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Classical Music in Southeast Ohio:
The Impact of Performance On a Rural Community

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Introduction

In recent years, music education, and specifically, classical music, has been marginalized in the United States. Indeed, there is alarming evidence of music education being reduced or altogether eliminated from public school curricula to make room for greater focus on such studies as the sciences, mathematics, and literacy (Guhn and Emerson 309). Classical music has often been associated with terms such as “elite,” “pretentious,” “expensive,” “out-dated,” and other negative descriptions. The presence of classical music has been diminished as a result of its long-standing tradition of formalities, making it less welcoming to the general population because of these reasons. From a global perspective, the potential for classical music to become a more widely appreciated art-form is greater than many may assume. According to a report conducted by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, streaming service Deezer, and British Phonographic Industry, classical music has recently experienced a surge in popularity among Millennials and Gen Z within the past two years due to increased access to streaming services (Roberts). According to the report, 34 percent of those listening to classical were between the ages of 18 to 25 years old (Roberts). Considering how the music industry has been dominated by genres other than classical music within the past decade, this seems to be a remarkable statistic.

This data contrasts with statistics reported ten years ago by British Phonographic Industry where ten percent of classical listeners were under 30 while 70 percent were over the age of 50 (Roberts). While classical music has grown through streaming services such as Deezer and Spotify, its increase in popularity among young people grew even more following the Covid-19 lockdown in March of 2020. This was reported by Deezer where over the course of three months, global plays of classical music increased by 11 percent among those 18 to 25 years old (Roberts). While the increase in streaming of classical music may have been associated with its commonly

perceived benefit of being “calming” or stress relieving, I believe that this is a step in the right direction (Roberts).

From the perspective of classical music in the United States alone, I believe that the potential for classical music to be a highly sought-after subject of study is very great for many reasons. After examining the role of classical music in other cultures, one can see that there is a growing trend towards this genre with more enthusiasm and interest in music education. For example, the status of classical music in East Asian countries such as China, Japan, and South Korea has grown exponentially (Huang 162). As can be seen through the similarities between the United States and China in terms of economic drive, I believe the same will soon be said in terms of arts education. The “rage” towards classical music education in China can be seen through the millions of young pianists studying this subject on a daily basis. From international piano competition winners to hundreds of concert pianists performing around the globe, Chinese pianists seem to be the dominating group within the classical music world today. Why has classical music become so popular in China? The answer to this question lies within a philosophical context of Confucian values that are so important to much of the Chinese population (Huang 166).

According to *The Economist*, of the 50 million pianists worldwide, as many as 40 million of these are Chinese (Gulangyu and Guangzhou). Even more study the violin with reports of over 50 million children studying this instrument. This is compared to the United States where, according to *The New York Times* article titled “Steinway's Grand Ambitions for Its Pianos in China,” there are an estimated 6 million pianists (Hernández). According to the *International Journal of Music Education* article titled “Why Chinese People Play Western Classical Music: Transcultural Roots of Music Philosophy,” *The New York Times* has remarked that “with the

same energy, drive, and sheer population weight that has made it an economic power, China has become a considerable force in Western classical music...The Chinese enthusiasm suggests the potential for a growing market for recorded music and live performances just as an aging fan base and declining record sales worry many professionals in Europe and the United States” (qtd. in Huang 163). Classical music in East Asia could be compared to the American focus on athletics over the arts. *The Philadelphia Inquirer* has even quoted that “Chinese parents urge their children to excel at instrumental music with the same ferocity that American parents push theirs to perform well in soccer or Little League,” (qtd. in Huang 162).

The arts seem to identify as the preferred educational outlet for Chinese children and students to pursue. The Chinese philosopher Confucius and his perspective that music plays a major role in developing the human intellect has lasted since the time of his death in 479 BC. Additional philosophers at the time including Pythagoras and Plato supported Confucius and his belief that music and the arts encourage a sense of gracefulness and perfection within the day-to-day life of a person (Huang 169). According to Plato, “because anyone who has been properly educated in music and poetry will sense it acutely when something has been omitted from a thing and when it hasn’t been finely crafted or finely made by nature. And since he has the right distastes, he’ll praise fine things, be pleased by them, receive them into his soul, and being nurtured by them, become fine and good” (Huang 169). Confucius made similar statements that suggest how music plays a role in developing virtue, sensibilities, and grace within a person.

The Chinese perspective that music provides a deep source of virtue, grace, and sensibility contrasts with the view in the United States where classical music is valued to a lesser extent in terms of human fulfillment. Classical music is often justified by advocates as a way to enhance one’s ability in other intellectual areas, known as the “Mozart Effect” (Huang 172). In

this manner, classical music is justified in the United States as a means to an end rather than as a deeper method of self-cultivation. These differences in interpretation between the United States and China provide a possible explanation as to why classical music is valued at such different levels. Despite these differences in perspective, the evidence that classical music could potentially be valued to the degree of the Chinese is very high for many different reasons.

Much interest has been given to the concert-artist with the appearance of many classical musicians on different public platforms of social-media, late-night shows, and other forms of entertainment. These platforms are not exclusive to the classical world but to the general population. The classical pianist Lang-Lang has made a very successful effort to share his performances to the general population as can be seen through his appearances on late night television including Jimmy-Fallon and Stephen Colbert as well as appearances on countless other television programs. These efforts by Lang-Lang to create interest towards classical music should be undertaken by more musicians. However, the traditional method of performing within the classical music world alone has prevented the possibility of an even larger interest in this genre. Rather than performing for the general population, the classical musician has become too comfortable within a smaller sector of the country. At the same time, a stigma has been placed upon the mainstream artist, resulting in few classical musicians willing to perform for the general public.

In order to counteract the negative preconceptions that have been promoted by the media in the United States, classical musicians must make an effort to perform for the general public more frequently. While the mainstream media often portrays classical music as a dying art-form, sold-out concerts of Lang Lang, Yo Yo Ma, and Hilary Hahn prove otherwise. Classical music has often been characterized as elitist, pretentious, and generally boring compared to new genres

of today. We must frame classical music in a different light in order to create enthusiasm for this genre to the same degree as China. The “Mozart Effect” is not enough to ensure that classical music will become an essential component of the American education system. Not only should musicians be preparing for traditional recitals but also for the community at new and unique locations.

II. Creative Project

In order to promote classical music and create a greater sense of enthusiasm for this genre, this project has been designed to reach a smaller community within the region of Southeastern Ohio. As a native of Southeast Ohio, my knowledge of the area as well as past experiences revealed what was most lacking in terms of music education opportunities. This study will particularly focus on the community of Gallipolis Ohio, where the population is approximately 5,000 people. As a native of Gallipolis, Ohio, my upbringing within this community will likely result in greater likelihood for participation in this study as well as appreciation for the genre of classical music. My education within its local school system as well as participation in programs offered by the Ariel Opera House will result in many connections that can be utilized throughout the execution of this project. I will have the ability to access more resources within this community to promote this project and attract as many participants as possible.

The town of Gallipolis, Ohio, is unique in that classical music has had a modest existence in this community due to programs and concerts offered by the Ariel Opera House, home of the Ohio Valley Symphony. The Ohio Valley Symphony was first established in 1989 by Lora Lynn

Snow who was responsible for restoring the abandoned opera house after 25 years of closing. The symphony performs frequently with a six-concert series throughout the year. Four of these concerts occur during the fall while two occur in the spring. Despite the number of notable artists and significant concerts that have been offered by the Ariel Opera House on a yearly basis, general interest throughout the community is lower than one might expect. In addition, a large portion of audience members visit from neighboring communities rather than from the town of Gallipolis itself. Many masterclasses offered by significant artists receive low attendance as well with participation in these classes from students of distant universities. Promotion of these concerts and masterclasses by local schools, churches, and other community locations is kept to a minimum or is nonexistent, resulting in a general lack of awareness by members of the community towards these events.

To create a greater sense of enthusiasm for classical music, as well as an awareness for the Ohio Valley Symphony and its yearly concert series, this project will deliver a traditional classical program to the community of Gallipolis, Ohio at two different locations. These will include Gallia Academy High School and the Ariel Opera House. With these two locations in mind, the performance at Gallia Academy High School will target the younger population of Gallia County. Since the Ariel Opera House is located at the center of the town of Gallipolis, this will reach a larger number of people due to its recognition by local residents as a significant medium for performance.

III. Methods

According to the *International Journal of Music Education* article titled, “The Impacts of a Community Orchestra in a Rural Setting: An Insight into Borderland Community Orchestra” a study was conducted in 2013 of the Borderland Community Orchestra, a cross-border ensemble located in the rural region of northern Minnesota and Northern Ontario, Canada (Darby 259). Three themes emerged following a survey of community residents in regards to the local orchestra. These themes included (1) Better marketing and increased awareness (2) Perform more concerts and (3) Youth Outreach and Involvement. These themes emerged from the final qualitative question of this survey that asks “In your opinion, how could the BCO have more beneficial impact in the community?” (Darby 274-275). With my own project, these three themes will be applied beginning with the proper marketing tools in order to attract more participants to a performance of classical music. Social media has the greatest impact in terms of outreach towards members of a community and with this in mind, a social media campaign will be administered in order to increase awareness for the performance at the Ariel Opera House in Gallipolis. Marketing for this performance will also include flyers posted throughout the town of Gallipolis. The performance at Gallia Academy High School will not need a marketing campaign due to an assembly at the end of the school day to witness the performance. This assembly will be offered by the principal to specific students within the school with low behavioral issues and a positive academic record.

The next two themes of (2) Perform more concerts and (3) Youth outreach and involvement will be applied through the performance of four major works for piano at each of these locations. A different approach will be applied towards the students of Gallia Academy

High School compared to the performance at the Ariel Opera House with a more interactive and educational experience. The performance at the Ariel Opera House Center will identify as a more concert-like experience with less interaction between the audience and the performer. With performances at these two locations, this study will reach a broad audience of younger and older people alike with the goal of reaching a wide demographic of audience members.

In order to ascertain the perceptions and experiences of classical music by audience members, surveys will be distributed to audience members before the performance begins. These surveys will consist of two separate parts with part one occurring before the performance and part two occurring after the performance. With a pre- and post-performance survey in mind, this will provide insight as to how the audience has changed in its attitudes and perceptions towards the genre of classical music following the performance of four major works. These works will include French Suite No. 5 in G major: BWV 816 by J.S. Bach, *Variations sérieuses*, Op. 54 by Felix Mendelssohn, Sonata No. 30 Op. 109 in E Major by Ludwig van Beethoven, and *Variations*, Op. 41 by Nikolai Kapustin. I have designed this program in such a way as to expose the audience members to the different styles under the larger umbrella term of “classical music.” These styles consist of the baroque, classical, romantic, and 20th century. These four sub-genres are generally the traditional format of the piano recital.

Part one of the survey administered at Gallia Academy High School will ask questions related to the experiences and perceptions towards classical music by the audience members and what barriers have made participation in classical music more difficult. This survey has been directed towards the Ohio Valley Symphony where some of these barriers may include ticket prices, marketing strategies of the symphony, travel distance to Gallipolis, or the audience’s general interest in classical music. An “other” option has been inserted to describe any other

barriers that may have prevented attendance of the Ohio Valley Symphony. Part one of the survey administered at the Ariel Opera House will ask an additional question related to the marketing of this performance and what methods were most effective in attracting audience members. These methods include five options including social media through Facebook, flyers posted throughout the town of Gallipolis, word-of-mouth communication, or an “other” option. The post-performance survey at these locations will ask three questions that identify changes in attitude and perspective following the performance with questions one and three being qualitative.

The performance for the students of Gallia Academy High School will be designed in such a way as to create as much interest and enthusiasm for classical music as possible through an informal method of presentation. One of the many barriers associated with classical music is its presentation to audiences as more intimidating and serious. With this in mind, this presentation will be more relaxed and welcoming by eliminating many of the traditions of a piano recital. These include proper concert attire and the separation between the performer and the audience. More freedom will be given to the students through an interactive discussion of classical music and what experiences they have had towards this genre. This discussion will be executed in such a way as to build a strong connection with the students and to create a comfortable environment. The performance at the Ariel Opera House will be less of an interactive experience and more of a traditional piano recital. However, audience members are encouraged to dress as they please with a free cost of admission to the performance.

IV. Results

Gallia Academy High School

Performance

The performance at Gallia Academy High School was largely a success with much interaction between the students and myself. In addition, the students were very focused on the performance throughout the duration of each piece. To attend the recital, the students were required to complete parental consent forms which were distributed by the school principal one week before the event. These were required by the Ohio University Institutional Review Board in order to use the students' survey responses in my research. A select number of students were offered these consent forms such as honors students and students with low behavioral issues. As a result, the recital was a huge success with very little distractions and a full focus on the discussion and performance. With the help of Gallia Academy High School choir director Natalie Phillips, the proper set-up was attained which created a very captivating atmosphere for the students. This included piano tuning shortly before the event, a microphone for my lecture to the students, and stage set-up in the main auditorium of Gallia Academy High School.

Before beginning any discussion, the students were given ten minutes to complete the pre-performance survey. Special attention was directed towards question #2 which asked the students to describe their overall perceptions toward classical music. I asked the students to be completely honest when responding to this question so that the results would be as revealing as possible following the performance. After the students were given ten minutes, I began my lecture with my own experiences as a teenager with classical music. Since I graduated from

Gallia Academy High School in 2018, I have had many relatable experiences with the students. As a result, the students were very focused throughout the entire discussion. The Ohio Valley Symphony was emphasized while discussing my early experiences with classical music since this had been a major factor in my development as a pianist. I explained how I attended its yearly concert series and participated in multiple masterclasses by pianists who performed with the orchestra. The Ariel Opera House created the proper environment for a young classical musician to succeed, and this was explained to the students.

Following this discussion of shared relatable experiences, I began my performance of the Mendelssohn *Variations sérieuses*, Op. 54. Before performing this piece, I gave the students elements of the piece to listen for and explained the overall structure of the work. The term “variations” was explained as a set of transformations of one primary theme. I played the primary theme of this work before performing the entire piece to give the students an idea as to how this theme will eventually transform in different ways. Snippets of multiple variations were played to help the students understand the different ways in which this theme changes. Following this short demonstration of the theme and segments of multiple variations, I then performed the entire piece in full context. Following the performance of this piece, the students were invited to share their thoughts regarding the transformations of the original theme. Multiple students offered insightful responses including variations in tempo and dynamic contrast. Explaining the structure of this piece gave the students a different perspective towards the listening experience.

Following the *Variations sérieuses*, Op. 54, I then performed the first two movements of Beethoven’s Sonata No. 30 Op. 109 in E Major. Before beginning the performance, I asked the students if they were aware of the term “sonata” and how this format is structured. Very few responses were provided by the students when asked this question. Because of this, I explained

the structure of a piano sonata as a set of three sections called “movements” with the first and third movements being generally faster and more energetic. However, the structure of Beethoven’s Sonata No. 30 Op. 109 in E Major was explained as having a different approach with a highly energetic second movement. Following this discussion, I then performed the first two movements of the work with a transition straight into the discussion of the final piece.

Before performing the *Variations*, Op. 41 of Nikolai Kapustin, a brief introduction to this piece included an explanation of its infusion of classical and jazz as a result of Nikolai Kapustin’s training as a classical pianist and his reputation as a composer of jazz throughout his lifetime. The students were encouraged to identify this mixture of genres throughout the performance of the piece as well as the different approaches applied compared to the works of Beethoven and Mendelssohn. Following the performance, the students were asked to compare all three works and identify one that resonated with them the most. There was a mixture of responses, with different students preferring one work over the other. However, the majority of students identified the Mendelssohn *Variations sérieuses*, Op. 54 as being the most enjoyable listening experience. Following the entire performance, the students were then asked to fill out the post-performance survey.

Surveys

The responses provided for both the pre- and post-performance surveys reveal much in terms of the experience of the youth of Gallipolis with classical music, as well as their perceptions towards this genre both before and after the performance of a recital program. A total of 42 surveys were completed, and the results were generally very positive with an overall

greater interest in the genre of classical music. Question #1 of the pre-performance survey revealed that out of 42 responses, only two identified as students that currently have a direct relationship with classical music. The other 40 responses reveal either an indirect relationship with classical music or no relationship at all. Of the two that have a direct relationship with classical music, one of these students writes “This genre has been extremely useful in my everyday life. When I am having an anxiety attack or studying, classical music has helped me to refocus and work on school work.” The second student quotes that “Classical music makes up $\frac{1}{3}$ of the music on [my] Apple Music playlist.” The other 40 responses provided reveal mostly an indirect relationship with classical music through music programs offered through the school such as band, jazz band, and show choir.

Question #2 of the pre-performance surveys revealed that when it comes to the perceptions of the youth in this community towards classical music, there was overall appreciation of this genre despite the lack of participation in this art form by the students. However, the majority of the students preferred other genres over classical music as represented by one of the students who quotes “I enjoy performing classical music, but I generally do that in a group and don’t listen to it outside of that at all. I can listen to it, but it is never my first, second, or even third choice. I think that is because I have barely been exposed to it.” This was a good representation of multiple responses that expressed a similar sentiment. Only two responses stated a more negative description of classical music. Of these two, one student writes “I think of classical music as prestigious and sometimes boring. However, there are a few songs that I feel can be exciting and fun to listen to.” The second student writes “I feel like it's perceived as boring and for those who think they’re “above” others.” Despite these two negative responses, the other 40 students generally expressed a more positive perception of classical music. These

positive perceptions mostly referred to classical music as being a calming factor while also identifying as a more intellectual and beautiful genre of music.

Question #3, which deals with the students' attendance of concerts offered by the Ohio Valley Symphony, revealed that there is a great lack of participation in these concerts with 27 students choosing letter A (0 concerts), 14 choosing letter B (1-3 concerts), and only one student choosing letter D (I am a regular attendee). None of the students chose letter C of 4-6 concerts. Question #4 is even more revealing in that when it comes to what barriers have made attendance of these concerts more difficult, 32 students chose letter B (weak marketing strategies/was unaware of concerts), 3 chose letter D (general interest in classical music), 3 chose letter E (other), 3 circled multiple options, and only one chose letter C (travel distance to Gallipolis). Of the three students that chose letter E of "other," two of these students could not attend concerts due to lack of free time, while the third student could not attend due to lack of transportation. Of the three that circled multiple options, all of them included weak marketing strategies. Along with weak marketing strategies, one included letter A of ticket prices, the second student included letter E due to lack of free time, and the third student included letters D and E with the "other" option due to lack of free time. The results of question #4 reveal that the greatest barrier to attendance of concerts offered by the Ohio Valley Symphony is Letter B of weak marketing strategies with a total of 35 students choosing this as an option.

Post-Performance Survey

The overall results of the post-performance survey generally showed a positive reaction to the performance along with a positive change in perception towards classical music. Question

#1, which asks how the recital has changed the students' perspective of classical music, revealed that of the 40 students who identified as having an indirect relationship or no relationship with classical music in question #1 of the pre-performance survey, 36 of these students responded as having a positive change in perspective, two responded with little to no change in perception, and two were unable to complete the post-performance survey. Of the 36 students, the responses expressed multiple changes in perspective due to factors such as the emotional power of classical music along with the technical skills required in order to play at a high level. Multiple students also responded as having a change in perspective due to their previous views of the genre as being uninteresting to listen to. Of these students, one writes "It was more energetic and lively than what is usually shown in [the] media. It was entertaining rather than boring like the media suggests." Another student writes that "It showed me classical music isn't just slow and calm music but can also be up-beat, fast, and almost jazzy while keeping certain aspects of the classical part of it." Of the two students who already had a direct relationship with classical music, both of them responded as having a positive change in perspective with one student responding "I have realized there is a lot more to classical music than notes and rhythms that are soothing. Classical music has dimensions and can cause you to feel different things."

Within Question #2 of the post-performance survey, which asks if the students would be more willing to attend concerts offered at the Ariel Opera House in Gallipolis, of the 38 students who identified as having an indirect relationship/no relationship with classical music and who completed the post-performance survey, 28 students chose letter C (Definitely), 10 chose letter B (Maybe) and 0 chose Letter A (No, I am still not interested). Of the two students who already had a direct relationship with classical music, one chose letter C and one chose letter B for a total of 29 students choosing Letter C and 11 choosing letter B.

Conclusion

Through analysis of the responses of the pre- and post-performance surveys, the youth of Gallipolis, Ohio, can be said to have a greater interest in the genre of classical music following the performance of a recital program. As can be seen through both the qualitative and quantitative questions of this study, the potential for classical music to become popular among the youth of this community is very high. Of the 38 participants who had an indirect relationship/no relationship with classical music and who completed the post-performance survey, an overwhelming majority of 36 students responded as having a positive change in perception. Of these 38 students, an overwhelming majority of 28 also chose letter C of question #2 of the post-performance survey, demonstrating the increase in enthusiasm for classical music following the performance. Of the 27 students who chose letter A of question #3 in the pre-performance survey (0 concerts attended), 8 of these students chose letter B of question #2 (Maybe) in the post-performance survey, 18 chose letter C (Definitely), and 1 was unable to complete the post-performance survey. These statistics reveal an overwhelming majority of the students who have gained an interest in classical music despite never attending concerts offered by the Ohio Valley Symphony in Gallipolis, Ohio. As question #4 of the pre-performance survey has shown, we must make a greater effort to reach out to residents of our local communities through our music. The overwhelming majority of students who chose letter B of question #4 (weak marketing strategies/was unaware of concerts) revealed what contributes to the lack of participation and enthusiasm for classical music within communities such as Gallipolis, Ohio.

Ariel Opera House

Performance

Similar to the performance for the students at Gallia Academy High School, this recital showcased the works of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and Kapustin along with the French Suite No. 5 in G Major BWV 816 of J.S. Bach. The Ariel Opera House in Gallipolis, Ohio, provides artists with multiple settings for performance, including a main auditorium along with a smaller “chamber” theater located on the third floor of this building. To achieve a more intimate setting for discussion, the chamber theater was utilized for this performance. A marketing campaign was applied beginning one month before this recital including the use of flyers and a social media campaign by both the Ariel Opera House and myself. A total of 63 people attended this performance as a result of this marketing effort.

Audience members were first asked to complete both an adult consent form required by the Ohio University Institutional Review Board along with the pre-performance survey. I provided a brief 10-minute lecture before beginning the performance of the program. Similar to the Gallia Academy High School experience, I provided a short backstory of my beginning roots with classical music. Program forms were also distributed to audience members as they entered the chamber theater, which included an autobiography of my upbringing in the town of Gallipolis, Ohio. My background was expressed in the lecture and program forms as a way of relating to members of the community. This backstory was then followed by a discussion of each piece and their individual significance within the piano literature. A brief explanation of the structure of each piece was also explained to encourage a more focused listening experience. The

Beethoven Sonata No. 30 Op. 109 in E Major was emphasized as having a third movement with a set of variations based on a chorale-like main theme. This theme was explained as being transformed throughout the movement in many different ways followed by its return at the end. The entire sonata was also explained as having unproportioned lengths due to the shorter first two movements followed by a larger third movement. The other works were discussed similar to their explanation at Gallia Academy High School.

The entire performance was characterized as a traditional piano recital with no discussion between each piece. In contrast to the Gallia Academy High School performance, the Beethoven sonata was performed in its entirety followed by the Mendelssohn *Variations sérieuses*, Op. 54, Bach French Suite No. 5 in G Major BWV 816, and Kapustin *Variations*, Op. 41. Following the entire performance, audience members were then asked to complete the post-performance survey.

Surveys

The perceptions towards classical music, as compared between the pre- and post-performance surveys, once again reveal a more positive reaction similar to the results from Gallia Academy High School. Of the 63 audience members who attended the performance, a total of 30 surveys were completed. Question #1 of the pre-performance surveys revealed that the overall experience of audience members with classical music was relatively slim with six participants who identified as having a more noticeable relationship with classical music. Of these six participants, one writes “I was first exposed to classical music through private instruction going to Capital University. I was performing nothing but classical.” Another

participant writes “I attend [the] Ohio Valley Symphony and listen to public radio and other concerts when out of town.” Of the other participants who responded as having little to no experience with classical music, some audience members experienced classical music in the past with music lessons as a child, while others have never attended a concert such as the one presented by myself.

Question #2 of the surveys revealed an overall positive perception towards the genre of classical music with the majority of responses describing classical music as very calming as well as intellectual. One of these responses provides a good representation of the audience members who writes that “I find it very soothing and intellectual. It helped me to appreciate all types of music. I especially like jazz, which is [as] emotional as classical music.” Some responses also provided insight as to the general view of society towards classical music. One participant writes “I find it to be a soothing type of music. Our culture seems to promote songs in 3-4 minute segments rather than longer pieces of music. We have short spans of attention.” Another participant quotes that “I believe many people overlook this genre because it’s “old,” but classical styles are worth understanding and vital in truly enjoying classical music.”

Question #3 of the pre-performance surveys showed that of the 30 participants who completed the surveys, 12 chose letter A (Facebook), 14 chose letter C (Word-of-mouth), 2 chose both A and C, 1 chose letter D (Other), 1 chose both C and D, and 0 chose letter B (Flyers). Of those who chose D (other) as an option, these participants became aware of the event through the local newspaper. The results of question #3 have shown that the marketing methods of social media and word-of-mouth communication worked best for the marketing of a piano recital in the town of Gallipolis, Ohio. The more traditional methods of marketing through flyers

and the local newspaper did not generate attendance as well as the more modern forms of outreach.

Question #4 of the pre-performance survey revealed a greater mixture of responses when asked how many Ohio Valley Symphony concerts the audience members have attended compared to the results from Gallia Academy High School. Of the 30 completed surveys, 12 participants chose letter A (0), 4 chose letter B (1-3), 11 chose letter C (4-6), and 3 chose letter D (I am a regular attendee). The results show a great divide between those who have never attended Ohio Valley Symphony concerts, and those who attend them more regularly. The marketing methods applied successfully attracted those who have never been a part of classical music within the community of Gallipolis, Ohio.

Question #5 revealed multiple reasons as to what motivated audience members for attending the recital. 10 participants chose multiple options while 16 chose letter C (Personal connection to the performer), 2 chose letter D (Support of local arts organizations), 1 chose letter F (Other, please explain), 1 chose letter B (I love classical music), and 0 chose letter E (Attendance of a previous lecture). Due to my upbringing in this community, this would explain why the majority of participants chose letter C as their only option. Of the 10 participants that chose multiple options, the majority of the responses included the options of letters B, C, and D as part of their reasons for attending the recital. Since only one previous lecture was held at Gallia Academy High School, this would mean that no students decided to attend the recital at the Ariel Opera House since 0 participants chose letter E (Attendance of a previous lecture) as an option. Of the one participant that chose letter F (Other), this person was motivated by a family member to attend the recital.

Post-Performance Survey

Question #1 of the post-performance survey revealed that of the 24 participants who responded as having little to no experience with classical music in question #1 of the pre-performance survey, there was an overall positive response to the recital. Many of these responses expressed a change in perspective towards classical music due to the emotional power of the music, as well as the non-traditional methods of composition as demonstrated by the mixture of classical and jazz in the *Variations*, Op. 41 of Nikolai Kapustin. Some responses also noted the intensity and excitement in the music that contrasted with the general “relaxation” and “calming” elements that characterized their original views. One of these participants quotes “The music is varied. Not just soothing and slow, but can also be upbeat and dramatic.” Another participant writes that “I’ll not just listen to relaxing classical anymore.”

Question #2 revealed that there was an overall greater anticipation of audience members to attend concerts offered by the Ariel Opera House with a total of 16 participants choosing letter C (Definitely), 14 choosing letter B (Maybe), and 0 choosing letter A (No, I am still not interested). Of the 12 participants that chose letter A (0) in question #4 of the pre-performance survey, 5 of these participants chose letter C (Definitely), and 7 chose letter B (Maybe) in question #2 of the post-performance survey. This shows a split between those who have been directly persuaded by the performance and those who still feel unsure about attending concerts at the Ariel Opera House. Of the 24 participants who had little to no experience with classical music, there was a split with 12 participants answering letter C and 12 answering letter B. The overall results show that although many of the participants still feel unsure about the concerts offered at the Ariel Opera House, none of the participants feel completely uninterested following

the performance. The majority of the participants have decided that they will definitely attend more concerts following the performance.

Conclusion

After comparing the pre- and post-responses by the participants towards classical music, the recital was largely a success with the majority of participants feeling a greater interest towards this genre following the performance. As can be seen through the post-performance survey, of those who had little to no experience with classical music, there was an overall positive change in perspective towards this genre following the performance. In addition, the majority of participants chose letter C of question #2 of the post-performance survey while no participants chose letter A. Even though many of the participants still felt unsure about attending concerts offered by the Ariel Opera House, the recital revealed the potential for classical music to become more popular with the community of Gallipolis, Ohio, through the qualitative responses offered by the participants. Since the largest motivator of participants to attend the recital was their personal connection to the performer, community residents should play a larger role within arts organizations, such as the Ariel Opera House, in order for classical music to generate a greater following. It is not enough to provide professional concerts but to also incorporate community members into these local arts organizations. In addition, up-to-date marketing methods must also be utilized in order to reach as many community members as possible. This was shown in question #3 of the pre-performance survey where 28 of the 30 participants chose either letter A or C as their reason for becoming aware of this event. The

traditional methods of marketing through newspapers and flyers do not reach community members to the same degree as more modern forms of outreach.

V. Conclusion

The performances at both Gallia Academy High School and the Ariel Opera House have demonstrated the huge potential for classical music to become popular within rural communities all across the United States. The positive changes in perspective at both locations can be seen as very few participants expressed a neutral change in perspective following the performance of a traditional classical program. The majority of participants at both of these locations had little to no experience with classical music and at the same time, almost all of these participants expressed a positive change in perspective towards classical music in question #1 of the post-performance survey. In addition, the majority of participants at Gallia Academy High School who had little to no experience with classical music chose letter C of question #2 of post-performance survey. These participants were more split at the Ariel Opera House with many choosing either letters B and C of this same question.

The results from Gallia Academy High School show that there is a great lack of participation in classical music activities by the youth in communities such as Gallipolis, Ohio. This was seen in question #3 of the pre-performance survey since 27 of 42 students chose letter A of 0 concerts attended, 14 chose letter B of 1-3 concerts attended, and only one chose letter D of "I am a regular attendee." The next question revealed that weak marketing strategies were the largest barrier towards students attending these concerts with 35 of the 42 students choosing letter B of question #4. The statistics from the Ariel Opera House surveys answer this dilemma

with the fact that an aggressive marketing campaign through social media and word-of-mouth communication worked best for this recital. Arts organizations must make a greater effort to provide youth outreach and to also implement more aggressive marketing strategies.

Overall, the study revealed many different barriers which prevent the engagement with classical music in the community of Gallipolis, Ohio. The study conducted of the Borderland Community Orchestra shows many similarities in that the primary barriers revealed in the surveys included youth outreach and involvement, better marketing and increased awareness, and performing more concerts. What stood out to me from the pre-performance surveys was that the overall perception of both the youth and general population of Gallipolis, Ohio, towards classical music was more positive rather than negative. This was unexpected since attendance of Ohio Valley Symphony concerts is lower than one might expect. The issue of concert attendance does not seem to stem from negative perceptions of classical music by the community but from other factors revealed in this study such as marketing strategies and community engagement within the organization. Community engagement seems to play a key factor since the majority of audience members who came to the Ariel Opera House recital attended due to personal connection with the performer. Residents within the community must play a more active role within arts organizations in order to generate a greater following and to increase interest in events held at these organizations.

Changing the status of classical music in communities such as this one includes changing its perspective among the population. Even though few responses of question #2 of the pre-performance surveys were negative, many of the perceptions of classical music pointed to the relaxing and calming effects of this genre. As mentioned earlier, we must frame classical music in a different light in order to encourage its implementation within the education system. The

“Mozart Effect” is not enough to ensure the long-term sustainability of classical music in the United States. Classical music must be perceived as a deeper sense of human fulfillment in order to encourage its implementation within the American education system. This study has shown that with the proper techniques applied to unique performance settings such as Gallia Academy High School and the Ariel Opera House, the status of classical music in communities such as this one can drastically change. Exposing audiences to wide differences in musical style through various composers such as Bach, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and Kapustin showcase the endless degrees of character beyond just the “relaxing” and “calming” components of classical music. The post-performance reactions to the program demonstrate the potential for classical music to grow in communities such as this one through our music.

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Appendix

1. Audience Consent Forms and Surveys

Ohio University Parental Consent Form

Title of Research: Classical Music in Southeast Ohio: The Impact of Performance on a Rural Community

Researchers: Taae Hamid, Dr. Christopher Fisher

IRB number: 21-X-144

You are being asked by an Ohio University researcher for permission for your child to participate in research. For you to be able to decide whether you want your child to participate in this project, you should understand what the project is about, as well as the possible risks and benefits in order to make an informed decision. This process is known as informed consent. This form describes the purpose, procedures, possible benefits, and risks of the research project. It also explains how your child's personal information/biospecimens will be used and protected. Once you have read this form and your questions about the study are answered, you will be asked to sign it. This will allow your child's participation in this study. You should receive a copy of this document to take with you.

Summary of Study

This project will be focused on classical music in Southeastern Ohio. I will be performing at two separate locations in Gallia County including the Ariel Opera House and Gallia Academy High School. I will provide inspirational lectures followed by a traditional classical program of works by Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Bach, and Kapustin. These lectures/recitals will be accompanied by the use of surveys to find out how prevalent classical music is within Southeastern Ohio. These surveys will also reveal what barriers are present towards preventing classical music participation within an underserved community. Your participation in these studies will assist me in creating more opportunities for classical music education within Southeastern Ohio.

Explanation of Study

This study is being done as a result of the lack of opportunities with classical music in underserved communities. Classical music has generally been reserved for those living in more centralized locations with access to concerts and quality lessons.

If you agree to allow your child to participate, your child will be asked to fill out a short pre- and post-performance survey. This survey will ask for your child's personal feelings towards the genre of classical music both before and after a performance of works by major classical composers. Participation in the surveys is required in order to attend the performance. Refusal to participate in the surveys will have no impact on your child's academic standing.

Your child's participation in the study will last for approximately 60 minutes. This will include listening to the lecture and performance as well as completing the surveys.

Risks and Discomforts

No risks or discomforts are anticipated.

Benefits

Your child will be able to witness the performance by participating in the survey.

Confidentiality and Records

Your child's study information will be kept confidential through an anonymous survey.

Additionally, while every effort will be made to keep your child's study-related information confidential, there may be circumstances where this information must be shared with:

- * Federal agencies, for example the Office of Human Research Protections, whose responsibility is to protect human subjects in research;
- * Representatives of Ohio University (OU), including the Institutional Review Board, a committee that oversees the research at OU;

Contact Information

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact the investigator [*Taae Hamid, th987317@ohio.edu, 740-853-0232*] or the advisor [*Dr. Christopher Fisher, fisherc@ohio.edu, 740-243-2165*].

If you have any questions regarding your child's rights as a research participant, please contact the Director of Research Compliance, Ohio University, (740)593-0664 or compliance@ohio.edu.

By signing below, you are agreeing that:

- you have read this consent form (or it has been read to you) and have been given the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered;
- you have been informed of potential risks to your child and they have been explained to your satisfaction;
- you understand Ohio University has no funds set aside for any injuries your child might receive as a result of participating in this study;
- you are 18 years of age or older;
- your child's participation in this research is completely voluntary;
- your child may leave the study at any time; if your child decides to stop participating in the study, there will be no penalty to your child and he/she will not lose any benefits to which he/she is otherwise entitled.

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____

Child's Name _____

Version Date: *[insert 3/7/22]*

Ohio University Assent to Participate in Research

**Study Title: Classical
Music in Southeast Ohio:
The Impact of
Performance on a Rural
Community**

Researcher: Taae Hamid

**Sponsor: Dr.
Christopher Fisher**

- **You are being asked to be in a research study. Studies are done to find better ways to treat people or to understand things better.**
- **This form will tell you about the study to help you decide whether or not you want to participate.**
- **You should ask any questions you have before making up your mind. You can think about it and discuss it with your family or friends before you decide.**
- **It is okay to say “No” if you don’t want to be in the study. If you say “Yes” you can change your mind and quit being in the study at any time without getting in trouble.**
- **If you decide you want to be in the study, an adult (usually a parent) will also need to give permission for you to be in the study.**

1. What is this study about?

I will be traveling to two separate locations within Gallia County including the Ariel Opera House and Gallia Academy High School to perform works for piano by major classical composers. I will ask audience members to complete a brief pre- and post-performance survey to assess whether my performances caused a change in perspective towards classical music.

2. What will I need to do if I am in this study?

You will be asked to complete a survey before I perform my music and after the performance is complete. The survey will ask questions related to your experience with classical music. It will also ask to describe your overall perceptions towards this genre of music.

3. How long will I be in the study?

The study will last for approximately 60 minutes. This includes a lecture and the performance of classical music.

4. Can I stop being in the study?

You may stop being in the study at any time.

5. What bad things might happen to me if I am in the study?

No bad things are anticipated with this study.

6. What good things might happen to me if I am in the study?

You will get to experience a performance of classical music during the final period of the school day.

7. Will I be given anything for being in this study?

You will not receive anything besides the performance.

8. Who can I talk to about the study?

For questions about the study you may contact **Taae Hamid**

Email: taaehamid3@gmail.com Phone: 740-853-0232

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the Director of Research Compliance, Ohio University, (740)593-0664 or compliance@ohio.edu.

Signing the assent form

I have read (or someone has read to me) this form. I have had a chance to ask questions before making up my mind. I want to be in this research study.

_____ Signature or printed name of subject	_____ Date and time	AM/PM
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Investigator/Research Staff

I have explained the research to the participant before requesting the signature above. There are no blanks in this document. A copy of this form has been given to the participant or his/her representative.

_____ Printed name of person obtaining assent	_____ Signature of person obtaining assent
	_____ Date and time
	AM/PM

This form must be accompanied by an IRB approved parental permission form signed by a parent/guardian.

Ohio University Adult Consent Form With Signature

Title of Research: Classical Music in Southeast Ohio: The Impact of Performance on a Rural Community

Researchers: Taae Hamid, Dr. Christopher Fisher

IRB number: 21-X-144

You are being asked by an Ohio University researcher to participate in research. For you to be able to decide whether you want to participate in this project, you should understand what the project is about, as well as the possible risks and benefits in order to make an informed decision. This process is known as informed consent. This form describes the purpose, procedures, possible benefits, and risks of the research project. It also explains how your personal information/biospecimens will be used and protected. Once you have read this form and your questions about the study are answered, you will be asked to sign it. This will allow your participation in this study. You should receive a copy of this document to take with you.

Summary of Study

This project will be focused on classical music in Southeastern Ohio. I will be performing at two separate locations in Gallia County including the Ariel Opera House and Gallia Academy High School. I will provide inspirational lectures followed by a traditional classical program of works by Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Bach, and Kapustin. These lectures/recitals will be accompanied by the use of surveys to find out how prevalent classical music is within Southeastern Ohio. These surveys will also reveal what barriers are present towards preventing classical music participation within an underserved community. Your participation in these studies will assist me in creating more opportunities for classical music education within Southeastern Ohio.

Explanation of Study

This study is being done as a result of the lack of opportunities with classical music in underserved communities. Classical music has generally been reserved for those living in more centralized locations with access to concerts and quality lessons.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to fill out a short pre- and post- performance survey. This survey will ask to describe your overall perceptions towards the genre of classical music both before and after a performance of works by major classical composers.

Your participation in the study will last for approximately 60 minutes. This will include listening to the lecture and performance as well as completing the surveys.

Risks and Discomforts

No risks or discomforts are anticipated.

Benefits

No individual benefit anticipated.

Confidentiality and Records

Your study information will be kept confidential through an anonymous survey.

Additionally, while every effort will be made to keep your study-related information confidential, there may be circumstances where this information must be shared with:

- * Federal agencies, for example the Office of Human Research Protections, whose responsibility is to protect human subjects in research;
- * Representatives of Ohio University (OU), including the Institutional Review Board, a committee that oversees the research at OU;

Contact Information

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact the investigator [*Taae Hamid, th987317@ohio.edu, 740-853-0232*] or the advisor [*Dr. Christopher Fisher, fisherc@ohio.edu, 740-243-2165*].

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the Director of Research Compliance, Ohio University, (740)593-0664 or compliance@ohio.edu.

By signing below, you are agreeing that:

- you have read this consent form (or it has been read to you) and have been given the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered;
- you have been informed of potential risks and they have been explained to your satisfaction;

- you understand Ohio University has no funds set aside for any injuries you might receive as a result of participating in this study;
- you are 18 years of age or older;
- your participation in this research is completely voluntary;
- you may leave the study at any time; if you decide to stop participating in the study, there will be no penalty to you and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Signature_____Date_____

Printed Name_____

Version Date: *[insert 3/7/22]*

Gallia Academy High School

Before Performance

1. From what you have previously experienced with classical music, how relevant has this genre been within your own life? Please describe any other musical activities in which you have participated.

2. What are your overall perceptions of classical music?

3. The Ariel Opera House is home to the Ohio Valley Symphony in Gallipolis. In total, how many Ohio Valley Symphony concerts have you attended if any?
 - a. 0
 - b. 1-3
 - c. 4-6
 - d. I am a regular attendee

4. What barriers have made attendance of concerts at the Ariel Opera House more difficult?
 - a. Ticket Prices
 - b. Weak Marketing Strategies / Was unaware of concerts
 - c. Travel distance to Gallipolis
 - d. General interest in classical music
 - e. Other, please explain

After Performance

1. In your own words, please describe how a traditional program of Bach, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and Kapustin has changed your perspective of classical music, if any at all?

2. The Ariel Opera House hosts many artists that perform programs similar to the one seen today. Would you be more willing to attend one of these programs?
 - a. No, I am still not interested
 - b. Maybe
 - c. Definitely

3. If the answer to # 2 was letter A, what could I have done to better enhance the experience?

Ariel Opera House

Before Performance

1. From what you have previously experienced with classical music, how relevant has this genre been within your own life?
2. What are your overall perceptions of this genre of music?
3. In what way did you first become aware of this event?
 - a. Facebook
 - b. Flyers
 - c. Word-of-mouth
 - d. Other, please explain
4. In total, how many Ohio Valley Symphony concerts have you attended if any?
 - a. 0
 - b. 1-3
 - c. 4-6
 - d. I am a regular attendee
5. What motivated you to attend the performance today?
 - a. Advertisement
 - b. I love classical music
 - c. Personal connection to the performer
 - d. Support of local arts organizations
 - e. Attendance of a previous lecture
 - f. Other, please explain

After Performance

1. If this is your first time attending my recital, please describe how a traditional program of Bach, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and Kapustin has changed your perspective of classical music, if any at all?

2. The Ariel Opera House hosts many artists such as the one seen today. Would you be more willing to attend one of these programs?
 - a. No, I am still not interested
 - b. Maybe
 - c. Definitely

3. If the answer to #2 was letter A, what could I have done to better enhance the experience?

2. IRB Approval for Protocol

Project Number	21-X-144
Project Status	APPROVED
Committee:	Social/Behavioral IRB
Compliance Contact:	Rebecca Cale (cale@ohio.edu)
Primary Investigator:	Taae Hamid
Project Title:	Classical Music in Southeast Ohio: The Impact of Performance on a Rural Community
Level of Review:	EXPEDITED

The Social/Behavioral IRB reviewed and approved your amendment of the above referenced research.

IRB Approved:	03/18/2022 11:45:58 AM
Expiration:	01/13/2023
Review Category:	7

Waivers: No waivers are granted with this approval. If applicable, informed consent (and HIPAA research authorization) must be obtained from subjects or their legally authorized representatives and documented prior to research involvement. In addition, FERPA, PPRA, and other authorizations / agreements must be obtained, if needed. The IRB-approved consent form and process must be used. Any changes in the research (e.g., recruitment procedures, advertisements, enrollment numbers, etc.) or informed consent process must be approved by the IRB before they are implemented (except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to subjects).

The approval will no longer be in effect on the date listed above as the IRB expiration date. A Periodic Review application must be approved within this interval to avoid expiration of the IRB approval and cessation of all research activities. All records relating to the research (including signed consent forms) must be retained and available for audit for at least three (3) years after the research has ended.

It is the responsibility of all investigators and research staff to promptly report to the Office of Research Compliance / IRB any serious, unexpected and related adverse and potential unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others.

This approval is issued under the Ohio University OHRP Federalwide Assurance #00000095. Please feel free to contact the Office of Research Compliance staff contact listed above with any questions or concerns.

The approval will no longer be in effect when the Primary Investigator is no longer under the auspices of Ohio University, e.g., graduation or departure from Ohio University.