilhooly, interview with the author, 15 December 2015.
38 M. Feldman, op. cit.
launched in July 2013 and Composed in November 2014. This thesis’ cross-section of apps is justified with regards to segmentation: My First Classical Music App for children, the intellectual, musico-analytical content of The Liszt Sonata, and the Classic FM aesthetic of Composed.

**Ethnography and netnography**

According to Robert Kozinets, ethnography is

> an anthropological method that has gained popularity in sociology, cultural studies, consumer research and a variety of other social scientific fields. The term refers both to fieldwork, or the study of the distinctive meanings, practices and artefacts of particular social groups, and to the representations based on such a study. Ethnography is an inherently open-ended practice. It is based upon participation and observation in particular cultural arenas as well as acknowledgment and employment of researcher reflexivity.\(^\text{40}\)

Similarly, Christine Hine accounts for ethnography as ‘the sustained presence’\(^\text{41}\) of the researcher in the field, together with ‘intensive engagement with the everyday life of the inhabitants of the field site’.\(^\text{42}\) Both authors’ definitions are germane to my involvement in the field over an extended time period and to my reflection on it as a participant observer. Daymon and Holloway counsel that by reflecting on one’s research, relationships with research participants, assumptions, prejudgments, and role, ‘the study will become more reliable and valid, in other words, more trustworthy and authentic’.\(^\text{43}\)

Ethnographic authenticity, then, is an important aspect of the methodology. The role of personal reflexivity is emphasised but a self-critical mode of thought equally transfers to those researched. In *Virtual Ethnography*, Hine pre-warns researchers that the Internet is both ‘a product of culture’ and ‘cultural artefact’.\(^\text{44}\) Due to visual anonymity and lack of in person interaction, performativity is prevalent on online sites, forums, and now, social media.\(^\text{45}\) In that sense, virtual ethnography is construed as ‘necessarily


\(^{41}\) C. Hine, op. cit., p. 63.

\(^{42}\) Ibid.


\(^{44}\) C. Hine, op. cit., p. 9.

\(^{45}\) Ibid., p. 118.
partial” and an ethnographic narrative authentic if involving ‘Face-to-face interaction and the rhetoric of having travelled to a remote field site’.

Interestingly, Kozinets posits that netnography ‘provides marketing researchers with a window into naturally occurring behaviours’ and ‘online ethnography in return makes visible many interactions and relations which would be difficult if not impossible to discern in any other manner’. Thus, the observed behaviour of an in person ethnographic study ‘may be presumed to be presenting a more carefully cultivated and controlled self-image’. Such statements are concurrent with my findings because some of the people interviewed were aware of the purpose of the conversations and maybe worded their answers in view of that. As netnography is often unobtrusive and carried out in a context not monitored or manufactured by the researcher, their online interactions were extroverted, especially if they were insiders.

But while online communications are frequently mediated performances or interactions, such readily available data have ample scope for microanalysis. Stacy Wolf reflects on her study of Internet fans of the Broadway musical Wicked as such, ‘Girls who post on fan sites are performing their spectatorship and their fandom. Rather than make general or pseudo-scientific claims about Wicked’s fans, I would like to read each example as I would a newspaper review: as at once idiosyncratic and yet typical and revealing of its moment’. More than that, Kozinets claims that insiders are the top data sources in ‘marketing research useful for marketing strategy formulation’ and they are attributed

46 Ibid., p. 65.
47 Ibid., p. 10.
51 Ibid., p. 63.
52 Ibid., p. 65.
54 Ibid., p. 66.
to their strong ties, long-term involvement, and frequent references by others in the online community.\textsuperscript{55}

This thesis adopts a ‘blended’ ethnography/netnography, ‘research that combines the collection of online data and interactions with data and interactions’,\textsuperscript{56} because such an amalgamation enables the researcher to weigh up the reliability of online and offline fieldwork. To obtain a fuller picture of the field and specific details, I have supplemented online data gathering with human ethnography, methods which have been recommended to me. Yet, following the ‘spatial turn’ in the humanities, online-offline divides are not as clear-cut anymore. The blurring of locational spaces liberates ‘an early response that charts where a particular conceptual boundary stood at a particular time’\textsuperscript{57} but the idea of how multiple overlapping sites interact with fieldwork has implications that go beyond the subject of this doctoral project altogether.

**Autoethnography**

To recap, autoethnography fuses autobiographical and ethnographic elements to deepen the field researcher’s understanding of cultural experience and the outsider’s.\textsuperscript{58} Very often, researchers write about ‘epiphanies’, memorable moments the individual deems to have greatly impacted his/her life and that arise from being involved in a culture or having a certain cultural identity.\textsuperscript{59} In my case, this is my experience of playing and listening to classical music, studying Western art musicology to postgraduate level, being a regular social media user, and observing the classical music community online and on social media.

Still, as a research method \textit{per se}, one does not just show and tell eye-witness accounts or bring up a personal backstory for empathy. Leon Anderson holds reservation for what Caroline Ellis terms ‘evocative or emotional autoethnography’,\textsuperscript{60} creative non-

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{55} Ibid., p. 66.
\bibitem{56} R. V. Kozinets, \textit{Netnography: Doing Ethnographic Research}, op. cit., p. 188.
\bibitem{57} R. V. Kozinets, \textit{Netnography: Redefined}, op. cit., p. 80.
\bibitem{58} C. Ellis, T. E. Adams, and A. P. Bochner, op. cit.
\bibitem{59} Ibid.
\end{thebibliography}
fiction, and what Geertz critiques as ‘author saturated texts’, and rather lends support towards an ‘analytic autoethnography’. Anderson accounts for this style on three conditions:

Put most simply, **analytic autoethnography** refers to ethnographic work in which the researcher is (1) a full member in the research group or setting, (2) visible as such a member in the researcher’s published texts, and (3) committed to an analytic research agenda focusing on improving theoretical understandings of broader social phenomena.

These steps are concomitant with my methodology because I have immersed myself in the research field. I have been encouraged to make my own voice present and give my opinions of the field. Simultaneously, I have been advised to bind my fieldwork analyses together with other discursive frameworks. This last point pertains because Anderson states that ‘the defining characteristic of analytic social science is to use empirical data to gain insight into some broader set of social phenomena than those provided by the data themselves’.

‘[B]roader phenomena’, then, are undergirded by the theoretically-driven Literature Review and meta-arguments. As William Julius Wilson and Anmol Chaddha opine, ‘good ethnography is theory driven’; likewise, Tina Ramnarine analogises theory to a playground for the ethnographer. Indeed, critical and theoretical methodologies were lacking in my correspondences with those whose personal identities and occupations are more practice-based such as digital marketers and online fans.

**Challenges, limitations, and concerns**

Having reasoned the sources and methods for my research design, it is pertinent to use the final part of my methodology to reflect on the various obstacles and limitations that I have faced during my research. The main challenge is maintaining a symbiosis of

61 Ibid., pp. 385 and 387.
62 Ibid., p. 375.
63 Ibid., p. 387.
academic and industry perspectives. With my involvement in the field before and during the doctoral study, I have found myself sympathising with insiders and agreeing with primary sources. Given the plentiful amount of information online, I have had to be careful not to take everything at face value. Consequently, it has been necessary to challenge subjective opinions. I have been encouraged to take my fieldwork into the academic world of ideas while corroborating my arguments with humanised ethnography, empirical data, and figures.

What is more, the Research Excellence Framework includes an assessment of ‘impact’, ‘any effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services […] beyond academia’, and research in digital technology corresponds to these sectors. Following this definition of ‘impact’, my transdisciplinary study overlaps with semi-academic areas such as media studies, cultural studies, marketing, and geography. It is anticipated that my doctoral dissertation will interest those from digital marketing of classical music, as well as the cultural, creative, and technological industries.

Sarah Price, a former AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award student, researching classical concert audiences, has reflected on the ‘academic’ and ‘commercial’ styles of research. In general, she suggests that both schools of research have their own ideologies and contrasting structures in terms of publication types. Accordingly, academics are reverential towards previous literature. Bourdieu, for example, is still regularly cited in academic audience studies, even though Distinction (1984) is based on audience research from the 1970s, because it is believed to tell us more than just the specifics of that population. As a consequence, articles are structured to dwell on previous literature before making a new addition to knowledge.

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66 D. Remenyi and S. Greener, op. cit., p. 18.
In contrast, commercial reports are designed to inform action and produce change. Executive reviews provide the headline findings to busy industry professionals along with recommendations on how to implement this new knowledge.\textsuperscript{69}

Commercial research, then, risks being overly business or practitioner-orientated, ‘too focussed on the bottom line to explore interesting questions and share their findings’.\textsuperscript{70} A commercial report usually has a purpose in mind and so the content will, by implication, head towards a certain value judgement. By contrast, academia could be caught up in ivory-towerism, ‘producing research only of interest to other academics rather than helping organisations with the knowledge they need’.\textsuperscript{71} This divide potentially causes Knowledge Incompatability, ‘whereby professionals are unable to accept the findings of a research project’,\textsuperscript{72} and subsequently, ‘academic knowledge cannot be ‘transferred’ to the external partner’.\textsuperscript{73} The alternative outcome is Knowledge Resistance, whereby ‘academic knowledge is rejection outright by external partners because it contradicts their prior beliefs about the industry’.\textsuperscript{74} I have related to this response during my fieldwork. When I asked certain interviewees about challenging concepts from the scholarly literature, they reframed them in a positive way (e.g., their opinions of the ‘digital divide’ and the classical music ‘crisis’).

One way to overcome academic and commercial divisions is a hybrid type of research, which has been published during my PhD studies. Scholarly research is affiliated to a commercial organisation or the report is co-authored by academic researchers and those directly involved in industry. Indeed, my supervisory team have had extensive first-hand experience in the industry. My academic supervisors and advisor advised me on what readings to consult, and they encouraged me to probe the commercial literature and raw material collated.

Not dissimilar to the above, Henry Jenkins has written about his self-identification as an ‘aca-fan’, a term encompassing how his life straddles an academic career and a personal

\textsuperscript{69} Ibid., p. 170.
\textsuperscript{70} Ibid., p. 171.
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{72} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid.
fandom. With a substantial part of my ethnography based around audience and fan reception in classical music and Internet cultures, I was susceptible to empathising with fans and emotionally investing in their online posts because I have come to the research study with a certain amount of insider involvement. Yet, many academics are unafraid to admit that they personally immerse themselves in fandoms, either away from or in congruence with their work. Although my dissertation is autoethnographic in part, David Sholle cautions that ‘The stance of the ethnographer […] must still to some extent retain a dimension of distance from the situation. There is a danger of taking up the standpoint of a fan and thus confusing one’s own stance with that of the subject being studied’.

Relatedly, one must judiciously read the plethora of fan messages on the Internet given that social media messages are often portrayed as emotionally instantaneous. Matt Hills stipulates that fan ‘justifications’ cannot be seen simply as ‘cultural facts’,

Fan-talk cannot be accepted merely as evidence of fan knowledge. It must also be interpreted and analysed in order to focus on its gaps and dislocations, its moments of failure within narratives of self-consciousness and self-reflexivity, and its repetitions or privileged narrative constructions which are concerned with communal (or subcultural) justification in the face of ‘external’ hostility.

While Kozinets advises that netnography should ‘assume instead that the participants in your study […] know much more about their online social experiences and interactions (and very likely many other things) than do you’, re-interpreting their messages and my fieldwork interviews from an academic perspective prompts research subjects to reconsider their own engagement with their community and field.

In terms of data-gathering, there are several challenges presented. The greatest challenge has been the overwhelming amount of social media and online content now available on the Internet. Having browsed through what I can, the research process has


78 Ibid., p. 38.

had to be selective about what is presented and analysed. It is anticipated that the social media data will be best able to demonstrate my arguments and represent the strong insiderness Kozinets opines as a top data source for marketing research. More than that, ‘[I]nteresting and useful conclusions might be drawn from a relatively small number of messages, if these messages contain sufficient descriptive richness and are interpreted with considerable analytic depth and insight’.  

The human ethnographical aspect of my data collection yielded mixed results. Some of the correspondents are contacts with my supervisors, and as a result, it was straightforward to organise a meeting and obtain answers to my research questions. Similar instances occurred with individuals referenced in previous academic research or recommended through another person I already interviewed. It was slightly more difficult, though, to arrange correspondences with famous artists and senior staff within the industry, namely, DiDonato and her manager, owing to their busy schedules. I am, however, very grateful to everyone who took the time to contact me about their availability.

An additional ethnographic concern was undertaking face-to-face interviews, which I was apprehensive about for several reasons. Despite my school and university education, I do not come from a white, upper middle-class, or musical family, demographics taken for granted in classical music culture. Due to my ethnicity, I was worried about being pre-judged by my research subjects on skin colour. Unlike older classical audiences, I am still young and so did not know whether older correspondents would make their first impressions of me based on age. The same could have been the case for gender because some of my interviewees were male and the classical music industry is traditionally male-dominated. Yet, there have been concerted efforts to foster cultural relativism within the classical music world. My verbal and written correspondences were with people of both genders and sexualities and taken from

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82 Ibid.
various backgrounds, ethnicities, and nationalities and so I was put at ease by these cues.

Data protection and legislation are overriding ethical issues surrounding my netnography. National bodies such as the EU General Data Protection Regulation and the US Code of Federal Regulations have outlined conduct surrounding personal data in research.83 Scholars have been uncertain whether they should acknowledge the usernames or personal identities of individuals on public online media, causing a divide in referencing styles.84 Having seen the terms of use for the social media researched, personal accounts are referenced because, unless users alter their privacy settings, the policies presage that they are members of public domain systems and take full responsibility for their posted content. Confirming these social media policies are academic referencing systems, which mandate writers to cite all forms of online media by author and, where applicable, username and date. While it would be fascinating to learn about the personal online habits of classical music actors (e.g., DiDonato has a private Facebook account and a public Facebook page), this thesis refers to their public social media accounts to respect people’s privacy. For private email communications, interviews, and some informal conversations, I had to ask correspondents to quote from them.

In terms of logistical challenges, the vast majority of my netnography has been facilitated by Royal Holloway’s Wi-Fi Internet service on campus, where I have been based for my four years of study. Regarding the final case-based chapter, I do not own a tablet and so have used a family friend’s iPad and services at Senate House Library, University of London, allowing Library members to loan an iPad for free use within the building. In August 2016, Composed announced that it would be closing down at the end of the month and so I had to carry out netnography during this time. I could access the desktop version, directly from in-browsing. Its sudden closure would explain why the mobile app was unavailable on Apple iTunes or Google Play towards the end of August and why I was unable to access its services from an iPad. Having seen what the app looks like on a mobile device, this thesis accounts for my experience of Composed

83 A. Lee, op. cit., p. 8.
84 Ibid.
from a laptop but what I write should not have been comparatively different to using it on a smartphone or tablet.

Finally, we are reminded that ethnographers take a great deal of responsibility and accountability for the field and their research subjects and so have to be careful about how they present their findings to the public and wider world. At the same time, this piece of advice links to the opening of this subchapter, which proposes a balance of industry-based and academic perspectives. Thus, I have been asked to be critical of the field studied. While my arguments may initially come over as cynical or hypercritical, critical thinking is warranted for the overall benefit and continuous development of the classical music industry. It is needed, too, because a ‘spiral of silence’ has been commonplace in the classical music community, where the minority or less favoured opinion tends to either receive little attention or much hostility on social media.

Conclusions about the methodology

A varied methodology represents the cross-disciplinarity of my dissertation topic and ethnographic methods, appropriate for the research field in question. Given the vast amount of social media data, the ever-increasing number of digital projects in the industry, and the constantly shifting digital landscape, this thesis is a representation of a particular period of time and is necessarily selective of what is studied. A balance must be struck between autoethnography, auto-netnography, industry-led data, and critical methodologies in line with academic research. I am aware that my PhD will eventually be made available for public access, and by extension, those in the communities analysed. Yet, a critique is wanting because the classical music industry, digital marketers, and social media audiences have a way of thinking that has not changed much over the course of my ethnography. It is anticipated that the following case study chapters will reflect all of the above.

85 Henry Jenkins, Textual Poachers, op. cit., p. 7.
Chapter 4: Branding Classical Music Artists on Social Media

Introduction

Online brand building is an integral sub-discipline of social media marketing. Classical musicians use social media not just for corporate advertising of projects, performances, and appearances. Marketing messages, too, reflect what the branding discourse terms core ‘brand values’: the artist’s so-called ‘authentic’ voice, personal attributes, and characteristics. This personal contact, which endeavours to lie at the heart of social media marketing, enables elements of a parasocial or perceived interpersonal social interaction. As a result, fans not only follow their favourite musicians’ activities but also respond to their identities, interests, personalities, and life stories. These interactions feed the artist’s personal social media brand and the fan’s loyalty, both of which have the potential to contribute to more engagements and enhance the artist’s public profile.

Taking these observations as a basis, this first case-led chapter concerns social media branding of classical artists. It starts by examining the grammar of branding and social media branding, which is extended into non-branding theories so that an account of this marketing technique is not solely based on positivist findings. It then realises this background discussion in light of the two main case studies: the social media brands, personalities, and identities of opera singer Joyce DiDonato and concert pianist Stephen Hough, and audience/fan responses to their e-strategies. A combined comparative and conclusions subchapter recaps in full key findings from the artists’ online brands and opens out to the broader implications for classical music marketing and outside. Both comparisons and conclusions are incorporated in the final subchapter because a comparative approach gives way to the conclusions and vice versa.

Branding

The etymology of the term brand derives from the Old Norse word *brandr* — to burn — whereby an identification mark would be burnt onto livestock with a heated iron.¹

Similarly, in ancient Greece and Rome, marks indicated the ownership, origin, and content of vessels.² Therefore, a brand is a product, stamped with a particular mark and imprint of an organisation, as suggested by the American Marketing Association’s definition, ‘A name, term, design, symbol, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from competitors’.³ On closer examination, its definition has ramifications of branding as ownership and the subsequent impact on ownership of attention, purchasing power, customer loyalty, and fans, all of which are referred to in this chapter.

Yet, with a vast amount of choice in today’s competitive market place, a brand has become much ‘more than just names and symbols’.⁴ To increase brand equity, which comprises the economic outcome and added value from the consumption of a brand,⁵ a common technique marketers employ is imbuing their brands with personality traits (e.g., anthropomorphisation, personification, and creation of user imagery). Marketers represent a product through a consumer’s feelings to which we can, or at least are meant to, relate to. They lead to specific constructs: brand personality, ‘the set of human characteristics associated with a brand’,⁶ brand identification/identity, the identity a brand wishes to convey to consumers, and brand archetype, a pseudonym summarising a brand’s core values.⁷ While personalisation is integrated into corporate brands, that is, the branding of ‘corporate’ products and companies, it transfers to what is known as personal branding. The product is the person and the brand’s identity his/her brand values, what Tom Peters calls a person’s ‘sign of distinction’.⁸ It warrants emphasising,

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⁷ John Purkiss and David Royston-Lee, Brand You: Turn Your Unique Talents Into a Winning Formula (Pearson UK, 2014).
though, that personal and corporate brands are not as delineated anymore and very much overlap.

Contrary to proliferation of a product’s brand identity, Brand Empire has been pervasive in contemporary culture. Socialite and popular cultural figure Kim Kardashian has generated her empire from a reality television show, popular media coverage, her online/social media platforms, product endorsements, and a flagship store in Beverley Hills, selling souvenir items. But from the consumer perspective, the brand is not only about marketer-created signifiers around the product. Rather, ‘a brand is the condensation of meanings from which a brand identity – an identity that maps onto both the brand and its participants – emerges’.

This definition is compatible with processes of interdependency, co-dependency, and active brand co-creation. On the one hand, a brand represents the values a product builds on and which marketing and advertising ideally uphold. On the other hand, a brand reflects the values of a consumer and so it is an assemblage of values, interpreted and articulated via his/her emotional associations. This two-way negotiation contradicts a theory of branded content as push marketing, whereby the marketer continuously hard sells or imposes the brand identity of a product on the consumers until lodged in their minds.

Combining all of the above, the brand as an experience has been heavily fostered. For instance, sportswear company Nike extends its branded experience beyond its famous slogan ‘Just Do It’. As well as being a sports retail outlet, its flagship store on Oxford Street, London (UK) invites an experience in itself with multiple floor levels, a music soundtrack, and large screen video displays, all of which contribute to visitors’ own images of the Nike brand as they physically, visually, and mentally engage with it in person. The online Nike+ Community provides users with a range of fitness tracker and statistics apps, the statistics from which can be shared with friends and community

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members to encourage competition, improvement, and goals. The apps are linked to Spotify and iTunes, where users can identify ‘PowerSongs’ to spur their fitness sessions and thus ‘augment’ their reality. Users can share pictures of their training on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to motivate others and endorse a ‘social’ experience of the brand community.  

11 This membership site is ‘largely reactive to the machinations of the brand’ but brand communities allow users to ‘form strong social bonds through common affinity for a brand’.  

Accounting for a brand in the just mentioned ways has enormous impact on social media marketing. Due to the ‘participatory turn’ of Web 2.0/social media, many online users see themselves as part of a community. Hence, the cultural facet of a brand should become a priority for Internet and social media marketers as fans wish to establish an affinity with core brand values and regularly gather around a public object and a social media object in the literal sense. Consider the synergy between ‘culture’ and ‘cult brands’, which have become such because

One does not create a community just on the basis of product attributes, however clever they may be. People tend to gather around causes, ideas, ideals and values. This is what the cultural facet of the brand is about. It is the ideological glue that ties everything together long term.  

A correlation between branding and social media is also attributed to social media marketing as relationship marketing (see Chapter 1, ‘Definition and exploration of the field’). It corresponds to constructs of brand archetype, personality, and relationship. Crucially, social media marketers design content to reflect a specific brand personality or archetype.  

14 This act elicits customer loyalty, brand equity, and what Brian Solis terms ‘micro acts of appreciation’; liking, sharing, and commenting on a social media

13 Ibid.
15 The ‘Brand overview’ of Royal Holloway University of London asks that its tone of voice, visual brand image, and social media logos are to be used across marketing and writing consistently. See <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/iquad/documents/pdf/brand/brandguidelines31115.pdf> [accessed 19 November 2016].
Therefore, the bi-/multi-directional online communications and interactions try to strengthen the consumer-brand relationship. It is what the branding discipline terms brand loyalty, ‘to capture the strength of the connection formed between the consumer and the brand toward a prediction of relationship stability over time’.17 Susan Fournier proposes a ‘reciprocal exchange between active and interdependent relationship partners’18 and that interdependence must be present to ‘collectively affect, define and redefine the relationship’,19 similar to the two-way/many-to-many transactions of social media.

The concept of brand loyalty or a consumer-brand relationship ties in with the idea of added value. By regularly interacting with the brand via digital technology, a consumer’s mental imagery of a brand is complemented by the experience of it online. For Stephen Bellman et al.’s participant study on branded mobile phone apps, ‘[t]he results show that using these apps has a positive persuasive impact, increasing interest in the brand and also the brand’s product category’.20 Over a six-week trial period, Virgin Atlantic airline staff wore Google Glasses to make customer service and the check-in process more efficient, with clients providing very positive feedback in response to the experiment.21 But it is superficial to account for diametrically opposed offline and online brand experiences. We need to reinterpret the boundaries between virtual and real-world brands as much more intertwined and ambiguous.

A final impact on social media branding is the process of co-creation, enhanced by web-based ideologies of ‘the participatory turn’, ‘user-generated content’, and ‘prosumers’. But by applying a Foucauldian perspective on power relations and Judith Butler’s

18 Ibid., p. 344.
19 Ibid.
theory of norms or ‘universals’, one could argue that users are not as free to present a version of their true selves online due to the structures of social media platforms, which are governed by their owners (e.g., custom wallpapers, photo filters, and standardised profile settings). ‘[I]ndividuals are very much locked into the design of these outlets and limited to its range of choices and predefined format[s]. In addition to creating the illusion of agency, the structure of social media also prevents its users from recognising this illusion’. Contrary to this chapter’s earlier theorisation of active co-creation, the counterargument is that users are unable to fully craft their own ideas and imagery of what the brand represents and means to them because they are pre-generated by corporate marketing and social media franchises. Consumers, then, are more susceptible to manipulation processes, whereby a corporate entity moulds their opinions of the brand and they become more aware of into attempts to ‘buy into the brand’.

Nonetheless, social media users will still feel that they are involved in brand co-creation. Their online content indicates not just love, passion, affection, and a consumer-brand relationship but how the brand influences the fan’s self-image, self-worth, and personal identity. Social media branding also extends to major life projects, ‘the construction, maintenance and dissolution of key life roles that majorly alter one’s concept of the self’. Indeed, Adam Arvidsson claims that ‘brands depend on consumers rendering these objects part of themselves and of their life-world’ and so there is ‘a capacity on the part of consumers to become one with the brand.’

By ‘understanding that social media is less about technology and more about anthropology, sociology, and ethnography’, social media branding is more concerned with a social behavioural system than strategic marketing. Hence, frameworks, outside of branding, warrant attention; they serve to enhance theoretical discourses within the

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23 S. Fournier, op. cit., p. 346.


25 Ibid.

branding literature mentioned up until now. These non-branding frameworks include: media behavioural theory (e.g., the parasocial relationship and performativity), notions of authenticity, and capitalist and commodification processes, each expounded on in the rest of this subchapter.

Donald Horton and R. Richard Wohl’s theory of the parasocial relationship accounts for how media users develop an imagined social relationship with media personalities over time such as Hollywood actors. By directly observing and interpreting the media personality’s appearance, gestures, voice, conversation, and conduct, ‘the devotee – the “fan” – comes to believe that he “knows” the persona more intimately and profoundly than others do; that he “understands” his character and appreciates his values and motives’.

This behaviour is visible in social media branding because fans regularly interact with their brand of choice online and internalise it. Further, personal brands are partial to sharing a back narrative in their online content, a tactic aiming to render the engagement motive of social media marketing compelling, relatable, and personable. Yet, the counterargument is parasociality as perceived sociality. Horton and Wohl term this perception an ‘illusion of intimacy’ because the fan and media persona cannot see each other in real life. Douglas B. Holt’s theory of iconic brands or myths, ‘[s]imple stories with compelling characters and resonant plots’, echoes this constructivist stance. ‘[C]onsumers come to perceive the myth as embodied in the product. So they buy the product to consume the myth and to forge a relationship with the author: the brand’.

Based on my positivist findings, relational interactions are, for the most part, phenomenologically real because social media fans feel a passionate, emotional


28 Ibid.


30 Ibid.
connection to their favourite classical performers. They relate to the artists’ life experiences, interests, personae, and backgrounds. Additionally, they confirm their own ideas of what the musicians are like via fan-to-fan interactions, artist-to-fan interactions, in person concert/opera attendance, and attendance at stage door, ‘the ultimate encounter of passion regularly expressed on fan sites for each performer’.\(^{31}\) Indeed, core classical audiences display fan-like behaviours on social media and online communities, which marketers should take advantage of to bind them closer to brand manipulation and the consumer-brand relationship.

These parasocial interactions concur with notions of authenticity. As personal brand values are supposed to emanate from the person himself/herself, branding and social media branding highlight the role of authenticity. By consistently presenting a person’s ‘authentic’ brand identity to one’s online followers, and by regularly coming into contact with such personality cults via strategic online content, the logical outcome is that these actions strengthen the parasocial relationship for the consumer. But while users may be ‘being themselves’ on the Internet, a projected authenticity is what is more than often displayed, even if they see it as real and material in form\(^{32}\) and that their brand is modelled on ‘true’ selves.

Again, this ethos is caused by the predetermined formats of social media outlets, spurring users to put on a charade. As Sherry Turkle writes, ‘Today more than ever we blur the line between simulation and reality, between what exists on the computer and what is real’.\(^{33}\) ESPN journalist Kate Fagan characterises the photo-based social network Instagram as such,

> Checking Instagram is like opening a magazine to see a fashion advertisement. Except an ad is branded as what it is: a staged image on glossy paper.

> Instagram is passed off as real life.

\(^{31}\) S. Wolf, op. cit., p. 55.


Yes, people filter their photos to make them prettier. People are also often encouraged to put filters on their sadness, to brighten their reality so as not to "drag down" those around them.\(^\text{34}\)

By applying Erving Goffman’s vocabulary of ‘the interaction order’, social media users and brands are giving a ‘platform performance’\(^\text{35}\) in the literal sense of a social media platform. Accordingly, they wear a public ‘front’, a ‘mask’,\(^\text{36}\) and try to maintain the image an ‘actor’ wishes to present to others. With specific reference to music, Philip Auslander identifies several on stage situational identities: the real person (the performer as an everyday human being), the performance persona, and the character enacted via the song’s text, all of which are present in classical music (e.g., the on-stage personae of singers and conductors).\(^\text{37}\) Thus, DiDonato and Hough’s social media content is manipulated to produce essentialised yet performed versions of their authentic brand personalities. These self-essentialisation processes contribute to the brand personalities, by which the artists are known among online fans, in classical music circles, and in the public media.

Scholars have commented about the omnipresence of capitalism around branded products and around brands in popular, jazz, and classical music.\(^\text{38}\) Capitalist forces resonate with social media branding techniques due to a bifurcation between Web 2.0/social media as relationship marketing and product-push marketing (see Chapter 1, ‘Definition and exploration of the field’). Yet, any marketing strategy is rooted in the product, and by implication, commences as push marketing. Furthermore, both social media users and owners have modified the functions of these sites over time. Twitter and Facebook maintain their set-ups as social networking sites but both platforms are ideal for personal and corporate marketing purposes because people go on them habitually.


From a cultural industrial perspective, ‘The art market is all about money, value, and investment, and artists – at least most of the well-known examples – are tremendously occupied with successfully selling their images’.\textsuperscript{39} Contrary to the importance of personal creativity and artistic freedom ascribed to cultural products,\textsuperscript{40} ‘art is a commodity, subject to market forces and consumer behavior processes’.\textsuperscript{41} The economics of classical music come at the expense of aesthetic quality, the latter of which is of utmost worth to the core consumer. As a result, social media branding does not revolve around the main musical work, which has always been cherished by regular classical consumers. To prolong consumers’ interest, artists have to sell themselves as marketable commodities and carefully constructed personality cults. ‘Within a political culture of neoliberal individualism, self-branding is encouraged with the promise of reward’.\textsuperscript{42}

The theory of the artist as a branded commodity has a greater effect on how owners of online platforms negotiate branded content. DiDonato’s public Facebook fan page is verified, as shown by a checkmark at the top of the page, meaning that it is an official marketing platform. Brands can gain distinct benefits from this verification process: showing higher up in users’ Facebook searches and the likelihood of increased engagement and reach.\textsuperscript{43} The cumulative effect is a stronger chance of financial growth and being one of a collection of top brands Facebook users will engage with. The same effect applies to Hough’s verified Twitter account, his primary social media platform for marketing and branding. These verification methods are cooperative with an attention economy because self-branding is ‘essentially an attention-getting device, and

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\textsuperscript{41} J. E. Schroeder, op. cit., p. 1293.


\textsuperscript{43} Rivka Kawano, ‘Should I Bother to Verify My Facebook Page?’, <https://www.agorapulse.com/blog/verified-facebook-page> [accessed 22 November 2016].
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is frequently sold as the key to helping the aspiring professional to achieve competitive advantage in a crowded marketplace’.44

Indeed, social media users are not always free to decide which brands to be fans of. A group of brands authorised by major social media companies (namely, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube) generate more exposure, awareness, and ultimately, fans. These outcomes are associated with a winner-takes-all market, whereby a certain proportion of online brands reap the most economic profit and the rest receive little in comparison. The classical music industry operates on the same principles.45 Together with disproportionate wealth shares in the social media marketing industry, the classical music system is fraught with a competitive elite, of which DiDonato and Hough are part of. This is the antithesis of what the classical music business is striving to prove on social media networks.

The following case studies apply aforementioned theoretical frameworks to two classical music performers and their social media branding techniques. My fieldwork analyses show that DiDonato’s brand identity (the self-penned ‘Yankee Diva’ pseudonym) is not only constructed by herself but is as much co-created by her fans. Yet, she is engaged in notions of performativity partly due to online self-presentation techniques she intelligently manages but also due to the fact that her social media marketing is managed by companies: her artist agency, record company, and PR firm. These processes are applicable to Hough’s social media brand identity of a polymath and a middle-class gentleman.

Case Studies

Joyce DiDonato and the ‘Yankee Diva’

Kansas-born DiDonato is one of the most popular opera singers, performing on the major world stages, including the Metropolitan Opera and Covent Garden. She is in great demand on the international concert and recital circuit and has won Grammy, 0

Gramophone, and Echo Klassik Awards. Her brand archetype, the ‘Yankee Diva’, is a defined yet polysemic one. It fuses classic tropes of an all-American ‘gal’ (i.e. the ‘Yankee’) and female opera divas (the ‘Diva’); these components of her social media brand are analysed in separate subchapters. Her online brand aligns on the social media channels she is on: her former Blogspot site, her official website-housed blog, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram.46

To continue this brand archetype proves the role of strategic social media marketing and branding. Her content shows how these techniques are implemented to increase brand equity and audience loyalty. In fact, her first blog post refers to a neoliberal and self-commodified ‘importance of having a logo’. ‘For a little while now I’ve been contemplating the importance of marketing and promotion in today’s climate of classical music and opera’.47 What is more, she claims that she composes all of her social media posts, writes her blogs, and makes her videos.48 This personal involvement is warranted in the current classical music industry because companies are heavily involved in digital marketing of their clients. Indeed, it is inevitable that her publicity agency, Albion Media, has co-ordinated her digital and social media marketing. According to TrendBlaze, her YouTube channel is affiliated to her record label, Warner Music Group, thus rendering commercial motives more likely than just recreational video-making.49

Even in the earliest stages of her social media, DiDonato demonstrates an acute awareness of indirect brand promotion. She does not explicitly state in her posts that she is a ‘Yankee Diva’ but alludes to it. In her second blog post,50 she reflects on her involvement in a gala weekend for Houston Grand Opera, the company she trained

46 DiDonato also has a Flickr photo gallery but has not been active on this since 2012.


48 F. Paul Driscoll, op. cit.


with, and so she already negotiates her cultural identity. Throughout, she refers to several celebrities at the event such as Sir Elton John and the Duchess of York. These tactical references of star power and one’s societal status help to conjure up archetypal images of glamorous opera divas, ‘all of the glamour and the glitz and the paparazzi and the gowns and the stars and the jewels and the confetti’.

A number of her current social media messages continue in this path. They include a photo with rock musician Sting and actor Robert de Niro, as well as Instagram selfies with famous opera singers, including Bryn Terfel, Plácido Domingo, and Dame Janet Baker. The cumulative effect is that she is a well-connected public figure in both popular culture, which functions on a star system, and the small world of classical music, where according to marketing consultant Trevor O’Donnell, actors ‘publish only photos of themselves and other insiders’. Florence Eves, Digital Marketing Manager at Intermusica Ltd, DiDonato’s former artist agency, recalls that selfies with other colleagues might be taken in the moment but they are recommended, if artists happen to be performing in the same area.

**Constructing the ‘Yankee’ brand: the case of ‘#letJoycesing’**

By maintaining her ‘Yankee Diva’ archetype on social media, DiDonato’s strategic branding elicits a ‘strong, positive consumer-brand connection’, at least experientially with her fans. Therefore, her brand identity is explicit, essentialised, and individualistic. A similar example of such was a fan-generated campaign, launched in mid-October 2014.

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52 YankeeDiva, ‘In Flight’, op. cit.
56 F. Eves, meeting, op. cit.
57 P. Kotler et al., op. cit., p. 257.
On 15 October 2014, DiDonato, as a loyal Kansas City Royals fan, tweeted that the team would be playing at the World Series, the annual championship for Major League Baseball. Almost immediately, her fans devised several initiatives, pleading for her to sing the American National Anthem at one of the matches. A now-defunct Facebook appreciation page was created by Beth Munce, one of the singer’s friends, and it had around 5,300 likes. A Change.org petition was launched by a fan and gained over 3,000 signatures in support.58 DiDonato emerged as the winner in a poll on the Kansas City Star’s website and Munce’s husband launched the hashtag ‘#letJoycesing’, which trended from 17 October 2014.59 While all of these sources create a fuller, transmedia narrative, in which ‘each new text [makes] a distinctive and valuable contribution to the whole’,60 social media were the most significant for her ‘Yankee Diva’ brand archetype.

An online brand community was mainly represented by the local and national classical music scenes. DiDonato retweeted tweets, the ‘#letJoycesing’ hashtag, and hyperlinks to the Facebook and Change.org pages. These tweets were posted to her Twitter handle by American fans, associated American organisations, (e.g., the Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Carnegie Hall, and her record label Warner Classics USA), and professional colleagues (namely, Renée Fleming, another famous American opera diva to have sung the National Anthem at a glocalised sporting event, the Super Bowl).61 DiDonato reposted on her Facebook page a video of a men’s choir from Rockhurst High School, Kansas, performing the National Anthem in support of her (Joyce DiDonato, Facebook post, 21 October 2014). Having her share online messages and mobilise famous people, bodies, and fans in classical music to co-create her ‘Yankee’ brand indirectly promotes her as a ‘Kansas girl’, ‘all American gal’, and one of America’s finest classical singers. Much in the same way as Simon Frith describes world music marketing, ‘ethnomusicological expertise was needed to guarantee the authenticity of what was

59 ‘@KCI Star @bethmunce the #letjoycesing hashtag was created by me that evening and was in the @WSJ 17 hours later. (Also prior to poll)’ (@chrismunce, tweet, 27 October 2014).
60 H. Jenkins, Convergence Culture, op. cit., pp. 95–96.
being sold" and so DiDonato’s Yankee or Kansas affiliation online ascertains that ‘the authentic itself becomes the exotic and vice versa’. In fact, social media analytics site Klear shows that 50 per cent of her Twitter followers are from the United States.

While one Amazon comment asserts that the ‘#letJoycesing’ campaign was fan-initiated, DiDonato, and more than likely her publicity team, know what techniques to best apply to manipulate her brand’s cultural facet, co-creation and loyalty from a Yankee/Kansas City audience. According to the Amazon posting:

Joyce immediately jumped on board the fan campaign, and started using all her digital media to encourage fans to be active. I also know when it started to go up the twitter trends, she was texting all her contacts asking them to immediately use all of their accounts to support the hashtag (you can actually see when that started to happen as more and more organizations began tweeting). She (meaning her office, since she was on tour in Europe) also let all local media know she would be THRILLED to do it (which may have influenced the media as much as the fan calls). So.... this was definitely fan generated, with most of the work done by fans, but Joyce was doing some stuff behind the scenes.

Undoubtedly, there are numerous manoeuvres at work. It is an oversimplification that fans and industry representatives actively supported ‘#letJoycesing’ out of choice. Were it the case that she deliberately asked her connections to promote the cause online, then there is a manufactured Yankee authenticity. Due to her loyal following, they ‘bought into the brand’ and ardently shared the ‘#letJoycesing’ hashtag. On the other hand, there is a mediated cultural negotiation. When fans typed out messages of support, they were constructing their ‘Yankee’ identity, which they chose to present publicly as part of their online selves to attract DiDonato’s attention.

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63 Ibid.
66 Ibid.
67 ‘Going to tweet/retweet everything having to do with #letJoycesing. Unfollow if you want. Haters gonna hate. @JoyceDiDonato is gonna sing’ (@TheJappleton, tweet, 29 October 2014).
Another cunning way to leverage relationship marketing and brand manipulation was messages’ use of parasocial language, ‘All we KC fans want our hometown girl @JoyceDiDonato to sing at the #WorldSeries!’ (@Suzanne_Hendrix, tweet, 16 October 2014); ‘As a Royals fan who is also a classical pianist, I ask that @JoyceDiDonato sing the National Anthem at the @WorldSeries @MLB’ (@JonYoung2007, tweet, 17 October 2014); ‘You are the best qualified singer to represent Kansas City Royals by singing our National Anthem’ (Doug MaGee, Facebook post, 21 October 2014). DiDonato publicly shared and joined in with these sorts of communications, ‘And she can sing Non piu mesta at the 7th inning stretch’ (@BillKristol, 16 October 2014); ‘Now THERE’S an idea, Mr. Kristol!’ (@JoyceDiDonato, 16 October 2014). Such parasocial transactions support ‘#letJoycesing’ but they are also an ‘illusion of intimacy’ because users did not communicate with the singer in real life.

To increase DiDonato’s likeability, a certain type of relational ‘marketing fiction’ was implemented, what Swainston-Harrison calls ‘industrialising intimacy’ (see Chapter 1, ‘Introduction’). Detectable in popular music and celebrity culture, users present aspects of their personal lives to their social media audience, like a calculated promotional exercise. Such is the case with an article from the sports section of the New York Times, published in the build-up to the World Series and retweeted by DiDonato. In this piece, she hints the strong, individualistic work ethic, typical of the American Dream myth, as she draws parallels between her struggle to be an ‘immediate star’ and ‘the equivalent of extra innings’, language exploited for sympathy. The article alludes to the American paradigm of frugality as she recalls her father saving up for a Kansas City Royals game, which she attended with the family. She recalls an anecdote about the night the baseball team won, ‘I had the window down and I was half in, half out of the

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car yelling ‘Whoo! Whoo!’ and we got pulled over by the police and got ticketed […] We weren’t even drinking’. 70

These kinds of narratives are reiterated by the mainstream media and the life stories of American opera divas. 71 Such vignettes are meant to attract new audiences, not just because the article is published in a non-music section in a major news publication. Rather, these intimate moments conjure up various nostalgic emotions, life stories, and experiences we can, or at the very least are supposed to, relate to. One person tweeted, ‘Great story abt #Cinderella mezzo superstar & KC @Royals fan @JoyceDiDonato’ (@GraceNY, 21 October 2014); likewise, ‘GOOD backstory on the national anthem singer from Game 7’ (@jhludlum, tweet, 30 October 2014). Critically, the language of these tweets suggests a conscious brand manipulation because the users perceive a carefully crafted back narrative media personalities try to bring out. Nonetheless, they still ‘buy into her brand’.

In the same way as the just mentioned episode, one further technique was to draw on the cultural facet surrounding her brand to do what Holt terms ‘coattailing on cultural epicenters’, 72 whereby a brand weaves itself into new expressive cultures to ‘[create] an impression for the mass audience that the brand is a vested member of the community and that its stature within that community is deserved.’ 73 Holt’s definition, then, not only pertains to the core audience. Having seen the artist referring to celebrities in one of her ‘Yankee Diva’ blogs, two of her tweets are sent to the account of Ellen DeGeneres, one of America’s most famous television personalities, to request an appearance on her chat show in connection with ‘#letJoycesing’ (@JoyceDiDonato, 16 and 25 October 2014). Some fans have supported DiDonato’s ambition, especially with regards to non-classical audiences, ‘THE ELLEN SHOW NEEDS TO HAPPEN! She’d love you! And sooo many people would be introduced to OPERA!’ (@amber_zuniga7,

70 Ibid.
73 Ibid.
tweet, 16 October 2014). She has not yet appeared on The Ellen Show but it is a life goal she harbours.

Returning to a performative negotiation of cultural identity, ‘#letJoycesing’ was endorsed by users outside of America, thus evincing the glocalisation of opera. A tweet from a fan in Argentina was retweeted by DiDonato and liked by Wigmore Hall’s Twitter.74 Similar interactions came from comments below the Change.org petition: ‘Because Joyce is the greatest American mezzosoprano [sic] in the world and her native town is Kansas CIty [sic]! Fingers crossed for Joyce!!!!!’ (Daniela Radulescu, Romania); ‘Because she is the greatest singer of our time! Another great opera singer Renée Fleming has sung the national anthem at the Super Bowl!!’ (Chris Kwak, Republic of Korea). While DiDonato has an international following, in addition to her American fan base, she, again, clearly understands how to position her online strategy in order to influence broader audience demographics, both nationally and internationally.

On 27 October 2014, Major League Baseball announced that DiDonato had been invited to sing the American National Anthem at Game 7 of the World Series two days later, which the Kansas City Royals would be playing at (@MLB_PR, tweet, 27 October 2014). Matt Bourne, a spokesperson for Major League Baseball, told the Kansas City Star that the fan-led ‘social media outpouring’75 made a major impact on booking her the appearance. But as suggested by the previous Amazon comment, one should not take his claim literally apropos of digital optimism, hashtag activism, and a carefully positioned media campaign. On the one hand, social media messages and the press accounted for the build-up in terms of online activist ideologies. DiDonato described it as a ‘groundswell’,76 ‘viral support’,77 and ‘movement’ (Joyce DiDonato, Facebook post, 2 November 2014). Fans tweeted their excitement about the outcome of

74 ‘Make it happen! @JoyceDiDonato @MLB all my support from Argentina! :) #letjoycesing !!! #GoRegina !!! Sign here--> change.org/p/major-league…’ (@Elu_u3, tweet, 17 October 2014).
77 Ibid.
‘#letJoycesing’, with one tweet influenced by the individualistic mythos of the American Dream, ‘#letjoycesing movement makes me so happy. Just goes to show that if you’re persistent and passionate, anything can happen!’ (@TheJappleton, 28 October 2014). Major League Baseball even incorporated the ‘#letJoycesing’ hashtag into its tweets (@MLB_PR, 27 and 28 October 2014), a gesture that corporatises the hashtag instead of what Jay Rosen terms the ‘people formerly known as the audience’, in regards to their social media usage.78

On the other hand, it would not be unsurprising to glean any backstage negotiations. In tandem with online media, DiDonato gave television interviews, a Skype interview, and featured in print news (@pablywably, tweet, 19 October 2014). Of particular attention is a YouTube video, retweeted onto DiDonato’s Twitter, in which a fan conjectured that a prior decision was made so that the social media support over the previous fortnight would have been a point of discussion.79 Some of this was a publicity stunt and an effort to build her profile, as with tweets from the corporate side of her career, ‘Help @Royals superfan @JoyceDiDonato fulfil her dream to sing anthem @ World Series! @MLB it’s time to #LetJoyceSing!’ (@albionmedia, 17 October 2014); ‘Can’t wait for @JoyceDiDonato in Alcina at @carnegie hall today! Also @MLB and @Royals - now there’s a Game 6…just sayin’…#letjoycesing’ (@WarnerClassicUS, 26 October 2014); ‘.@JoyceDiDonato sings the US National Anthem tonight at #Game7 of the #WorldSeries in Kansas City #letJoycesing’ (@IntermusicaLtd, 29 October 2014). It was vicarious hashtag activism, slacktivism, or clicktivism users wish to accomplish in line with social media ideologies.

Significantly, my data collection yielded mixed reactions towards her actual televised performance at the World Series, thereby questioning the real-world impact of social media for change. Numerous fan messages claim that they were not interested in baseball or sport but would watch DiDonato singing, ‘I never watch baseball, but tonight I will’ (Ray Ring, Facebook post, 29 October 2014). In fact, one of DiDonato’s


fans Paule-Elizabeth Jackson hints the branding technique of ‘coattailing on cultural epicenters’:

I know a bunch of ‘em were just like ‘Wow. That was awesome’. And some of my friends who don’t even know about classical music or opera or anything. Like, I was talking about Joyce so much and so often that some of my friends just started falling in love with her. So I know that it [‘#letJoycesing’] had an impact on making classical music more aware, when it came to the people who really didn’t know anything.\(^{80}\)

A Twitter search presented messages, expressing a strong musico-cultural dislike of the performance, ‘The National Anthem sung by [R and B singer] Usher would sound better than an Opera singer. My ears are bleeding’ (@stacey_pedsRN, 29 October 2014); ‘Torture for #sfgiants fans has already started. We had to listen to that KC opera singer sing the National Anthem’ (@ChrisMed2112, 29 October 2014). Even those who like DiDonato did not succumb to a social media ‘spiral of silence’ (see Chapter 3, ‘Challenges, limitations, and concerns’) such as a blog by Scott Cantrell, Classical Music Critic for Dallas News.\(^{81}\)

The end goal, then, does not equate to a Machievellian marketing scheme. Many of DiDonato’s fans enjoyed her rendition and their involvement in ‘#letJoycesing’ would have confirmed their image of her. Non-classical audiences exhibited positive brand equity as well. Yet, this was a one-off occurrence. While some people wanted to prolong ‘#letJoycesing’ the year after, the number was scarce to warrant further action for a repeat performance.\(^{82}\) As with real-time activist hashtags (e.g., ‘#Jesuischarlie’), the bulk of activity happened over a concentrated time period. Interest has since drifted and transferred to other projects.

**Performing the (anti-)‘Diva’ persona**

In the same way as the ‘Yankee’ in ‘Yankee Diva’, the ‘Diva’ component of DiDonato’s social media brand is schematic but self-commodified. It is not merely a natural extension of her off-stage identity. Classically trained singer Mirjam Frank

\(^{80}\) Paule-Elizabeth Jackson, interview with the author, 29 June 2015.


\(^{82}\) ‘Is it too early for us to restart the #letjoycesing campaign?’ (@andyheffà, tweet, 23 October 2015).
remarks that she is a ‘promoter’ of her personality. Such individualistic self-branding intertwines with her ‘platform performances’ in the verbatim sense of Goffman’s term and social media platforms.

The popular stereotype of an opera diva is that she is a ‘divine monster’. ‘In opera legend, a master class is a vehicle for a domineering personality to tell vain stories and stomp out vain hopes’. By contrast, Hilary Poriss emphasises that in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, biographical and written accounts consciously normalised opera singers to construct a ‘wholesome, generous, down-to-earth, and above all, extremely hard-working’ personality cult vis-à-vis the monster behaviour. The biographies of American opera divas Beverly Sills and Renée Fleming capitalise on this anti-diva image via stock topoi of humble beginnings, frugal households, and wholesome roots.

The Twitter bio of Deborah Voigt, no less, describes her as a ‘Dramatic soprano & down to earth diva’.

Essentialised tropes of the anti-diva vis-à-vis the opera diva percolate DiDonato’s personal social media brand. By analysing her social media content, Jonathan Eifert categorises the singer’s online brand archetype as ‘The Nurturer’, ‘embod[ying] one who is altruistic, supportive, and generous’. Specifically, as part of this nurturing personality, classical music journalist Alex Ross observes that ‘she gives special attention to young singers, responding to their questions and giving them advice. I think this means the most to her’. Jim Brosseau of Forbes cogently summarises the above,

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83 Mirjam Frank, informal correspondence with the author, 25 September 2015.
84 Compare with fans’ perception of Beverly Sills, who ‘responded not only to her voice but also her persona’. N. Guy, op. cit., p. 81.
87 H. Poriss, op. cit., p. 379.
88 R. Fleming and N. Guy, op. cit.
90 J. Eifert, op. cit., p. 19.
91 Alex Ross, email to the author, 5 June 2014.
‘This non-diva diva blogs to build her fan base, embracing the day’s marketing imperative: Be a brand’.

A blog post about breath support, a component of vocal pedagogy aspiring singers have asked her extensively about, hardly gives technical advice per se. Instead, her blog entry uses intelligently worded sentences to encourage ‘you fabulous young singers out there’, ‘Nurture a healthy, positive, pro-active view of your breath support, and nurture with gusto and delight that circle of loved ones where the support flows equally in both directions’. Readers have been influenced by the iconic brand myth of a life coach, albeit one’s friend, ‘Thank you for sharing your joy and discoveries along the way. You are truly inspiring to those of us still learning and working toward a lifetime of music and song’.

Akin to Horton and Wohl’s theory of media personae, parasociality permeates another fan’s social media posting. Having watched her ‘Yankee Diva’ YouTube vlogs, focused on advice for singers, the user writes,

Joyce DiDonato’s vlogs are so generous and encouraging, like, what world-famous opera singer just takes time out of their day every once in a while, to talk to a camera for fifteen minutes about taking time to discover one’s own potential and her perspective on the connection between breathing and emotional truth, like.

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94 Ibid.
95 Meagan, cited in ibid.
DiDonato consistently integrates this life coach persona into her online self-marketing, whether taking part in an ‘#AskJoyce’ question and answer session on Twitter, sharing ‘inspiring’ quotes on her social media pages, vlogging about ‘How do you keep the faith?’⁹⁷ or posting humorous GIFs, encoded with positive brand values fans decipher, ‘Nooo lil rhino! You are beautiful and perfect the way you are! Be a better version of YOU, not a unicorn! (@JaimieAppleton, tweet, 5 September 2015) (Figure 4-1, Figure 4-2, & Figure 4-3). This personality type is distinctly American; consider Oprah Winfrey, an American ‘diva’ personality who has extended her brand empire to O Network, an online content resource and television channel, focused on lifestyle and self-improvement.⁹⁸

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Yet, the underlying subtexts are a misleading false modesty and authenticity. DiDonato claims that she is not a voice teacher, despite her expertly technical advice to participants in her live-streamed video masterclasses, ‘I’d love to hear a brighter Italian *ah* rather than *aw* on the letter A. With *ah*, there is more sunshine in the baritone voice. It makes the voice sound younger and allows for more humour […] is in the back teeth and molars, not in the temples’. 99 Indeed, she brings up her back narrative of personal struggle, self-doubt, and assiduous American determination, ‘I couldn’t even phonate when I was a junior in college […] I don’t consider myself a pedagogue at all’; 100 ‘Muscular technique (3 years of rebuilding!) and lack of confidence (time/experience) #AskJoyce’ (@JoyceDiDonato, tweet, 10 January 2016); ‘I want to be a perfect singer. I wanna have perfect command over my voice and I work really hard on that level of it’. 101


100 <http://www.medici.tv/#/joyce-didonato-master-class-carnegie-hall-day-1-2016> [accessed 5 December 2016].

From a critical perspective, DiDonato’s fans are not claiming their own agency but are influenced by her phraseology, ‘I don’t want to be an opera singer but I watch @JoyceDiDonato masterclasses because they are LIFE LESSONS’ (@lucy_drever, tweet, 18 February 2015). Likewise, an observer of her 2015 London masterclass tweets, ‘Got schooled [my emphasis] today, not just in Opera and singing but in life’ (@LucyOBryne1, 15 April 2015). Returning to the idea of an institutionalised power of social media (see Chapter 4, ‘Branding’), Carnegie Hall’s blog about her live-streamed masterclass at the venue directs readers to the self-help component of her brand, ‘Ms. DiDonato imparted invaluable life lessons alongside technical musical skills’.102 ‘After the class, mezzo-soprano Miya Higashiyama tweeted, ‘I feel I have made life changing discoveries about using the breath and the body to inform sound and not getting stuck in my own head!!’”103

Despite DiDonato’s advice to singers to ‘be true to yourself’ (@JoyceDiDonato, tweet, 10 January 2016), which is reinterpreted by the branding literature as ‘be your own brand’ and ‘stand out from the crowd’,104 her anti-diva brand becomes paradigmatic of a diva. One YouTube video conveniently presents viewers with an image of the ‘star diva in her very extraordinary ordinariness’,105 even though it was recorded in the moment. DiDonato is seen rehearsing an aria for a gala concert, while opera diva colleagues Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and Frederica von Stade improvised an interpretative dance. This occurrence was, no less, filmed by the famous American mezzo-soprano Susan Graham.106

103 Ibid.
105 S. Wolf, op. cit., p. 41.
As opera singer Jennifer Johnson remarks, there is pressure in today’s market of live HD broadcasts for opera singers to not only be vocally stunning but visually as well. With this in mind, DiDonato regularly presents herself online as agreeably pleasant. By putting filters on her Instagram selfies, she ‘makes them prettier’ and ‘brighten[s] their reality so as not to “drag down” those around them’ (Figure 4-4). Likewise, she engages in social media brand endorsements of Vivienne Westwood and takes selfies in the luxury fashion designer’s dresses, which she wears in concert as part of the brand deal (Figure 4-5). These photos convey an aura of Hollywood diva opulence. Due to the limiting formats and structures of social media platforms (e.g., one’s profile picture, photo filters), female users’ profiles tend to adhere to Westernised/Americanised ideals of beauty, ‘leaner, younger, more fashionable versions of themselves’.

On occasion, the idealised online image of an attractive, endearing, and kind diva has to cede; DiDonato is a human, with multiple, contradictory situational identities. She has replied to negative comments such as criticism towards her ‘Nurturer’ support of gay rights (Figure 4-6). While she ‘respectfully ask[s] you to take your judgement and your


hate somewhere else’ (Joyce DiDonato, Facebook post, 12 June 2016), to maintain the safe and supportive tone of voice of her social content, her strong-minded response becomes diva-like in itself. Having followed her for six months for a New Yorker profile, Ross candidly wrote the following about a masterclass she gave, ‘In her buoyant manner, she fires off judgments that would sound brutal coming from anyone else: “I couldn’t hear the words. Without the words, we don’t care”; “We know exactly what’s coming, and we stop listening.”’ Her anti-diva brand, then, conceals typical diva mannerisms. Her nurturing online self is the reason why she has the social media engagement she has, ‘Many young singers idolize DiDonato, not only because of her voice but because of her blog (called Yankee Diva), her tweets (four thousand and counting), and her YouTube videos, in which she gives advice to novices’.

![Figure 4.6 - DiDonato’s response to negative comments](image)

*Figure 4.6 - DiDonato’s response to negative comments*

*Sources: Jennifer Downey, Facebook post, 12 June 2016; Joyce DiDonato, Facebook posts, 12 June 2016.*

Fan reception and response

As indicated in previous subchapters, DiDonato maintains a special relationship with her fans, online and offline, and so a separate analysis of audience/fans’ responses to her social media brand is warranted. Further, fans’ co-creation of a brand identity is integral to the online branding process, as highlighted by the theoretical discussion at the start of this chapter.

Paule-Elizabeth Jackson, a vocal major student and aspiring opera singer, is a self-confessed fan of DiDonato, who was introduced to her favourite singer by watching

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100 A. Ross, ‘Mastersinger’, op. cit.

111 Ibid.
YouTube videos of her. She strongly engaged with DiDonato’s ‘Nurturer’ component of her social media brand in a visceral life project (her personal life and mental health problems) but she negotiates a performative self when discussing her vocation as a classical singer. As she recalls,

So, she used to post a lot of videos to her YouTube, one about how to keep the faith. That one in particular, I stumbled across that one prior to writing her the letter and it really resonated with me cause I not only did it to my personal life, not just my musical life but my personal life. When you’re a singer, both parts of you overlap and they kind of touch each other. When you’re a singer, your personal life and your singing life kind of just merge together. I was talking about my self-harm and suicidal tendencies and I was just telling her that the video that she wrote really kind of helped me with that. She was kind of the person who saved me.

The singer has taken time to reply at length and the consumer-brand relationship is phenomenologically real, ‘every-time I email her she is ALWAYS ALWAYS so excited to hear from me’; ‘please drop me a note every so often to let me know how you are!’ (DiDonato, cited in @Paule_4Equality, tweet, 20 August 2013). Still, the language of her response judiciously reflects her nurturing demeanour, ‘YOU are the one who is writing her own story going forward’; Never, ever doubt yourself”; ‘you make a pact with yourself starting NOW to accept yourself, to LOVE yourself, and to know that you matter’ (Figure 4-7).

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112 P. Jackson, op. cit.
113 Ibid.
Furthermore, Jackson’s blog about a stage door meeting is consonant with Andrea J. Baker’s theory of a ‘blended identity’, ‘whereby the offline-self informs the creation of a new, online-self which then re-informs the offline-self in further interaction with those the individual first met online’. In her fan netnography of the Broadway show *Wicked*, Wolf observes that, ‘Musical theater relies on a broad, open, face-front performance style, so spectators are always aware that performers are performing […]

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*L. Bullingham and A. C. Vasconcelos, op. cit., p. 102.*
The diva is both an on- and offstage phenomenon; she is both the character and the self.'\textsuperscript{116} In that sense, DiDonato may be ‘being herself’ but the amalgamation of her ‘virtual’ and ‘real’ selves produces a persona of an inspirational, Americentric motivational speaker. As Jackson blogs,

I look at her and I go “things have gotten better, and I want to thank you for everything you’ve done for me” she [sic] stops turns to me and says “who is responsible for all of your successes??” I look at her and I’m To [sic] stunned to speak… Again, she goes “who is responsible for your successes?? Im [sic] not gonna finish signing this CD until you answer” I squeak out “I am” she [sic] then responds with the absolute greatest piece of advice that I’ve ever gotten “you are responsible for those successes! And you have to give yourself some credit for all of the MAJOR things that you have overcome. I’m not saying that I’m not thankful I am thankful and proud of you! But now it’s time for you to be proud of yourself and give yourself credit for all of the things that you’ve accomplished. Never loose [sic] sight of that”.\textsuperscript{117}

Such friction to reconcile true selves with performative versions is discernible in social media postings and accounts, as in the case of DiDonato’s fans. They are predominantly female (57%), in the teenage to young adult demographic (a median age of 26),\textsuperscript{118} and many declare that they are aspiring opera singers. Identity experiments form a significant part of adolescence and people in this stage of life use the Internet and social media to do so. Within a distinctly homosocial fandom, online messages around DiDonato are reminiscent of ‘a long tradition of ‘sapphic’ diva-worship in the world of opera’\textsuperscript{119} and comprise gestures that conflict with their actual identities that are crucial to realising at their age, notably, celebrity worship. They express that DiDonato is ‘my idol’ (opera-is-life, Tumblr, 26 April 2014), a ‘goddess’ (themoon-andbackagain, Tumblr, 17 April 2015), and the ‘#perfect #queen of everything’ (sapphicdiva, Tumblr, 24 April 2015).\textsuperscript{120}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{116} S. Wolf, op. cit., p. 54.
\textsuperscript{117} P. Jackson, <http://o-pera-is-life.tumblr.com>, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{118} ‘Joyce DiDonato’, in Klear, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{120} Having perused Tumblr posts, DiDonato’s female fans love other famous female opera singers, notably, Anna Netrebko, Susan Graham, Sarah Connolly, and Alice Coote. In one video, a teenager and budding opera singer confesses to Netrebko at a post-show meeting that ‘You’re my favourite person’. See Adriana Mantilla, Adriana meeting Anna Netrebko Metropolitan Opera, online video recording.
\end{flushright}
These phenomena arise from an online support network around the brand, as derived from the following tweet, ‘Ya know if I could just be @JoyceDiDonato my life would be complete’ (@Paule_4Equality, 29 May 2013). Her message is consonant with Wolf’s interpretation of girl fans and their response to seeing their favourite actresses in Wicked, a show centred on themes of divadom, queer feminine love, and female identity, ‘girl fall in love with performers not because they want to be them in toto but because they want to be them performing’.121 Jackson views her self-concept through trying to be someone that she is not, more precisely, an on stage version of DiDonato. This leads to another fan message, ‘But then who would be Paule?! We can’t live without Paule! :)’ (@TheJappleton, tweet, 29 May 2013). Yet, the irony of this tweet is an allusion to both DiDonato’s essentialised ‘nurturer’ brand values and the branding literature’s ideal of ‘being your own brand’ online, which is invariably a mediated authenticity. DiDonato enters into the correspondence and places herself in a position of assumed authority. By applying Goffman’s vocabulary, she is telling fans to put on a ‘front’ with the tone of voice of their tweets, ‘LOVE the support and encouragement that you all are giving each other. CARRY ON!’ (@JoyceDiDonato, tweet, 30 May 2013).

One of the more overt instances of this performed identity is what Jackie Stacey terms ‘the “transformation of the self,” which, for her subjects, included changing their hair or gestures to imitate the style of their idol’.122 With DiDonato presenting her visual image in an idealised feminine way, the singer’s female fans emulate a diva stage appearance and self-select their looks on the Internet to display a well-presented version of themselves to their social networks. One video of a teenage opera singer in performance sees her wearing a beautiful dress, appropriate for a concert engagement, with her hair styled and make-up done (Figure 4-8). Even her confident posture and expressive gesture with her left hand is reminiscent of a famous diva on stage. Indeed, in the same way as DiDonato’s ‘anti-diva’ diva, these young singers wish to imitate her personal qualities as much as her visual ones, by portraying themselves as passionate,

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121 S. Wolf, op. cit., p. 58.
122 Ibid., p. 57.

conscientious students. In that sense, one uploaded a selfie, showing herself with her musical repertoire she received in the post (Figure 4-9). Interestingly, non-singers/non-musicians hint these social practices, ‘seen her [DiDonato] twice now and got a new outfit every time...Considering a new dress for Werther’ (@annemiekeda, tweet, 17 May 2015).

Significantly, the ‘transformation of the self’ is not restricted to DiDonato’s onstage visuals but cross-gender role-play, arising out of feelings of queer love, characteristic of non-heterosexual diva worship. Evincing such are two photo responses from Cassie Kutev, a voice major student. The first photo shows her audition image, a classic opera diva look: a smart dress, lipstick, mascara, earrings, red nail varnish, and coiffed hair in tribute to DiDonato (Figure 4-10). Describing herself as a ‘queer woman’, the fan’s second selfie addresses her emotional, relational, and performative ties as she copies the costume DiDonato wore for her trouser role in a performance of Handel’s opera Ariodante (Figure 4-11). ‘Their longing for the diva captures both identification and desire; it is an intensely homoerotic affect that is expressed not as about having them but as about being them’. Concomitant with Jenkins’ theory of a media convergence culture (where ‘each of us constructs our own personal mythology from bits of fragments of information extracted from the media flow and transformed into resources through which we make sense of our everyday lives’), together with Lawrence Lessig’s readings of a remix media culture, Kutev’s performative negotiation presents itself in a more powerful way than a ‘read-mode’ piece of written text.

123 C.f. N. Guy, op. cit., p. 89. Her ethnography of Beverly Sills’ fans recalls the majority of her male fans as gay.


125 S. Wolf, op. cit., p. 58.


Figure 4-8 - 'Transformation of the self' 1
Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K0CvlKHNqVw> [accessed 30 November 2016].

Figure 4-9 - 'Transformation of the self' 2
Source: @themusicalrichster, Tumblr, 1 January 2016.
Figure 4-10 - Cross-gender role play 1
Source: cassiekutev, Tumblr, 4 March 2015

Figure 4-11 - Cross-gender role play 2
Source: cassiekutev, Tumblr, 19 September 2015
Stephen Hough

Stephen Hough is one of the most sought-after concert pianists. His musical achievements have resulted in many accolades and awards, including: the first classical musician to receive a MacArthur Fellowship, a discography of more than fifty recordings, a visiting professorship at the Royal Academy of Music, and faculty membership at the Juilliard School. Alongside pianistic interests, he has gained reputation as a composer, poet, painter, writer, and former cultural blogger for *Telegraph Media Group*, with his agency and press media promoting him as a ‘renaissance man of his time’ and ‘a true polymath’. While his online content reflects the varying interests a polymathic self-image would have, he does not self-market under any brand pseudonym or archetype. Nonetheless, the techniques he employs online are akin to many of the branding strategies analysed in this chapter.

While he claims to blog and tweet himself, thereby rendering a supposed authenticity on his part, he self-brands in a way that reflects his online presentation, much in the same way as DiDonato. His online self-presentation is described by his Twitter bio as such: ‘concert pianist, writer of words and music, governor of royal ballet companies, theology, art, poetry, perfume, puddings’. In that sense, he assumes various forms of minor personae via his content: the pianist, musician, composer, artist, poet, gay Catholic, theologian, deep thinker, and ordinary human being, who ‘just want[s] to be able to pay my bills and eat’. Accordingly, he can go from tweeting short poems, blogging for the *Telegraph* on the Catholic Church’s stance on same-sex marriage, parasocially congratulating a male fan about his gay marriage (@houghhough, tweet, 26 April 2015), ‘industrialising intimacy’ via a picture of a slice of sticky toffee pudding

131 ‘Fifty years have gone/But eighty-eight keys remain:/A life to unlock. #haiku’ (@houghhough, tweet, 22 November 2011).

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(Figure 4-12), through to tweeting a pre-concert selfie in his dressing room (Figure 4-13). Thus, numerous messages have a performative identification.

Figure 4-12 - 'Industrialising intimacy'
Source: @houghhough, tweet, 20 March 2013

Figure 4-13 - 'Industrialising intimacy', pre-concert selfie
Source: @houghhough, tweet, 18 October 2015
Representative of such are a picture he tweeted of pink wellington boots in a shop (Figure 4-14) and a video on Classic FM’s Instagram of him playing Tchaikovsky on a pink toy piano at the radio station’s office, both denoting a willingness to make fun of stereotypes around his sexual orientation.¹³³ His audience responds to his online content depending on the respective subject matter. For the just mentioned *Telegraph* blog, he advocates same-sex relationships and so given the controversial topic, it causes many of the comments below to stir up heated debate, criticise his arguments, and even criticise other users and the author. This is a fascinating reaction because what is being seen is an attempt from a classical musician to write about issues outside of his usual social circles and he has instigated said objective in the blog comments. Having emailed him myself to ask whether he aims to attract non-classical audiences via his social media, he answered, ‘Definitely. The Arts are all linked in a deep way and connecting them consciously is an interest of mine’.¹³⁴ Unlike DiDonato, though, he has chosen not to reply to trolls,¹³⁵ a prudent decision in his case because it matches his learned and pensive online identity.

As indicated before, one desired effect of ‘industrialising intimacy’ on social media users is a parasocial interaction with the artist, for instance, an enthusiastic comment in response to his religious beliefs and blog entry entitled ‘Praying, practising and moulting Persian Blues’, ‘Including blessing such as how the Lord allowed me to come across your wonderful compositions as I selected repertoire for my recital! Thank you

¹³³ <https://www.instagram.com/p/1K7ofIlV_n/> [accessed 24 April 2017].

¹³⁴ Stephen Hough, email to the author, 16 October 2015.

¹³⁵ ‘Yes, I back off when things get nasty like that. What’s the point of engaging with such comments?’ (@hough_hough, tweet, 22 July 2012).
again, Mr. Hough!! Christ loves you’.

As an amateur pianist, Enbysk uses the blog’s public setting to openly share his personal experiences of ‘fear of playing in public’, to which Hough advises, ‘Keep going! Just practise will help – the more you play the easier it will (should) become’. While both users cannot see each other in person, Hough’s response, in his situational identity of a star concert pianist and authoritative pedagogue, must have been meaningful, even if Enbysk read the artist’s online message experientially.

Having posted a picture of his penchant for sweet food items (@houghhough, tweet, 20 March 2013), John O’Leary replies, ‘We had choc & hazelnut pudding last night, with choc h’nut sauce and custard. I thought of you, and how much you’d enjoy it’ (@johnno_49, tweet, 20 March 2013). The topic of this fan’s message is banal, nevertheless, it confirms the importance a loyal audience places on regular relational interactions with the artist on social media, even if it is a mental consumer-brand relationship with the fan. Such parasociality, from the artist to the fan and back, is situated within Tom Mole’s theorisation of a hypertrophic celebrity culture, where ‘the structure of the apparatus is becoming as much an object of fascination as the individuals it promotes. An organic structure becomes hypertrophic when it grows in such an exaggerated way’. This hypertrophy extends to the environments of the Internet and social media, where fans are as much voyeurs of their favourite artists’ non-musical and everyday interests.

There is a correlation between parasocial behaviour and brand equity because fans wish to have an affinity with the artist’s brand values so that they try to identify with him/her in a way beyond looking at an online message. One illustration is an Amazon comment, prompted by Hough’s Christian beliefs and The Bible as Prayer, his book commentary and aide-memoire for prayer, ‘I have started a Lectio Divina group here at church and this book gives me the gems of verses to use. […] It helps me to choose scripture for


137 Ibid.

the sessions’. Another tweet implies perceived homosocial bonds, ‘@houghhough getting gay married! My mom is super happy! He’s my best friend by our love is real’ (@hinton44, 26 April 2015).

In a similar way, Hough has recommended the Chicago hat seller Optimo Hats and tweeted photos of himself trying the hats in store (Figure 4-16). On Twitter, he endorses Bärenreiter editions of musical scores he uses. What initially seem like casual product placements are well-considered because a recommendation from someone as reputed as Hough gives him and the business more credibility and influence. Actionable results include one individual who tweeted the pianist about purchasing an Optimo hat (@Mark_Stryker, 17 July 2014) to copy a typical gentleman’s look. Having tweeted Hough to ask how ‘to put a little curl in the rear brim of my panama’ (@leboyfriend, tweet, 2 August 2014), a fan even called the American hat vendor from the UK. Following Hough’s tweeted picture of a Bärenreiter score, professional classical pianist Assaff Weisman asked whether the music publisher had ‘any plans of offering paid-for pdf versions for the growing number of us using iPads?’ (@AssaffWeisman, tweet, 1 May 2015), to which the company replied (@BarereiterUK, tweet, 4 May 2015).

One of the more telling signs of Hough’s online brand identity lies in notions of class and culture. The irony is that he expresses an interest in self-marketing to audiences outside of classical music culture. Still, the particular interests arising from his varied, polymathic self-image are inextricably linked to the interests, activities, and opinions of regular classical audiences. There are powerful ramifications for the sorts of people able to interact with Hough on social media.

For example, the academic discipline of theology means that he tweets cleric Reverend Richard Coles about their opinions of the Book of Acts and both comprehend each other’s opinions. To someone unfamiliar with Biblical discourse, their exchange may be difficult to follow because they tweet about privy details and inside references. Meanwhile, Bärenreiter editions pride themselves on ‘their quality and the in-depth


140 Nina from Optimo Hats, email to the author, 20 January 2016.

scholarship involved in their preparation’. Purchasing a quality music score is highly desirable for someone such as Weisman but he is in a fortunate financial position to not only use an iPad but also enquire into paid sheet music for the tablet.

Another episode is Hough’s article on the Guardian’s website about his piano composition Sonata III (Trinitas), favouring a certain type of readership and audience response. Allied with the broadsheet market of this newspaper is the way he describes his composition via specialised musical terminology, used to explain classical music pieces: ‘the [note] row can be inverted or reversed or transposed’; ‘I used a note-row which was shot through with tonal implications’. The comments below the article reflect this vocabulary, usually assumed on the part of classical audiences, ‘there’s a lot of good music still to be written in C major, as there is as free atonal, bitonal, polytonal or serial’. In contrast, this specialised knowledge, typical of classical music culture, presents itself to non-attenders as unfamiliar, all the more so due to the unstraightforward idiom of serialist and contemporary classical music Hough based his composition on.

In hindsight, these class tastes derive from his position in what Sherwin Rosen terms an ‘economics of superstars’. Therefore, he tweets about dining at a Michelin-starred restaurant, blogs about his Friends’ membership at the Royal Academy of Arts, and posts seemingly casual pictures of himself as the consummately dressed gentleman, wearing luxury brand shoes, a bowler hat, and a quirky multi-coloured sock (Figure 4-15, Figure 4-16, & Figure 4-17). But money appears not to be a major issue for those

142 Patrick Abrams, email to the author, 4 February 2016.
144 bessaboi, cited in ibid.
146 S. Rosen, op. cit.
147 ‘I’m really full and don’t need dessert @Marcuswareing “The warm chocolate crunch please” (@houghhough, tweet, 21 April 2014).
who regularly enjoy such first-world luxuries, as implied by an interaction between the pianist and a person, self-identifying herself in her Twitter bio as a presenter and producer on an Oklahoma classical radio station, ‘Yes, a classic wedge salad with maytag cheese, at the simple SF airport restaurant: $12’ (@houghhough, tweet, 23 October 2011); ‘$12 Amazing. Well then, a big welcome back to America or at least, reasonably priced American SF airport restaurant menus’ (@radiogirlok, tweet, 23 October 2011).

In terms of self-branded products, initially diversifying Hough’s appeal to non-classical audiences, they incontestably favour ‘[w]ealthier and time-richer audiences [who] are undoubtedly able to access great diversity’.149 Charged at £14.99 on Amazon and $9 in tablet form, the price of Hough’s book The Bible as Prayer is questionable because it is a compilation of Biblical texts with some written contributions from him. The book,

moreover, received mixed Amazon customer reviews.\textsuperscript{150} Relatedly, a cost of £10.49 justifies the high quality, content-rich approach of The Liszt Sonata, an app he was involved in creating, although David Hesmondhalgh’s response is apposite, ‘the rise of digitalization is unlikely in the medium and long term to lead to any profound democratization of musical creativity conditions’.\textsuperscript{151}

Interestingly, Hough has written for popular media, thus raising a dichotomy between his online image to the outside world and his inner circles. Namely, his article for Radio Times, shared on his Twitter account, suggested shorter alternatives to the standard two-hour classical concert format.\textsuperscript{152} In a feature for BBC Radio 3’s website, retweeted by him, he supported popular modifications to concert hall conduct: wearing what you like, taking photos on your phone at the end of a performance, and clapping between movements.\textsuperscript{153} Conversely, one of his Telegraph blogs advocated archaic constructs of the classical concert as ‘a place for formality and distance’.\textsuperscript{154} According to Klear, his third most popular piece of Twitter content was one of his blogs he


\textsuperscript{151} D. Hesmondhalgh, op. cit., p. 58.  

\textsuperscript{152} <https://twitter.com/houghhough/status/76733324251627520> [accessed 12 December 2016].  


\textsuperscript{154} <http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/culture/stephenhough/100062509/telling-tails-do-special-clothes-help-us-to-perform-better/> [accessed 18 January 2016].
reposted, describing classical music as ‘difficult to listen to, difficult to understand fully, difficult to play’.155

On closer perusal, though, online interactions highlight exclusivist behaviours. In tweets to a longstanding colleague, classical cellist Steven Isserlis, both jokingly refer to each other via mutual abbreviations: Hough= PH, Isserlis= V. Only those who know the artists well enough can understand their nicknames and humour. O’Donnell criticises that ‘Classical music marketers talk exclusively about themselves and how much other in-the-know people admire them’.156 A clannish but self-congratulatory tone of voice is evident on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram (c.f. DiDonato’s selfies with celebrity opera singers), ‘Wonderful Desert Island Discs with my friend @houghhough. I’m proud of you, PH!!’ (@StevenIsserlis, tweet, 10 October 2016); ‘@StevenIsserlis Thank you V x’ (@houghhough, tweet, 10 October 2016); ‘Awww P and V! We like it :)’ (@RoyalPhilSoc, tweet, 10 October 2016).

Relatedly, Hough has posted selfies with famous pianists such as Maria João Pires and Peter Halstead (@houghhough, tweet, 21 July 2016), who are more likely to be known by insiders. He has even been mentioned in a small, self-selecting group of people, who ‘all met on Twitter’ (@lindasgrant, tweet, 26 April 2013) and have shared cultural interests. He could have made acquaintances with anyone online so the fact that his Twitter contacts include an author, clerics, presenters on BBC Radio 4, and a fiction editor signifies the circles he mixes with, online and in person (@RevDavidColes, tweet, 26 April 2013).

The branding concept of added value is perceptible online. Some classical music critics have been influenced by Hough’s self-image of the perpetuating polymath when writing their online reviews. Wilson writes that ‘[a]s befits this deep thinking musical polymath, the programme for Stephen Hough’s Barbican concert was carefully constructed to


156 T. O’Donnell, op. cit.
reveal every side of his personality – artistic, creative and philosophical’.\textsuperscript{157} Her review refers to ‘the virtuoso-at-ease’, the Catholic, theologian, and composer via the ‘spiritual preoccupations’, ‘dogma and metaphysics’ of \textit{Sonata III (Trinitas)}. But by re-reading these descriptions socio-politically, Hough has manipulated the content he posts so that social media audiences are governed by particular images of him, whether reading about him in another media outlet or seeing him live. Indeed, he claimed that he was ‘given a wonderfully free rein’\textsuperscript{158} for his \textit{Telegraph} blogs but the \textit{Telegraph} is a traditional media corporation and so he cannot merely write what he wishes, ‘Sometimes a post will be edited after it’s been published’.\textsuperscript{159}

\textbf{Comparative analysis and conclusions}

Carefully designing an artist’s social media brand can generate brand equity, positive fan perception, and a loyal brand community. Yet, these outcomes are not the case every time and a well-planned branding strategy does not guarantee the end result. Indeed, many brands are vying for consumers’ attention online and so fans are aware of being brand manipulated.

The classical music industry is not just concerned with established branding concepts. Although this chapter has addressed such frameworks because they are how the normative branding, personal branding, and social media literatures account for brands, they are slightly overdue and restrictive for how classical artists and fans employ social media. Thus, DiDonato and Hough’s online selves maintain the possibility of social media to further key narratives: biography, class, culture, gender, identity, ideology, image, and sexuality, all of which have a contemporary relevance.

By way of illustration, both musicians support gay rights, a social cause influencing the semiotics of their social media. A corresponding audience openly expresses its sexual orientation online via performatve and relational affinities with the two artists. ‘In a culture in which heterosexualization very much dominates a young woman’s [to which


\textsuperscript{158} S. Hough, email, op. cit.

\textsuperscript{159} Ibid.
one can add a young man’s] world, a space that permits homoerotic expression is radical and important, both personally and politically’.  

Sociotechnologically, Donna Haraway’s cyborg manifesto proposes that biologically determinist divisions between gender and sexuality are more liberated. Thus, the combination of personal branding, political accidental activism, and post-gender dynamics on social media deeply resonates with fans and so there is the opportunity for artists to generate fan engagement, as well as future ideas for their branded content, targeted at certain audiences.

In addition to loyal fans, artists can attract marginal segments as a result of their online strategy, including teenagers, non-classical audiences, and non-musicians. Yet, my findings bring up patterns of middle-class exclusivity. The classical music industry envisages a commitment to everyone through social media, whereas the reality is somewhat, if altogether, different. Jenkins et al. befittingly account for the situation as such:

[W]here brands are concerned, one has a different relationship to the fantasies they enhance, depending on whether one can afford to buy the commodities to which one has assigned these values. Brands are certainly sustained by aspiration — the mystique of the Rolls Royce is supported by those who dream of buying such a car — but the company depends on the actual purchases of people with the money to buy the vehicles to sustain their business. Thus, while companies may invite all interested parties to make meanings with their content, these stories will ultimately focus on the fantasies of a subset who can afford to become customers.

This chapter, then, referred to the class and cultural interests, making up Hough’s polymathic self-image. Although they are by-products of a winner-takes-all market he is in, simply mentioning them online has connotations. Further confirmation of these underlying subtexts derives from DiDonato’s social media endorsements of Vivienne Westwood. Having seen previews and pictures of her, wearing this luxury branded


162 H. Jenkins et al., Spreadable Media, op. cit., pp. 103–104.
couture in concert, fans tweet their adoration of it. Clearly, though, they are privileged.

In April 2014, a group of teenagers and adults in their twenties organised a social event via the Tumblr fan community OperaRox to see DiDonato in Rossini’s La Cenerentola at the Metropolitan Opera. Someone would have paid at least $30 for each person’s ticket. One teenage fan flew in especially to see her in performance, meet her at stage door, and stay in New York for a week and so these arrangements will have expended more. A female fan in her forties will have spent a minimum of £70 on tickets to see two concerts starring DiDonato and her paid entry masterclass in London in 2015 (sapphicdiva, Tumblr, 1 October 2014). The National Endowment for the Arts’ statistics are consonant with these opera-goers; over 40 per cent of opera attenders earn at least $100, 000 per annum and households with a family income of $150, 000 plus are more likely to go (22.3% versus 7.4% of those earning less than $20, 000). Reconsider, too, the time and money invested in the aspiring opera singers’ tuition, sheet music, expenses, and concert wear. The fact that Tumblr is used by a small percentage of older teenage girls (16% of 15 to 17-year-old girls), who are more likely to use it with increasing household income (16% of those earning $75, 000 plus compared to 10% earning $30, 000), suggests that DiDonato’s female fans are privileged sociotechnologically.

A vital implication is how the classical music industry accounts for approachability via social media. To foresee a fundamental question for this thesis: How does classical


164 P. Jackson, interview, op. cit.


166 P. Jackson, interview, op. cit.

167 A perusal of the event sub-pages on the Barbican Centre’s website shows that standard tickets for the masterclass costed £30, tickets for her ‘Stella di Napoli’ concert started at £15, and tickets for the April 2015 concert started at £25.


music’s social media marketing differ from general social media marketing? One formative answer comes from the context of this chapter. The Bourdieusian habitus and luxury cultural pursuits of classical music contradict the supposed mass audience for popular culture’s social media marketing. This irony is perceptible in DiDonato and Hough’s online brands because Internet-effected images, which try to portray them as down-to-earth, contradict social media fans who have become affiliated to a core classical segment via their interactions with each other and the artists. Looking towards Chapter 6, there is a paradox between Hough’s generic tweets and technological privilege of his The Liszt Sonata app (channelling the ‘geek factor’).

In terms of social media culture, fans may feel that they are actively co-creating the brand identities of their favourite artists and that they are forming new ones. At the same time, these branding processes are company-driven machinations. Both artists and fans are implicated in projectivist identities, even if they claim to ‘be themselves’. Although these mechanics are inauthentic (the opposite of what social media marketing is meant to be about), they still incite brand engagement, even if fans are aware of ploys to attract their attention.

A further corollary is the artist or brand as a capitalist commodity. Various forms of personalised engagement have been identified yet the difference between product, corporate, and personal branding is passé. Many of DiDonato and Hough’s social media messages are inextricably linked to work or opportunistic self-promotion. Fans may believe the brand values of their favourite social media personalities but branding is nonetheless ‘a strategic signifying practice’. Jonathan E. Schroeder words it as such,

Artists offer exemplary instances of image creation in the service of building a recognizable look, name, and style – a brand, in other words. Successful artists can be thought of as brand managers, actively engaged in developing, nurturing, and promoting themselves as recognizable “products” in the competitive cultural sphere.

Although the nexus of this thesis is web-based, there is no longer a social media and an offline brand. Social media converges with traditional media and the distinctions are far

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170 J. E. Schroeder, op. cit., p. 1292.
171 Ibid.
from clear. In the same way as celebrity media agencies and engagements, the classical musician is to be promoted via as many channels as possible. It is the responsibility of media PR companies to sell likeable, personable, relatable, and charismatic personae, alongside the inevitable self-promotion. In fact, Albion Media’s goals are:

[t]o ensure that Joyce’s performances and zeal for education and various social issues are given the broadest platform possible and are carefully positioned […] A mixture of traditional PR and social media campaigns have been devised and implemented by Albion Media on behalf of DiDonato on a range of activities outside of the opera or concert hall stage.172

Similarly, DiDonato and Hough appeared on BBC Radio 4’s legendary music chat show Desert Island Discs in autumn 2016. They promoted their brand values on this programme; DiDonato’s nurturing advice, ‘[perfection] can become your biggest enemy as an artist’173 and Hough’s interests in Catholicism and composition.174 These publicity schemes raise the question of how to strike the balance between incorporating a genuine personal narrative into content,175 building a consistent brand on social media,176 and not explicitly hard-selling.

Yet, there are classical artists who do not use social media but have cultivated their fan base via self-branding. Where possible, British opera singer Lesley Garrett promotes her moniker of ‘the Diva from Doncaster’, by referring to herself as a born and bred Yorkshire girl, and by conveying her persona of ‘bubbly, slightly eccentric, and a little over the top’177 via various media outlets. They include: her most recent album A North Country Lass, online interviews, magazine features, and broadcast media appearances; as a contestant on the reality television show Strictly Come Dancing and a panellist on daytime television chat show Loose Women. She has built up a devoted following online and in person. Her website does not have any social media links but it maintains

175 Florence Eves, Are You Retweetable, Likeable and Instagrammable? The power of social media to get you heard by the right person (PowerPoint presentation) (2016).
176 Ibid.
a fan club and message board, where users can share experiences of meeting and seeing her live in performance.178

But given that the lines between offline and online brand experiences are not as rigidly drawn, it will not be too long before the future of branding becomes post-digital.179 In autumn 2011, Syco, the record label of superstar pop band One Direction, joined up with advertising agency AIS to create a transmedia fan experience around the fictional character 1DCyberpunk, a virtual superfan, who had stolen the band’s laptop and would only give it back if fans showed that they were as dedicated as her. She set challenges to fans via Twitter and the band’s official website, including: dressing up as 1DCyberpunk, imitating her hairstyle, making paper dolls of the band members, and running to a virtual listening party for the album. Running over fifty days, the traffic to the band’s website almost doubled and created twelve Twitter trends.180

While the idea of a cybernetic version of DiDonato or Hough may be iconoclastic for the traditional values of classical music, the fan loyalty of classical audiences, together with the recent fashion of augmented reality and virtual reality (AR/VR), makes it a feasible marketing strategy. VR technologies such as Facebook’s Oculus Rift headset will make people more voyeuristic; perhaps they will be a digital contact for a musician’s practice session or virtually meet them at stage door in real time. Users might see who people are away from their web-mediated selves and they might reveal more about their private selves.

The next case study chapter — social media marketing of concert halls — incorporates approaches, similar in scope, purpose, and design to social media branding. It applies them to a corporate entity (i.e. a music venue) rather than a personal one (the artists) as has been the case in this first case-based chapter, although the distinctions between personal and corporate branding are no longer delineated.

178 <http://www.lesleygarrett.co.uk/fans.php> [accessed 1 February 2016].
Chapter 5: Social Media Marketing of the Classical Concert Hall

Introduction

There are various reasons why classical concert halls use social media in their marketing. They include: the burgeoning digital media marketing industry, promotions, cross-media promotions (between artists, organisations, and audiences), event availability, audience growth, online engagement, and content marketing (such as artist interviews, blogs, and instant reviews from audiences, fans, and critics). Simultaneously, concert halls employ social media to reflect their own mission statements or ethos, in other words, their so-called ‘brand values’ or ‘brand identities’, entailing the venues’ ways of life. Following these frameworks, this second case-led chapter explores social media marketing within a classical concert hall context. For the purposes herein, it concentrates on one venue, Wigmore Hall (the Hall), although the discussion refers to other presenters for a holistic understanding of the classical concert network.

The chapter starts by providing a historical and cultural context because this is at the heart of the Hall’s brand. By overviewing the history of the Hall, and by linking it to its various cultural aesthetics, geographies, and ecologies, a fuller picture is painted of its brand values and how they intersect with social media. Bearing in mind just mentioned reasons for social media marketing within the concert hall, together with key concepts from the preceding chapter, an analytical reading of the Hall’s online strategy is then given. By initially employing an informal yet conversational tone (expected of many social media communications), alongside techniques and tropes from contemporary social media culture, the Hall’s Twitter account enters in line with its brand. That is, online engagement is primarily designed for a core classical or ‘Wigmore’ audience, and by implication, this e-strategy links to market segmentation. Segmentation is integral to the Hall’s brand identity and so a separate subchapter is dedicated to this particular marketing technique.

Market segmentation is partly linked to the creative cities thesis because this urbanist theory concerns a particular group of people. In that sense, the creative cities thesis is another consequence of the Hall’s audience, and in turn, the venue’s social media. The
basic premise is that the kinds of people attracted to working, studying, and living in a creative city provide distinct advantages to insiders, that is, they are the driving forces behind creative, innovative, and economic developments.\(^1\) Hence, another subchapter recollects the types of audiences visiting the Hall and it discusses the role of London as an ecosystemic ‘creative centre’.\(^2\) Furthermore, this urbanist model has significant effects on translocal connections, types of capital those in a ‘creative class’\(^3\) possess, and how all of these constructs manifest online.

Finally, a key concept to investigate is spatiality because it applies to both concert halls and social media (i.e. online spaces). As mentioned earlier in this thesis (see Chapter 1, ‘Overview of the thesis’), the concert hall is no longer a physical space, purely built for watching and listening to a live musical performance. Rather, it is possible to reframe the Hall’s social media engagement from the following perspectives: in house spaces, spatial aesthetics, transpatiality, online mediation, and real life concert-going. Spatiality is an open-ended topic but, to some extent, recapitulates various issues from this chapter.

### The history, cultural aesthetics, and brand values of Wigmore Hall

Wigmore Hall is one of the world’s most important classical concert and chamber music halls. Launched on 31 May 1901 as Bechstein Hall, as an adjunct concert space and promotion for the London showrooms of piano maker Carl Bechstein, the venue, currently seating 552, ‘was promoted with proud assurance as the best of places for intimate music making’.\(^4\) It attracted many great artists and composers, including George Enesco, Pablo de Sarasate, Joseph Joachim, Nellie Melba, Enrico Caruso, Artur Schnabel, Arthur Rubinstein, Sir Thomas Beecham, Camille Saint-Saëns, and Percy Grainger.\(^5\)

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\(^2\) Richard Florida, ‘Cities and the Creative Class’, *City & Community*, 2.1 (2003), 3–19 (pp. 8–9).

\(^3\) Ibid., p. 8.


When the Hall opened, concert life and leisure activities in London were starting to undergo late developments. Music halls and theatres opened across the West End, notably, the London Coliseum and Palladium. A wide public was introduced for shopping experiences in the then-new department stores, namely, Selfridges, about a ten to fifteen-minute walk from the Hall’s location on Wigmore Street. Cheap and efficient public transport could facilitate enjoyable visits to the centre of the metropolis.\(^6\) International concert promoters, agents, and impresarios were committed to organising high-quality recitals, symphony concerts, and celebrity recitals such as Robert Newman, who founded the Proms concerts with conductor Sir Henry Wood, and Bechstein Hall alone scheduled two hundred concerts in its opening year.\(^7\) Due to the outbreak of war in 1914, strong anti-German sentiments, and the passing of the Trading with the Enemy Amendment Act in 1916, all of the assets of the Bechstein Company were sold at auction, including Bechstein Hall. The Hall was reopened in 1917 as Wigmore Hall.

Many of the Hall’s historic, cultural, aesthetic, and geographic values influence its current mission statement, ‘To continue as the pre-eminent international home of chamber music and to be recognised in the UK and the rest of the world as the National Concert Hall for Chamber Music and Song’.\(^8\) The venue aims to firmly position itself within the local, translocal, national, and international classical concert network. It does so via the Hall’s official website, social media, and traditional marketing. The Hall is self-branded with strong taglines: ‘the National Concert Hall for Chamber Music and Song’, ‘Europe’s leading venue for chamber music, early music and song’,\(^9\) and ‘the pre-eminent international home of chamber music’. Its LinkedIn page mentions ‘the unique place in London musical life’\(^10\) and Rylan Holey, former Digital Content

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\(^6\) C. Ehrlich, op. cit., p. 33.

\(^7\) Ibid.


\(^10\) Wigmore Hall, in LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/company/wigmore-hall> [accessed 22 July 2016].

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Administrator at the Hall, endorses it as ‘the world’s leading chamber music venue’. Its official website promotes the ‘celebrated acoustic’ and ‘famously knowledgeable audience’. ‘[T]he world’s leading musicians especially appreciate the degree of intimacy built up between artist and audience, which contributes so much to Wigmore Hall’s very special atmosphere’.

Following the Hall’s traditions of music-making and concert-going throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the distinct yet almost formalised, traditionalist, and perfectionistic aura surrounding the classical music performance, the aesthetic experience, ‘our high reputation for quality’, and ‘performances of the highest calibre’ are all of utmost importance. They are demanded from the venue, audience, and artist alike, to the extent that classical music journalist Andrew Mellor likens it to another London-based luxury brand, ‘the Fortnum and Mason of live music venues’. Visitors of the Hall often translate the Queen’s grocer, self-advertising as ‘the most luxurious department store in the world’, to its ‘richly-carpeted vestibule’, ‘plush comfort of the crimson seats’, and the main concert stage’s ‘panel[led] doors with handsome mo[u]ldings and brass doorknobs’.

11 Rylan Holey, in LinkedIn <http://uk.linkedin.com/in/rylanholey> [accessed 18 May 2013].
13 Ibid.
14 Ibid.
15 ‘Hailed by @Telegraph as ‘close to perfection’ cellist Antonio Meneses makes a welcome return to WH on Sunday morning’ (@wigmore_hall, tweet, 20 May 2016) and ‘Is there such a thing as a perfect recital? Well yes there is actually. @kathynrudge @jailieu @wigmore_hall @BBCRadio3’ (@light100, tweet, 13 February 2017).
20 Ibid.
This comparison not only links to quasi-bourgeois modes of aesthetic disposition, taste, and intention\textsuperscript{22} but also geo-spatial notions of what might be termed ‘venueness’. From social sciences and spatial humanities perspectives, concert halls are no longer absolute, ‘territorial [spaces], a series of blocks demarcated by state territorial boundaries’.\textsuperscript{23} By applying the model of an ecosystem, ‘loosely based on the systems theories of biologists who study the life cycles of individual organisms as well as of collective groups functioning in a self-sustaining but evolving environment of complex, networked relationships’,\textsuperscript{24} the concert hall fuels artistic and cultural life, as well as the creative and wider economies. It is part of a matrix of cultural production and, in terms of translocalism, ‘the emergence of multidirectional and overlapping networks that facilitate the circulation of people, resources, practices and ideas’.\textsuperscript{25}

In the case of the Hall, this includes, as one example, the retail and leisure sectors. They manifest via the venue’s close proximity to the shopping district of Oxford Street, its clustering of high street brands, luxury brands, and department stores, and all of these retailers in the area. Georgina Wheatley, an Assistant Artist Manager from classical music agency HarrisonParrott, tweeted about her window-shopping experience in the large John Lewis department store on Oxford Street, before seeing a concert at the Hall (Figure 5-1), a message the Hall liked. It is possible to walk from the Hall to Fortnum and Mason via Regent Street. The street’s shopping district, moreover, joins Oxford Street’s at a visible intersection, Oxford Circus, allowing pedestrians to continue ‘shopping for pleasure’.

But combining Bourdieu’s criticism of ‘the naïve exhibitionism of conspicuous consumption, which seeks distinction in the crude display of ill-mastered luxury’,\textsuperscript{26}

\textsuperscript{22} P. Bourdieu, op. cit., pp. 20–24.  
\textsuperscript{24} Shzr Ee Tan, Beyond ‘Innocence’: Amis Aboriginal Song in Taiwan as an Ecosystem (Farnham, Surrey, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), p. 7.  
\textsuperscript{26} P. Bourdieu, op. cit., p. 23.
contemporary consumerist critique of shopping department stores as ‘temples of consumption’, and the material and expensive products of classical music culture, one might ask whether the Hall implicated in a certain kind of lifestyle and if it is reflected, implicitly or explicitly, via its social media. One answer is suggested by the Hall’s location. The venue forms part of a cluster of many businesses on Wigmore Street, which Bourdieu would specifically account for in *Distinction* as part of a middle class, ‘dominant’ class, or ‘whole’ lifestyle. These businesses include: large kitchen showrooms (Magnet, Siematic, and Botti), health and beauty care (the Queen’s pharmacy John Bell & Croydon), high-end clothing brands (Margaret Howell), a racquet sports shop (Wigmore: The Racquet Specialists), fine-dining experiences (Italian restaurant 2 Veneti), organic food chains (Sourced Market), artisan cuisine (Lebanese eatery Comptoir Libinais and cookery school L’atelier des chefs), and a Steinway piano showroom (Steinway Hall, its precursor being Bechstein Hall). After an evening concert at the Hall on 19 July 2016, I saw a family who had been shopping at Fortnum and Mason and another man had been to John Bell & Croydon.

What is more, the Hall is within close proximity to St. Christopher’s Place, a mini retail complex off Wigmore Street, self-advertising as ‘the best boutique shopping in London’ and leading onto an intersection between the retail outlets of Bond Street and Oxford Street’s Selfridges. Among the boutique brands it has boasted are artisan menswear’s label Diverso and independent coffee chain Workshop Coffee Company.

The Hall’s Twitter account promotes such

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29 <http://www.stchristophersplace.com/shops> [accessed 30 May 2016].
retailers to its followers, who are encouraged to invest in them as part of an overall consumer experience around the venue. One tweet, retweeted by the Hall and issued by Jon Jacob, a university music graduate, former BBC Radio 3 employee, and classical music blogger, gently parodies the types of products associated with classical and Wigmore audiences, ‘What I espec’y love about any concert experience is the heady mix of aftershave and perfume. @wigmore_hall tonight especially seductive’ (@thoroughlygood, 14 April 2016). While this tweet is meant to be light-hearted, the underlying subtexts of this message are: highbrow cultural tastes, socioeconomic access, luxury commodities, and pleasure-seeking cultures not only in classical music but in contemporary life as well. They suffuse the online brand values and personality cults that are at danger of countering the Hall’s aim of a digital community and a utopian ‘democratisation of classical music’. 

To provide another illustration, the Hall’s duty tweeters might be casually tweeting a picture of Fortnum and Mason’s ‘Wedding Breakfast Blend’ of tea that they will drink (Figure 5-2) but bought in person, it costs £9.95. Bourdieu describes tea in Distinction as ‘a typically bourgeois’ drink and suggests that some foods are ‘an interesting indicator of the mode of self-presentation adopted in ‘showing off’ a life-style’. Emphasising these claims is a tweet from Nicola Davies, a regular at the Hall, Friend’s member of the venue, and senior lecturer in psychology, ‘Ooh, that’s one of my favourites. It’s lovely. Make me a cup too’ (@njd2245, 17 January 2015). The National Endowment for the Arts’ statistics remind us that classical music attendance is proportional to education and wealth, with those educated to postgraduate level showing the highest rates (26% versus 15.9% of college graduates and 7.3% with some college

30 ‘Hey everybody the @DiversoLondon sale is now on! A hidden gem of men’s tailoring!’ (@wigmore_hall, tweet, 22 June 2015) and ‘Starting the day with a short photo shoot by @ealovega at @wigmore_hall - it would be rude not to stop in at @WorkshopCoffee Wigmore…’ (@niallaroni, tweet, 24 June 2015).


32 B. Stöber, op. cit., p. 15.


34 P. Bourdieu, op. cit., p. 383.

Relaying these statistics to the Hall, its Friends’ membership starts at £50.37

Jeremy Pound, Deputy Editor of the classical music-based *BBC Music Magazine*, tweets about the ‘prohibitively expensive’ (@Jeremy Pound71, 27 February 2015) products from Fortnum and Mason. Still, tickets in a lower price band for a classical concert at the Hall present political economic and sociodemographic problems, which are critiqued in due course. More pointedly, Fortnum and Mason and the Hall are as much globalised brands as they are London-based and British and so their impacts are important for the kinds of transregional and overseas audiences, who interact with the Hall online. These audiences are impacted by: social mobility levels, media and wealth distributions, socioeconomic access, cultural activities around the world, and online geographic divides. Compare 2016 Internet usage in London, which was between 90 to 96 per cent vis-à-vis 75 to 85 per cent in the North East of England and Northern Ireland.38 By contrast, current Internet penetration rates for the United Kingdom are 91.6 per cent and 4.7 per cent in Burundi, a Least Developed Country.39

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In the same way as personal social media branding, the advertising industry has implemented music via pre-planned marketing schemes to sell not only the product but also certain sign-values, semiotic sign-object relations, and social and psychological meanings constructed around it, namely, the lifestyle the consumer will adopt in tandem with the product.\textsuperscript{40} Hence, the aforementioned tweet about Fortnum and Mason’s tea is not just a product placement but what Max Weber terms a ‘stylization of life’, in which ‘aspiring members’ and status group memberships are sustained and reproduced via the ‘monopolization of ideal and material goods’.\textsuperscript{41}

Several tweets in this subchapter have already introduced the historical and cultural values of the Hall, however, it is helpful to further analyse these brand values within the context of other online strategies, notably, content marketing, memes, and intertextual approaches.

**Wigmore Hall’s e-strategy**

The Hall has established itself on a whole range of online media. From BBC broadcasts in the 1920s and on the Third Programme in the 1950s, this partnership continues with regular relays of lunchtime and evening concerts on BBC Radio 3 via analogue, digital, and web-streamed radio, as well as on catch-up mode via BBC iPlayer radio. For one of the Hall’s Monday lunchtime concerts, around a quarter of a million people are listening on the Internet and on radio in the country, and for BBC Radio 3 broadcasts a potential audience of forty million across the European Union.\textsuperscript{42} In 2004, the Hall underwent a refurbishment programme under the directorship of Gilhooly to improve facilities for broadcasting and recording, leading it to be the first concert venue to establish a record label, Wigmore Hall Live.\textsuperscript{43} Many CD recordings of concerts, past and present, can be purchased via the Hall’s online shop. A number are available to listen for free on Spotify and can be downloaded from Apple iTunes and the venue’s website in FLAC and MP3 format.

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\textsuperscript{40} T. D. Taylor, op. cit., pp. 20, 209, 213, and 215.
\textsuperscript{42} The Information Technologists, *Wigmore Hall’s Digital Achievements*, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{43} A. Mellor, op. cit.
\end{flushright}
The Hall’s official website was fully overhauled in 2015 with a spend of £150,000 and the public was invited to test it for constructive criticism.44 It is 100 per cent mobile-friendly for the ‘mobile first’ generation.45 Following the Hall’s £2.1 million refurbishment in summer 2015 (see Chapter 3, ‘Case studies’), it presented its first live-streamed event to coincide with the 2016/17 season launch on 28 January 2016 and has since made selected concerts, events, and masterclasses viewable on the Hall’s website, Medici TV, and YouTube.

Apropos of social media, the Hall’s official website has integrated links to them. These include: a Facebook page, Twitter profile, YouTube channel, Google+ page, mailing lists, e-lists, RSS feeds, and a series of podcasts, available from iTunes and the Hall’s website. The Hall also has online copies of brochures on the free magazine sharing website Issuu and audio files on AudioBoo and SoundCloud. While the venue has made Twitter its ‘one metric that matters’,46 focusing on one online metric, data form, or marketing form to increase performance in business, it does not neglect other online outlets and so this chapter still refers to various social media platforms in addition to Twitter.

The Hall responded to growth in the social media market. Rylan Holey, former Digital Content Administrator of the Hall, commented that social media provide ways ‘to communicate better with people’47 and ‘to humanise the organisation’.48 Typical of the last two reasons are:

- Status updates for upcoming concerts, event availability, and media broadcasts, ‘Iestyn Davies, Thomas Dunford and Colin Hurley present John Dowland – A Delightful Thing Thurs 7:30pm Returns Only’ (Wigmore Hall, Facebook post, 9 November 2016).
- Facebook event pages for concerts.

44 The Information Technologists, *Wigmore Hall’s Digital Achievements*, op. cit.
45 Ibid.
47 Rylan Holey, interview with the author, 10 May 2013.
48 Ibid.
• Personal responses from staff, ‘@schnuckster General public booking will start at 10:00am this Tuesday’ (@wigmore_hall, 4 November 2016).
• YouTube videos of the Hall’s press launches of concert series and season previews.\(^49\)

In addition, there are event previews and interviews with artists, senior staff, and experts via podcasts and YouTube videos.\(^50\) The venue retweets such online content such as artists’ self-promotion of concert engagements at the Hall, the audience’s reviews in tweeted form, and reviews in article or blog form from newspaper classical music critics and ‘pro-am’ classical music journalists. Audience outreach has contributed to the Hall’s social media in the following ways:

• A free ticketing scheme (‘Chamber Zone’) for audiences aged 8 to 25, sponsored by the music organisation Cavatina.
• Endorsements on Facebook and Twitter of the Hall’s discounted ticketing scheme for people under the age of thirty-five, ‘We’ve increased the number of £5 tickets for available to under 35-year-olds to 25,000 throughout next year! (Wigmore Hall, Facebook post, 12 December 2016).
• Last-minute deals for concerts.
• Competitions on the Hall’s Facebook and Twitter pages for free prizes, like CDs and concert tickets.

Holey mentions that social media ‘was driving more and more traffic to Wigmore Hall’s website and it was generating us eventually the most traffic to our sites’.\(^51\) In fact, his time at the Hall caused a 19 per cent increase in online traffic and a 20 per cent increase in revenue, generating a 9,900 per cent return on investment from the website.\(^52\)

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\(^{50}\) Wigmore Hall, Mark Padmore on the Wigmore Hall/Kohn Foundation International Song Competition, online video recording, YouTube, 24 August 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tIv2rqWEEwo> [accessed 15 February 2017].

\(^{51}\) Ibid.

\(^{52}\) R. Holey, LinkedIn, op. cit.
Inevitably, sales are ‘the ultimate goal of anything that you do in any concert hall’, and by implication, social media drive economic growth. On the other hand, social media messages from previous years imply different motives.

Drawing on Rebecca Lieb’s typology of content marketing, my 2013 analysis of the Hall’s Facebook and Twitter feeds locates ‘content that entertains’, ‘informs and educates’, and ‘provid[es] utility’. Together, Facebook messages and tweets promote:

- Live-streamed or on demand broadcasts of recitals from the concert hall on BBC Radio 3 (entertainment content).
- Concert previews (informational content).
- Pre-concert talks, study days, and podcasts of lecture-recitals at the Hall (educational content).
- Links to concert subpages and booking pages on the Hall’s website (utility-type content).

Generally, the social media marketing industry terms these forms of content ‘information-pull’ or pull marketing. To requote Christopher Gruits, former Director of E-Strategy at Carnegie Hall, they are about ‘pulling people in through compelling content and engagement’. Simultaneously, social media messages resemble interruption marketing; the Hall pushes out concert reviews and retweets self-marketing of artists’ engagements there because these marketing techniques form part of its Twitter policy. But while ‘product-push’ imperatives are interpreted as an invitation

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53 R. Holey, interview, op. cit.
54 Ibid.
55 Rebecca Lieb, Content Marketing: Think Like a Publisher - How to Use Content to Market Online and in Social Media (Indianapolis, Ind.: Que, 2011), p. 19.
56 Ibid., p. 27.

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rather than an instructive command, they signal the artist as a commodity, interested in financial matters for their living and career. By way of illustration, a Klear statistic indicates that 56 per cent of the Hall’s tweets are not original and so the social media analytics site designates the Hall a ‘Broadcaster’ as a result.

Ultimately, all social media marketing is rooted in push marketing, even if the industry vows that this is not so. Gilhooly accounts for it as such, ‘I felt, personally, that the tweet feed was getting too self-congratulatory. All it was was ‘Here’s a concert. Here’s another marketing offer. Aren’t we great?” From about three years ago, it reduced the amount of push marketing and dramatically changed its tone, by utilising Twitter as the ‘one metric that matters’.

The Hall’s Twitter engagement, then, has not just been a publicity machine. The venue has developed and capitalised on various forms of pull marketing, including: humour, memes, musical games, behind the scenes, audience commentaries, artist and fan engagement, colloquial threads (with musicians, audiences, and duty tweeters), social etiquette/commentaries, political opinions, current events, cultural pursuits, day-to-day activities, and social networking in a literal sense (e.g., working ties with music organisations and other businesses). They have contributed to Gilhooly’s description of the Hall’s Twitter feed as a way to ‘come in and stir the pot’ and that it is ‘a lot of fun’.

This approach contrasts the boutique aesthetics the Hall projects in its self-branded values and so it reverses fundamental advice from the social media branding industry: maintain a consistent brand identity with strategic, carefully planned content to increase interest and loyalty towards the product. Holey echoes this approach:

60 ‘please come along to our @wigmore_hall debut 18th Jan’ (@MyrthenEnsemble, tweet, 3 January 2013); ‘Read this review of Gerald Finley and Julius Drake’s recent “spine-chilling and compelling” recital at the Hall’ (Wigmore Hall, Facebook post, 16 January 2013).


The tone of voice when you’re talking on something like Twitter and Facebook has to match the brand no matter what organisation you are. So Wigmore Hall is very much, it’s not authoritative I would say, it’s more knowledgeable. You don’t want to be seen as ‘Hey guys! Come to the concert!’ It doesn’t really fit with the brand. So no matter what we’re doing, John [Gilhooly] was always, and quite rightly and cleverly, was saying, you know, we have to think about that when we’re writing all this kind of stuff and it’s something that we all have to think about. It’s responding in the right manner cause if we start going really left-field, people are just going to go ‘Well. What’s this about? This isn’t the Wigmore Hall’.65

Thus, it is debatable whether the following personality cults appropriately publicise the Hall: animal photos, pictures of food, drink, and alcohol, satire of politicians and public figures, a re-semiotised meme of the wartime slogan ‘Keep calm and be rude to people who don’t respect you’ (@wigmore_hall, tweet, 26 February 2016), informal language, the characteristic phatic talk of social media communications, and even wishing Twitter followers ‘Good morning’, ‘Good night’, and ‘Happy Friday’ (Figure 5-3 to Figure 5-7).

On the other hand, social media branding discourses and shareable media texts such as memes justify the tweets as not ‘seemingly trivial and mundane’.66 Instead, they exploit intertextuality to reflect ‘shared norms and values’67 and ‘deep social and cultural structures’.68 These social media texts indicate to the user overtly and covertly something about the Hall, whether this is the traditional concert hall’s commentary on contemporary life or a moment for those who log to ‘pass the time of day with like-minded people’.69

65 R. Holey, interview, op. cit.
67 Ibid.
68 Ibid.
**Figure 5-3 - Intertextual tweet**

Good morning: don't forget we have a coffee concert this morning. Enhanced water always available in bar too!

**Figure 5-4 - Informal language ('Hey Everybody')**

Hey Everybody please retweet the recording of our season launch interview it's very informative and entertaining! wigmore-hall.org.uk/whats-on/2016-

**Figure 5-5 - Animal photograph**

41,300 followers! Yay, we seem to attract more followers than we put off or lose!

**Figure 5-6 - Re-semiotised meme, political satire**

keep calm and be rude to people who don't respect you.
To apply an intertextual approach to the Hall’s previously mentioned tweet about Fortnum and Mason’s tea, regular followers of the Hall’s Twitter feed identify subtexts that relate to cultural constructs: support of gay/same-sex marriage (the then just announced civil partnership of British actor and director Stephen Fry and his husband Elliot Spencer)\textsuperscript{70} and expensive products, associated with classical music culture.\textsuperscript{71} Likewise, one tweet about ‘Enhanced water’ (@wigmore_hall, 20 September 2015), on offer at the venue’s Sunday coffee and sherry concerts, links to classical music culture’s regular use of alcohol as a means of escape, a social bonding tool, or a Bourdieusian signifier of class status. The Twitter bio of a classical music and opera critic for the \textit{Guardian}, a quality daily newspaper itself, reads ‘founder of the campaign group More Champagne for Opera Critics’.\textsuperscript{72}

Further to these semiotics, Jacob recalls the following from the Hall’s 2015/16 series press launch:

[B]eing in a room full of press-types and movers and shakers and seeing them snigger at various tweets the organisation puts out proves one very salient point. Their irreverent style is not only counter-intuitive, but it’s played to great effect

\textsuperscript{70} ‘@wigmore_hall You can celebrate Mr Fry and his husband! =)’ (@Sinceritas_C, tweet, 17 January 2015).

\textsuperscript{71} ‘Fortnum & Mason - your ticket sales must be doing well!’ (@AuroraEstella, tweet, 17 January 2015).

\textsuperscript{72} <https://twitter.com/georgehallmusic> [accessed 20 July 2016].
with a knowing eye on its most influential audience – the classical music ‘aficionados’. If you’ve got them on-board, everything else is plain sailing’. 73

Again, one could reconsider whether overt engagement in contemporary culture (what Thomas Frank terms ‘the conquest of cool’) 74 and social media culture’s tendencies to prioritise mainstream tastes comply with the Hall’s brand. To reiterate a recent paper about selling classical concerts to younger audiences on a mobile app, ‘By attempting to meet the needs of both the existing and potentially new audiences, classical music runs the risk of pleasing neither’. 75 Holey, too, suggests ‘alienating your core audience’. 76 In fact, his view is that ‘chamber music comes to people generally when they’re a bit older’. 77 Empirical research aligns with the ‘ageing profile’ 78 of chamber audiences and ‘their tendency to be musically knowledgeable, if a little conservative’. 79 The Hall’s musico-aesthetic values classify its audience as primarily a core classical segment and classical music aficionados.

Interestingly, the Hall’s tweets are re-contextualised for a core classical market. Its most popular tweet of 2015 (Figure 5-8) was a pictogram of Stravinsky’s work The Rake’s Progress, which on a later occasion was automated for late circulation (@wigmore_hall, tweet, 8 May 2015). Relatedly, within a ‘hypertrophic celebrity culture’ (see Chapter 4, ‘Stephen Hough’), a retweeted piece of content about pop singer Justin Bieber, the second most followed celebrity on Twitter, 80 reads ‘Happy Birthday Justin Bieber’ (@wigmore_hall, 29 February 2016) (Figure 5-9) given that it is customary for social media fans to post birthday greetings to their favourite celebrities. It is juxtaposed with a pun about Baroque composer Heinrich Biber, ‘we look forward


76 R. Holey, interview, op. cit.

77 Ibid.


79 Ibid.


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to hearing those Bieber Rosary Mystery Sonatas for violin and voice at WH soon’. Responses to said tweet demonstrate Biber’s music as a Bourdieusian ‘legitimate taste’ and so come from people in occupations ‘richest in educational capital’,\(^8\) an architecture graduate, ‘You’ve made my morning with that tweet’ (@JamieSansbury, 29 February 2016), a university-based musicologist, ‘Tweet of the month, already’ (@carolinefrmus, 1 March 2016), and an academic GP trainee and lecturer in medical education, who re-contextualises the sociolinguistics of popular culture and online messaging, ‘sassy. Actual #LOL’ (@DuncanShrew, 1 March 2016).\(^9\)

Interestingly, Gilhooly asserts that ‘We’ve got to protect the integrity of the art’\(^10\) because digital media may not always be the best way to promote a highbrow classical concert (see the Conclusion chapter for a fuller discussion). But by adopting an extroverted yet informal tone, and by ‘using a good sense of humour and looking at the wider world’,\(^11\) these approaches have had an opposite effect on the Hall’s core audience and online base, with an increase in Twitter followers by 400 per cent over

\(^8\) P. Bourdieu, op. cit., p. 8.

\(^9\) Occupations of these tweeters were found on their Twitter bios.

\(^10\) J. Gilhooly, interview, op. cit.

\(^11\) Ibid.
two years.\textsuperscript{85} One follower tweets hyperbolically that, ‘if I ever stopped following @wigmore_hall I would request an emergency appointment with my psychiatrist’ (@davidkingmozart, 20 October 2015). Based on my experience as a participant observer, people within the classical music community adopt a mix of intellectual, juvenile, and adult humour and the Hall incorporates this language in its music and non-music-based tweets.

**Market segmentation**

My fieldwork analyses show that the Hall’s social media marketing and branding strategies impact the audience segments, who invest in the venue’s products (e.g., concerts). Hence, a further investigation into this marketing method is warranted in light of the previous two subchapters. To reconfirm, market segmentation concerns distinct segments of people, grouped according to age, experiences, interests, activities, and opinions. To illustrate this point, compare Holey’s opinions of the Wigmore audience as ‘a bit older’ and ‘knowledgeable’\textsuperscript{86} with Gilhooly’s:

First of all, there’s no such thing as one audience. There is an audience that only comes to vocal. There’s an audience that only comes to chamber, there are people who will only come to piano. There’s obviously a learning audience, an education audience, a young people’s audience for those events, those tailored events. There is some crossover.\textsuperscript{87}

\textsuperscript{86} R. Holey, interview, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{87} J. Gilhooly, interview, op. cit.

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The Hall does endorse a cross-section of such target markets online. A Twitter search indicates audience subdivisions: Wilson’s blogged reviews of piano-based concerts, the opera community, who attend vocal recitals at the Hall especially to see their favourite classical singers, and aspiring classical musicians (e.g., conservatoire students or young performers at the start of a career), who take advantage of and tweet about the concert
hall’s reduced ticketing initiatives (Figure 5-10 to Figure 5-15). Segmentation also depends on the particular artist or repertoire, ‘All those young people in the audience of a harpsichord concert at @wigmore_hall’ (@MahanEsfahani, tweet, 19 July 2016).

What is more, Gilhooly proposes that Facebook is used more by students, whereas Twitter attracts a slightly older, forty-plus age group and so there is the potential to implement these social networks accordingly. The venue already does this with Facebook promotions of concert ticket offers for younger audiences and musical in-jokes on Twitter; the latter marketing technique correlates with appreciating classical music more with age. Given that 90 per cent of Instagram users are under the age of thirty-five, and a certain proportion of the Hall’s audience and artists use Instagram, there is a ripe opportunity for the Hall to take advantage of this photo-based social network. Bear in mind, though, that adults across all ages use more than one social media site.

But when it comes to the core audience, social media content emanates what Henry Jenkins et al. term ‘pre-structured interactivity’. Online sites incorporate games, quizzes, and other interactive features to retain the attention of browsers, what marketers term ‘stickiness’. In line with an Internet participatory culture, the Hall has occasionally encouraged its Twitter followers to join in with classical music trivia. While they are fun on the surface, they are not as participatory as they make out. One tweet asks followers to identify two concert artists in a selfie taken during a rehearsal: pianist Emmanuel Ax and conductor Yannick Nézet-Séguin (@wigmore_hall, 29 October 2014). To most of the general public, both would be seen as ordinary people so the fact that classical music journalist and writer Jessica

88 Ibid.
90 <https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/wigmorehall/> [accessed 20 December 2016].
93 Ibid.
Duchen tweets their nicknames, ‘Yannick and Manny, methinks?’ (@jessicaduchen, 29 October 2014), is a signifier of classical music culture’s insiderness. Her message mirrors an Adornian ‘culture consumer’ typology.94

a properly bourgeois one in control of opera and concert audiences [...] He respects music as a cultural asset often as something a man must know for the sake of his own social standing [...] it substitutes hoarding as much musical information as possible, notably about biographical data and about the merits of interpreters, a subject for inane hours of discussion.95

Another tweet asks ‘musos’ to ‘recognise the composer’ (@wigmore_hall, 13 November 2015) from the attached picture of the musical score: Chopin’s F Minor Polonaise, Op. 71, No. 3. By aiming the task at ‘musos’, it brings up pre-existing criteria: an ability to read music and a knowledge of classical repertoire. Although correct answers are tweeted by two individuals, a Google search found that one has a doctorate in historical musicology (@theresasmets, 13 November 2015)96 while the other has the hashtag ‘#TeamShostakovich’ in his Twitter bio and gives the work’s full title and opus number (@Nico_trainwreck, 13 November 2015). Such evidence elucidates the interests, activities, and opinions of the Wigmore audience. A first-hand account from one of the Hall’s Friends is a telling sign of assumed familiarity with the classical canon,

On that particular evening, the pianist had concluded with a charming piece which was lilting and full of spirit but which he had unfortunately not announced. As the Cloakroom Queue settled down for a nice long rest, the following exchange took place.

Man behind me to his companion: ‘That was a lovely encore. I wonder what it was?’

His lady friend: ‘I’m not quite sure.’

Voice at the bottom of the stairs: ‘It’s Schubert.’

Voice halfway to the top: ‘Moments Musicaux.’

Voice nearer the bottom: ‘Number Three.’

95 Ibid., pp. 6‒7.
Voice just in front of me: ‘In F minor’.97

While there are audience members at the Hall who are ‘adventurous and will try everything […] probably only about two thousand or so of our core base’,98 the Literature Review and Gilhooly’s said claim reconfirm that audiences in a core classical segment know what they like and dislike regarding musical styles, composers, artists, and performance aesthetics because they will have seen and heard many different performances and recordings. There has, no less, been a tradition of amateur musicians, aspiring performers, professional classical musicians, and celebrity classical artists, who form the Wigmore audience base.99

With the Hall’s high benchmarks for performance, these musical audiences equally have their expectations. The tweets of these ‘pro-ams’ explicate the specialist language used by classical musicians, ‘Having a bit of a moment over @EPahud’s Berio Sequenza […] The control! The dynamic contrast!’ (@SecondNorn, 12 December 2016); ‘Absolutely sensational playing by @BeatriceRana from @wigmore_hall this lunchtime on @BBCRadio3 Such characterisation and counterpoint: bravo!’ (@cavatinachamber, tweet, 16 January 2017). Not dissimilar to the ‘culture consumer’, online reviews will critique performances as appropriate, recollecting acute details, technicalities, or even flaws imperceptible to a non-musician or the general public, ‘Fagioli’s lack of consonants compounded by @wigmore_hall audience being plunged into darkness, so unable to read texts!’ (@larkingrumple, tweet, 13 November 2015); ‘Tonight, Bostridge was often flat (very often) and the quality of his tone was far from even across his range’.100

Intriguingly, the Wigmore audience have tweeted dream concert line-ups and repertoire choices, ‘JK/HD [tenor Jonas Kaufmann and pianist Helmut Deutsch]’ in ‘the

98 J. Gilhooly, interview, op. cit.
99 C. Erlich, op. cit., p. 37. ‘I’ve been fascinated by Elly [Ameling]’s Lied-singing since I was a young singer in training’ (@Sincertitas_C, tweet, 8 April 2016) and ‘Terrific concert @wigmore_hall with @benbeilman and Andrew Tyson. Janacek disturbing and heartbreaking and thrilling’ (@houghhough, tweet, 10 July 2016).
Britten/Michelangelo’ sonnets and Wolf lieder (@Hariclea, 4 June 2015), the same two artists in Schubert’s Winterreise (@NightsAtTheGdn, 4 June 2015), and ‘a [baritone Simon] Keenlysie/[song pianist Malcolm] Martineau all-Wolf programme squeezed into 16/17 please’ (@jsdhenderson, 31 January 2016). One would expect the Wigmore audience to give relatively specialised artist and music requests but, on closer analysis, the implication goes beyond market segmentation in the form of an institutionalised hegemony.

Classical concert-goers have their musical tastes and preferences, and in turn, the Hall is responsive to supply and demand. For example, ‘our audiences expect to hear keystones of Austro-German chamber repertoire’; likewise, recitals from German baritone Christian Gerharer led to ‘Insatiable Box Office demand’. Still, audiences must decide from a set events calendar, created by concert halls, artistic directors, artists, sponsors, and artist agents, who help to select the repertoire their clients will perform. Gilhooly will have started programming annual seasons up to three years in advance. The Hall’s regular audiences, then, are accustomed to the musical ways there. Insiders are fully aware of what the Hall’s former Artistic Director William Lynne describes as ‘a family of musicians’; ‘I do not need to tell the regulars who they are’.

Applying aforementioned theories of power and agency to social media (see Chapter 4, ‘Branding’), the Hall’s seven duty tweeters, including Gilhooly, are effectively able to control its Twitter account, what is issued to the feed, and who they interact with. In that sense, the Hall’s tweets overtly endorse the ‘family of musicians’. As someone Gilhooly supported at an early stage of his career, one tweet describes British countertenor

101 David Burke, Music Management seminar, Department of Music, Royal Holloway, University of London, 23 January 2015.
106 Clare Finney, ‘Big Interview: Director’s Cut’, in Marylebone Journal [accessed 8 July 2016].
Iestyn Davies as ‘The Greatest counter tenor in the land and beyond’ (@wigmore_hall, 13 September 2015) in response to his opening recital for the Hall’s 2015/16 concert series. Indeed, Klear indicates that Davies is in the top 8 per cent of who the Hall communicates with on Twitter.\(^\text{107}\) Often, the Hall has retweeted one of its resident artists, pianist Igor Levit, and it is indicative that his retweets ‘industrialise intimacy’ (see Chapters 1 and 4).\(^\text{108}\)

Relatedly, a tweet from Adrian Ainsworth, a regular attender, appears as if he has personalised his selection of concerts but he has been constrained by the priority booking window for the Friends of Wigmore Hall, ‘Thrilled with @wigmore_hall tickets I have got, though! Susan Graham! [tenor] Mark Padmore! [tenor] Ian Bostridge! Steven Isserlis solo! [violinist] Tasmin Little!’ (@Adrian_Specs, 30 October 2015). With his tweet featuring specialist names in the Hall’s roster of artists, the venue likes his message and so does the Twitter account for independent classical record label Hyperion Records. Despite programming lighter and non-classical repertoires, the Hall likes a tweet that is perhaps snobbish towards musical theatre, ‘He’s [Jonas Kaufmann] considering an evening devoted to early work of Lloyd Webber. Season to be curated by Tim Rice’ (@CURZONPRODUCT, 4 January 2015).

**Creative cities**

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the strategy of market segmentation is interlinked with the creative cities thesis because this particular urbanist model mainly focuses on a certain sector of society. Therefore, it is pertinent to apply the creative cities thesis to the self-selecting audience base the Hall fosters. According to Richard Florida, a creative city attracts people who are creative and talented (‘as those with a bachelor’s degree and above’).\(^\text{109}\) In turn, they motor regional economic growth, that is, human capital.\(^\text{110}\) The defining characteristic of the creative class is ‘to engage in work

\(^{107}\) ‘Wigmore Hall’, in Klear, op. cit.

\(^{108}\) ‘I’ve just asked the flight attendant, why the flight is delayed by 2h. Her response (I quote!!): “because we’re @airberlin.”’ (@igorpianist, tweet, 5 December 2016).

\(^{109}\) R. Florida, op. cit., p. 10.

\(^{110}\) Ibid.
whose function is to “create meaningful new forms”. The super-creative core, then, includes ‘scientists and engineers, university professors, poets and novelists, artists, entertainers, actors, dancers, and architects, as well as the “thought leadership” of modern society: nonfiction writers, editors, cultural figures, think-tank researchers, analysts, and other opinion-makers’.

There are professionals engaged in creative problem-solving and knowledge-based occupations, ‘high-tech sectors, financial services, the legal and health care professions, and business management’. Usually, these jobs entail a high level of formal education, and by extension, human capital. Creative cities, too, profit from large reservoirs of technology (e.g., the London offices of YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook) and from tolerance, which Florida defines as ‘openness, inclusiveness, and diversity to all ethnicities, races, and walks of life’. An ‘agglomeration’ of firms and industries yields productivity on inter-local and urbanist levels. In sum, ‘creative centers provide the integrated ecosystem or habitat where all forms of creativity—artistic and cultural, technological and economic—can take root and flourish’.

With regards to talent, human capital, and a ‘creative core’, the Hall’s concert-goers include university students, academics, and classical music professionals (e.g., full-time performers and artist agents). To illustrate this point, the user ‘Tiffany’ is a graduate of two Russell Group universities (Cambridge University and University College London) and works at the London Contemporary Dance School. She regularly tweets the Hall and Wigmore regulars and her Twitter bio depicts someone passionate about classical music, arts, and culture (‘Flautist, ‘at least a full lyric something’ beginner violist, dance librarian, ballet’). Relatedly, Peter Crisp is Dean of the BPP Law School and the

111 Ibid., p. 8.
112 Ibid.
113 Ibid.
114 Ibid., p. 4.
115 Ibid., p. 9.
116 Tiffany Hore, in LinkedIn <https://uk.linkedin.com/in/tiffany-hore-66207b6> [accessed 9 July 2016].
118 <https://twitter.com/PeterCrispBPP> [accessed 14 July 2016].
Hall’s concerts are profiled by university-trained celebrities in winner-takes-all markets such as British actor and comedian Chris Addison.\textsuperscript{119}

Bearing in mind these occupations, interests, activities, and educational backgrounds, Florida’s definition of talent, together with associated forms of capital, set the scene for the Wigmore audience. Frances Wilson, who blogs on classical music and pianism at ‘The Cross Eyed Pianist’ (<http://crosseyedpianist.com>), describes Wigmore Hall’s patrons as ‘knowledgeable’, ‘switched on to classical music’, ‘intelligent’, and ‘quite well-off’.\textsuperscript{120} This audience description contradicts Florida’s idealisation ‘where all forms of creativity […] can take root and flourish’ and it, moreover, incites powerful mixed meanings around tolerance.

There is a marked technological capital for those Londoners who use social media to promote the Hall’s concerts. An opera singer of African-American origin with a ‘rags to riches’ back narrative,\textsuperscript{121} Angel Blue has lived in London and attended Jonas Kaufmann’s sell-out recital at the Hall in 2015. By tweeting ‘Feels like I got a 2hr voice lesson for 40£ #priceless’ (@AngelJoyBlue, 4 January 2015), there is a financial subtext. In the same way, the Hall’s £5 ticket offers for patrons under the age of thirty-five are initially advantageous for ‘students struggling or people in their early thirties who are trying to get on the property ladder’;\textsuperscript{122} I have made bookings through the venue’s discounted ticket schemes for young people. Still, the limiting factors are financial barriers, facing many college and university students, the comparatively higher cost of London properties, and travel expenses into or around the City via public transport.

One concert-goer, retweeted by the Hall, evidences the above. The tweeter recommends the ‘Gobsmackingly fantastic Under 35s scheme’ (@GradAdParnassum, 3 June 2015), despite the user’s screenshot of bookings. The order summary includes six concerts in

\textsuperscript{119} ‘@classicalopera @wigmore_hall @fatboyclayton @IanPageMozart A superb concert, that. Brilliantly sung, conducted, chosen and played’ (@mrchrisaddison, tweet, 6 May 2015).

\textsuperscript{120} Frances Wilson, interview with the author, 5 May 2015.


\textsuperscript{122} J. Gilhooly, interview, op. cit.
the Hall’s £5 ticketing scheme for people under the age of thirty-five, a standard ticket of £20 for a piano recital, and extra online booking fees. The concert-goer’s Twitter profile reads that the user is from Islington, London. Similarly, a Facebook message mentions that representatives of the concert hall visited the student fairs of the London conservatoires, King’s College London, and City, University of London (Wigmore Hall, 27 September 2016). Hence, these musical and educated audiences invariably have an advantage over students in other UK regions and university towns. Given the high Internet usage in London and urban and suburban residents’ larger likelihood to use social media over their rural counterparts, positive online engagement with the Hall inarguably favours those in a creative core and those who live, work, and study in a creative city.

A creative city not only profits economically from people (i.e. the creative class) but also a clustering of firms and organisations. This chapter has already demonstrated how the Hall uses Twitter to promote shopping experiences in London. Similar to Hough’s Twitter recommendations of Optimo Hats and Bärenreiter music scores (see Chapter 4, ‘Stephen Hough’), a seemingly casual online endorsement of quality products gives luxury brands and the concert hall more reputation and influence. In that sense, businesses cross-promote each other in a networked flow. Both the Hall and the London branch of artisan men’s tailoring company Diverso (which is off Wigmore Street) engage in offers and giveaways on Twitter. Gilhooly mentions that a select group of the Hall’s artists is encouraged to make purchases from Diverso, thereby yielding value that does not just come from box office ticket sales or wealthy donors (e.g., Friends’ membership).

124 ‘RT @DiversoLondon: 20% OFF - For One Weekend Only […] our favourite local tailor!’ (@wigmore_hall, tweet, 29 May 2015); ‘#LONDON #GIVEAWAY! Retweet and follow: us, @ERbelts, @aqualondon & @wigmore_hall to #win this £450 bundle!’ (@DiversoLondon, tweet, 17 December 2015).
Similar mechanisms pertain to the classical music network. The Hall issued two tweets about a ‘Big@wigmore_hall [sic] staff outing to Maria Stuarda @TheRoyalOpera on Saturday’ (@wigmore_hall, 3 July 2014), who were ‘there to cheer you @JoyceDiDonato and all on!’ (@wigmore_hall, 4 July 2014). Returning the favour, the concert hall hosted her and Sir Antonio Pappano, Music Director at Covent Garden, as the opening recital for its 2014/15 series, the CD recording of which won a Grammy Award. Gilhooly claims that different classical music presenters ‘all talk to each other and send each other messages […] all the time, they talk to use via social media’.

In that vein, Twitter interactions with the Oxford Lieder Festival and Barbican Centre’s accounts complement each other’s work and affirm positive working relationships for the industry’s infrastructure. But there is no doubt that these cultural presenters are ‘competitors’, even though Gilhooly asserts that, ‘We don’t want to create rivals. It’s not good for anybody. You don’t want to see any international hall or orchestra or opera house failing’.

Based in the BBC’s Broadcasting House and within walking distance from the Hall, BBC Radio 3 has a partnership with the concert hall and regularly publicises its lunchtime and evening concerts on Twitter and Facebook, relayed throughout the annual classical music season. With their large national and transnational listenership, these radio broadcasts feed the classical concert ecology. To reinstate this ecological approach, website analytics service Similar Web shows that among the top referring websites to the Hall’s are those of the Southbank Centre, international concert cellist Sol Gabetta, and Albion Media, the Hall’s PR firm.

126 J. Gilhooly, interview, op. cit.
127 ‘Every possible good wish to the wonderful @SholtoKynoch @OxfordLieder for an amazing 2015 Song Fest from all at Wigmore Hall!’ (@wigmore_hall, tweet, 15 October 2015); ‘Thank you so much @wigmore_hall @SholtoKynoch It means a huge amount coming from the Lieder Mothership!’ (@OxfordLieder, tweet, 15 October 2015); ‘@BarbicanCentre congrats on a great new classical season from all at WH’ (@wigmore_hall, tweet, 26 January 2016).

128 F. Eves, meeting, op. cit. She describes classical music agencies, including Askonas Holt and CAM, as competitors and claims that Intermusica Ltd have to try to be one step ahead with their online content.

129 J. Gilhooly, interview, op. cit.

130 ‘Blissful Beethoven from The Official Julia Fischer (violin) and Igor Levit (piano), performing live at Wigmore Hall’ (BBC Radio 3, Facebook post, 5 July 2015).

The Hall’s online video streaming initiatives contribute to urban technological growth in more ways than one. With headquarters in international cities (e.g., YouTube in San Francisco and Medici.tv in Paris), both video services receive financial support from major Westernised corporations that will more than often manipulate them to generate artificial demand for associated goods. A global media corporation, Google is the owner of YouTube and YouTube videos are usually accompanied by product advertisements, played before and/or during the videos. Medici.tv is sponsored by the luxury watch brand Rolex. For want of a comparison, about half of the money from the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra’s video streaming portal, the Digital Concert Hall, goes towards the artists and copyright holders and the remainder into new content and technological infrastructure. But partnerships with Deutsche Bank and Sony (the latter company provided HD cameras and microphones for the recordings and developed apps for its smart TVs) make the portal more about the corporate brands than the musical product.

Aforementioned ways in which audiences engage with the Hall (e.g., social media channels, radio broadcasts, live video streaming, and walk in/in person concert attendance) are inextricably linked to notions of mediation or mediatisation, and in turn, notions of spatiality. As the Hall is concerned with a vast range of spatial representations (for instance, offline-online divides, streaming technologies, and augmented reality), it is appropriate to make these a focus for academic analysis in the penultimate subchapter.

**Spatial representations**

Having performed at the Hall on numerous occasions, cellist Stephen Isserlis has described the Hall as ‘a sacred space’. Taking his metaphor as a basis for this discussion, it is not only a music performance or concert-going environment. Having attended classical concerts there myself, being an observer in the auditorium entails a

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134 Ibid., pp. 23–24.
conduct, inseparable from formalised customs, recital formats, and musico-aesthetic appreciation. Wilson remarks that ‘The whole etiquette of concert-going there is quite strict […] Those of us who go regularly make jokes about it that there’s this whole business of being very quiet and you can be sort of stared at for simply moving in your seat.’

Before each concert, a picture of a mobile phone (crossed out in red) is placed on stage as a reminder of the concert’s ‘ritual silence’ (see Chapter 2, ‘The classical music culture’) (Figure 5-16).

According to John Steane, ‘our audiences do not like too ready an assumption of informality’, that is, overt audience participation or being made to join in. An eye-witness account from Malcolm Wren, a Friend of the Hall, reads as follows:

It was one of those tiny gestures which seem to say so much: in this case, ‘Wait until I’ve sung through to the end of this group of songs,’ ‘Thank you but no thank you,’ and (most clearly of all), ‘The music will make more sense and have a greater impact if you respond to it in silence.’ All of this Janet Baker communicated by standing completely still and raising her right hand (from the wrist only) by about

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136 F. Wilson, interview, op. cit.
20 degrees, yet everyone saw it, took notice, and the precipitate clappers were immediately silenced.\(^{138}\)

The classical concert hall’s ‘formal’ and ‘muted’ behaviours\(^{139}\) contradict the social media marketing industry’s ideologies of participatory democracy. Although one of the Hall’s objectives is an accessible digital community,\(^{140}\) regular classical audiences can be unforgiving towards those not adhering to concert etiquette and complain on social networks, ‘She deserved a better audience, not only in terms of numbers but in terms of behaviour. Aarghh, unsurpressed coughs and a ringing phone in Wigmore Hall! Most unusual’ (Katherine Herzberg, Facebook post, 22 July 2016). It is symptomatic that the Hall retweeted ‘Dear coughers, if you are @wigmore_hall tonight, I WILL offer you lollies and you WILL accept them. Don’t make me’ (@baroquebird, tweet, 12 October 2015). As with the just mentioned picture, the exception classical music presenters have made is for audience members to take photos on their mobile devices before the performance or during the artists’ bow and film their encores.

For many classical concert-goers, social proceedings are just as important, if not, more so, than musical. According to the League of American Orchestra’s empirical research, concert attendance is communal; 57 percent attend with a spouse and 34 per cent with a partner, date, friend, or group.\(^{141}\) In a survey report from LaPlaca Cohen, the second most popular reason for making culture part of one’s life was to spend time with family and friends (83% in 2014).\(^{142}\) Whether built intentionally or not, audience members have utilised various physical spaces in the concert hall for particular social activities to enhance their overall experience, and no less so for Wigmore audiences, who have got to know each other in person and online.


\(^{140}\) The Information Technologists, *Wigmore Hall’s Digital Achievements*, op. cit.


The Hall’s foyer is not simply somewhere for selling CDs, programmes, and classical music magazines. More than that, ‘The foyer is a place to eat and drink and socialize, to see and be seen […] Among those present we might recognise celebrities—a famous violinist, the music critic of a quality newspaper, even perhaps an eminent politician’. Small’s autoethnography parallels online interactions of Wigmore regulars, ‘@SecondNorn @NightsAtTheGdn Quite sure I spotted you this morning in foyer @wigmore_hall’ (@brianocofaigh, tweet, 15 February 2015). Wilson blogs that, ‘Downstairs the bars and restaurant resonate with pre-concert conversations, and sometimes when we visit we might spot a “musical celebrity” – Steven Isserlis, Alfred Brendel, Julian Lloyd Web[ber]. I usually arrive in good time for drinks and chat with friends’. The Hall is inarguably aware of the auxiliary functions of its physical spaces other than the main concert auditorium. It retweets Ainsworth’s photo from the restaurant about ‘how good the banana bread is @wigmore_hall’ (@Adrian_Specs, 20 April 2015). By reposting a GIF captioned ‘#AWKWARD OLD LADY HUG’, and by tweeting ‘This looks like one of our foyer hugs:)’ (Figure 5-17), the Hall gently parodies pre-concert rites and the venue’s older demographic, no less (see Chapter 2, ‘The classical music culture’).

Similar to audiences of opera, musicals, and other cultural performances, audiences more than often feel that their experience is not yet complete without doing something in response after the performance finishes. In view of what Richard Schechner would term the ‘cool down’, the Hall hosts post-concert CD and programme signings in the foyer; an opportunity to access, thank the artists, and meet the stars in real life (Figure 5-18).

143 ‘Sitting on the leather seat in the @wigmore_hall foyer, and [sic] three copies of @StuartSkelton’s face are staring at me from the @Operanow cover (@RuthElleson, tweet, 12 May 2016).
144 Christopher Small, Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1998), pp. 23–24.
146 S. Wolf, op. cit., p. 55.
Visiting the Hall’s illustrious Green Room reaffirms concert-goers’ perceptions of the musicians’ personalities off stage. Jacky Wong’s Instagram selfie with Isserlis in the Green Room has the cellist leaning on the concert-goer’s shoulder, with a cheeky facial expression, akin to his self-branded personality (Figure 5-19). Ariane Todes indicatively tweets that she ‘got a glimpse of .@violincase backstage, but no autograph...’ (@ArianeTodes, 7 May 2014). Indeed, Tiffany tweeted about a post-concert drink with a fellow concertgoer and the singer performing on the particular evening she attended (Christian Gerhaher), ‘@ZwischenKath and I are in the pub with CHRISTIAN GERHAKER. He bought us drinks. And is totally delightful’ (@SecondNorn, 8 November 2015). The way she describes his demeanour confirms her own preconception of this artist on and off stage.

147 Ibid., pp. 55–56.
These socio-spatial musickings extend outside of the concert hall itself, into online interactions, and continually echo. Having met fellow tweeters at the Hall for the first time, Wilson claims that she has made friends.148 There is the formation of what Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh term ‘musically-imagined communities’149 as audience members regularly update each other about other cultural pursuits, and no less, menial activities, ‘Day of meetings. Emergency tea required. But then later, #ROHTrovotore’ (@SecondNorn, tweet, 11 July 2016). According to Nina Drucker, a Friends’ member, ‘more of us bump into each other at local recycling bins, in the food department of Marks & Spencer, even at other concert halls, theatres, museums, art galleries’.150

Relatedly, the user ‘Wisdom Hill’ tweets that it was ‘Nice to meet up @Minjas_Zugik @KyokoLondon @Ruth Elleson, saw @kasper holten and Mr JG from @wigmore_hall #ROHOrphee (@Scarlet2046, 14 September 2015). The Friends have even celebrated

their birthdays and wedding anniversaries and made hospital visits.\textsuperscript{151} A ‘musically-imagined community’ on the Internet also features transnational interactions, ‘@baroquebird I’ll be there in spirit. (But in reality, I’ll be at home in my bed in Stockholm, sulking…) @wigmore_hall’ (@Sincertas_C, tweet, 2 October 2016); ‘@Sincertas_C @danielsings @wigmore_hall Tickets (& flights) ordered. Will be 1st visit to wonderful Wiggers in FAR too long. Can’t wait’ (@gripenhack, tweet, 15 February 2017).

But as demonstrated by numerous examples throughout this chapter, an insular ‘classical cult’\textsuperscript{152} pervades these social happenings. Not only do they derive from the ‘bourgeois concert hall’ (see Chapter 1, ‘Definition and exploration of the field’), that is, local and international audiences are in a fortunate position to pay for travel and tickets to attend performances. Rather, there is a certain amount of educational, cultural, and social capital audiences usually possess in order to be part of the ‘musically-imagined community’. For instance, an online search reveals that Wong is conservatoire-educated\textsuperscript{153} and the Hall’s audiences present certain extra-musical signifiers on their social media profiles (e.g., luxury brands and attendance at highbrow cultural attractions). Relatedly, the Hall hosted a Twitter Party in July 2015. This event was an in person social gathering for ‘our favourite tweeps’ (@wigmore_hall, tweet, 22 March 2015), thus implying a self-selecting group of people, favoured by the Hall’s staff. Indeed, my Twitter search of the hashtag ‘#WigmoreTwitterParty’ suggests that tweets were less focused on the main social bonding tool, an interest in music. Rather, user ‘George’ posts a photo of ‘My current favourite and obviously understated footwear for tonight’s #WigmoreTwitter Party’ (@OperaCreep, tweet, 10 July 2015); likewise, pictures were taken of a select group of people in attendance (@RuthElleson, tweet, 11 July 2015).

In contrast to the Hall’s self-perpetuating, urbanist audience base, the anticipated outcome of its online video streaming is ‘a new era of international access to some of

\textsuperscript{151} Ibid., pp. 180–181.

\textsuperscript{152} Melissa C. Dobson and Stephanie E. Pitts, ‘Classical cult or learning community? Exploring new audience members’ social and musical responses to first-time concert attendance’, *Ethnomusicology Forum*, 20.3 (2011), 353–383.

\textsuperscript{153} <http://jackywongmusic.com/biography/> [accessed 20 December 2016].
its many recitals and events’, "beyond the Hall and into the wider communities, and this is made possible by a new and stronger presence in the digital world’. Still, one needs a good Internet connection and a computer device to watch these events, and possible payment for these counter ‘FREE worldwide access’, ‘a new era of international access’, and a ‘stronger presence in the digital world’. One individual tellingly posts the following Facebook comment about accessing the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra’s Digital Concert Hall, ‘I can’t afford to listen; so, if it was free it would be better for me’ (Wayne Teachev, 17 November 2014).

Contrary to traditional concert ritual, viewers can worry less about using their mobile devices due to the ‘doubling of place’; the physical location of the Hall and the individual watching from the comfort of one’s home. But to this one should add ‘several places’, not a duality, due to the many locations where people can access mediated performances from. More than that, viewers are not obliged to listen or watch as if in the auditorium itself and can engage otherwise, especially if they are multitasking, ‘Listening to Bryn live at the [M]et whilst cooking. Staggering singing! #thering’ (@JulianOvenden, tweet, 28 April 2012); ‘Wow! Lovely to have @NYO_CB keep me company on a rainy night drive with Rachmaninov 2nd @BBCRadio3 Stupendous playing; John Wilson on fire!’ (@Sviceridor, tweet, 6 January 2017). Blogging about the Hall’s first live-streamed concert, Jacob’s view is congruent with what Richard Schechner terms the ‘selective inattention of an integral audience’, ‘knowing I could drop in online at (almost) any time makes me jump up and down with ridiculous excitement’.160

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155 John Gilhooly, cited in ibid., p. 2.
156 Ibid., p. 1.
158 B. Stöber, op. cit., p. 10.
One tweeted photo encapsulates these physical-virtual intersections. The user is ‘at home enjoying the brilliant live stream of @wigmore_hall 2016/17 season launch!’ (@YCATrust, tweet, 28 January 2016). A pet cat is sitting on the laptop keyboard, looking at a camera shot of the singer, pianist, and audience with programmes in their laps or holding them (Figure 5-20). This image plays into Edward W. Soja’s concept of Thirdspace or heterotopia, something other than the ‘material and mental spaces, the real and the imagined’\(^1\) around us. The mediated performance fosters a ‘musically-imagined community’, reciprocating from the concert hall, into the home, ‘virtual’ world, and back, ‘@YCATrust @wigmore_hall WHO’S IS THIS!!!!!! <3’ (AmyHarmanBsn, tweet, 28 January 2016); ‘@AmyHarmanBsn @wigmore_hall We couldn’t possibly let the cat out of the bag’ (@YCATrust, tweet, 28 January 2016); ‘I know that pussycat’ (@wigmore_hall, tweet, 28 January 2016).

Imagining what it would be like to be at the Hall in person overlaps with the venue’s intimate atmosphere. Its relatively small capacity is favoured by audiences and artists, often more so than other concert halls, ‘While @AndreasScholl was faultless, I preferred a more intimate venue like @wigmore_hall to @BarbicanCentre’ (@awyliu, tweet, 3 February 2014). The size links to the Hall’s ‘cozy acoustics’\(^2\) it prides itself on, which acoustician Willem Bonning analyses in his blog: the narrowness of the auditorium, the smooth side walls, reflecting and amplifying the direct sound from the

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\(^{2}\) W. Bonning, op. cit.
stage, the carpeted floor, maintaining a moderately constant reverberation even if not to full capacity, and the concave-curved ceiling, focusing the sound yet doing so evenly.  

Together, the size, acoustics, and performance aesthetics contribute to the repertoire musicians perform at this particular venue, ‘The Hall’s intimate acoustics is ideal for early and baroque music’ (Wigmore Hall, Facebook post, 23 November 2016); ‘One is struck by how much Uchida’s playing is better suited to more intimate settings; can’t wait to hear her with Widmann in @wigmore_hall’ (@GradAdParnassum, tweet, 31 January 2017). As song pianist Graham Johnson recollects in one of the Hall’s podcasts, 

If you’ve been doing a lot of concerts elsewhere, even very famous halls, and you come here you suddenly find yourself capable of sounds, of colours, of responses on a small, intimate level without being too small, but I mean you suddenly find yourself capable of things you didn’t think yourself capable of [...] [t]he colours and the sonorities and the variations of touch because the hall is so unbelievably alive to these nuances.  

But these mediations of intimacy are reversed when one is not physically in the Hall itself. There are noticeable differences between experiencing the Hall’s distinct acoustics for real, on a home surround-sound system, and on cheap headphones plugged into a computer or iPod. Hence, one must ask whether the web-mediated ‘aura’ of the physical concert space is secondary or, as Benjamin would criticise, ‘jeopardised’ by ‘mechanical reproduction’. One possible answer (expounded in the final chapter) is that it is an experience in itself that should not be directly judged against being in the concert venue in person.

With an ‘illusion of intimacy’ between media personae and the television viewer (see Chapter 4), social media as a relational marketing tool, and close up camera shots, it also warrants asking whether musicians are aware of altering their gestures and projections to the audience online, in addition to giving a performance to those in the Hall. In a live webcast of the Royal Ballet Company’s class on 1 October 2015, one of the presenters commented, 

163 Ibid.
164 The History of Wigmore Hall, online audio podcast, Wigmore Hall website, <https://wigmore-hall.org.uk/podcasts/the-history-of-wigmore-hall> [accessed 16 February 2017]
165 W. Benjamin, op. cit., p. 221.
[w]hat’s been really fun is that he [a dancer] came over to us and just said ‘This is a really private occasion usually. But all of a sudden, you’ve got the cameras in, and everybody’s sort of upping their game a little a bit’ […] It’s just added a bit more of excitement because they’re showing off to the world just what they do on a day-to-day basis.  

Figure 5-21 - Digital mappings of the Hall
Source: <https://www.google.com/maps/@51.5168045,-0.1483017,3a,75y,354.45h,83.98t/data=!3m7!1e1!3m5!1smPQBgLjuyb0AAAAWtOGivw!2e0!3e2!7i13312!8i6656!6m1!1e1> [accessed 20 December 2016].

Perhaps most interesting is that the Hall has entered into a phase akin to augmented reality (AR). A Google Maps page has a user’s collection of photos of the venue for full-rotation viewing. One can see it from different spaces and vantage points inside and outside of the Hall: the street view, outside of the building, the foyer, downstairs bar, back of the auditorium, front of the auditorium, and facing the auditorium (Figure 5-21). An audience member might form an assemblage of heterotopias, whereby the digital mediation of the Hall informs his/her mental images of the venue and then attending in person, ‘Before you visit Wigmore Hall, you can take a virtual tour inside our building so you know what to expect’ (@wigmore_hall, tweet, 12 March 2016). These offline-online liquidations add to a cumulative Wigmore experience. Following in this vein are two retweets by the Hall, showing users playing the AR mobile game Pokémon Go, outside of the building and inside the auditorium during the interval (Figure 5-22 & Figure 5-23).

Conclusions

This chapter has studied the social media activities and e-strategies of a concert hall, which is paradigmatic of the classical concert tradition. It has done so through numerous interrelated areas such as: branding, cultural aesthetics, market segmentation, business-to-business dynamics, the ecology of the concert hall, geographical location, socioeconomics, urbanism, and ‘venueness’, all of which extend to ‘non-musical’ musickings.

While it is superficial to categorise all classical concert attenders of the Hall in a certain way, it is largely known among insiders that a specialised culture around this particular venue has been constructed. While its tweets try to emulate practices from popular social media culture to deliberately counter the ‘classical cult’, many messages elicit signs apropos of: class, culture, education, financial privilege, habitus, musical background, occupational status, particular social activities, social strata, and the interconnections between these.

More to the point, there are oxymoronic ‘digital divides’. Reducing ticket prices and putting out more digital marketing content is not equivalent to bringing in new attenders. To requote Hesmondhalgh, ‘the rise of digitalization is unlikely in the
medium and long term to lead to any profound democratization of musical creativity and innovation without transformation of broader economic and social conditions’ (see Chapter 4, ‘Stephen Hough’). The Hall and its younger audiences have optimistically tweeted about discounted ticketing schemes yet such attenders are affiliated with more traditional communities and audience bases. Notably, Albion Media mentions that many of the venue’s attenders under the age of thirty-five ‘are aspiring musicians themselves’.167 They are conservatoire or university-trained and so they possess the relevant educational and cultural capital to appreciate a classical concert.

By applying Foucauldian notions of power relations to social media sites, together with a Bourdieusian concept of a ‘dominated necessity’ that affirms power and ‘implies a claim to a legitimate superiority’,168 one could argue that the duty tweeters (i.e. staff at a ‘bourgeois concert hall’) promote themselves as gatekeepers of ideal aesthetic, cultural, and class tastes that subsequently influence the audience. This self-perpetuating use of social media is in direct contrast to other concert halls. As mentioned in the opening chapter, the location of the Southbank Centre engenders a civic orientation, where visitors do not have to take an active interest in specific musical repertories but can walk in and explore the surroundings and cultural offerings, inside and outside of the building (see Chapter 1, ‘Overview of the thesis’). Similarly, Birmingham’s Symphony Hall (UK) is within a short walking distance from major shopping complexes, eateries, and cultural attractions (e.g., the Birmingham Repertory Theatre and Library of Birmingham), all of which facilitate casual walk-in visits and social meeting points.

Furthermore, there are initiatives from arts presenters, based in creative cities, encouraging a ‘digital public space’ for anyone to join in with, regardless of their background.169 For example, the Lyttelton Lounge at London’s National Theatre allows visitors to borrow an iPad from the Theatre’s Bookshop, if they do not have one on them, to browse exclusive digital content from its archive.170 Last year, the walkway

169 Tony Ageh, ‘The BBC, the Licence Fee and the Digital Public Space’, Open Lecture. Humanities and Arts Research Centre, Royal Holloway University of London. 10 March 2015.
from Birmingham’s Bull Ring and Grand Central shopping complexes featured a kinaesthetic sound installation, where members of the public can play the pre-set touchpads of musical instruments (e.g., guitar, drums, and keyboard), imprinted on the wall. As creative cities profit from the technological industry, perhaps it is feasible for the Hall to engage in similar strategies. These might include a business partnership with the Apple Store on Regent Street, so that attenders can borrow iPads pre-concert, during the interval, and/or post-concert to issue social media messages about their thoughts.

Compared to other cultural presenters, though, what makes the Hall a leader of social media marketing is the formation of a ‘musically-imagined community’. It is an active online community of audience members and brand ambassadors of the Hall, primarily cultivated on Twitter. By contrast, a perusal of the Twitter accounts of Colston Hall (Bristol, UK) and Town Hall Symphony Hall Birmingham yields messages that are orientated towards product-push marketing or event promotions rather than informal fan engagement, even though these venues host niche areas (e.g., classical, jazz, world music, and R&B), popular music, and non-musical events (e.g., comedy performances and celebrity talks).\footnote{In fact, Klear labels Town Hall Symphony Hall Birmingham’s Twitter account as a ‘Broadcaster’ because forty per cent of its tweets are not seen as original (e.g., retweets of other promotions).} In fact, Klear labels Town Hall Symphony Hall Birmingham’s Twitter account as a ‘Broadcaster’ because forty per cent of its tweets are not seen as original (e.g., retweets of other promotions).\footnote{According to Arts Council England, audiences are suspicious of being ‘marketed to’ via social media sites and so this finding renders creating a social media fan community all the more important because it is a substitute for overt push marketing.} According to Arts Council England, audiences are suspicious of being ‘marketed to’ via social media sites and so this finding renders creating a social media fan community all the more important because it is a substitute for overt push marketing.\footnote{There is no doubt that the future marketing strategies of the Hall are focused on digital technology but ‘you can’t yet use social media to replace any of the core

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\footnote{171 ‘We’ve launched our classical season for 2017/8! Tickets will go on sale tomorrow at 10am. For full listings visit buff.ly/2tRnryO’ (@Colston_Hall, tweet, 22 June 2017); ‘Limited tickets available on the door for @OutlookFestivalOrchestra feat. @rootsmanuva at Harbourside Amphitheatre. £35 cash only’ (@Colston_Hall, tweet, 21 July 2017); ‘Get your seats booked for an evening full of delightful music by #hansrajhans 7:30 pm, Sept 24th,’17 [sic] at @THSHBirmingham’ (@sampad_arts, tweet, 2 August 2017).}

\footnote{172 <https://klear.com/profile/THSHBirmingham> [accessed 4 August 2017].}

marketing’.174 ‘Facebook and Twitter are both important parts of an overall marketing strategy but equally as important is just sending the printed brochure through somebody’s door in an envelope still through the post’.175 Instead of freestanding traditional and social media audiences, regular patrons tweet photos of their print season brochures from the Hall and draw up spreadsheets and calendars to plan what they will go to.176 Although the Hall’s website is omnichanneled, Davies’ tweet (‘LOVING the easypeasylemonsqueezy priority booking for @wigmore_hall’ (@njd2245, 14 January 2016)) is an imperative reminder that the venue must also have an easy-to-use ticketing outlet that converts website visits into sales, given that the Hall sells about fifty per cent of its tickets online.177

For want of a comparison, the town of Berkhamsted (Hertfordshire, UK) is in close proximity to London. According to Neil Kennedy, Treasurer of Berkhamsted Music, the marketing of this music organisation is more traditional via print, contacts at other concerts, audience-gathering via related websites (e.g., Berkhamsted Music, Concert Diary, and Classical Music Magazine), and word of mouth at concerts in the area.178 Social media are not used due to the concert series’ audience demographic ‘but because these need to be fed little and often to keep them active ie time and cost’. Interestingly, ‘I have not seen any convincing evidence that they reach an audience who has not already bought in to the idea of local concerts with professional artists’179 and so Kennedy’s observation calls into question whether social media attract marginal audiences to classical music. He even recollects that ‘posters and hand-delivered brochures are not always recognised. The answer I often get is ‘ … I have your brochure but don’t know where I got it ..’180

174 J. Gilhooly, interview, op. cit.
175 Ibid.
176 ‘@njd2245 @jsdhenderson @RuthElleson @hugh_canning @wigmore_hall My recent ‘calendar’ attempt almost made me cry’ (@Adrian_Specs, tweet, 6 March 2015) and ‘@Adrian_Specs I can knock up a template of my spreadsheet system, if you like. It’s sprawling, but v simple and easy to see what’s what’ (@RuthElleson, tweet, 6 March 2015).
177 J. Gilhooly, interview, op. cit.
178 Neil Kennedy, email to the author, 2 March 2016.
179 Ibid.
180 Ibid.
The final case study chapter — the classical music app market — is a pertinent way to synthesise various frameworks from the previous two case-based chapters, including: branding, the user perspective, sociological perspectives of classical music, market segmentation, and creative and spatial geographies. Yet, it re-appropriates them due to my fieldwork analyses of apps that are aimed at both a general, layperson’s audience and an audience, which already expresses an interest in classical music prior to using the apps.
Chapter 6: Classical Music Apps

Introduction

In this ‘mobile first’ climate, apps are integral to the overall digital and social media ecosystem. As of June 2016, there were 2.2 million apps on Google Play and 2 million on the Apple App Store, the two leading app stores in the world. By 2020, it is estimated that mobile apps will generate around 189 billion US dollars in revenue via in-app advertising and app stores.

Yet, there are other motivations, alongside the ultimate reward of economic profit. For example, apps are an educational resource. Amphio’s edutainment app Beethoven’s 9th Symphony has had over a million downloads. In terms of segmentation, uptake in tablet ownership has come from middle to retired-aged users and so there is the facility to tailor classical music apps to a traditional audience base, associated with the art form. A common trend in app development has been to ascertain whether apps bring in different audience segments, for example, Student Pulse, a nationwide ticketing app for discounted classical concerts, targeted at college and university students. More than that, one could ask whether apps motivate people, who do not know much about classical music, to want to learn more about the art form. By necessity, today’s mobile music streaming services have caught up with the classical music sector and there are now apps focused on classical music streaming.

Taking the above observations into account, this final case-led chapter is an ethnography of classical music apps. In a similar vein to the previous two chapters, this chapter opens with a contextual discussion. The provenance of apps and the various ways we utilise these technologies are discussed before identifying different categories of apps in reference to the classical music market. More pertinently, there is a ripe opportunity for this chapter’s app taxonomy to include an element of critical analysis. As emphasised by Crawford et al.’s empirical research on Student Pulse, academic

2 Ibid.
researchers of app technologies are encouraged ‘to extend research into institutional potentials of social-media-enabled apps and networked publics beyond a marketing paradigm’.\(^4\)

Together with an autoethnographic perspective (my personal experiences of testing classical music apps), a number of the above theoretical and critical discourses are applied to fieldwork analyses of three classical music apps: Naxos Books’ My First Classical Music App, Amphio’s The Liszt Sonata app, and Composed (a now-defunct music streaming service, associated with Universal Music and Classic FM). The conclusion makes corollaries for app usage within a classical music context, by reflecting on this chapter’s main findings and key debates from the previous case-led chapters.

### Apps and mobile usage

An app is an application or a file, downloadable to a mobile device and serving a purpose, whether this is social networking, playing games, engaging with brands, or playing virtual musical instruments. These functions spawn out of the way people use mobile devices other than for voice calls. Ofcom reports that the most popular weekly activity on a mobile phone after communication is creating content.\(^5\) GlobalWebIndex indicates that 46 per cent stream music on their mobile phones.\(^6\) Inevitably, a market has developed for social media apps; as of August 2016, 3 in 4 WhatsApp users access this mobile social networking and chat service daily, with half doing so more than once a day.\(^7\)

Yet, the idea that mobile phones are used for more than just phone calls is not a new phenomenon. Commentaries make out the Apple iPhone and App Store as key markers

\(^4\) Ibid., p. 4.
\(^7\) Chase Buckle, ‘3 in 4 WhatsAppers user the service daily’, <https://www.globalwebindex.net/blog/3-in-4-whatsAppers-use-the-service-daily> [accessed 12 September 2016].
in the development of the app market\textsuperscript{8} but mobile personal digital assistants (PDAs) existed in the 1980s and mid-1990s.\textsuperscript{9} The first smartphones were caused by convergence of the mobile phone and PDA in the 1990s.\textsuperscript{10} Despite their limited functionality, Palm OS, Nokia Symbian, and Windows Mobile were the prevalent PDA and mobile operating systems around the late 1990s/early 2000s, which allowed extra applications to be put on them.\textsuperscript{11}

From behavioural and sociotechnological perspectives, mobile devices are extensions of their users and so they are more than just communications technologies. They are what Mark Weiser terms ‘ubiquitous computers’,\textsuperscript{12} pocket-sized computers that are carried everywhere and embedded into a person’s everyday lives without having to consciously think about their existence. In that sense, the user interface normalises and facilitates actions.

Styluses for smartphones and tablets act as digital versions of the graphite pencil and rubber. Much in the same way as a laptop computer, USB stick, or the outmoded floppy disk, a tablet is effectively a portable hard drive to access one’s documents, applications, and information. Stephen Hough claims that he uses his iPad like ‘a traveling “mini office,” to read and check the weather — and access music scores he’s working on and a metronome’.\textsuperscript{13} Based on her empirical study of music streaming users, Anja Nylund Hagen deduces that ‘streaming devices were deeply embedded in their lives, almost practically attached to their bodies’.\textsuperscript{14} She frames one user’s personalised streaming praxis in terms ‘of her identity work […] so that life, music and


\textsuperscript{10} Ibid

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid.


technology merged into an all-encompassing act of experience linked to her notions of selfhood and identity’. Chief Technology Officer of Touchpress (now rebranded as Amphio) John Cromie remarks that mobile devices are tactile. One can physically touch the screen of a tablet, e-reader, or smartphone, unlike a laptop or desktop computer, and so interaction with a mobile app is akin to an extension of one’s personal self.

Not dissimilar in intent, the AR phenomenon means that a natural progression is to gamify oneself and lives, whether via mobile gaming apps (e.g., Pokémon Go), the number of followers users try to accumulate on Twitter, or wearable technology to help people become fit and lose weight (e.g., the Apple Watch or Fitbit tracker). Hagen likens the streaming practices of one research participant to a remote control because he had created an offline playlist set to a random playing order on his smartphone, kept in his pocket. While it initially seems counter-intuitive, performers’ use of tablets in the classical concert hall is akin to ‘a game of man versus machine’. For example, there are classical musicians who employ pocket computers as a sheet music repository and substitute for ‘the age-old art of musical page turning’, with a Bluetooth foot pedal. The user interface contributes to such gamification as mobile technologies assume the function of a remote control, joy stick, fitness tracker, or music score in the above instances.

In contrast to the communicative self, an attention economy and the ever-increasing functionalities of mobile devices and apps mean that, in some sense, we are more removed from each other. When combined with the uses and gratifications theory (a theory which accounts for how people use media to meet their own wants and needs), a

15 Ibid.
17 A. N. Hagen, ‘The metaphors we stream by’, op. cit.
19 ‘@cuartetocasal’s Abel Thomas used iPad to read his music in immaculate Haydn, Mozart, Schubert @wigmore_hall tonite. Never seen that b4!’ (@hugh_canning, tweet, 25 September 2015).
20 Cited in S. Usborne, op. cit.
lack of person-to-person interaction infiltrates a technoculture of instant gratification and this is how Hans Geser accounts for a pre-mobile period:

books, radios, TV sets, VCR’s, computers and other gadgets opened the way for individuals to free themselves (functionally as well as psychologically) from their immediate social surroundings by empowering them to fulfil many material and psychological needs without relating to any others in their vicinity.21

Within a mobile context, the recent phenomenon of tweet seats in the concert hall, opera house, and theatre purports to enhance engagement in the live performance. Yet, tweet seats risk reducing audiences’ attention spans because one can use mobile technology in atomised yet multitasked settings. One attender of a Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra concert tweets that, ‘I may have checked email/ Facebook once or twice, otherwise just rather stay with the concert 1st and Twitter 2nd’.22 A 2015 Pew Research Center report indicates that over 50 per cent of users aged 18 to 50 plus used smartphones to overcome boredom.23 One MP was even photographed playing the arcade-style game Candy Crush Saga on his iPad during a meeting on pension reforms.24

Further, Geser describes mobile phones as ‘symbolic bodyguards’,25 instilling behaviour around what Goffman terms ‘civil inattention’, whereby people try to remove themselves mentally from others ‘to express that he [sic] does not constitute a target of special curiosity or design’.26 Turkle would term such disconnect ‘alone together’ as we expect more from technology and less from others.27 From an empirical perspective, a


25 Amparo Lasen, cited in H. Geser, op. cit.


2011 Pew Research Center survey reports that 13 per cent of mobile phone owners pretended to be on them to avoid interacting with others around them.28

Yet, overlap between an attention economy and ‘civil inattention’ instigates moments of creativity and inspiration. Having observed a masterclass at Trinity College of Music, London (UK) in November 2016, the person sitting next to me on a train journey was looking at a music score on her tablet and listening to classical music on it. On another train journey in January 2017, an individual sitting opposite me was listening to music on his phablet and doing air-guitar. While annotating a score can be done with the printed version, having a stylus and mobile device with the music uploaded to it catalyses the process. As New York Times music critic Corinna da Fonseca-Wollheim suggests,

If, say, in the course of a summer festival, a pianist plays a familiar quintet with a new set of partners, she can save the group’s interpretive markings in a neatly archived file without having to erase her usual dynamics and tempos. A young professional hopping from one master class to the next can keep track of multiple, even conflicting, instructions, traditions and technical tips.29

Indeed, in one video of conductor and composer Essa Pekka-Salonen, he describes the iPad as part of his creative self, ‘like an extension of my hand and an extension of my mind. It’s the closest thing to a thought being read that I know’.30

A number of these behavioural, psychological, and sociotechnological frameworks around app usage and development influences different types of apps within the classical music market and the wider app market. Hence, an explanation of these categories of apps is warranted and, moreover, it is helpful to compare classical music apps with apps from other sectors; this comparison is made towards the end of the next subchapter.

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App categories within a classical music context

In effect, apps provide another means for marketing and branding. Symphony orchestras, classical musicians, and classical presenters have accounts on the mobile social networking app Snapchat to post ‘sneak previews’, ‘behind-the-scenes’, ‘marketing and fan engagement’, photos, and videos.31 As with artists’ self-marketing on social media, there is a strategic element. With the common perception of young people’s disinterest in classical music, KC Commander, Marketing Coordinator of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, recalls that ‘Snapchat has been a great way to communicate with the younger generation. But for us, that also includes the 20-30 year olds that are on Snapchat, too’.32

One of the more noticeable instances of self-branding was a series of videos, including a 2014 television advert for iPad Air with Pekka-Salonen.33 Similar to the ‘shiny new tool’ syndrome given to Web 2.0/social media, the films inevitably try to trendify him and portray his ‘geek factor’. Shrewdly, Apple anticipated that the commercial would help to augment the then-flagging sales of the tablet device and Tim Edwards, Managing Editor of Classic FM Interactive, suggested that the video would raise the profile of the Philharmonia Orchestra, of which Pekka-Salonen is Chief Conductor and Artistic Advisor.34

Aside from promotions and advertising, Bellman et al. claim that branded mobile phone apps are ‘useful’ and have ‘a positive persuasive impact, increasing interest in the brand’.35 A prime example is LiveNote, a mobile programme notes app, relayed in real time to the Philadelphia Orchestra’s concert attenders. Although ‘the app needed to

32 K.C. Commander, cited in ibid.
35 S. Bellman et al., op. cit., p. 191.
have a strong brand’, 36 what was more intriguing was the audience survey at the Orchestra’s LiveNote concert series; patrons were encouraged to use the app during the LiveNote concerts. According to Ezra Wiesner, Managing Director of IT of the Orchestra, ‘the app had a very strong impact on patron interest in attending more concerts […] people who use the app promote it and people who don’t use it do not promote it’. 37

Bellman et al. deal with two main types of apps in their participant study: ‘utilitarian/information-gathering (informational)’ and ‘intrinsic enjoyment/entertainment (experiential)’. 38 Informational apps have a utilitarian or goal-orientated outcome (e.g., online banking), whereas experiential apps focus on intrinsic enjoyment and escapism. 39 ‘[A]pps with an informational/user-centered style were more effective at shifting purchase intention, most likely because this style focuses attention on the user, and therefore encourages making personal connections with the brand’. 40

This informational motive is akin to the just mentioned likelihood of purchase intention for concerts apropos of the LiveNote app. Similarly, typical focus group responses to Student Pulse were that it would be ‘handy’ and ‘really convenient’ because the students were ‘almost never without their mobile phone’ 41 so that they could book tickets in an instantaneous way.

By implication, ‘Experiential gamelike apps were less successful, because they focus attention on the phone’. 42 ‘Experiential apps are more persuasive for low- rather than high-relevance products. Informational apps are more persuasive for high- rather than low-relevance products’. 43 While experiential classical music apps are not necessary for a mobile device, denigrating them as ‘low-relevance’ is questionable due to the deep

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37 Ibid.
38 S. Bellman et al., op. cit., p. 193.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
41 G. Crawford et al., op. cit., p. 8.
42 S. Bellman et al., op. cit., p. 193.
43 Ibid., p. 194.

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connection many classical audiences have to their music. Contrary to Bellman et al., then, classical music gamification apps receive both positive and negative user reviews.

As classical music is concerned with a quality product, there are mixed views as to whether a game-based app can be taken seriously. The Telegraph’s Daniel Johnson takes a traditionalist stance and is dubious of the quasi-arcade games of SymbolSmash, an iPad app designed to teach children the basics of classical music. Like Bellman et al., Johnson’s review reconfirms attention given to the screen as opposed to music education,

These are all perfectly good, standard quick play game fodder for iPad.

But the educational value in this context? Almost nil. You find yourself just mashing the screen as you would with any other game without particularly registering what you are doing. There is a button at the top of the screen – a cello, violin or French horn for example – which you get bonus points for tapping when you hear it in the music as you are playing the other games. But amidst all the clicking and dot-joining it is very easy to forget that this even exists.44

‘Mashing the screen’ is central to the Touch Pianist app. When the screen is touched, a note is created, each one represented by a coloured dot that disappears after sounding. With the focus on rhythm, players can control the speed to play at. It is possible to get through the ‘Adagio sostenuto’ of Beethoven’s Moonlight Sonata by tapping as fast as possible. The way the app operates suggests that it is a gimmick. Carphone Warehouse’s ‘The Lowdown’ website reviews it as ‘the lazy man’s piano app’ and ‘great fun - nothing more, nothing less’.45

But while Touch Pianist is not a virtual piano app per se, in which the user interface is akin to a touch and feel keyboard, this game-based app made a considerable impact in comparison to a trivial and novel app merely for playing Chopsticks.46 Creator Batuhan Bozkurt recalls having ‘heard from a number of people who aren’t typical classical

46 John Kim, Windows 8 Tablet TV Commercial, Just Play Chopsticks Song, online video recording, YouTube, 8 December 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RH1zqYQyUPY> [accessed 26 December 2016].
listeners who found themselves liking what they heard and even asking him for listening
suggestions’. Moreover, he ‘received so many messages from people saying that the
app convinced them to start studying the piano and also from people saying they are
returning to studying piano after many years of hiatus, only because of how Touch
Pianist made them feel’. This evidences new musical creativities, which both musical
and marginal segments gain from mobile technology.

A comparison is made with musical video games, namely, Guitar Hero and Rock Band.
While they do not recreate actual instrumental playing, they have inspired players to
take up real instruments. Likewise, the Research and Development report for the app
Steve Reich’s Clapping Music was ‘most interested in players who might benefit from
playing the game to develop their rhythmic awareness and skills in coordinating play
with others (ensemble skills)’. This game is not simply about tapping the screen as
more than a third of participants from the focus group felt that their rhythmic skills had
improved from playing it.

Experiential game apps in classical music, then, cater to those with formal musical
training and those without. As a result, there is a positive impact on these audience
profiles. Still, a certain class or cultural aesthetic is at hand, as demonstrated many times
throughout this thesis. Returning to Johnson’s review of SymbolSmash, which
suggested that ‘there is definitely more potential from an educational point of view’, it
is unsurprising to learn that the number one hobby in YouGov Profiles LITE’s sample
of 1592 Daily Telegraph readers is playing a musical instrument, an activity


48 Ibid.


51 Ibid., p. 28.

52 D. Johnson, op. cit.

53 <https://yougov.co.uk/profileslite#/The_Daily_Telegraph/lifestyle> [accessed 16 September 2016].

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inextricably linked to cultural capital. Focus group data for Steve Reich’s Clapping Music showed that 69 per cent currently played an instrument. More to the point, ‘overall accuracy in the game was highly correlated with self-reported musical sophistication […] suggesting that previous musical training and active engagement with music were factors for success in the game’. 

Even children’s classical music apps, which on first glance have accessible content and user interfaces, specify otherwise. Composer Morton Subotnick, creator of the composition app Pitch Painter, states that ‘It is intended to let children experience musical creativity before embarking on a formal musical education’. The app is recommended for three to five year olds, the age category at which children expand their musical horizons; likewise, an introduction to classical music typically happens at a young age (see Chapter 2, ‘The classical music culture’). The Young Person’s Guide to the Orchestra app (a project between the Britten-Pears Foundation and the Royal Northern College of Music) has a traditionalist aesthetic around Britten’s set musical text. It includes an increasingly difficult aural quiz, a re-orchestration game, based on the fugue (a generic form typified as staid and academic), and features to help younger users, considering learning an orchestral instrument (e.g., organological explanations). Digital education website Common Sense posits that ‘Music teachers might use this app for an in-class activity or homework for a lesson that introduces the instruments of the orchestra. Teachers might also use this as a good introduction to a unit on music history, music theory’. People, who are looking to further their musical training, will be able to obtain more out of classical music apps with an educational and traditionalist focus.

54 A. Burke et al., op. cit., p. 37.
55 Ibid., p. 28.
To reiterate this point, the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music has a series of iPad and iPhone apps to assist candidates with the aural training, scales, and sight-reading components of music performance exams, through interactive exercises, sample answers, marking, and feedback. The music exam board advises that the aural app ‘is not designed to replace conventional approaches of aural practice but to supplement them’.

This statement reinforces an old, self-perpetuating style in which the grammar of Western classical music has been, and continues to be, taught (e.g., in formal music lessons). Having sat ABRSM exams myself, before the apps were launched, it is not enough for a candidate or non-musician to teach himself/herself music theory exclusively through the app but by being schooled in the music exam board’s set syllabus and teaching methods, especially given that the exams are conducted in person.

In a similar way, Touchpress is an app developer that creates iPhone and iPad apps, based around challenging subject matter with an educational or cultural aspect (e.g., the periodic table, mathematics, and Shakespeare’s sonnets). Despite CEO and Co-founder Max Whitby’s claim, ‘all of our apps are educational […] but with a small ‘e’’, the company’s The Liszt Sonata app slightly favours those who understand Western Art Music, even if the content aims to appeal to varying musical experiences. One of its features is a musico-analytical essay (adjunct to a full-length video performance of the piece by Hough); musical analysis is conducive to ‘structural hearing’ (see Chapter 2, ‘The classical music culture’), which Adorno favours as the best way to listen to a piece of music. From a sociocultural perspective, Touchpress’ Beethoven’s 9th Symphony enables users to listen to four different recordings of this work, thus hinting an Adornian ‘culture consumer’ typology (see Chapter 5, ‘Market segmentation’).

More than that, Touchpress ‘works with premium brands’ and aims to ‘deliver high quality content’ and so the apps’ intellectual content is priced at the high end. The Liszt Sonata costs £10.49 and Beethoven’s 9th Symphony is based on a freemium

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model, whereby users can test all of the app’s features for two minutes before being invited to make an in-app purchase ($5.99 for iPhone and $13.99 for iPad). Furthermore, Hough describes The Liszt Sonata’s set-up as a ‘coffee-table-book approach’, a socio-demographic as opposed to a technical-aesthetic appreciation of classical music.

While some audiences claim that the app is pricey, there is a market for such boutique content. A 2010 Arts Council report indicates that people are willing to pay for online content that offers ‘something extra’ (e.g., smartphone apps) and is ‘extremely high value or exclusive’. As of August 2013, Beethoven’s 9th Symphony was downloaded over 620,000 times, with over 5 per cent making the full purchase. From October 2016, analytics from Sensor Tower show that The Liszt Sonata has had fewer than 5,000 downloads. Whitby would view the results for these two apps as ‘a good conversion rate, at the high end of what is expected’. Additionally, it is important to bear in mind that a quality app is generally a large investment; Beethoven’s 9th Symphony had a six-figure budget. According to Savvy Apps, pricing ranges from $250,000 to $1,500,000 for smartphone and tablet apps, requiring a complex user interface or significant backend.

Sometimes, there is a utilitarian justification for paying. A notable case in point is Juilliard Open Studios, an iPhone and iPad app, devised in association with the Juilliard School and Touchpress, which showcases various subjects and disciplines represented at the eminent performing arts conservatoire. A press article claims that ‘By subscribing

62 S. Isacoff, op. cit.
63 ‘@oughough Although I greatly admire your work, I hope you won’t mind me saying that your Liszt app is a bit too expensive…’ (@MacRoboTweet, tweet, 11 July 2013).
64 Arts Council England et al., op. cit., p. 34.
66 Max Whitby, cited in S. Isacoff, op. cit.
to the app, users will be supporting all aspects of Juilliard’s educational mission, including scholarships and outreach programs. But following in today’s culture of charity fatigue, social media activism, and slacktivism, one might ask where the School and app company strike the balance between philanthropic giving, the supposed ‘transformative’ power of social media, and persuasive backstories of charitable campaigns. One cannot ignore the fact either that Touchpress is run by a small staff team of app developers, designers and software engineers, all of whom need to be paid for their work.

While financial revenue should not be the main priority, there is a group of utilitarian apps that serve to benefit performers’ labour economics. Gig economy apps such as Gigtown, Join Encore, and Groupmuse operate on a self-employment/-recommendation basis. From my experience as an intern in a classical music agency and as a casual performer, bookings are usually made via an orchestral fixer or artist agent. Additionally, the world of classical performance is competitive. There are far more musicians than engagements available and there is a pool of musicians, who reap extra rewards over others, just as deserving and talented. Artists, moreover, are most likely to be working on a freelance basis. Hence, gig economy apps generate labour on demand and contribute to the much-needed income stream for a freelance classical musician. Further, one could reconsider the instant gratifications of social media-enabled apps in a more productive light.

Up until now, this subchapter has identified various categories of apps in general and within the classical music sector: marketing, branding, social networking, informational, utilitarian, enjoyment, entertainment, experiential, gaming, and education/edutainment. Together, this taxonomy of apps begs the question of how classical music apps contrast from other apps on the market. Following many instances throughout this thesis, the most delineated difference is the milieu where Western art music comes from. Music apps within the popular cultural sphere value personal creativity, expression, and enjoyment because anyone can use them regardless of musical background. Among


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these sorts of apps are karaoke, DIY electronic dance remix, drum machines, virtual piano keyboards, and vocal autotuning/sound effects.\textsuperscript{70} For want of a comparison, there is a novel quality about certain mobile phone apps where the interface turns into a playable, virtual ethnic instrument (e.g., gamelan, sitar, and tabla).

In contrast, a certain proportion of classical music apps are based in the theoretical vocabulary of Western art music, which is usually presupposed by audiences. This sociocultural dimension extends to the user interface. In his blog for Musicology Now, Professor Andrew Dell’Antonio reviews Beethoven’s 9th Symphony as ‘silent and reverential interaction, recreating in spirit if not in full the sacralized atmosphere of the concert hall’.\textsuperscript{71} Instead, he recommends creative responses akin to popular music culture, ‘to copy and paste portions of different recordings in order to customize a new interpretation, to change instrumentation of passages so as to hear how that might modify the effect, to modify a cadence to dwell on the significance of harmonic choice’.\textsuperscript{72}

He advocates social interaction via bookmarking, user comments/annotations, and sharing, akin to the social networking facilities of SoundCloud and Smule. His recommendations are what Tim Berners-Lee terms as intercreativity, a ‘hive minds’, networked usage of the Internet.\textsuperscript{73} They would ‘emphasize the relevance of the Ninth beyond its distinguished talking heads (plus the chance to build and market to a captive social network)’.\textsuperscript{74} But considering Touchpress’ premium products, together with scholarly critique of Internet ideologies, one might ask who these social networks would be: classical music fans or marginal audiences, looking to expand their musical knowledge and interests.


\textsuperscript{72} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{73} Axel Bruns, \textit{Blogs, Wikipedia, Second Life, and Beyond: From Production to Produsage} (New York: Peter Lang, 2008), p. 16.

\textsuperscript{74} A. Dell’Antonio, op. cit.
To account for the above comparison, classical music apps should demythologise traditional conventions around the art form, for example, by offering simplified explanations of keywords within the Western art music glossary. Additionally, classical and non-classical audiences implement app and mobile technologies in creative and personal ways (e.g., remixing interfaces), and many people in the classical music community enjoy interacting with other like-minded users online. Hence, there is the facility for classical music apps to foster intercreative approaches and networked publics, by integrating social media into the app’s user interface. This was the case for players of the app Steve Reich’s Clapping Music. Having shared their high scores on Twitter, they created a community and a public ‘Hall of Fame’ around the ‘28k’ club.75 Yet, there will be users, who favour a traditionalist and passive approach, whereas other people will prefer to be interactive on mobile apps. By way of illustration, evaluation results for the then-fashionable Concert Companion (a hand-held wireless PDA device, relaying real-time commentary about the music to concertgoers in the hall) suggested that the device would ‘appeal to those who prefer a more active learning experience’ and ‘to those who are comfortable multitasking’.76

Other auxiliary differences between classical music apps and the wider app market concern pricing. Classical music is an expensive art form and apps can amount to a grand investment. On closer examination, though, there is not a large financial difference between classical and popular music apps. While there are popular music apps that are free or of a relatively low cost, a number are priced at the high end. Although they value musical expression, personal creativity, and fun, they are surplus for one’s mobile device.

Priced at $19.99, FACT Magazine reviews the Korg iKaossilator synthesiser app as ‘the sort of device that a novice could get sounds out of with ease, and pros could easily spend hours just messing around with. Even if it was just a bit of studio fluff’.77 Smule’s Sing! Karaoke app endorses instant gratifications and overnight fame. Among the

75 A. Burke et al., op. cit., pp. 44–45.
incentives for using it are entering singing competitions (the rewards for which include gaining thousands, and even millions, of video views on YouTube)\(^78\) and winning ‘VIP’ popstar treatment,\(^79\) iTunes gift cards, and iPads. One could imagine that an optional paid subscription (from $2.99 a week) influences these materialistic motives. In terms of non-musical apps, a snow globe simulator, clown-punching game, and football video game all cost $299.99 on the Apple App Store; perhaps it is unsurprising that one review described the football video game app as the ‘worst game ever’.\(^80\)

It is anticipated that the usages and categories of apps, theorised in the previous two subchapters, will be demonstrated by my analyses of three different classical music apps. For example, certain apps tested for this chapter are marketing products. They are concerned with elements of gamification and they help to instigate users’ musical creativity.

**Case Studies**

**My First Classical Music App**

Launched in 2011, My First Classical Music App is for Apple and Android devices. The app is produced by the independent classical record label Naxos and it is based on *My First Classical Music Book*, a children’s book and audio CD by Genevieve Helsby, Editorial Manager of Naxos Books (Naxos’ strand of multimedia books, CDs, and websites). The app’s target audience is four years old and over, which influences the age-specific content, usability, and interface.

There is justification for researching a children’s classical music app. The children’s app market is a prolific one, with over 80,000 apps in a specially designated ‘Kids’ section on iTunes. The scientific world and popular media have taken interest in the ‘Mozart effect’; that listening to classical music, particularly, Mozart, will aid children’s intelligence, concentration, and performance. Yet, one meta-analysis has shown a


paucity of evidence for a specific, performance-enhancing Mozart effect and the overall effect is small. Still, the placebo effect has spawned a vast Mozart industry, notably, CD compilations of classical music for babies. With Apple iTunes UK making My First Classical Music App among the ‘Best of 2012 iPad apps’, the app capitalises on the Mozart franchise.

The app attempts to be child-friendly in aesthetic. It is full of illustrations such as colourful graphics, animals playing orchestral instruments, and caricatures of canonic composers (e.g., ‘Johannes Brahms looks a bit like Father Christmas’). Becky White, former Senior Researcher at mobile and IoT software agency Mutual Mobile, writes that ‘it’s no secret that kids love color. Kids expect their apps to be bright and engaging. Don’t be afraid of color’. The app, too, fosters a kinaesthetic appeal that is meant to entice children. It encourages them to touch the paragraphs of text (read aloud in audio form) or to tap on the illustrations that produce a sound effect, basic animation, or short extract of classical music (e.g., animals ‘la la la-ing’ to the tune of Offenbach’s *Can-can*). Understandably, the text is simple and jargon-free (e.g., ‘Near the beginning, there are lots of fast little notes that go up, then down’) for an infant’s verbal cognition. In a similar way, it explains classical music, using generic properties or experiences children can relate to (e.g., ‘It can make you cry’, ‘It can make you dance’) but even the classical music industry markets to adult-age listeners in such ways. Music streaming services have playlists based on mood and special occasions.

As for usability, screen-wiping (or swiping) is not ideal for children’s fingers and clumsy hands, whereas mobile user interfaces require fine precision. The sole gesture required for the app is tapping the iPad’s screen for interactive features or pagination. This hand movement is child-suited due to the small touch-based forward and backward arrows at the bottom of the screen rather than finger swipes. White claims that feedback is important for children, particularly for educational apps, and so touching the app’s

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83 Ibid.
features is rewarded with narrated text, sound effects, pre-recorded classical music, animations, or a new page.

Yet, the typography is inconsistent. Each page’s headings are in a large font but the text for paragraphs and interactive tasks is too small; about a 10-point size for paragraphs and much smaller for other interactive features and characters’ speech bubbles. When pressed, the text on the page enlarges for a split second but then it returns to its small size. This small font is manageable for adults, who will likely be reading along with their children, although empirical research recommends a 14-point size for young children.84

Inevitably, the music selected is taken from the typical ‘Classical music for children’ canon such as Prokofiev’s Peter and the Wolf, Saint-Saëns’ Carnival of the Animals, and Adams’ Short Ride in a Fast Machine, the latter of which is a set work in the primary school strand of the BBC’s Ten Pieces (an initiative targeted at schoolchildren to interest them in classical music). Yet, Dr Eric Rasmussen, Chair of Early Childhood Music at the Peabody Institute, claims that children should have exposure to adult quality music.85

For want of a comparison, ‘When Yesterday We Met’ was a specially devised song recital for children, presented at Wigmore Hall. It featured professional classical singers and core lieder repertoire such as Schubert’s Erlkönig and Schumann’s ‘Ich grolle nicht’. Young people and adults responded positively to the performance.86 In a similar way, Apollo Music Projects is a charitable organisation that has run a programme in primary schools in Hackney and Tower Hamlets, London. It introduces pupils to classical music through high quality live performances and challenging repertoire such as the string quartets of Haydn, Mendelssohn, and Shostakovich. When asked for improvements to the scheme, it is particularly striking to note that the teachers


86 dominic harlan, When Yesterday We Met...., online video recording, YouTube, 11 July 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZaaQHghPNXA> [accessed 27 December 2016].
suggested more ‘child-friendly’ music but this suggestion was not reflected in the children’s views.\textsuperscript{87} The children’s responses mirror research, proposing that young people are ‘open-eared’ and will engage with all types of musical styles if presented without prejudice.\textsuperscript{88} Indeed, research from the Nielsen Norman Group found that young users are attuned to age differences and responded negatively to content even one school year below or above them. A case in point is the opinion of one six-year old, ‘This website is for babies, maybe 4 or 5 years old. You can tell because of the cartoons and trains’.\textsuperscript{89}

Aside from a child-friendly approach, which could be somewhat patronising, what is noteworthy is that the app parallels key areas of a child’s development. Jenkins \textit{et al.} posit that young people must develop what they term ‘new media literacies’.\textsuperscript{90} While commentaries have criticised the amount of screen time spent by young people, ‘a focus on negative effects of media consumption offers an incomplete picture’.\textsuperscript{91} More importantly, Jenkins \textit{et al.} support traditional literacies, ‘Before students can engage with the new participatory culture, they must be able to read and write’.\textsuperscript{92} This statement explains why the ‘Welcome’ page of My First Classical Music App promotes reading about classical music as the first activity children can engage in as part of their experience.

In classical music, listening is designated a core media literacy. This is because a time-honoured activity within classical music culture is listening to a musical work or at least an extract in full. In the twentieth century, music appreciation classes, focusing on the classical canon, were integral to the school curriculum. Freya Hellier, former Head of Content at Sinfini Classical, implores parents to teach children to learn how to love


\textsuperscript{88} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{90} Henry Jenkins, Ravi Purushotma, Margaret Weigel, Katie Clinton, and Alice J. Robison, \textit{Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century} (United States of America: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2009), pp. 28–29.

\textsuperscript{91} Ibid., p. 14.

\textsuperscript{92} Ibid., p. 29.
listening to classical music, ‘it’s far better to be a star listener than a frustrated player’. Therefore, the activity the app’s homepage endorses second to reading about classical music is listening to it (Figure 6-1). The app includes a set of tasks reminiscent of formal music appreciation. On slides about composers and instruments, the ‘music bird’ presents a short sentence or a couple about musical features to listen out for (Figure 6-2) or asks a question about the music heard, to which users press the answer on the screen (Figure 6-3).

Figure 6-1 - My First Classical Music App ‘Welcome’ page
Core media literacies: reading and listening to classical music

**Figure 6-2 - Music appreciation activities 1**

a) Short explanation of key musical features: absolute and programme music

b) The ‘music bird’ and ‘Listen For’ feature

**Figure 6-3 - Music appreciation activities 2**

The ‘music bird’, ‘Listen For’ feature, and a music appreciation-style question
Returning to child development, especially apropos of music, four year olds can ‘identify changes in pitch, tempo, loudness, and musical duration’ and ‘understand basic principles of tone, tempo, genre, pitch, etc’. Given that the app embeds activities drawing attention to these elements of Western art music, this ideally informs a child’s musical development. The app even introduces more advanced musical concepts: different textures, styles of writing (e.g., antecedent and consequent phrases, melody-dominated homophony, polyrhythm, melisma), and genres (oratorio, absolute music, and programme music).

For a quality classical record label, the app’s full price is comparatively cheap at £2.99. Although it reflects Naxos’ core values of providing audiences with a quality product at budget prices, a low budget means that there is inevitably a compromise in the user interface. The app’s layout is predominantly one-dimensional and essentially has the function of an enhanced book. The paragraphs are formatted on the app’s pages akin to a children’s picture book while the text is repeated in audio form when touched. When pressed, illustrations are accompanied by a short musical extract, sound effect, or basic animation. At the bottom of each slide, the small arrows are page turners for the app. Due to this unidirectional interaction, one could ask whether children will become bored.

One possible answer derives from Ofcom, which reports that people from the age of three have access to tablets. By extension, infants can engage in many interactive forms of play on their mobile devices such as online games. Additionally, there are children’s classical music apps, which are inexpensive and stimulate bi-directional forms of play, for example, Pitch Painter (£2.99) and the ‘Fugue Game’ on the free Young Person’s Guide to the Orchestra app, whereby users reorganise musical samples from Britten’s work to create their own fugue. In fact, Jenkins et al. postulate appropriation, ‘The ability to meaningfully sample and remix media content’, as a skill

94 L. Lewis Brown, op. cit.
in their new media literacies.\textsuperscript{96} Relatedly, White opines that children are inherently creative.\textsuperscript{97} Within the budget of Naxos Books’ products, perhaps it is feasible to give children the opportunity to creatively remix, sample, and appropriate the app’s musical choices within the user interface.

Concurrent with interactive approaches is the issue of a child’s attention span. While listening to a piece or extract of classical music in its entirety is a cultural competency, one could ask whether this still, quiet form of concentration is ideal for an infant. Gertrude Hildreth writes that a six-year old appears to be more suited to activities ‘built for action rather than sitting still’.\textsuperscript{98} In the same way, the child studies literature recommends that the attention span for reading should be no more than ten to fifteen minutes in one go.\textsuperscript{99}

Bearing these recommendations in mind, Rasmussen claims that four to five minutes is a suitable length for children to listen to a classical piece.\textsuperscript{100} Musical movements and works on the app match these timings, for instance, the ‘Allegro’ from Mozart’s \textit{Piano Sonata in C Major, K.545} and ‘Hallelujah Chorus’ from Handel’s \textit{Messiah}. However, the children’s classical music market should not underestimate the concentration of young people. One review of the app recalls that ‘I could tell that my son was really listening to the information provided as he sat up in bed slightly as each classical music piece played, sometimes commenting on what he previously heard’.\textsuperscript{101} A quote from an interview with a child about Apollo Music Projects reads, ‘To the people who think that young children can’t be able to listen or just stay still for music, I think they are not correct. I think they should know children are open-minded because they are young and able to get more stuff in them’.\textsuperscript{102}

\begin{flushright}
\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{96} Jenkins et al., p. xiv.
\textsuperscript{97} B. White, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{99} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{100} L. Lewis Brown, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{102} S. Hallam, op. cit., p. 28.
\end{flushright}
Tellingly, *The Sunday Times* placed My First Classical Music App in its Top 500 Best List of apps, reviewing it with the following sentence, ‘Learning and fun coincide in apps that encourage active participation’.

Yet, the app’s old style approach towards music appreciation and its user interface based on a traditional book format suggests otherwise, all the more so for the quality brands of *The Times* and Naxos Music, which both advocate classical music and cultural pursuits.

**The Liszt Sonata**

The Liszt Sonata is an iPad app launched in July 2013, as a joint initiative from app company Touchpress, film-makers Lone Star, and concert pianist Stephen Hough. The app is what Alan Brown terms ‘embedded interpretation’ or ‘interpretive assistance’, whereby various resources around the musical work are used to enhance the audience’s understanding. Using Liszt’s *Piano Sonata in B Minor* as the set text, the app’s ‘embedded interpretation’ is presented in several ways. Its centrepiece is a full-length video performance of the work by Hough, filmed from three camera angles (his hands at the piano keys, his face, and a side view of him playing) and arranged in a grid format (Figure 6-4). Other content includes: an optional voice-over commentary for the video presented by Hough, a scrollable musical score, a graphic ‘NoteFall’ visualisation of the work, video insights from Hough, and a series of ‘About The Piece’ essays (Liszt’s biography, a programme note, structural analysis, and history of sonata form), written by classical music journalist and reviewer Charlotte Gardner.

My overall experience of the app was user-friendly. Each option is signposted clearly; the homepage has two main options: ‘The Performance’ and ‘About The Piece’. Users can easily change between the content, thus reflecting basic guidelines of app design to ‘[keep] the user interface as simple and intuitive, as possible’. The user experience is further enhanced by the high quality of visuals and sound as the video performance was shot on three HD cameras.


104 A. Brown, op. cit., p. 12.

From my perspective, this added to the overall ‘aura’ of the art work, although there will be audiences who claim that the digital performance is not the same as experiencing the acoustics of a concert hall in person. One must ask whether the digitised classical performance equates to or rivals the live one, even with the best film technology available. One possible answer is from a 2010 Arts Council report, in which most respondents perceived the live offline experience to be superior to online.\textsuperscript{106} Similarly, one individual has tweeted about Hough’s performance of Liszt’s \textit{Piano Sonata in B minor} screened on digital television channel More 4 as such, ‘the camera work for Stephen Hough and the Liszt sonata was excellent. I really prefer to hear rather than see music being played’ (@geoffacox, 4 August 2013).

While the app’s luxury brand cost of £10.49 contradicts the ‘democratisation of classical music’ (see Chapter 5, ‘The history, cultural aesthetics, and brand values of Wigmore Hall’), the quality and scope of content makes the app worth the full price. It operates on many levels while retaining a semi-academic focus. Gruits would account for such as being ‘educated in a way that doesn’t really feel like you’re being educated’.\textsuperscript{107} If users just wish to watch the performance, they can do so without focusing on added layers of the score or Hough’s commentary. If users prefer an embedded or context-driven style, then they can follow the scrollable score, listen to Hough’s voiceover, watch

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure6-4.png}
\caption{The 'Performance' and its embedded content (from left to right): The 'Notefall visualisation', grid layout of multiple camera angles, and scrollable music score}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{106} Arts Council England et al., p. 5.

the NoteFall, or do all three simultaneously. The Liszt Sonata has been favourably received by those with formal musical training (e.g., classical music critics of quality newspapers and magazines)\(^{108}\) and those without such as British television personality and actor Stephen Fry.\(^{109}\) These reviews corroborate the app’s suitability for musicians and non-musicians.

A particularly striking feature of the app is the NoteFall. On first glance, this waterfall-like graphic is superficial but it is more than just ‘a hypnotic and enlightening visualization’\(^{110}\). Overlaid onto the aerial view of Hough’s hands, the synchronisation of the graphics, together with the camera shot of the piano keyboard, allows the NoteFall to illuminate central themes and motifs in each hand, contrasting textures, rhythms, and speeds (Figure 6-5). Due to this strong visual dimension, the NoteFall has the potential to interest non-musicians and those who are new to the work and who do not necessarily have to be able to read music to appreciate what is happening. Simultaneously, a graphical reading can complement institutionalised forms of music appreciation (e.g., score annotating) but not replace them entirely for those who prefer traditional music analysis.


\(^{109}\) ‘@houghhough - I just want to say that your Liszt B minor on the @touchpress app in performance and exposition is simply perfect. Thank you!’ (@stephenfry, tweet, 21 September 2013).

\(^{110}\) [http://lisztsonata.touchpress.com/assets/Products/Documents/The-Lizst-Sonata-Press-Release.pdf] [accessed 3 October 2016].
In previous years, the piece has been a set work for A Level music and university music degrees and so the app acts as an educational aid. Although I studied the piece in the second year of an undergraduate music degree at Durham University, the NoteFall helped me to realise the pianistic writing, musical textures, and motivic workings in a way that does not always come across in paper-based score analysis, a method that is sometimes dry and academic. By way of illustration, it has been reported that students of pianist and Professor of Music at the University of Southampton David Owen Norris were impressed by the Beethoven’s 9th Symphony app’s equivalent of the NoteFall, the ‘Beatmap’, in which colour-coded dots are laid out onto a map of the orchestra, which flash when each instrument is heard in the piece.\textsuperscript{111}

While my experience of The Liszt Sonata was largely positive, the app presents several risks. Tom Weightman, a software engineer for The Liszt Sonata, wrote the following about its high-end pricing,

\begin{quote}
We experimented with the price a lot, and it turned out people were happy to pay a fairly higher price for this app in comparison with others. We think that’s because you need to be a pretty engaged Liszt fan to download it, and those people are used to paying a similar price for CDs etc.\textsuperscript{112}
\end{quote}

His response implies a target audience with a prior interest and involvement in classical music. This is unsurprising due to the musical complexity of the app’s central work.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{Figure6-5.png}
\caption{The ‘NoteFall’}
\footnotesize{Source: <http://ipad.qualityindex.com/apps/754944/the-liszt-sonata> [accessed 24 October 2016].}
\end{figure}


\textsuperscript{112} Tom Weightman, email to the author, 4 January 2017.
There is the importance of marketing to one’s projected market segment or core audience but ramifications for marginal audiences cannot be ignored, as with the following episode.

While there are features with the scope to appeal to non-musical audiences, Touchpress’ educational ethos manifests a traditionalist tendency towards the app, partly due to Hough’s choice to make Liszt’s work the app’s set text. Due to the piece’s complex formal, thematic, and motivic constructions, classical music grammar is unavoidable in the app’s content. It is not overstating the case that users should revise their knowledge of Western music theory before exploring the app. As a classical music writer herself, Gardner’s structural analysis essay presumes that readers know what most of the musical terms mean without full explanation. Consider the following sentence, which is heavy in jargon and technical language, ‘there’s an implied dissonance despite the writing remaining in octaves, thanks to the accented dotted minim notes which create crunching suspensions against the implied diminished seventh chord of the four notes that follow’. This musical knowledge was instrumental in the app’s software input processes. As Weightman recalls,

I do have a musical background – I played violin and trumpet at school, and also did the ABRSM music theory exam. I do think it would be difficult to build an app like this without any musical knowledge. For example, it’d be really difficult to test the score without being able to read music (to test things like whether it’s in sync, whether repeat markings are working properly, whether correct staves are being displayed for each instrument, etc). I also needed to be able to use software like Sibelius to work with the scores, with obviously requires some musical knowledge too (just to know when things have gone wrong, if nothing else).113

Helpfully, some of the essays’ musical terms are tagged for simplified definitions. Still, tagged words refer to vocabulary not defined in itself such as ‘tonic key’, ‘dominant’, and ‘relative minor’. They are terms taken for granted in art music but fundamental to grasping the mechanics of sonata form. These musical keywords will leave a non-musician slightly frustrated. Given the app’s tagging facilities, these tagged words could direct users to an online hyperlink or one of the many free music theory tutorial sites on the Internet (e.g., MusicTheoryVideos.com), explaining them at an appropriate level. There is ripe potential to create a social dimension around such content, as is the case

113 T. Weightman, op. cit.
for social media sites dedicated to crowdsourced or peer-to-peer tagging of content such as Digg, Twitter, and blogs. When touched, the tagged musical terms connect to a relevant social media link (e.g., a wiki, Facebook discussion group, or Reddit chat forum) where users post their own definitions. These options may prompt non-musicians to post contributions alongside trained musicians and ‘expert’ listeners so that users of various musical competencies can compare different definitions to see which is clearest or most comprehensive.

Such music-analytical approaches extend to sociocultural ones. As a core classical market comprises older demographics, one might ask how their user experience would compare to a younger ‘Digital Native’ or someone in better health than a retiree. Declining health is one barrier that prevents retirees from attending cultural events in person but it hampers older users’ overall experience of mobile technology.114 Their eyesight and hand movement is not as fine as it once was.115 They do not wish to have many features on mobile devices and prefer to have one or two.116 As they may not be as technologically advanced, they need to learn how to carry out a task on a mobile device slowly but once the movement starts, their response time is not much different to younger users.117

But age provides an incomplete picture. When the interface is less user-friendly, people blame themselves rather than the design.118 Stereotypically, older people are reluctant to use technology when in fact they want to keep up because they may not yet feel old.119 In the same way as the ‘silver surfers’ (i.e. older users who use the Internet and social media), they may be capable of using complicated technology and will set aside time learning how to use it if they see a benefit.120 The older demographics of classical

116 Ibid., p. 16.
117 Ibid., pp. 7 and 16.
118 Ibid., 7.
119 Ibid., p. 16.
120 Ibid., p. 6.
concert-goers provide more time for self-improvement, continuous education, and new experiences, which includes learning to use digital technology.\textsuperscript{121} With all of this in mind, The Liszt Sonata should be optimised to older audiences’ needs as well. This is known as an adaptable interface, an application that will benefit all age groups, their capabilities, and technological competencies. ‘When the usability and user experience is improved for older users, it is also improved for younger adults’.\textsuperscript{122}

As a young adult, I could easily read the font size of the app’s series of essays (less than 14-point size) but there should still be a facility to change the size of the text for the essays and the subtitles for Hough’s audio commentary. Indeed, Weightman wrote that ‘We did think about allowing users to change the font size. It was on the list, but in the end we just didn’t have enough time’.\textsuperscript{123} Usually, changing the font size is achieved by pinching the mobile device’s screen with two fingers to zoom in and out, however, embedded zoom in/zoom out buttons with a 1-tap action are preferable for the hand-eye coordination of older users.\textsuperscript{124} But these features would not go amiss for users of other ages.

Already, the app allows users to selectively decide what content to look at around the main performance, either in isolation or altogether, although having six options (i.e. three camera angles, subtitles, the NoteFall, and follow along score) possibly creates too much information for older people. As older users would like a simplified user experience, such options might be split up. One version of ‘The Performance’ would comprise just the three camera angles and another one all of the embedded content, much in the same way one can switch the director’s commentary on a DVD film on and off.\textsuperscript{125} For an effective interface ‘that helps users in completing their goals with a little confusion and the less errors as possible’,\textsuperscript{126} there should be a noticeable visual change

\textsuperscript{122} T. Slavíček, op. cit., p. 7.
\textsuperscript{123} T. Weightman, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{124} T. Slavíček, op. cit., p. 28.
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid., p. 27.
\textsuperscript{126} Ibid., p. 7.
of slide or content when they press on each button or option.\textsuperscript{127} This already happens on The Liszt Sonata but an additional audio response helps (e.g., a ping, vibration, or short music clip from the work) because older people expect to have sonic feedback from a virtual keyboard and expect to hear a response, whether they pressed the button or not, much like in the real world (e.g., an elevator button).\textsuperscript{128} Such audio, though, is likely to be off-putting for younger users and so an adaptable interface should allow everyone to ‘choose the loudness of the sound, the layout, vibration feedback or selected items in the menu’.\textsuperscript{129}

The app’s user-led experience ties in with another stance on interactive user interfaces. Its content invokes a multisensory approach towards a classical performance but the user is not in the venue itself to witness Hough. Hence, the viewing experience is slightly one-way and passive, all the more so when factoring in conventional concert hall ritual. The opening video sequence on the app’s homepage implies formality. Wearing black concert attire, Hough walks onto the platform in silence before sitting at the piano. He flicks the tails of his tuxedo over the piano stool but does not start the piece immediately, thus inducing ‘ritual silence’ (see Chapter 2, ‘The classical music culture’).

Users cannot respond directly by applauding or giving the artist a standing ovation but have to form mental impressions of the performance. They are not part of an audience gathering either, as is normally the case in a multi-seater concert hall. Hence, those who like to enjoy a concert’s ‘magic moments’\textsuperscript{130} in the presence of other audience members (even if attending alone) may feel that the socialised element is lacking. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the social aspect of concert-going and cultural pursuits is a factor that determines the audience’s overall experience (see Chapter 5, ‘Spatial representations’).

\textsuperscript{127} Ibid., p. 28.
\textsuperscript{128} Ibid., p. 6.
\textsuperscript{129} Ibid., pp. 7–8.
\textsuperscript{130} Cited at ‘Listening to the Listener’ conference, University of Sheffield, 16 November 2015.
Users share their opinions of the app with others via bi-/multi-directional social media interactions, however, there is an affordability to embed user-to-user interactions into the interface for those who prefer these types of online transactions. The aforementioned tagging facilities could be integrated with hyperlinks to social networking (e.g., a Facebook or Reddit chat group) for users to start discussions around Liszt’s work. Chat topics might include: users’ favourite moments of the piece, or for more advanced listeners, the strengths and weaknesses of different structural analyses and recordings, including Hough’s interpretation on the app.131

Contrary to the above suggestions of a socialised user experience, a purist would criticise the app’s ‘embedded interpretation’ for shifting focus away from the absolute attention expected of concert audiences. In the same way as skim-reading a book, users can read as much or as little of the essays as they wish. As opposed to real-time viewing, they can stop and start the video performance with the timeline cursor. Shzr Ee Tan observes that such flexible viewing is a major development over DVD and VCR fast-forward buttons.132

Indeed, the video insights, embedded into the essays, are relatively short; they are one to two minutes on average, and some of Hough’s structural analyses videos are no more than three to four minutes. Clearly, the attention span of users has decreased with the Internet and social media. In 2015, the average attention span was 8.25 seconds (12 seconds in 2000) and the average length for watching a single Internet video 2.7 minutes.133 Therefore, the app’s extra content around the video performance reflects a technoculture of instant gratification and diminishing concentration because users have several options to keep them occupied, if they become restless sitting still and listening to a work of around a half-hour duration. For want of a comparison, Idagio, a classical streaming app, indicates an average length it takes to read its blogs. The time that reoccurs the most is three to four minutes, and the longest time suggested is nine minutes.


Together with flexible viewing and user options, another factor that influences one’s response to the app is location, thus linking to a range of socio-spatial interactions and private-public divisions. As the user is not in the concert hall itself, they are most likely watching Hough’s performance elsewhere. One tweet shows an individual lying down on a mattress, viewing the pianist’s performance and the scrollable score (@Aalejo808, 30 July 2014). Having used the app in Senate House Library, an academic university library, I had to respond to the content mentally. Returning to the idea of technologically-engendered attention spans, users could also be carrying out concurrent activities with the app on, for example, checking multiple mobile devices or looking outside a train window. Ultimately, they could be engaged in activities away from the app, thus risking an audio-only experience and poor sound quality (e.g., using the music on the app as background noise).134

Cunningly, The Liszt Sonata is as much a branding exercise for the artist as it is for Touchpress, thereby fuelling Hough’s labour economics. The app’s biographical note employs hyperbole to sell the client as: a polymath, ‘a rarity in our modern times’, and ‘as much a musicologist as a musician, with his interpretation admired for the way in which he underpins intense musical artistry with historical scholarship and knowledge’. His audio commentary reflects these descriptions and readily extends to his personal brand identity (see Chapter 4, ‘Stephen Hough’). For instance, his voiceover presents personal thoughts (e.g., ‘Always a little worry about that octave going up’), practical performance advice (‘it’s important that you hear the two arpeggios as two voices’), anecdotes (‘I’ve actually had tears in my eyes playing this particular part of the piece’), and musico-analytical commentaries (‘Just as we heard this exact melody the first time in D major, which is the relative major, the two sharps major related to the B minor’).

More than that, the app’s biography of Hough embeds a hyperlink to his official website. In turn, his website connects to his social media presence such as his former Telegraph blog and a hyperlink to his portal on HarrisonParrott’s website (his artist agency), which subsequently embeds a link to his Twitter feed. It is equally worth mentioning that the app was released on 10 July 2013, shortly before his appearance at the opening night of the BBC Proms on 12 July 2013, and the app’s official press

134 S. Tan, op. cit.

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release was published the day before his Proms performance. On 3 August 2013, digital television channel More 4 screened a full-length film of Hough, playing Liszt’s *Piano Sonata in B minor*. The programme was promoted on Twitter by More 4, HarrisonParrott, and one of the pianist’s acquaintances, Reverend Richard Coles. Touchpress even tweeted, ‘Tune into @BBCRadio4 now and hear @houghhough on #DesertIslandDiscs! Watch his beautiful performance on the the [sic] Liszt Sonata app!’ (@amphiolondon, 9 October 2016).

Together, these media outlets create a strategic cross-promotional campaign to increase sales of the app and the artist’s profile. In fact, statistics show that the app has been downloaded most in the US (40%) and UK (36%), thus reflecting Hough’s audience base in both countries. Combined with the above social media links liaised with the app, a fuller transmedia narrative arises, in which ‘each new text [makes] a distinctive and valuable contribution to the whole’ (see Chapter 4, ‘Constructing the Yankee brand’). His tweets juxtapose hi-tech manipulation with demotic posts and his intellectual side, and such a polysemic online identity leads to brand equity (see Chapter 4, ‘Stephen Hough’).

Yet, Touchpress benefits economically as much as Hough does. A brightly coloured tab with the figureheads of Beethoven and Vivaldi is placed in the top right hand corner of the app’s homepage. This tab links to a slide, promoting two other products, which form the app company’s trio of classical composer ‘edutainment’ apps (Beethoven’s 9th Symphony and Vivaldi’s Four Seasons). This is an overt promotional opportunity to persuade users to buy the apps; much in the same way that a classical music connoisseur will purchase CD recordings as collectors’ items rather than out of pure musical interest.

**Composed**

Composed was a streaming app, launched in November 2014, in partnership with product agency Made by Many, classical radio broadcaster Classic FM, and Universal Music Group’s classical record divisions Decca Classics and Deutsche Grammophon. It was available for in-browsing on a computer but could be used as an app separately on

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135 Sensor Tower, op. cit.
Apple and Android devices. The app shut down on 31 August 2016; according to one of Composed’s Facebook comments, this was due to dramatic changes in the streaming landscape.\textsuperscript{136}

A blog from Peter Parkes, Strategy Director of Made by Many, claimed that the app was created to combat the declining sales of physical records and current digital music services. At the time of writing, he claimed that Apple iTunes and Spotify did not cater to the classical music listener’s needs and so the goal was to ‘create and launch a direct-to-consumer digital subscription service dedicated to classical music, focused on the needs of casual listeners rather than diehard classical fans’.\textsuperscript{137} Having tested prototypes on hundreds of consumers to ascertain what they valued most, Composed prided itself on specific assets: the ability to choose music based on mood and the regular updating of music collections to enable users to discover new composers, pieces, and artists.\textsuperscript{138}

But as pre-empted by Composed’s sudden closure, the music streaming landscape has swiftly changed, even over two years. Dominated by popular music, Spotify has greatly expanded its classical music library, which includes many recordings from both commercial and specialist classical music labels. Rival classical music streaming services such as Pitched Music and Idagio have developed facilities to search for mood-based playlists. Whereas Composed only had search facilities for composers, classical music streaming now allows users to search for performers, conductors, and works. Notably, Spotify has an ‘artist radio’ style facility, based on the listener’s choice of tracks and artists.

Composed’s limited search engine was a basic flaw because classical is the most taxing musical genre in terms of metadata (e.g., name of the piece, artist, composer, album, record label, year of recording). According to classical music streaming service Grammofy, metadata is the foundation of digital music consumption and classical music

\textsuperscript{136} <https://www.facebook.com/ComposedUK/posts/651740284984822> [accessed 29 September 2016].


\textsuperscript{138} Ibid.
is more complex in data structure than most popular music. Therefore, a wealth of information embedded in classical music recordings should be made readily available online for Composed’s ‘casual listeners’, who are curious to find out more about what they are hearing, and for the classical music scene’s ‘culture consumers’.

Composed had a comparatively limited library because its tracks are almost exclusively taken from Decca Classics and Deutsche Grammophon. On the one hand, this approach reduces metadata problems and both record labels offer high-quality products. Mike Oakey, Managing Director of Composed, tries to justify the app:

> Often with classical music, there are hundreds of different recordings and you don’t know if it’s a good recording or a bad recording. On other streaming services, you have to know the name of the piece you are looking for and then the version you are looking for from the hundreds of different ones that come up (one might be a choir, one might be an orchestra, one might be a soloist, one might be a pop version). So, what we do is provide the single best version of every piece of music. We have access to the whole Deutsche Grammophon and Decca Classics catalogue and we chose the very best version.

On the other hand, as violinist and BBC Radio 3 presenter Clemency Burton-Hill writes, ‘the nature of the music and its constant re-interpretation by new artists over the decades means many enthusiasts seek out multiple recordings of the same piece’. More tellingly, Composed depicts itself as a publicity vehicle for the two record labels and their artists; one playlist is based on classical crossover singer Katherine Jenkins, who has recorded for Universal Music and Decca. Likewise, the app provides gratuitous promotion for Classic FM because the app’s library includes tracks familiar to regular listeners and has hand-picked collections from the station’s playlists (e.g., the Breakfast Show playlist, Classic FM’s Hall of Fame Hour). A ‘call to action’ button is placed at the top right hand corner with the Classic FM logo on it. Hagen, though, suggests that the user’s personalised streaming practices could in effect ‘negate’ the product’s

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141 <http://www.thebigmusicproject.co.uk/inside-composed-job-roles-streaming-companies/> [accessed 29 September 2016].

commodity status and so her response is that streaming prioritises the user’s ownership ‘in the interests of elevating personal music selection above all else’.  

This personalised approach was reflected in the facility to save playlists and bookmark tracks; what Hagen terms dynamic playlists, whereby users steadily increase the amount of content on their playlists rather than retain the same tracks over an extended period of time (i.e. a ‘static’ playlist). More to the point, music is analogous to water; it is no longer kept in one physical location or on one computer but ‘all over the internet, in different qualities, channels, formats (streaming/download), etc.’ Together with the capacity to access Composed across multiple devices (i.e. computer, smartphone, and tablet), users would have engaged in metaphors around personal collection. For example, streaming services act as a ‘container’ for storing music and people often invest time and emotional energy when creating their virtual record libraries. 

Returning to this chapter’s background discussion, mobile music streaming links to Weiser’s theory of ‘ubiquitous computers’. Hence, Composed was a portable data archive, which had music tracks that could be readily accessed from multiple mobile devices. These symbolic substitutes for physical records are compatible with Composed’s benefit statement: ‘Play the classical music you love, anytime, anywhere’. 

When Composed announced its closure, a spokesperson posted about the possibility of providing existing users with a way to export their saved playlists to another service. Not having access to their music, then, is akin to losing essential personal data and a large part of one’s self. For instance, one user tweeted that she had ‘Lots of memories’ (@BecciLC, 4 August 2016) from her saved Composed playlist. To further theorise this tweet, Hagen identifies a metaphor of streaming as a way of being, whereby an individual’s music choices and streaming praxis inform notions of self, agency, and  

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144 Ibid., p. 632.


146 A. N. Hagen, ‘The metaphors we stream by’, op. cit.

147 Ibid.
identity. Thus, music streaming is ‘an expression and negotiation of [one]self, both with and through technology’. Over time, streaming services become ‘lifeworld resources’, which ‘confirm, challenge, mo[u]ld, establish and endorse listeners’ notions of identity, sociality, corporality, environments, time, and self’. Another aspect of these sociotechnological and personal manifestations comes from Composed’s context-sensitive playlists. To illustrate this point, mainstream mobile music streaming services such as Spotify offer many context-sensitive playlists to choose from, including: playlists based on everyday situations, activities (e.g., exam revision, exercise, sleep), social events (e.g., dinner parties), emotions, holidays, and the seasons. Yet, these contextual representations embody a different meaning in tandem with the aesthetics of Composed and classical music. Compared to BBC Radio 3, ‘the traditional home for classical music’, Classic FM largely encourages a ‘passive experience’, with programmes such as Smooth Classics at Seven (an hour of ‘relaxing’ classical music). In contrast, BBC Radio 3 has promoted an intellectual and cultured approach; one programme, Discovering Music, presented musicological analyses of pieces before they were heard in full. ‘The implication is that a concentration on the music itself for a specific period of time is geared towards the content provided by Radio 3 and having classical music as a form of background music is more appropriate to Classic FM’s schedule’. Following in this vein, Composed has context and identity-sensitive playlists, facilitating background listening (e.g., ‘Music for a BBQ’, ‘Music for studying’, ‘Chant for Peace’, ‘Having a Party!’). More than that, they foster casual streaming habits, in which ‘music blend[s] into the users’ larger environments without calling conscious attention to itself as an element or an activity’. Annahid Kassabian would theorise this ‘ubiquitous listening’, a secondary or inattentive form of listening, shaped around

148 Ibid.
149 Ibid.
150 M. Carboni, op. cit., p. 146.
152 M. Carboni, op. cit., p. 147.
153 A. N. Hagen, ‘The metaphors we stream by’, op. cit.
the continuous presence of music in modern life, which includes listening to music via streaming services and mobile apps. In addition, she links ‘ubiquitous listening’ to background music or muzak. This musical streaming habit is confirmed by a person who used Composed to accompany household chores, ‘Thank you for your help today with a) tidying two cupboards and b) cooking’ (@richardlittleda, tweet, 14 May 2016).

Composed has also created playlists in line with the Adornian ‘emotional listener’, a deeply anti-intellectual form of musical listening. ‘Often music becomes a source of irrationality […] its preponderant function is that of such a trigger […] Yet this type may indeed respond with particular strength to music of an obvious emotional hue, like Tchaikovsky’s. He is easily moved to tears’. Composed playlists, then, are meant to instigate impulsive musical listening, as with the caption for the ‘Ultimate tearjerkers’ playlist, ‘Feeling emotional? Need to exorcise some negativity? These tearjerking classics are for you’. Returning to the uses and gratifications theory, this music collection responds to the individual’s emotional needs and instant gratifications. Although these casual and intuitive streaming practices are not work-centred, there are listeners who still obtain value. From a non-musical perspective, mind-sets other than musico-analytical are not lesser but simply another way of listening. In the same way, one of Hagen’s study participants recognised the advantages of listening on shuffle mode (pre-setting tracks on a music streaming service to play in a random order) and listening to a full-length album because both musical listening types have their own value.

A number of users in her research emphasised their casual streaming patterns, for instance, using music to ‘create a good mood’ or ‘a relaxing background atmosphere’. In particular, they were prone to using the shuffle setting on the streaming services because the random ordering of musical tracks created a more instantaneous form of listening. One individual found this mode of listening suited his commute. It mediated his sense of time so that it felt shorter and interesting, ‘It’s not too fun riding the subway

156 A. N. Hagen, ‘The metaphors we stream by’, op. cit.
157 Ibid.
in half an hour, and it feels good to listen for a minute, just dream away for a while’. He could take his mind off distractions and focus on the music, ‘I listen more deeply when I travel’.158 Similarly, one of Classic FM’s presenters suggested that using Composed might allow a tedious morning commute to be a more enjoyable experience.159

These opinions affirm that mobile music streaming practices are socio-spatial. Indeed, one might argue that they ‘augment’ the reality of users. To illustrate this point, another participant in Hagen’s research felt that the way he listened to music on an everyday commute heightened his surroundings and so his listening experiences took on a ‘transformative character’, ‘when you look out the window with music in your ears, it gives a completely different experience. [Without music] it’s more like, oh yeah, there it is, a house, there it is, grass, and there are some trees. The music makes so much to how I experience things’.160

Likewise, Classic FM presenter Bill Turnbull chose ‘Sea Interludes’ from Britten’s opera Peter Grimes for his Composed playlist because it reminded him of the Suffolk coast where he lives and from where the composer drew inspiration for the music.161 Composed featured a ‘Music for Tennis’ playlist and so one could imagine that during the Wimbledon Championships season, it is meant to provide background or ubiquitous listening, as its caption implies, ‘Perfect music for playing tennis to, or maybe just watching it on telly’.162 Much in the same way, some chefs have experimented with soundscapes; Heston Blumenthal’s ‘Sound of the Sea’ is a seafood dish at The Fat Duck restaurant, complete with an iPod and headphones in a conch shell, playing sounds of ocean waves and seagulls.163

As one might expect, the app does not explicitly promote ‘expert’ listening. On the other hand, Composed includes playlists that enable users to listen to a single classical

158 Ibid.
159 Composed, Alexander Armstrong talks about his love for Classical music (and Composed), online video recording, YouTube, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Cwf4ZTk4M> [accessed 31 August 2016].
160 A. N. Hagen, ‘The metaphors we stream by’.
work in full (e.g., Bach cello suites, Beethoven piano concertos), thus facilitating a formalist listening. Interestingly, Classic FM presenter and classically-trained performer Alexander Armstrong commented on the post-Wagnerian/tonal language of Sibelius in a video on Composed’s YouTube channel.\textsuperscript{164} As ‘expert’ listening is almost exclusively the remit of professional musicians, and by extension, typical classical segments, the just mentioned art music lexicon is alienating for the app’s target market of ‘casual listeners’. Reversing this vignette, contemporary classical composer Dr Christian Morris critiques that ‘It all feels a bit dumbed-down if you’re an experienced consumer of classical music’.\textsuperscript{165}

To account for listening modes, other than ‘structural hearing’, and the image of Composed as a publicity vehicle for Classic FM, the radio station’s brand is omnipresent. The app’s playlists had many tracks, typical of Classic FM’s musical output, and what Adorno would term the ‘entertainment listener’, ‘the type the culture industry is made for’.\textsuperscript{166} An adequate description of the entertainment listener will be possible only in the context of the mass media, of radio, film, and television.\textsuperscript{167} For example, the ‘Nervous Newcomer’ playlist included popular classics such as Puccini’s ‘Nessun dorma’ sung by Luciano Pavarotti, ‘Allegro con brio’ from Beethoven’s \textit{Fifth Symphony}, and Barber’s \textit{Adagio for Strings}. Pieces tended to be described in a populist way rather than intellectually, ‘Lots of familiar tunes including one of the best loved film themes, plus the piece that is now best known as Lord Sugar’s introduction music’\textsuperscript{168}.

To attain a mass appeal, musical choices were selected by well-known public figures (e.g., actors Stephen Fry, Hugh Grant, and Joanna Lumley) and the station’s celebrity presenters (e.g., Armstrong and Turnbull) vis-à-vis those with academic musicological training, as in the case for a certain proportion of BBC Radio 3’s presenters, producers, and programme contributors. Indeed, one can identify a convergence of both classical

\textsuperscript{164} Composed, online video recording, YouTube [accessed 31 August 2016].


\textsuperscript{166} T. Adorno, op. cit., p. 14.

\textsuperscript{167} Ibid., p. 17.


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music radio broadcasters via Composed’s ‘Pick of the Proms’ playlist but this playlist was almost exclusively limited to works in the BBC Proms’ accessible ‘Classical music for starters’ series. Interestingly, though, one exception to Classic FM’s typical playlist was the app’s inclusion of challenging contemporary music, like Messiaen, Berio, and Varèse.

In terms of the app’s pricing, a free thirty-day trial is inarguably a tantalising incentive but ‘will “casual” classical music fans be prepared to pay £4.99 per month when their musical thirst can be quenched just as easily by tuning in to Classic FM or the BBC’s Radio 3?’

By way of illustration, Spotify is regarded as the most rounded streaming service, whether users sign up to the basic, unpaid version or its premium package (£0.99 for three months, £9.99 per month thereafter). Both packages provide value for money because paying and non-paying users can access all tracks (over thirty million), including a vast classical catalogue, alongside a wide range of musical genres. In fact, empirical research suggests that live-streaming audiences and casual listeners of classical music have eclectic musical tastes not limited to classical, unlike Composed’s music library.

Out of the three main classical music apps studied for this chapter, Composed encouraged a ‘social’ experience the most. The app was promoted via four major social media channels: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. It gained a sizeable social media presence: around 74,000 YouTube views, 11,804 Facebook likes, 899 Twitter followers, and 210 Instagram followers. The app’s users posted messages about their streaming experiences and Composed’s account holders retweeted or replied to these posts to reflect the intercommunicative element social media users expect. Enhancing this interactive approach were users’ requests of pieces for Composed to add to its

169 A. Leonelli, op. cit.
171 Matthew Petrie, Becky Schutt, Dr. Allègre L. Hadida, Dr. Shima Barakat, and Adrian Brian Cruz, Dero Project: Research Findings and Insights Final Report (Digital R&D Fund for the Arts, Fusion Research and Analytics in collaboration with University of Cambridge Judge Business School, 2012), pp. 29–30.
library, and in turn, the app included a special ‘Composed by You’ playlist with users’ musical choices. To reward interactivity, the app’s social media pages featured exclusive competitions and discounts for followers such as gift cards, Black Friday offers, reduced subscriptions, and prizes (e.g., iPads and a trip to Abbey Road Studios).

Social media were used to promote many of the app’s playlists, with the aid of memes, bold visual content (e.g., an artistic photo of a landscape on Instagram), anecdotes, and information about the composers and pieces. Online content was created around trending hashtags, which were then linked to relevant playlists and tracks (Figure 6-6). This e-strategy links to Classic FM’s mission ‘to make classical music accessible and relevant to a modern audience’. Moreover, it contributes to larger cultural and digital ecologies. A competition, whereby users were invited to post an Instagram picture of their favourite recording from Decca Classics or Composed, acts as gratuitous promotion for the record company and the app; the winner would receive a copy of a new recording from Decca. Yet, this competition was organised due to business partnerships between both corporate entities (Figure 6-7). To situate the app within the wider cultural landscape, one photo of a manuscript from The British Library is reposted onto Composed’s Facebook page (Figure 6-8).

Interestingly, online content about technical or utility aspects appeared to be greatly valued, more so than entertaining or gratuitous social media promotions. The YouTube video with the highest number of views (67,591) was ‘Introducing Composed, the new classical music streaming service’, explaining what the app was and how to use it. This echoes Bellman et al.’s findings around utilitarian or informational branded mobile apps, which are ‘more effective at shifting purchase intention’ and ‘[encourage] making personal connections with the brand’. Conversely, several of Composed’s YouTube videos with Classic FM presenters had around fifty to one hundred plus views.

172 ‘Three requests for @Composed - Ultimate Harry Potter, Lord of the Rings and Hans Zimmer playlists, pretty please (@connie_ashpole, tweet, 18 March 2016); '@@connie_ashpole We are adding more music to Composed every week and we will certainly add your suggestion to our to-do list!’ (@Composed, tweet, 21 March 2016).

173 ‘It’s the last day to vote for your favourite piece on Composed! Tweet NOW! #ComposedbyYou’ (@Composed, tweet, 23 May 2016).

As important to this utility function are online responses to technical queries or user problems because they are an ideal opportunity for account holders to exemplify customer service within the public environment of social media, ‘Thanks for getting in touch. We are sorry to hear that the link is not working. Please email us at support@composed.com’ (@Composed, tweet, 3 August 2016). Customer service is a vital way for arts organisations, and indeed, all sectors, to use social media. In the social media
environment, where user criticism is rife, staff show that they can dramatically improve a situation, positively deal with users, and directly negotiate the problem at hand.175

Conclusions

An app is not just an extra or trendy accessory on one’s mobile device. The classical music app market is a fascinating area for scholarly research and this chapter has only begun to discover the possibilities for studying this specialism of apps. Academic research is not merely interested in apps as a conduit for strategic marketing and branding but meta-arguments around mobile and app usage need to be given especial consideration. They include: changing modes of operation, ‘civil inattention’, instant gratifications, and enlargements of self, creativity, and space. Indeed, the super-competitive labour economics of the classical market and the niche networks in this musical genre make music-based gig economy apps apt business model for freelance musicians. Yet, there are politico-economic implications that warrant attention; a certain amount of financial, educational, and cultural capital is required to enjoy The Liszt Sonata, even though app developers would argue that the app has high-quality content and its price creates a direct source of income. For want of a comparison, Composed offers a free thirty-day trial for users and its approach towards classical music is largely aimed at a mass audience.

These just mentioned meta-arguments present several corollaries to be learnt from classical music apps in relation to the wider app market. Consider quality brands, like the Guardian’s free mobile apps and Classic FM’s free app for accessing the station and its website content. Compare these two exceptions to the overall classical music app market and accessibility is a particularly taxing barrier that still needs to be overcome. For the average classical consumer, money does not appear to be a major issue and so a premium-priced app or paid monthly streaming subscription will seem relatively inexpensive.

As the classical music tradition prioritises an impassive, quasi-academic style of listening, there is a ripe opportunity for app developers to embed intercreative and

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socialised interfaces into the user experience. A comparison is made with popular music culture’s listening parties; these are events organised by bands or fans, in which listeners experience an album or new release in real time, message each other, and share their fandoms on social media. Still, app designers, software engineers, and certainly musicologists think in different ways and so the idea for developing a particular user interface may not be as realistic.

One further corollary is the importance of affordability or usability, an aspect of app design that has been neglected within the classical music sector. Drawing on my case-based research, one needs to especially acknowledge an older audience segment and a children’s market, both of which are central to classical music’s digital audience development. Mobile technology is increasingly used by children, middle-aged adults, and retirees (i.e. ‘silver surfers’) and so mobile apps must be specifically customised for these user demographics as opposed to an able-bodied person or a digitally-savvy ‘Millenial’.

Finally, there is an aesthetic concern, that is, the question of how app developers try to make classical music apps appealing to a wider audience. From a personal perspective, app developers should not compromise on musical content because core classical and marginal segments expect a quality product. Although the balance has to be struck between various audiences, Crawford et al. account for the Student Pulse app like so, ‘By attempting to meet the needs of both the existing and potentially new audiences, classical music runs the risk of pleasing neither’ (see Chapter 5, ‘Wigmore Hall’s e-strategy’). Therefore, it is a case of satisfying the interests of core classical consumers enough. As they have high expectations of cultural products and older consumers may initially be apprehensive about mobile technology, app developers may wish to stimulate the user experience, for instance, by including challenging musical listening choices. Simultaneously, classical music apps should provide an informative and user-friendly experience for newer audiences but not patronise them because they are not as musically literate.


177 J. Cromie and E. Molinari, op. cit.
The previous two case study chapters have contextualised the units of analysis in terms of traditional media precedents and so it is fitting to conclude this chapter in the same way. Cromie opines that app development requires a different mind-set from a book, television documentary, or the Internet.178 Chronologically, though, one might recall Voyager Company’s The CD Companion to Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, generally regarded as the first commercial interactive electronic publication. A precursor to the mobile app, the Concert Companion was a handheld electronic programme note for classical concertgoers, a device that was popular from the 1990s to the mid-2000s. Indeed, print concert programmes are still essential marketing materials, notably, the Barbican Centre and Carnegie Hall digitise programmes for audience members to readily access, download, or print before attending in person. Apps, then, are simply another phase in the development of digital technology. Yet, one cannot deny the impact apps have made in recent times. Inarguably, a keen interest in app and mobile technologies will continue into this year.

178 Ibid.
Chapter 7: Conclusion

Summary of the thesis and research findings

The goal of this thesis has been to determine the ways in which the classical music industry is driven by social media and associated technologies: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, blogs, memes, GIFs, online video streaming, mobile apps, augmented reality, and virtual reality. It has done so primarily via a case study approach of social media branding of artists, digital marketing by a concert venue, and the classical music app market. The research questions, however, have not been restricted to how and why the classical music sector utilises social media marketing and so it has been particularly important to traverse industry-based marketing and commercially orientated approaches and critically appraise the field. It is worth revisiting the research questions, posited in the Introduction (see Chapter 1, ‘Overview of the thesis’) which have aided these academic methodologies.¹

Furthermore, the classical music industry has endorsed a digitally optimistic outlook towards the potentials of Web 2.0, meaning that broader discursive frameworks and critiques have been negated. In that sense, my research has re-evaluated web-based ideologies and how they impact participation within and accessibility to social media and classical music. To demonstrate the wider implications for the classical music business’s social media marketing strategies, my findings have a bearing on disciplines, which are less focused on the commercial marketing sector. They include: musicology, ethnomusicology, sociology, political economics, labour economics, semiotics, cultural geographies, urbanism, gender, behavioural theory, the humanities’ ‘spatial turn’, socio-politics, and sociotechnology (see Chapters 2, 4, 5, and 6). A number of argumentative fulcra are identified, based on my fieldwork analyses: online and offline, consumer and producer, mainstream and subcultural, traditional and new/modern media, personal and corporate, institution and individual, and star and fan. Arguably, though, these binaries are outmoded within the mechanics of social media usage, for example, the role of the ‘prosumer’.

¹ Such questions (see Chapter 1, ‘Overview of the thesis’) are marked with a * sign within this chapter.
This research has analysed various effects of social media marketing within the classical music industry, each of which are reviewed and re-assessed for the purposes of this chapter:

1. Marketing/promotions — within cross-media marketing/events marketing/self-marketing (e.g., of artists, music presenters, and companies).
2. User engagement, interaction, and creativities (e.g., fandoms and audience to artist interactions).
3. Strengthening of business ties, of networks (local to international), and of social networks within classical music, the cultural and creative sectors, and beyond.
4. Self-marketing and branding processes (e.g., brand communities).
5. Revenue/return on investment/source of income.
6. Fandoms.
7. Educational/edutainment resources.
8. Attempts to widen accessibility and participation (e.g., live online video streaming).

First and foremost is the marketing and promotional objective, even though digital marketers attest that social media is used for non-marketing purposes. The marketing perspective is the main reason why social media are exploited by the classical music business and this thesis has aimed to demonstrate this via my case-based research. In addition to traditional media outlets (e.g., print), classical artists, organisations, and marketers are exploiting social media as an indispensable component of the overall marketing campaign. Social media are part of a marketing strategy (see definitions of ‘marketing’ in Chapter 1, ‘Introduction’) and social media marketing subsequently leads to actionable results such as an increase in online followers and engagement, an increase in the artist or company’s revenue, and the ability to attract new target audiences to classical music, notably, younger people.

Where, then, are traditional media positioned within social media marketing of classical music?* Do marketers, moreover, prioritise traditional, digital, social media or an aggregation of these media types?* By drawing out the real-world application of
Jenkins’ ‘convergence culture’ theory, ‘where old and new media collide’,\(^2\) it warrants stressing that social media converge with traditional, digital, and online media. Chapter 4 showed how the ‘#letJoycesing’ campaign was cross-promoted via social networks, online articles, broadcast media, and national newspaper. As opposed to mutually exclusive traditional and digital media audiences, today they consume a range of marketing, information, and customer channels in conjunction. Regarding Chapter 5, Wigmore Hall’s patrons use social media but access them in conjunction with print brochures, the website’s booking facilities, the box office’s telephone service, and physical attendance at the venue. To further push the effects of mixed media, they are not just converging but operating symbiotically within an ecosystem of all marketing media types. In fact, Florence Eves, Digital Marketing Manager at Intermusica Ltd, opines that social media are not to be used in isolation but in tandem with other marketing forms.\(^3\)

This media symbiosis runs parallel to current trends within consumption of music recordings, which are effectively marketing products. *Gramophone*’s 2014 reader survey revealed that they purchased an average of seven physical units per month and one download, signalling a dramatic fall in classical revenue if they instantly changed to annual streaming subscriptions.\(^4\) With Spotify passing over 100 million active users in June 2016, the market for music streaming continues to thrive alongside physical purchases and digital downloads. Although Spotify has irksome metadata problems in its classical music library (e.g., initially displaying a work by album cover rather than the record label or particular artist), it is still considered the best on-demand music streaming service.\(^5\)

Most noticeably, vinyl records witnessed a rebirth circa 2009, no less, in the classical music sector, and are the only physical format to have consistent growth in sales in all

\(^{3}\) F. Eves, meeting, op. cit.  
genres. While they are considerably more expensive to manufacture over their digitised counterparts, 2017 could be the year for the classical music industry to attract new audiences to the analogue revival, with over 3 million vinyl records sold in 2016, the most for a quarter of a century. It is not only the expected older listeners who are attracted to classical music vinyls but also from my personal observation this year younger people. Accounting for the above, what is present is another ecosystem of all of the different but interdependent states of recorded music. In January 2017, Vanessa Higgins, who runs Regent Street Records and Gold Bar Records, observed the state of music consumption in this way:

The younger generation are really embracing vinyl, that’s what we’re seeing in that spike. And also the older generation, more mature generation, are really embracing streaming, they’re getting to grips with the technology. It does feel like we’re hitting another golden age now with the streaming and the vinyl and the physical market working together.

Social and digital media, then, are no longer fetishised as the ‘shiny new’ marketing tools that they once were. Online and offline media, traditional and digital media marketing are not opposites but fully integrated into the e-strategy and these boundaries are becoming more liquidated. Bringing to mind Lysloff and Gay’s theorisation of technocultures, online transactions and social interactions are neither secluded from nor parallel to offline.

An account of the role of social media within the music industry overall has been given, however, it warrants reconsidering how they function for individual actors specifically within the classical music industry. For example, major social media channels (e.g., Facebook) promote an artist’s performance engagements, recordings, and media

7 News update, BBC Radio 2, 3 January 2017, 1pm.
8 A. Mellor, op. cit.
9 Emily Chivers Yochim and Megan Biddinger, ‘It kind of gives you that vintage feel’: vinyl records and the trope of death’, Media, Culture & Society, 30.2 (2008), 183‒195.
10 News update, op. cit.

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appearances. Relatedly, an artist agency, a PR firm, or record company promotes its clients using cross-media promotions such as an artist’s online information portal, press kit, and social media, which are then supplemented by traditional media forms; radio or television appearances, a feature interview in a quality newspaper or classical music magazine. A concert hall or an opera house advertises upcoming performances in its season and notifies online followers about tickets, returns, or last-minute sales, for instance, via short push notifications on Twitter.

Following in this vein, there are differing timelines and temporal modes of media consumption. For instance, regular classical music audiences enjoy the immediacy of social media for the ‘hypertrophic celebrity culture’ of famous artists’ accounts (see Chapter 4, ‘Stephen Hough’) and keeping abreast with event and booking information in every annual classical music season (e.g., priority booking details and return tickets). At the same time, they plan early if frequenting performances throughout the year and so browse online weeks in advance or consult their print brochures so that they can decide what to attend. Indeed, Wigmore Hall announced details of its 2017/18 season from 1 February 2017 on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube even though booking does not open until May 2017.

Alongside push marketing techniques, the above mentioned actors within the classical music business utilise their social media channels to post ‘sticky’ content, with the intention of capturing the user’s attention and engagement. This content includes: ‘industrialising intimacy’ (see Chapters 1 and 4), artists’ question and answer sessions with fans, behind the scenes photos, selfies, bold visual images (e.g., on Instagram), vlogs, blogs, memes, GIFS, hashtag-led ‘conversations’, relationship marketing, and interactive features. All of these social media marketing strategies link to the question of what the collective role of social media is for actors within the classical music industry.* In essence, actors cross-market and position each other and their social media

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13 ‘Just putting it out there that I’m still desperately seeking a ticket for @igorpianist @wigmore_hall on 30th Jan. Just missed a return. CRY’ (@SecondNorn, tweet, 10 January 2017) and ‘there are returns on the website right now if you’re still looking’ (@ShyamByatt, tweet, 10 January 2017).
14 ‘when I say “news”, I mean “look at what’s new on the @wigmore_hall website and sort out Friends booking”’ (@baroquebird, tweet, 21 December 2016).
within a larger cultural ecosystem. Examples of these ecosystemic networks are the Facebook and Twitter promotions between BBC Radio 3 and its regular broadcasts of Wigmore Hall’s concerts and an Instagram competition associated with Decca Classics and Composed (see Chapter 6, ‘Composed’). Thus, classical artists, organisations, and fans’ social media are not self-contained. Rather, this digital media ecosystem encompasses a range of sectors such as creative, retail, technological, and the economy at large. Chapters 1 and 5 demonstrated that classical concert venues use their social media channels to establish links with the cultural scene, the vicinity, as well as local and international businesses.

As mentioned towards the beginning of this chapter, another proven effect of social media for classical music is a subdiscipline of social media marketing: social media branding. It is not enough to sell the cultural product (e.g., CD recording) and so musicians and organisations have developed their own personal brand identities on social media to profit their public profiles, audience base, financial growth, and — in the case of artists — chances of engagements. As demonstrated by Chapters 4 and 5, performers, concert halls, and corporate marketing strategies consistently cultivate their brands online to yield audience engagement, brand equity, fandoms, and customer loyalty. But branded content is just as important to mobile music apps. To recap findings from Chapter 6, The Liszt Sonata and Composed apps constitute a branding strategy for Stephen Hough and Classic FM respectively as much as they provide a user-led experience.

Although the social media brand is effectively a corporate commodity, there is more to branding than the overriding goal of sales. DiDonato, Hough, and Wigmore Hall have all fed loyal brand interactions via their social media marketing. The Hall’s core audience members regularly message each other and show loyalty by commenting on the venue’s ‘sticky’ tweets. Fans feel a parasocial relationship with their favourite artists and their brand identities and openly express these kindred bonds with the musicians and other users on social media. They, moreover, feel compelled to respond intercreatively, as Berners-Lee would suggest (see Chapter 6), by blogging about their personal experiences of the brand, devising hashtags around it (e.g., ‘#letJoycesing’), and even engaging in performative role play as in the case of DiDonato’s fans (see Chapter 4).
A social media brand, then, is a social system and a social media object in the literal sense. Fans are as much involved in the co-creation of the brand as the brand itself so that it has become integral to their lives. All of the above social media branding processes are more so for classical music because regular audiences tend to have ‘that slightly obsessive quality that makes them good followers’. But owing to the social media conglomerate and the digital marketing industry, users are phenomenologically co-creating social media brands. While they personally feel that they are involved in the brand co-creation process, their human agency is delusional because the online brand identities are projected to them by a corporate entity, a digital marketer, or PR company, often steering the artist’s social media marketing strategies. The set layouts, designs, and user templates of social media contribute to such. They are reframed by a pervasive and existential form of hegemony, which is transferable to the online sphere (see Chapter 4 for a fuller theorisation), and recycled back in and out of mainstream and traditional media.

In addition to marketing and branding, there is an especially noticeable effect that has recurred over the course of my research: the classical music industry’s emphasis on educational value and digital ‘outreach’. This ties in with the state of classical music culture and a supposed classical music ‘crisis’. That is, digital technology is able to revolutionise the longstanding images, demographics, and psychographics of classical audiences. Do social media, then, attract new audiences, not yet schooled in classical music? Do these technologies help to combat the classical music ‘crisis’? Do they provoke the interest of a younger audience and instigate a positive change in attitude among marginal sectors? To some extent, the answer to this question is true and the Introduction gave evidence for social media to disprove a ‘crisis’ (see Chapter 1, ‘Introduction’).

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Social media, however, are more likely to attract an audience who have a prior interest in classical music; Kyra Landzelius terms this the ‘inreach’ as opposed to ‘outreach’.

Do social media strategies, then, risk alienating an existing customer/client base? Based on the findings of this thesis, the answer to this question is yes. It concerns marketing firstly to a core segment as a priority but, as the Literature Review highlights, classical music culture’s socio-genesis comes about when the person is young and when music is introduced in the family home, school, and/or individual lessons. Alternatively, people’s lives and musical tastes mellow down and mature with age, a time in their life where they now possess enough time and disposable income to spend on pursuits of their choice. Concomitant with this life cycle, there are classical music apps, especially targeted at children, and a gap in the market exists for app developers to optimise the technologies for older persons and retirees, the customary classical audience (see Chapter 6).

Contrary to popular belief, there is not just a ‘Digital Natives’ generation of classical music lovers on social media but ‘silver surfers’ (i.e. an older generation of social media users). Significantly, demographics for classical music, digital technology, and social media reiterate that audiences are from a fortunate sector of society: ABC1 social grades, high educational levels, and wealthy backgrounds. The classical music industry, then, reciprocates talk of an all-embracing participatory culture online, regardless of cultural, educational, and socioeconomic differences. Nonetheless, there is still a ‘digital divide’ in classical music.

My case studies evidence such profiles. DiDonato’s online fans ‘#willtravelforopera’ and would most likely have paid, or had someone pay, large amounts for travel and tickets to the performance. Regarding her younger fans, their formal vocal training and passion for opera entails time and money for their cultural education. In the same way, a certain proportion of Hough’s social media audience comprises recreational, pre-professional, and professional pianists. Due to his influence, his Twitter followers enjoy


17 ‘15 days till @amber_zuniga7 and I can get tickets to see #GreatScott and @JoyceDiDonato Can’t wait!!! #willtravelforopera’ (@fanofhearts, tweet, 28 June 2015).
the finer aspects of life and buy into upmarket brands. His tweets regularly appeal to an intellectual audience.

Similarly, many of Wigmore Hall’s social media followers are representative of the core classical segment. Furthermore, the venue has promoted quality brands on its Twitter feed, recommended within an overall ‘Wigmore’ lifestyle consumption. This concert hall risks reconvening the exclusive club of classical music among online fans; the Hall’s Twitter Party event is a case in point (see Chapter 5, ‘Spatial representations’). A market of apps is founded on the old-style practice of classical music appreciation, which is comparatively easier for trained musicians or those with more time to learn about the music (e.g., attending a music appreciation class or carrying out independent research on the Internet).

These findings direct us to two research questions in particular, positioned towards the beginning of this thesis. Having studied social media marketing and classical music in more depth, the Conclusion is a suitable place to answer them. The first asks how the classical music industry’s social media marketing contrasts from other areas of contemporary life and from their channelling of the technologies.* Perhaps to reformulate the question from a marketing or social media practitioner’s perspective: what are some of the approaches to learn from the classical music world? The second question is whether in a post-Benjaminian ‘age of mechanical reproduction’ (Chapter 1, ‘Overview of the thesis’), social media have cannibalised the ‘aura’ of classical music* because regular audiences place great worth on the aesthetic quality of a classical performance and this music has become enshrouded with prejudices about how it should be presented.

**How does the classical music industry’s social media marketing differ from other social media marketing?**

Although social media assume a taken-for-granted quality, from an industry perspective, classical music has been comparatively slow to catch up with the wider social media populace.18 Social media have been available for more than ten years but

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18 F. Eves, op. cit.
Swainston-Harrison proposes that ‘it’s such new territory’. As ‘the music we present isn’t necessarily accessible right away, it’s not like pop music’, another key difference derives from the sociocultural milieu of classical music, the supposed knowledge, or musical understanding to be part of the classical community. These constructs have bearing on the particular users who interact with the classical music culture online, including an older audience one would not immediately associate with social media adoption. They are embodied on social networks, online content sites, Internet fan communities, and apps, despite the ideological thinking of ‘classical music for all’, digital equality, and a digital public sphere. They affect app development, for example, Weightman’s musical background and software input for a classical app (see Chapter 6).

More than that, social media affect the way people in the classical music scene utilise social media to signify their class status; that they are rehearsed in the art form and they have a connected and active presence in the classical music community. Even when they use the technologies in everyday life or in a normalised context, the way classical music users behave and personify themselves online is marginally different. This is because of followers who, by implication, are like-minded and they interact with the social media posts and content they are interested in, whether they are about classical music or not.

But compare these observations to other musical genres and there is overlap. Popular culture, jazz, and folk music have their vernacular and customs for participants to understand the musical styles and become involved in these musical communities; consider the ever-increasing popular cultural slang deployed in pop songs, music videos, and social media messages. Similar phenomena are located in Sara Cohen’s

19 Atholl Swainston-Harrison, interview with the author, 30 October 2014.
21 ‘Any DIY bods out there tell me this sort if shelf system is possible on a plasterboard/stud wall?’ (@iestyn_davies, tweet, 16 February 2016); ‘Check out @Vitsoe - its superb system can be fitted to plasterboard walls. Their London shop near Wigmore is very helpful’, (@Stuartiaindixon, tweet, 16 February 2016).
22 See also F. Hield, op. cit.
ethnography on rock music culture in Liverpool.23 Social media sites employ a shared vocabulary, which users need familiarity with before they start to operate them (e.g., RT and ‘regram’). Classical music has adopted digital marketing techniques from popular culture to make the art form ‘cool’ when it conceals schooling behind classical music, which is instantly understood by insiders. One photo collection on Facebook shows a class, in which Oreo biscuits were a visual aid to teach music theory, something suited to music students rather than the lay person (The Columbus Academy, Facebook, 27 October 2015).24 Another case in point is Wigmore Hall’s re-contextualised tweet about pop singer Justin Bieber and Baroque composer Heinrich Biber, who Bourdieu would categorise as ‘legitimate taste’ (see Chapter 5, ‘Wigmore Hall’s e-strategy’).

The issue of pricing does not make a significant difference either. To assert that an opera ticket is inexpensive, one online article compared the entry prices of pop concerts, sports events, cultural attractions, and tourist attractions, with the opera and classical performances directed mostly towards the end of the list. Examples included a ticket for Kate Bush at the Hammersmith Apollo (£49), Opera North’s production of Puccini’s La Bohème at the Leeds Grand Theatre (£15), and English Touring Opera’s Life on the Moon at the Hackney Empire (£10).25 The author of the article did likewise for the top price band for these events (£135, £49.50, and £33 respectively) and wished to emphasise that an opera ticket in a high price band is less than or on a par with the prices for other events.26 Money, though, is a precious commodity for some audience segments. Additionally, travel costs, souvenir costs (e.g., a programme), geographical location of the ticket holder, and a person’s occupation must be acknowledged. The classical music industry will not resolve the ‘digital divide’ merely by tweeting about discounted tickets and retweeting marginal audiences, who are present at a performance.

26 Ibid.
Transferring the question of pricing to the digital environment, annual membership for the music streaming service Qobuz started at £149.99 for classical music only and £50 more for all genres.\(^\text{27}\) Sleek Technique is a boutique ballet fitness company based online, with a loyal customer base and active social media community. While the vast majority of its clients have not done ballet before,\(^\text{28}\) a desire to learn this highly classical art form is counteracted by the company’s Streaming Membership, starting at £30 a month, and its Principal Membership at £48 per month (or £495 per year).\(^\text{29}\) With free content on YouTube, where videos cater to all ages and experiences in many varied interests and skills, there is still a dependency on paid Internet access either from an external entity or oneself.

Classical music audience development, then, is slightly more focused on cultural capital than price.\(^\text{30}\) With this cultural knowledge in mind, DiDonato’s younger fans immerse themselves in opera fandoms on ‘free’ social media sites. A concert by the Royal Holloway Symphony Orchestra on 30 November 2016 had an audience of university students, who have the educational capital to appreciate classical music, but they could attend the event by purchasing a free ticket online. The use of social media in classical music reinforces ties with existing members of the community (thus, a higher level of engagement) and targets individuals with the same profile as existing members (so more of the same).

As the traditional classical concert experience risks being impassive and unidirectional, a further difference between classical and non-classical social media marketing is an effort to consciously inspire creativity, interactivity, and intercreativity in all audiences, irrespective of their background and digital literacy. Within the last decade, the classical music industry has created many opportunities for amateur content (e.g., fan blogs) and


\(^{29}\) <http://www.sleektechnique.com/home/#slide-3> [accessed 26 October 2016].

\(^{30}\) C.f., Pierre Bourdieu and Alain Darbel with Dominique Schnapper, The Love of Art: European Art Museums and their Public (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1991). Free admission to arts museums is a false pretence because their visitors are disproportionately part of the ‘cultivated class’. 
'pro-am’ content (e.g., certain tweeters and bloggers the industry see as exemplar social media performers and ambassadors). However, these users are similar in audience profile and have a shared mind set aesthetically, behaviourally, and culturally. Many of these audiences are familiar with the ‘proper’ ways of experiencing and appreciating classical music.

The classical music market has encouraged intercreative approaches on digital technologies (e.g., including creative composition on a mobile app) but needs to strategise more if the industry endeavours to reach audiences beyond a core classical segment. According to consumer research from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, ‘the data suggest that many more people would be interested in learning more about classical music if more attractive and interactive educational mediums can be found’.31 In the same way as The Liszt Sonata app’s structural analysis essay indicates, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation’s data also ‘suggest that intellectually oriented education programs such as pre-concert lectures and detailed program notes are most likely to appeal to people who are already knowledgeable about classical music’.32 These findings point to the ‘inreach’ instead of the ‘outreach’, to requote Landzelius.

Chapter 6, then, has proposed the idea of a social media-enabled wiki, content community, or chat forum, doubling up as a classical music glossary, so that posts are written by users with formal musical backgrounds and those who do not have musical training. Modelled on London’s Senate House Library and the National Theatre, perhaps it is feasible for the City’s concert halls and opera houses to adopt similar initiatives, whereby audiences can borrow an iPad for free use in the building to track and compose tweets and Facebook messages about the event. But as London is powered by a large technological industry, one might ask about the feasibility to translate this idea to less technologically-rich cities, suburbs, and sub-communities, where there is interest in classical music. For want of a comparison, the North East of England and Northern Ireland have many classical music activities (e.g., choral evensong in Durham

32 Ibid.
Cathedral, orchestral and chamber concerts at The Sage Gateshead, and Dublin’s National Concert Hall). Yet, they were the lowest UK regions for overall Internet usage in 2016; from 75 to 85 per cent in the North East and Northern Ireland vis-à-vis 90 to 96 per cent in London. But not every social user wants to be fully active on these sites and may prefer passivity. Chapter 2 referred to a ‘Social Technographics Ladder’, displaying various gradients and habits surrounding online experiences, including the ‘Inactives’, ‘Spectators’, ‘Creators’ of content, and digitally extroverted ‘Conversationalists’.

If the overriding question of this section is to be permutated, one would ask what approaches can be adopted from the classical music sector which can benefit the social media marketing industry. The classical music industry tries to exploit social media to mobilise a community of those who want to regularly and actively participate in the art form, and who want to interact with like-minded people. This is a strategy the social media marketing industry continues to capitalise on. A particularly noticeable instance is the fitness industry, which has built up a community of users of varying ages and experiences, who are united by the goal of lifestyle improvement and who want to share this with others on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook (see Chapter 4, ‘Branding’). Yet, in the same way as there are training plans and online streaming workouts from beginners to more advanced levels of fitness, it is also about providing social media users with appropriate entry points and different types/levels of participation because not every is able to or wishes to appreciate classical music instantly due to its deep-rooted sociocultural connotations. Not everyone wants to be a digital extrovert either. The next sub-chapter deals with these sorts of ways aesthetically, culturally and technologically.

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In ‘an age of mechanical reproduction’, have social media degraded the ‘aura’ of classical music?

Within the context of late capitalism, Dr Ian Bostridge regards pop music as ‘a cultural sine qua non’. Thus, the classical music industry’s social media marketing has regularly alluded to popular music, culture, and language to appeal to those outside of the classical music culture’s exclusive club. Popular media marketing advocates an appropriation of popular cultural and online cultural strategies as ideal tactics to attract a wider audience. Those within the classical music community love this kind of content such as the recent, informal Twitter style of Wigmore Hall. Although the preferred way to listen to classical music is to listen to a whole work in full, with ‘expert’ listening patterns, mainstream music streaming apps have catered more to popular music listeners, by offering mood-based playlists. But this ‘emotional’ listening, as Adorno designates it, is even facilitated by classical music streaming services (see Chapter 6, ‘Composed’).

On the contrary, younger audiences, children, and teenagers who are less exposed to classical music do not need to have educational or informative content presented in a populist way. My data collection for the ‘#letJoycesing’ campaign evinces that DiDonato’s performance of the American National Anthem (a song tailored to the popular classical subgenre) had mixed reviews from fans, classical audiences, and non-classical audiences. With an Adornian ‘popular’ music category considered the lesser over ‘serious’ music, one could ask whether popular cultural marketing techniques risk devaluing digital classical music marketing? Indeed, by transferring classical music marketing into the mainstream digital landscape, do social media dilute or enhance the cultural product?*

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Consider ‘The Twitter Opera’, a one-off Royal Opera House commission premiered in September 2009, in which the public were asked to submit tweets comprising the libretto. Jeremy Pound, Deputy Editor of BBC Music Magazine, suggested that ‘It was an accident waiting to happen. Whenever there is a new fad, you know that someone in the art world is going to grab hold of it by the horns’. 38 ‘They should be careful that it doesn’t overtake the serious stuff that they [ROH] do’. 39 The interest and intelligence of online users, without a Grade 8 music performance qualification, university music degree, or conservatoire education, should not be undermined compared to insiders with specialist knowledge. Armando Iannucci worded this as such in his speech for the 2006 Royal Philharmonic Society Awards,

There’s no way anyone is ever going to fully ‘know’ music, but I do think there’s now an obligation to allow as many people as possible to know as much about it as they can. That’s not the same as saying that music could become more accessible through marketing gimmicks […]

Nor does it mean the classical music industry has to s[t]art talking awkwardly in the language of the street, going on about how Beethoven was a crazy guy, and Wagner made ‘action movies’. It’s not that at all. But it’s about developing a language that talks to the audience aware of their intelligence and appetite, but also recognising that they will have questions that need answering. 40

Indeed, we live in a ‘retweetable, likeable, and Instagrammable’ 41 culture and so the classical music industry’s marketing is at the detriment of the musical work, which is the main cultural product. In fact, classical music venues and companies have dedicated positions for e-strategy and there are specific agencies for digital marketing and communications of classical music (see Chapter 1, ‘Introduction). One conductor writes on his blog, ‘It’s not unreasonable to conclude that people who spend enough time on Twitter to track the tweets of all the various orchestras out there are really more


39 Ibid.

40 Armando Iannucci, ‘Classical music, the love of my life’, in Observer [https://www.theguardian.com/music/2006/may/14/classicalmusicandopera2] [accessed 11 January 2017].

41 F. Eves, Are You Retweetable, op. cit.
interested in Twitter than in going to concerts’. Indeed, the author of the blog On An Overgrown Path, who claims to be a former employee of EMI Records, candidly asks, ‘Why are classical musicians and journalists so good at promoting themselves on social media, but so bad at promoting deserving and little-known music?’

Whether one is sitting in tweet seats in the opera house, watching a famous musician’s masterclass on YouTube, or streaming classical music on a smartphone app to pass the time, the classical music industry has adopted a position whereby social media, multimedia content, and digital initiatives provide a more immersive, context-driven experience. From an insider’s perspective, this immersive user experience is also created by the formation of ‘musically-imagined communities’ and regular online interactions with other members of the classical music community (see Chapters 4 and 5).

Additionally, new musical creativities and inspirations are stimulated by digital technology and mobile apps. Despite a technologically-engendered culture of instant gratifications, an aspiring musician can obtain invaluable technical advice by viewing a streamed video masterclass on the Internet, given by a recognised classical performer. A composer uses a tablet as if it were a portable music studio or a tangible version of one’s creative self. Away from the instrument, a trained musician wants some productive practice time by listening to recordings and marking in scores conveniently loaded onto a mobile device. From a business standpoint, the ‘aura’ of classical music contributes to a performer’s paid work because it is channelled via technical skill, hard work, and an attenuated musical awareness from years of training and practice. For the freelance classical musician, then, social media, business networks, online portals, and music gig economy apps are all used to promote their ‘aura’; it is also somewhat easier to promote oneself in this ‘Uber economy’.

42 Kenneth Woods, ‘Has social media turned music’s back to the audience?’, <http://kennethwoods.net/blog1/2015/04/11/has-social-media-turned-musics-back-to-the-audience/> [accessed 28 October 2016].

Yet, many classical audiences and purists strongly agree that the live performance is of greater worth than the digital one, artistically and socio-spatially. Becky Schutt et al.’s research of three orchestral concerts reports that the physical concert-goers’ scores were consistently higher than the streamed performances in another venue or online.\(^4^4\) Thus, by marketing the social media experience in terms of liveness, one could ask whether digital mediation is equated in value to the in person classical concert experience.\(^8^\) Schutt et al. answer this question:

Do digital platforms deliver an enhanced experience on par with (or even superior to) that of live performances? The answer to this question is no. Our results indicate that the streaming experiences did not deliver the emotional and immersive experience that the live performances delivered. While the live streaming experience was a novelty among most of its audience, the emotional and immersive experience gap between the live performance and the streaming was evident with 50 per cent of live audiences expecting an uplifting experience compared to 17 per cent in streamed venues.\(^4^5\)

Our sense of space, place, time, and how we engage with a classical or cultural performance has been modified and altered by social media and other digital technologies, whether tweeting thoughts about a live-streamed recital on the Internet in real time or choosing from the online content around Hough’s performance of Liszt’s *Piano Sonata in B Minor* on Amphio’s The Liszt Sonata app (see Chapters 5 and 6 for fuller accounts). Hence, it is understandable why there are those who feel ambivalent about the digitised experience of classical music, away from the concert hall or opera house.

Preference towards the live classical experience is also due to the nature of the art form. Classical musicians and singers are trained to use their instruments without microphones. Asked why people should go to the opera themselves, Opera Chic, a recognised blogger in the classical and opera communities, answered, ‘The unamplified voice-nothing like it, ever. YouTube and HD simulcasts have created this impression that opera is best enjoyed from afar, it’s not true, the true visceral experience is there in

\(^{4^4}\) Becky Schutt et al., p. 6.

\(^{4^5}\) Ibid., p. 32.
the opera house, and it always will be’.\textsuperscript{46} One low-frequency ticket purchaser opines that ‘My sound system can’t duplicate what goes on in the concert hall’,\textsuperscript{47} likewise, a sophisticated listener, ‘I cannot duplicate the experience of a live concert in my living room’.\textsuperscript{48} In a blog for the \textit{Huffington Post}, David Brown, Section Bass in the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, claims that ‘Technology won’t change this […] Even complete novices recognize there is a profound difference between attending a live concert and listening to a recording’.\textsuperscript{49}

But clearly, in person concert or opera-going is a very meaningful and personal activity for audiences. Based on my netnography, a certain proportion of classical music audiences regularly use Twitter but try to attend as many performances as they can, sometimes more than once a week. They are repeat attenders of the same opera production or concert artist in the annual classical music season. ‘For some people — those most involved with the art form — classical music plays out like a sound track to their lives’.\textsuperscript{50} Indeed, there are numerous reasons why audiences attend classical music such as the artistic value, therapeutic value, and social value, experiences that perhaps cannot be replicated in the same way as attending in person or with other like-minded people.\textsuperscript{51} These reasons (and hence an aura, in the dictionary sense of atmosphere) are often more important than the musical work or technical-aesthetic aspects of sound quality, ‘many people in the audience are there [classical concerts] for reasons other than (or in addition to) the music’.\textsuperscript{52}

Alongside preference for the live, in person classical music experience, there are audiences who, moreover, favour the traditional concert experience rather than alternative formats or enhancement strategies, which are facilitated by social media and

\textsuperscript{47} John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, op. cit., p. 19.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., p. 52.
\textsuperscript{50} John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, op. cit., p. 41.
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., p. 16.
\textsuperscript{52} Ibid.
digital technology. These audience members, however, tend to possess the relevant educational and sociocultural levels to appreciate a traditional concert experience. It is worth considering an observation of attenders at the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra’s student and youth concerts by Rudolf Axt, Chief Executive of the Orchestra, ‘They need the ritual, they want to be part of the whole spectacle’, even though the concert promotion is ‘very social media-facing’. Consumers from the student market suggested that they do not have to be fully reliant on mobile programme notes during the performance, as was the case with focus group members of the Student Pulse app, ‘To a certain extent you prepare before a concert and know approximately what’s going to happen […] not everything has to be handed to us on a plate, like I don’t see the need’;54 ‘I really don’t think we should be encouraging people to mess about with their phones in concerts please’.55

Ironically, though, classical music patrons use social media to criticise those not adhering to concert etiquette (see Chapter 5, ‘Spatial representations’). Relatedly, it is intriguing to note further audience data from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Accordingly, the youngest ticket purchasers, aged 18 to 34, are as likely as the oldest (75 plus) to appreciate the formality of the concert experience and ‘Ticket buyers with the lowest educational attainment (high school graduate or less) are more likely than those with graduate school educations to value the formality of the concert experience’.56

But ‘who is to say that the at-home or in-auto listening experience is any more or less valid, any more or less meaningful or worthwhile than the listening experience in a concert hall?’57 Former lead architect of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra’s Digital

54 G. Crawford et al., op. cit., p. 23.
55 Ibid.
56 John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, op. cit., p. 128.
57 Ibid., p. 51. Compare also with Glenn Gould’s two landmark recordings he made of Bach’s Goldberg Variations. The first recording in analogue form from 1955 was widely praised but the second digitally engineered version from 1981 was deemed less convincing, a recording then re-mastered into analogue for a re-release in 2002. Anthony Tommassini, ‘Remastered Glenn Gould in tempo with the times’, in
Concert Hall, Alexander McWilliam cogently answers this question and recaps many debates from this subchapter,

First, if we discuss only *streaming vs. live concerts* then we risk repeating century-old fears and missing the bigger picture […]

Second, no medium has ever replaced any other medium, albeit they benefit and/or cannibalize one another […]

Third, each format offers different benefits to different people. Some people enjoy the social exposure as much as the music. Some people are collectors. Some people need to be gradually introduced to classical music. Some people are HiFi enthusiasts and like to tinker with their listening experience like other’s [sic] like to tinker with their car or their garden. Some people are not as mobile or as affluent as they used to be and chose convenience over authenticity. Some people simply don’t have any great music institutions in their city… if they live in a city at all.58

Indeed, the classical music industry aims to encourage as many people as possible to enjoy and access the art form but not everyone will like classical music, in the same way that not all individuals use Facebook. One focus group member for Student Pulse pondered, ‘Does everybody need to listen to classical music, not everyone is into the same thing? I don’t know, after football matches do they have focus groups about how to get people to go to football? Not everyone does everything’.59 Following in this vein, the classical music industry is keen to encourage ‘Digital Natives’ to explore the art form but older audiences and retirees should still be allowed to regularly enjoy evenings in the concert hall or opera house. ‘With increasing numbers of people retiring early, and living more actively for longer and with more time and disposable income to explore the arts, the grey market itself offers opportunities for segmentation’,60 an observation that applies to digital technology and social media. These opportunities for market segmentation could encompass developing mobile app interfaces for older users or attending one of the regular ‘Digital Buddy’ drop-in sessions at Egham Library, where people are able to learn how to use a computer or laptop.

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59 G. Crawford et al., op. cit., p. 25.

60 P. Fraser, op. cit., p. 74.
Social media, then, are not designed to replace traditional types of business models, cultural attendance, and music appreciation but complement them. Gradually, people will come to realise the benefits of social media but are not obliged to use them. In fact, the National Endowment for the Arts reports that over 28 per cent of adults watched or listened to classical music on TV or radio vis-à-vis the Internet. In the same time, I guess, there are people who aren’t on Twitter and Facebook and they’re missing out on that but, to be honest, you know, that will come eventually. We can’t expect everyone to be on there and they’re still interacting with the [Wigmore] Hall, going to great concerts. [...] It’s not everyone’s cup of tea as well, you know, do they want to hear the critics’ opinion? [...] One of the things is giving people the option of how you want to interact with the organisation, do you just want to be by email, just want to be by Facebook, by print, by concerts only, walk-in, CDs? Gilhooly states that there still is a certain percentage of London-based classical music audiences who do not use a computer and so social media will not yet supersede the core or old style marketing methods. Having played in a professional orchestra myself, I have learnt that musicians’ bookings continue to be made using traditional communications such as word of mouth, email, phone, or mobile text message for short notice arrangements and logistical reasons. Thus, it is not necessarily self-promotion on social media networks and mobile applications that will cause a classical performer to be hired.

There are various justifications and pieces of evidence for whether social media have damaged the ‘aura’ of classical music. Those, who were involved in classical music culture before the development of social media, may have set opinions about digital media but attitudes are changing. Paradoxically, those from the classical music scene have used the Internet to question the quality and validity of digital ‘outreach’. We need to look at the wider media landscape and re-examine our thoughts towards this age-old art form and digital technology.

61 National Endowment for the Arts, A Decade of Arts Engagement, op. cit., p. 28.
62 Rylan Holey, interview with the author, 10 May 2013.
63 John Gilhooly, interview with the author, 15 December 2015.
Developments for the research

Reflecting on the key findings and research questions of this thesis, there are various avenues down which to take this dissertation for post-doctoral research. Each of the case study chapters concluded by contextualising the social media marketing strategies in terms of traditional media precedents. Given that the excitement around the newness of social media has lessened, it is worth considering the role of traditional media within classical music marketing so that this specific marketing specialism is re-examined as a whole. There are arts marketing textbooks that have drawn attention to traditional marketing methods but have done so before the development of social media. Hence, a reappraisal of the marketing mix is warranted given that social, digital, and traditional media forms converge.

One other reason for focusing on traditional marketing materials is because many classical music actors tended to use social media at the same time, partly out of necessity. Almost every major classical musician has their own social media account or at least has social media marketing done on their behalf. As social media consultant Brian Solis tersely commands, ‘Engage or Die’. In fact, several classical performers, who were previously not on social media, have recently capitalised on the tools. They include: concert pianist Peter Donohoe, who set up a blog on his personal website, and singer Roderick Williams, who has used multiple social media channels — Twitter, Facebook, Blogspot, and YouTube — from autumn 2015 to document preparing Schubert’s song cycles in recital. The oral tradition of classical performance tuition has even carried over to YouTube video tutorials, as well as one-to-one lessons via Skype, Facetime, and performance coaching portal Musical Orbit, even though ‘physical contact with a student is common practice and […] they might not be prepared to try this new way of teaching’.

67 Nicole Wilson, ‘Is the future of music tuition online?’, <http://www.gramophone.co.uk/blog/gramophone-guest-blog/is-the-future-of-music-tuition-online> [accessed 6 February 2017].
Inevitably, though, using social media successfully depends on each artist, organisation, and marketing strategy. Recorder player and teacher Sarah Jeffery claims that, since her YouTube tutorials, ‘I have met people from literally all over the world, who have started playing or who are playing and may not have teachers or resources in their area but through the Internet they can start’.\(^{68}\) Contrary to conventional belief of mediated performance teaching (that it is a lesser experience compared to having a music lesson in person), flautist Alenka Bogataj positively reviews her individual lesson on Musical Orbit with principal orchestral flautist Juliette Bausor because it saved time and money for travel and the site was easy and convenient.\(^{69}\) In Wilson’s survey of classical musicians and social media, 77 per cent of respondents felt that it was important to be on social media but 41 per cent felt that social media had been “very useful” for professional purposes.\(^{70}\) Bostridge claims that social media do not help much in bringing in sales for concerts and CD recordings.\(^{71}\) Artists will have likely started using social media marketing to keep up or an external party will have advised the musician to engage on social media, in Bostridge’s case, his record company.\(^{72}\) The jeopardy is that of a persistent broadcast platform or product placement (see Chapter 1, ‘Definition and exploration of the field’). Having launched a book in mid-December 2014, his Twitter account had been set up to retweet every tweet mentioning his name, subsequently annoying his followers.\(^{73}\) These retweets are akin to a corporate push marketing opportunity.

Yet, the corporate marketing aspect of social media and the economics of classical stars and performers are inescapable. From an Adornian perspective, artists of all musical genres have become subject to market forces, if more so than musical products and


\(^{70}\) F. Wilson, ‘Classical Musicians and Social Media’, op. cit.

\(^{71}\) Ian Bostridge, informal correspondence with the author, 21 November 2014.

\(^{72}\) Ibid.

\(^{73}\) Thomas Elwin, ‘Social media?’, <http://tomelwin.blogspot.co.uk/2015/02/social-media.html> [accessed 30 April 2015].

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works. But if the artist personally adopts social media, they have to actually want to use the tools. Swainston-Harrison expresses it as such:

The problem is a lot of very good artists have no time for Twitter. In fact, they might even not be good at it and if they’re not good at it, don’t let them do it. So the artist managers are saying ‘Ok, I’ll do it for you’. Is that true? Is that really getting to the vulnerable contact? Of course it’s not. They’re putting a barrier again, a filter between the artist and the public. A very managed filter. Will that really have the same impact? Probably not. So, either the artist does it and then regrets maybe sometimes not doing it right. Or gets a PR company to do it which is slightly false given that social media is about a really personal interaction.74

Thus, audiences desire first-person engagement from an artist’s social media account, rather than ventriloquising. Eves, too, discloses that Intermusica used to post in the style of the artist or in the third person but what people then wanted was their own voice.75

On the other hand, how artists, venues, companies, and agencies engage in corporate marketing and self-promotion online is necessary if the classical music industry is to survive economically and so these techniques should not be constantly criticised. Brian Tram, Founder of London Real, claims that repetitive entrepreneurial messages act as fresh online content for most people.76

In a similar vein to re-examining the role of traditional media within the classical music marketing mix, future academic research would follow classical music communities away from the computer. In fact, a body of evidence-based research from the Sheffield Performer and Audience Research Centre has set out to augment sociocultural knowledge about in person attendance at classical concerts, including audience response and socio-communal occurrences.77 This thesis has analysed classical fan and audience communities online and offline (see Chapters 4 and 5) and so my contribution to the existing literature would be sociotechnological given that physical-virtual divisions have become blurred.

74 A. Swainston-Harrison, op. cit.
75 F. Eves, op. cit.
76 London Real, op. cit.
Herein is another potential development from the doctoral thesis. Social media have become embedded subconsciously into our lives, personal selves, and corporeal beings so that they are ‘ubiquitous computers’ (see Chapter 6). Therefore, the next major step in technoculture has been to make a hyperreality actualised for users. According to Digi-Capital, investment in augmented reality and virtual reality reached $1.1 billion in the first two months of 2016 and revenue is forecast at $120 billion by 2020. The recent convergence of social media and futuristic technologies (e.g., the Pokémon Go mobile app) has allowed the classical music and cultural sectors to capitalise on these tools for audience engagement, development, and additional revenue. But in a similar way to social media, one could ask whether the newness of augmented and virtual reality is a passing trend or a sustainable, long-term market to amass a regular audience.

Graham Thomas from the BBC’s R&D department suggests that, ‘As with any emerging technology, the experiences need to be compelling enough once the novelty has worn off’. More worryingly, with Facebook initially selling its Oculus Rift virtual reality headset for $599, there is another risk of ‘digital divides’. With arts organisations dependent on box office income, Chicago-based orchestra consultant Drew McManus has perceptively asked whether performing arts organisations ‘would be better served by redirecting those resources toward improving the infrastructure of their existing online efforts such as their website, online ticketing and database management’. For most orchestra[s], even large budget groups, there are plenty of digital channels that deserve resources before casting an eye toward virtual reality programming.

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The Methodology commented on translating the research cross-culturally because my thesis has focused on examples rich in the Euro-American classical heritage. The majority of my case studies have centred on major cities such as London, Berlin, and New York, which yield economically from a super-cosmopolitan elite and large technological reservoirs. By way of a comparison, China and India have the potential to be leading world markets for classical music and social media are popular in these countries (see Chapter 3, ‘Scope of research’). By extension, a cross-cultural methodology utilises more localised approaches. Ruth Finnegan has undertaken ethnographic research of classical music activities in the town of Milton Keynes (UK),\(^{83}\) likewise, Chapter 5 presented some first-hand accounts of classical concert marketing in the town of Berkhamsted (see Chapter 5, ‘Conclusions’). As translocalism has been in vogue in many academic disciplines, the interrelationship between urbanist and local contexts and the ramifications for classical music and social networks would be a timely area for post-doctoral research.

Postscript

What is the future of social media marketing and classical music? Over a decade on from the launch of today’s popular social networks, there is still a burgeoning social media industry and so there is no doubt that the classical music sector will continue to utilise the technologies as core marketing tools, audience outreach initiatives, fan community platforms, and revenue initiators. Indeed, there is no better time for classical music and arts advocates to use social media and the Internet, with the announcement made earlier this year for Donald Trump’s administration to make significant budgetary reductions to the National Endowment for the Arts. The Metropolitan Opera and Lincoln Center used their Twitter accounts to express their opposition to Trump’s plans.\(^1\) A Change.org petition, with over 50,000 signatures,\(^2\) and an open letter, signed by chief executives of the eleven constituent organisations of the Lincoln Center (including the Juilliard School, New York Philharmonic, Metropolitan Opera and Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center),\(^3\) have both been widely shared on Twitter and Facebook.

Social media maintain an immense popularity with the core classical audiences, even if they log in to be regularly updated about their favourite artists, and so they will be disappointed if the digital media landscape disappeared altogether or if the classical music industry decided to stop using the technologies as a whole. But social media are not the ultimate marketing materials. The social media marketing industry is moving at a rapid pace. Having been a user of Facebook myself, I know that I signed up to its format upgrades and checked my online privacy settings in this light. In 2016, there

\(^1\) ‘General Manager Peter Gelb and @LincolnCenter leadership: “Save the National Endowment for the Arts” metopera.org/user-informati …’ (@MetOrchestra, tweet, 2 March 2017) and ‘Peter Gelb speaks w @NBCNightlyNews about Trump’s budget proposal to eliminate the @NEAarts. Watch video: bit.ly/2nJS22u’ (@MetOpera, tweet, 22 March 2017);


\(^3\) <http://www.lincolncenter.org/article/save-the-national-endowment-for-the-arts> [accessed 22 April 2017].
were reports of stunted growth of Twitter users. It is not unreasonable either that YouTube could suddenly shut down. Tram cautions those who exclusively rely on this video platform for their source of income, even with millions of video views, because the amount made from a video is comparatively small and these users do not have a ‘real’ business model in place.

Yet, the classical music industry has been slow to make progress in terms of the ‘digital divide’. Over the course of my doctoral studies, there has scarcely been change because classical music culture is heavily institutionalised. Due to the economic and business models of classical music, it will always be an expensive art form, even when promoted via ‘free’ online outlets and social media applications. A tweet from Wigmore Hall, regarding its Twitter party in summer 2015, summarises much of this thesis’ content, ‘if you are not in, you can’t win!’ (@wigmore_hall, 2 April 2015).

On 12 September 2015, conductor Marin Alsop took out a selfie stick at the end of the Last Night of the Proms, an established event within the classical music scene. She proceeded to take two selfies with the orchestra, chorus, and audience in the Royal Albert Hall. Planned in advance by her creative team, one was caught on camera during the concert’s live televised broadcast on BBC One, the other posted onto her Twitter account by a representative from her management immediately after. Due to the very high engagement with this tweet in a short space of time, the selfie was deemed a success. This closing vignette confirms the ways in which the classical music industry will maintain its social and digital media marketing. I personally am eager to find out what will be the next phase in the e-marketing strategy of classical music. Who knows what technological advances the classical music business will exploit three, five, or ten years after this thesis, all the more so as social media move into a phase beyond virtual reality and into the world of automation (e.g., Amazon Alexa)? Yet, it will be of especial interest in the long term to observe how the classical music scene will negotiate

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5 London Real, op. cit. [accessed 1 November 2016].
6 Florence Eves, email to the author, 3 November 2016.
7 Ibid.
digital developments that necessitate the industry to take practical action and tackle such matters directly.
**Glossary**

For the purposes of this thesis, a glossary of specialised vocabulary, pertaining to social media marketing, is included. It can be referred to if needed. A number of these words have developed in a memetic way within the social media marketing industry and, as I hope this dissertation has shown, they have created new ways of thinking.

**Symbols**

@  
(v.) (to ‘@’ someone): a way of communication on social media sites such as Twitter, by incorporating the ‘@username’ handle of another account. On Twitter, all user names start with the ‘@’ symbol.

**A**

**AudioBoo**  
(n.) an audio-sharing website.

**App**  
(n.) a file or application, downloadable to a mobile device and serving a purpose (e.g., watching videos or social networking).

**Augmented Reality (AR)**  
(n.) a computer-generated technology, whereby extra digital information is laid over real-world/real-time data (e.g., images, GPS, or video) to enhance or ‘augment’ one’s reality of a situation or location. A prominent example of AR is Pokémon Go (see below for definition).

**B**

**Bio**  
(n.) a designated section below a user’s Twitter profile picture where one can give information about themselves in no more than 160 characters.

**Blog**  
(n. & v.) shortened for web blog. The social media equivalent of a website, where one can write entries akin to a diary, organised in chronological order. Blogs can feature as a special section on a website as well. There are many reasons why people blog, for instance, to offload emotion, express opinion, inform an audience, or promote a product (e.g., corporate blogs).

**Blogspot**  
(n.) a blog hosting website, launched in 1999.

**C**

**Content marketing**  
(v.) a marketing strategy that uses content to help promote the product.

**Content**  
(n.) anything put out by a user on the Internet, on social media, and on a website.
Crowdfunding/crowdsourcing
(v.) an online fundraising initiative, whereby members of the public are encouraged to donate money to help artists achieve their particular goals, for example, raising the costs for recording an album. Due to their donations, patrons may receive a reward such as a dedication to them in the CD’s sleeve notes. Two of the most popular crowdsourcing sites are Kickstarter and Patreon. Crowdsourcing also refers to a peer-to-peer system, whereby online/social media data is collated and sourced en masse for a particular purpose (e.g., online voting and hashtags).

D

Digg
(n.) a crowdsourced news aggregation site, where users could submit their own stories. Users voted for the content they liked best, by clicking on a button that came with each story. The stories with the most votes would be featured on a user-curated main page and across other platforms.

E

Engagement
(adj.) how engaged or interested the user is in online or by online/social media content.
‘Engaged Users’
(adj.) a metric on the social media site Facebook, which accounts for how engaged users are.
e-strategy
(n.) a business strategy, implemented online and/or through digital media.

F

Facebook
(n.) a popular social media network, launched in 2004, where users can message each other, update their contacts or ‘friends’ about what is happening, issue pictures, keep up to date with trending topics, news, accounts of other people, and fan pages of celebrities, public figures, and brands, and more recently, stream live video to others.

Filter
(n.) an effect put on a picture, namely, on Facebook and Instagram, to alter its colouration and/or brightness.

Flickr
(n.) a photo-based social networking site, launched in 2004.

Follower
(n.) (from: to follow) someone subscribed to another account on social media sites such as Twitter and Instagram.

G

GIF
(n.) a file, uploaded to social media that supports text, picture, video, animation, or any combination.
Gig economy
(n.) A social media-enabled form of employment, whereby the employee is paid an amount for each gig or engagement rather than on an hourly basis. For this reason, the gig economy has been likened to a zero-hour contract. Examples include apps such as Uber (taxi services) and Groupmuse (classical music performance).

Google Glasses
(n.) an AR headset in the shape of glasses, developed by Google. It responded to voice control, by enabling users to perform many tasks such as taking pictures, recording videos, and getting directions (e.g., ‘Glass, take a photo’). It enabled apps for news, facial recognition, translation, and social media interactions.

Hashtag
(n.) a crowdsourced, people-to-people tagging device on social media. A word or short phrase, starting with the hash symbol (#), which users can click on and utilise in their messages for identification purposes, starting a discussion, and data collection. Hashtags have also been used for activist purposes to show a particular opinion towards a cause or event (e.g., ‘#letJoycesing’).

Instagram
(n.) a social media site, launched in 2010. Focused on photo-based content, it introduced the facility to share video content in 2013.

iPad
(n.) a tablet computer device from technology corporation Apple, launched in 2010.

iPhone
(n.) a smartphone device from Apple, launched in 2007.

iPod
(n.) a rounded rectangular-shaped music player from Apple, launched in 2001. It operates by purchasing downloadable tracks from the online iTunes store, and by transferring tracks from one’s CD collection and Apple iTunes into a personal library (see below for definition of iTunes). These tracks can then be uploaded onto the iPod.

iTunes
(n.) (Apple iTunes): an online application, from which users can purchase music tracks, store music, and organise it in a personal library. The library is accessible both online and offline.
L
Like
(n.) (also v.) refers to a clickable button on social media to show liking towards or interest in the content. For example, one can ‘like’ a tweet or a fan page on Facebook.

Live streaming
(n.) audio and/or video content is relayed online in real time.

M
Meme
(n.) a rapidly spreading or ‘viral’ concept across social media. It can be a phrase, picture, and/or a video.

Micro-video
(n.) a mini video form, adapted for social media and mobile apps (e.g., Vine).

N

O

P
Page
(n.) a content portal for a social media user or account (e.g., a Facebook fan page for a particular celebrity or brand).

Periscope
(n.) a live-streaming video app, owned by Twitter and launched in 2015.

Phablet
(n.) a hybrid of a tablet and smartphone.

Podcast
(n.) a mini radio programme that can be downloaded onto a computer or mobile device. Podcasts are made available on Apple iTunes, SoundCloud, or a relevant hosting website.

Pokémon Go
(n.) an AR mobile gaming trend, launched in 2016. Based on a popular Japanese television cartoon, players have to find Pokémon, fictional animal and monster-like characters, in certain locations, identified via crowdsourced data and GPS tracking.

Post
(n.) (also a verb); a piece of social media content or a social media message, issued or ‘posted’ online.

Q

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Reddit
(n.) a combined news, content, and chat forum, where users can collectively vote on the items to organise and rank them so that the top items appear on the front page or at the top of one of many categories, by which the site is organised by (e.g., sports, food, and music).

Regram
(n.) (also v.): to repost a video or photo on Instagram.

Repost
(v.) to reissue a piece of social media content or social media message.

Retweet
(n.) (also v.): to repost a message on Twitter.

Selfie
(n.) a self-portrait image, uploaded to social media.

Share
(v.) see ‘post’ and ‘repost’.

Smartphone
(n.) a redevelopment of the simple mobile phone. It combines functionalities of a personal computer, notably, Internet Wi-Fi, email, and app downloads, with basic mobile features (e.g., voice calls, texts, calendar, games, taking photos, and video). Unlike the buttons of a standard mobile phone, smartphones operate with a touch screen interface.

Snapchat
(n.) a photo, video-sharing, and multimedia app for smartphones. On it, viewers are able to access content for up to ten seconds before it disappears.

Social media
(n.) ‘Social media employ mobile and web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms via which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content’.1

Social network
(n.) a social media site, where the focus is on social networking. Yet, the collusion of many social media franchises means that there is not a major difference between a social media site and a social network because many social media entail an element of networking.

SoundCloud
(n.) an audio-sharing website (e.g., for music clips and podcasts).

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Status update
(n.) a feature on Facebook where one updates their status about what is happening around them, how they are feeling, or what they are doing. This feature can be used to share news, website links, social media links, pictures, and audio-visual content.

Streaming
(v.) relaying audio and/or video content over the Internet, social media, or mobile apps either in real time or at a later date. For example, live-streaming events have been hosted via the music streaming service Spotify but users can also stream music on demand.

T
Tablet
(n.) a portable, wireless computer device, smaller than a laptop but larger than a smartphone. It has a touch screen interface and keyboard and connects to Internet Wi-Fi, meaning that users can perform similar functions as they would on a smartphone or laptop, for example, downloading apps. Due to its size, it is easier to carry out tasks on a tablet otherwise difficult on a smartphone such as accessing documents and working on them.

Trend
(n.) (trending topic): a popular subject or topic that many people are talking about on social media.

Tumblr
(n.) a popular social networking site combined with blogging facilities, launched in 2007.

Tweep
(n.) a person using and/or following a particular account on Twitter.

Tweet
(n.) (also v.) a message, issued on Twitter.

Tweeter
(n.) a person who tweets.

Twitter
(n.) a social networking site, launched in 2006, operating through 140 character messages, known as tweets.

U
User-generated content
(n.) online content generated by the user, at least experientially.

V
Vine
(n.) an app, owned by Twitter and launched in 2013. It allows users to create six-second videos and upload them either to Twitter or as freestanding videos on one’s smartphone.
Virtual reality (VR)
(n.) a computer-generated simulation of an occurrence or environment to make a person feel that he/she is experiencing it in reality. VR is usually achieved by wearing special goggles-like headsets (e.g., Facebook’s Oculus Rift headsets) and by creating an immersive sonic and visual experience for the person.

Vlog
(n. & v.) The video equivalent of a blog.

W

Wearable technology
(n.) digitally-enabled devices that can be worn on oneself, which create personal data without human interference (e.g., the Fitbit fitness tracker).

Web 2.0
(n.) an umbrella term, coined by Tim O’Reilly in 2005, to summarise the next development of the ‘read only’ Web 1.0. Web 2.0 suggests a more interactive, participatory, and collaborative approach towards the Internet (see Chapter 2, ‘Social media’).

WhatsApp
(n.) an instant messaging app for smartphones, facilitated via Internet connection. It was launched in 2009 and owned by Facebook in 2014. WhatsApp also allows users to make voice calls to contacts on their phones and share multimedia messages.

Wiki
(n.) a crowdsourced informational resource that can be authored by anyone. The model example of a wiki is Wikipedia, a resource that has entries on a vast range of subjects and people (e.g., celebrities), which people continually add to and update over time.
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