

**Between stalls, stage and score:
An investigation of audience experience
and enjoyment
in classical music performance**

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*This thesis is dedicated to the memory of Rene Dobson, 1911–2009
whose art, wit and acuity will always be an inspiration*

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the factors that affect the enjoyment of classical music concert attendance and identifies audience members' underlying motivations for attending classical performances. The experience of listening at live music events has been a topic largely neglected by both musicology and music psychology. This thesis therefore contributes to an emerging field of empirical research on classical music audience experience, with most key existing studies published within the last five years. A combined approach to data collection was employed to increase understanding of audience experience and enjoyment at orchestral concerts. Unlike previous studies of orchestral audiences, a questionnaire distributed to a concert audience ('attenders') was combined with in-depth interviews with a subset of respondents to gain deeper experiential accounts of classical concert attendance. In addition, a further study gained wider perspectives on the factors that affect the enjoyment of concert attendance by inviting eight individuals new to classical concert-going ('non-attenders') to three orchestral concerts, eliciting their responses through focus group and individual interviews.

The degree to which a concert provides accessible information with which to contextualise the music is critical in determining non-attenders' enjoyment, as is discerning interaction or communication with the performers. For both attenders and non-attenders, familiarity with the repertoire performed did not necessarily equate to greater levels of enjoyment, with some attenders consciously balancing the presence of familiarity and novelty across the concert experience. Distinct elements of witnessing a live performance acted as key underlying motivations for attending classical performances, as did the types of individual and shared experiences facilitated by listening to classical music within the concert hall setting. The thesis demonstrates the complexity of individual responses to live classical listening, while arguing that audience enjoyment relies on a series of predominantly social interactions between audience members themselves, the performers, and the music performed.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

In a concert hall, two thousand people settle in their seats, and an intense silence falls. A hundred musicians bring their instruments to the ready. The conductor raises his baton, and after a few moments the symphony begins. As the orchestra plays, each member of the audience sits alone, listening to the work of the great, dead, composer. (Small, 1998: 1)

In broad terms, this is a study of classical music performance within the concert hall. But while there is a great deal known about the meanings and mechanisms of performing classical music (from studies of performance anxiety, to investigations of how musical expression is conveyed by musicians, to research on the communication and social dynamics of the performers on stage), far less consideration has been given to what audience members 'do' or even 'seek' in the concert hall: what is *their* role, and why are they there?

The epigraph to this chapter comes from the opening sentences of Christopher Small's (1998) *Musicking* – an ethnographic deconstruction of the relationships implicit within a hypothetical classical concert. Small takes a holistic view of 'what is really going on' within the auditorium, examining the nature and meanings of both performing and listening within this context, as well as considering the effects of more intrinsic aspects of the canonic Western art music that symphony orchestras typically perform. As an introduction, Small's quote deliberately sets a scene which can then be unpicked and examined as his argument progresses. But because Small's work is grounded in his personal experience – an account which he freely admits is motivated by 'never [feeling] at ease' within the concert hall (Small, 1998: 15) – his description of the audience's role in these events leaves the door wide open for further, *empirical*, investigation of the scene he depicts. For a start, when rereading the epigraph, one might wonder whether in 'sitting alone' audience members are aware of, or even affected by, the presence of the other listeners with whom they share the experience. And should we also consider that they might value *seeing* as well as 'listening' in the concert hall? To what extent do they attend concerts to witness the orchestra's *performance* as well as to merely experience a musical 'work'? And how well do they

know the work of the 'great, dead, composer' – and do they even consider him (for as Nicholas Cook (1998) points out, it is usually a 'him') to be 'great'?

Small provides insightful answers to some of these questions through the course of *Musicking*, but his work nonetheless highlights that having 'set the scene' for a consideration of the audience perspective in classical music performance, it is time to hear more from concert attenders themselves. This thesis aims to investigate the nature of audience members' experiences of attending classical concerts, focusing on the factors that affect their enjoyment of concert-going. In so doing, it aims to gain an understanding of individuals' underlying motivations for attending classical performances. The nature of audience experience is explored throughout the thesis by taking a similar approach to how an audience member seated in the centre of the stalls might find themselves watching the performers on stage. It moves constantly between, first, a broad and inclusive view of the many factors that may affect audience members' enjoyment in the concert hall (the equivalent of watching the spectacle of the orchestra working as a whole); and, second, more focused considerations of individual experiences and narratives, to consider the complexity of individual response (just as the audience member in the stalls might narrow their focus to watch the violinist on the second desk as she expertly navigates a fast passage, before turning their attention to the timpanist at the back after he dramatically makes his first entrance).

This work is not, therefore, a study of audience demographics. While I hope that the findings of this research may be useful for orchestras and concert organisations, it is in investigating and articulating individuals' underlying motivations for engaging in concert attendance that the focus of this study lies. Nor is this research a study of taste: probing why audience members choose to listen to classical music in the first place is – while an interesting research avenue – beyond the scope of this thesis (as is, similarly, a consideration of how taste and demographics interact). In some ways, this research is as much a study of *what people choose to do to music* as it is a study of *what music does to people*. For example, it remains outside the remit of this research to explore the means by which a given piece of music might elicit specific emotional responses in its listeners. But how an audience member's emotional responses to hearing a symphony in the concert hall might differ from his or her experiences of listening to the same music while on their way to work, for instance, is a topic that is considered here. In short, this

study addresses why people choose to listen to classical music within the concert hall environment, and seeks to explore what kinds of experiences hearing music in this situation can foster.

Questions of disciplinarity

In researching the wide range of factors that may affect the enjoyment of concert attendance in a real-world setting, this study requires an interdisciplinary approach (cf. DeNora, 2003: 149). The nature of an audience member's specific experience might be influenced by their levels of knowledge, prior experience, and liking of the works performed (the field of experimental aesthetics within psychology) or by the degree to which they feel comfortable and at home within a specific concert hall (environmental psychology's 'place attachment'). They may be awed by the celebrity status of a star performer, or excited by the uncertainty of attending a live event (cultural and performance studies). Their engagement in the music might be enhanced by a performer's musical expression, or by a particular musician's gesture and body movement (music psychology) – while knowing that their companion seated adjacent is similarly engaged might also affect their own response (sociology). Any number of these features (and more) might interact to shape an audience member's personal experience within the concert hall.

Reflecting the nature of this complex phenomenon, existing studies of classical music audiences come from a wide range of disciplinary standpoints – including musicology, arts marketing, sociology, and music psychology – each with their own attendant theoretical groundings and related research motivations. While this study employs an inherently interdisciplinary approach, it is grounded in the aims of empirical musicology (Clarke & Cook, 2004) in taking the opportunity to gather available, real-world data to further an understanding of how we think about music. Considering musicology's well-documented predilection for viewing music purely as 'text objects' or 'works', this research contributes to a move, both within various sub-fields of musicology and other cognate disciplines, to study music as an act and/or process (whether that be in listening, performing, or composing) – and one that is inevitably rooted in social life (DeNora, 2004).

Methodological approach

To do this, it was important to maintain a high degree of ecological validity in researching audience experience. That meant tapping into audience members' responses and enjoyment at real concerts, rather than taking an experimental approach to break down the listening context into a smaller subset of variables. Research in the field of music psychology provides detailed consideration of various aspects of musical listening, but with data normally elicited from laboratory settings rather than 'real-world' listening contexts it is difficult to gain an understanding of how different aspects of the listening experience might interact. Perhaps because it is a complex phenomenon, difficult to subject to experimental manipulation, music listening at live events is a topic that has been neglected by much existing music psychology research (Sloboda, Lamont, & Greasley, 2009; Thompson, 2006).

The data presented in this thesis come from two main studies, each drawing on a different group of audience members. In Study 2, a questionnaire was distributed to an audience at a concert performed by the English Chamber Orchestra at London's Cadogan Hall. This provided a broad set of data on audience response and experience at one specific concert, and thus draws in part on DeNora's (2003: 55) paradigm of 'the musical event' in seeking to explore a 'specific [instance] of musical engagement' to generate ideas about how music works in people's lives. This approach was developed through follow-up interviews with a sub-group of questionnaire respondents, who were able to contextualise how that particular concert related to their wider experiences of concert-going, and so articulating further their underlying motivations for attending classical concerts.

Study 1 took a different approach, seeking to explore why individuals *do not* attend classical concerts, and then investigating their experiences within the concert hall when given the opportunity to attend. Eliciting data from 'novice' classical concert attenders enabled further insight into what there is to be enjoyed in classical performance, and how enjoyment might relate to existing knowledge: do classical audience members just go to concerts to hear music they 'know and love', or can other aspects of the event influence an individual's concert experience? Additionally, considering the experiences of audience members new to classical concerts was also important given that as a researcher, I am also to some extent one of the 'initiated' –

musically trained in the classical tradition, I frequently gain enjoyment from both listening and performing within the concert hall. Incorporating data from both new audience members and those who attend of their own volition thus helped to ensure that my interpretations of the data did not unnecessarily sway towards perspectives that most closely resembled my own.

Structure of the thesis

The next chapter provides an overview of existing literature and research relating to classical concerts and audience experience. Given the wide range of phenomena that might play a role in the experience of attending concerts, this overview is not intended to be exhaustive; rather, further relevant literature is integrated into the data-driven chapters of the thesis to contextualise findings as they arise. Chapter 3 outlines the design of the studies used and the rationale for the research methodologies employed. Chapter 4, the first of four chapters presenting data and findings, puts the experiences of novice concert attenders into the spotlight, considering ‘outsider’ perspectives on the classical concert. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 then integrate data from both Studies 1 and 2 to consider key areas which affected audience members’ enjoyment of concert attendance. Chapter 5 focuses on the effects of familiarity and novelty in audience experience, considering in turn the possible effects on audience enjoyment of levels of existing knowledge of the concert environment, the performers, and the music performed. Chapter 6 considers aspects of listening (and seeing) classical music performed in a live context, before Chapter 7 explores the types of experiences that specifically classical music listening within the concert hall environment can facilitate. Finally, Chapter 8 draws together themes from Chapters 4 to 7 to articulate the key findings of the thesis, before evaluating the methods used, considering the implications of the findings, and suggesting avenues for future research.

CHAPTER 2

Researching audience experience

Until recently, musicological research has neglected to systematically consider the audience experience at present-day classical music concerts. Instead, comments about audience behaviour – and about the types of states audience members are assumed to experience in the concert hall – are more often made by musicologists to lend support to discussion about the nature of ‘the music itself’ or when more explicitly considering the effects of the historically privileged status of the musical ‘work’. Musicology’s traditional approach to treating music as ‘text objects’ combined with the discipline’s ‘predominantly historical self-image’ (Cook & Clarke, 2004: 5) has meant that, until recent decades, considering performances as a key part of how we think about classical music has been somewhat sidelined, with the notable exception of studies of reception history. Research in music psychology, meanwhile, explicitly examines the processes behind both performing and listening, but rarely devotes attention to the experience of being in audience at a live musical performance. Overall, then, there has been a lack of consideration from both musicology and music psychology about how and why classical music is heard in present-day contexts.

This situation is in contrast to that of other academic disciplines of the performing arts (notably theatre and popular music studies) where audience members’ roles within and experiences of the performance event take a more central place in discourse on these subjects. Sociology, meanwhile, considers audience experience as a more integrated concept across domains (from sporting events to television shows), and so offers a firm theoretical base from which this overview of the literature can depart. As noted in Chapter 1, this literature review aims to provide background on existing approaches to thinking about classical music audience experience, but does not seek to comprehensively outline all possibly relevant aspects of research on music listening more generally; comment on further literature is incorporated into the later chapters where appropriate. The first section of this chapter briefly considers approaches to understanding audiences from sociology, theatre studies, and popular music studies. The next section addresses literature on the concert hall setting and the types of behaviours

typically found within it. This is followed by a review of existing empirical research on classical music audiences, before literature on the relationships between live and recorded listening is examined. Finally, from identifying gaps both in current knowledge about classical music audience experience and in the methodological approaches used in existing studies, the research aims of the thesis are outlined.

2.1 Perspectives on being 'in audience'

Sociologists Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998) consider the different ways in which, in contemporary Western societies, being 'in audience' is an ongoing part of everyday life. They propose three different types of audience: simple, mass and diffused. Although these three types of audience events and experience share central features which include 'a degree of ceremony and ritual' (p. 41) and the 'sense of specialness' (p. 40) that any kind of performance engenders, there are some important distinctions. The simple audience event often takes place in a public space; performers and audience communicate directly in a performance setting which involves strong ritual elements (e.g. a concert audience or a football match crowd). Mass audiences, in contrast, usually 'exist in private rather than public spaces' (Longhurst, Bagnall, & Savage, 2004: 105); the performance generally commands less focused audience attention than a simple audience event, and communication between audience and performer is not as direct (e.g. a television or radio audience). Finally, the diffused audience experience refers to the way in which 'in contemporary society, everyone becomes an audience all the time. Being a member of an audience is no longer an exceptional event, nor even an everyday event. Rather, it is constitutive of everyday life' (Abercrombie & Longhurst, 1998: 68).

These three types of audience experience need not be entirely separate, and in many cases interact with each other, reflecting the 'media saturation' of contemporary society (Ang, 1996: 13). As an example of the potential relationships between different types of audience experience, Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998: 159) cite the experience of the football fan: 'the simple audience which attends the football match can become members of the mass audience when they watch a programme of edited highlights of the match they have attended after the game.' But, through the wearing of football shirts (a practice that occurs both at football matches themselves but also in daily life) the football fan is incorporated into a diffused audience, performing his or her

own identity as a fan in doing so (ibid.: 160). Ang (1996) points out that the constant flow of different media sources vying for our attention means that mass media consumption (and the 'consumption' of any type of performance, for that matter) requires an inherently active process of choosing what to engage with, 'in order to produce any meaning at all out of the overdose of images thrown before us' (Ang, 1996: 13). But how does the experience of being part of a diffused audience in everyday life affect our attitudes towards simple audience events? Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998: 159) stress that 'the diffused audience has not replaced simple or mass audiences, which in some respects have become more important than ever'. Auslander (2008) takes a different perspective in considering the relationships between live and mediated performance, questioning the value that is usually placed on live performance over mediated forms. From Auslander's perspective, mediation is the dominant cultural form and is increasingly present in performances that we consider to be 'live'. Rather than a live performance retaining a sense of 'specialness', then, Auslander argues that in terms of ontological status live and mediated performances are increasingly indistinguishable.

For example, Auslander considers the relationship between theatre and television, arguing that while early television aimed to emulate theatre, now that television has become a culturally dominant medium, *theatre* is now increasingly defined in reference to television. Not only may theatre productions include media technology (such as video screens), but the perception that audiences judge and respond to theatre in the same way that they have been conditioned to respond to television needs to be considered by those who are involved in creating theatre productions: who, if they want their show to succeed, must be aware of the audience's expectations (Auslander, 2008: 26). But is this all too simplistic? Might there be experiential distinctions between watching television and watching a live theatre production that Auslander neglects to consider? For a start, some writers argue that without an audience, theatre cannot function fully:

Theatre always involves an act of conscious self-presentation, which implies another or others to whom the presentation is being offered. It is the presence of these others, the spectators, and their participation in the event which defines it as theatre. Without the presence of an audience the theatre event is not complete. (O'Neill, 1989: 16)

Being an audience member at the theatre therefore involves a greater sense of responsibility in enabling the event to happen than when watching a television broadcast. Even if no one chooses to watch a particular television programme, the performance itself has already been created. Moreover, that other people are not watching would not detract from a viewer's experience of watching a given programme, while the experience of sitting alone in a theatre is inevitably going to differ from sitting within a full house.

Despite the fact that theatre audiences have actively chosen to attend a performance, and that going to the theatre is a 'simple audience' event which is likely to facilitate high levels of audience attention (Abercrombie and Longhurst, 1998), there does remain a tension between the theatre audience's physical passivity and the mental activity that is required to engage in what is being seen (O'Neill, 1989). As Susan Bennett writes:

Spectators are...trained to be passive in their demonstrated behaviour during a theatrical performance, but to be active in their decoding of the sign systems made available. Performers rely on the active decoding, but passive behaviour of the audience so that they can unfold the planned on-stage activity. (Bennett, 1990: 206)

Thus theatre audiences take on a critical role in enabling and participating in the theatrical spectacle, albeit while conforming to a mode of behaviour which allows the performance to proceed effectively.

As events, the concert and the play are relatively analogous, sharing venues which delineate the domains of audience and performer, consequently engendering similar modes of audience behaviour. However, in contrast to the temporally specific theatrical event, music can and does exist without an audience and stage: through playing it yourself (until relatively recently in history, *playing* music was the primary means by which people experienced it) and through recorded listening. Although television is a mediatised equivalent of theatre in being a vehicle for audiences to experience drama, theatre does to some extent appear to have kept its 'niche': while there is occasional overlap between the cultural forms through which an audience may be able to experience a given dramatic work (a theatre production which is then adapted for television, for example), mostly, each dramatic work created can be experienced through only one medium: either film, television or theatre. With music, this distinction

is far less clear, with the types of music it is possible to hear from performances and recordings overlapping much more closely. As an example, while it may be feasible to hear Alfred Brendel play a Beethoven piano sonata both on disc and at a live concert, we do not similarly expect that a rendition our favourite television drama will also be shown in a live performance at the theatre. This is perhaps one reason why the performance situation, and the concomitant role of the audience, has been of central epistemological concern in theatre studies, while musicological research has traditionally focused predominantly on the musical *works* which are performed, played and heard.

In other musical genres, freer from the dominance of the musical text that characterises discourse on classical music, reflections on performance situations and audience roles have been considered more frequently. Audience members in jazz performance can be seen as active participants, with their responses to a musician's (often improvised) performance forming a 'communication loop' between performers and listeners (Berliner, 1994: 459). Berliner demonstrates how audience participation in jazz is viewed as an enhancing, and expected, feature:

Returning the affection and respect of improvisers, jazz audiences are fully aware that their responses may be contributing to the creation of an ephemeral musical masterwork. (Berliner, 1994: 470).

Similarly, studies of 'pub rock' (Bennett, 1997; Björnberg and Stockfelt, 1996) stress the rapport built between performers and audiences as a defining feature of performances in this context, especially when performers encourage audience participation in the form of 'singing along' to songs which have gradually assumed a local significance (Bennett, 1997).

The pub as a music venue allows, and even encourages, music to be performed in a context with high levels of social investment, where the motivations for hearing a band's performance are intertwined with the opportunities for socialising and construction of identity that such performances facilitate (Bennett, 2000: 169). Frith (1987), writing about popular music more generally, also contextualises popular music in terms of its social functions, including its use in the formation of identity (see also Grossberg, 1992). As Cavicchi, in his study of Bruce Springsteen fans, notes,

concert going is as much about *being seen* as about *seeing* a performance; it involves forming a view of oneself as similar to other fans and as different from ordinary audience members. (Cavicchi, 1998: 135)

And so again, in popular music performance, the capacity for audience participation is seen as a central feature, with Frith (1987: 140) stressing the importance of fans 'get[ting] their kicks from being a necessary part of the overall process'. But how do audience roles at present-day classical music concerts relate to those at theatre or popular music performances? The body of empirical research on classical music audiences that has recently emerged is outlined in 2.3 below, after concert-going practices have first been contextualised by a discussion of the concert hall setting.

2.2 Perspectives on the concert hall

Developing concert practices

The history of concert-going, and of the venues in which it has taken place, can shed light on the nature of audience experience today. Weber (1975) demonstrates how the rise of concerts as a commercial entity in the first half of the nineteenth century was closely related to the rise of the middle classes during that period. As the divisions between the middle classes and the aristocracy became less clear, concerts became increasingly 'professionalised': musicians no longer worked solely for aristocratic patrons, and large-scale concerts became increasingly commercial in their aims. One manifestation of this trend was the 'promenade concert', which was essentially informal in nature, with large crowds eating, walking and talking while the concert took place (Weber, 1975: 109). By the 1850s, however, formal orchestral concerts had replaced promenades, and, consequently, audience behaviour changed too (Weber, 1977). For example, Johnson's (1995) *Listening in Paris* investigates why the behaviour of Parisian audiences between 1750 and 1850 changed from socialising and talking while performances were in progress to listening in rapt silence. Part of Johnson's explanation is the development of musical style that took place during this period: as musical language changed from the imagery and emotionally descriptive writing of Gluck and Rameau to the more abstract language of Haydn and Mozart, listeners were required to pay more attention to the music in order to perceive meaning in it. Consequently, Johnson argues, the experience of listening became 'interiorized':

Realizing that the elusive meaning of music was not reducible to anything so simple as a single emotion – or perhaps emotion at all – these listeners enclosed the act of listening in a private space closed off from community and inaccessible to language. (Johnson, 1995: 273-4).

Thus the non-representational nature of classical music is perhaps one explanation for the differences in audience behaviour between classical performance and other musical genres. As seen above, being in audience at a popular music performance is more easily characterised as a social event than is the image of ‘detached, contemplative listening...[where] each listener listens on his or her own’ associated with the classical concert (Small, 1998: 154). In popular music performance, exhibiting and sharing emotional responses with others is the norm, and a key part of the experience is a process of identification with the content of the song and/or with the performer (Cavicchi, 1998). There is an inherent tension in this context between ‘an implied story (content: the singer in the song) and the real one (form: the singer on stage)’ (Frith, 1996: 209), but nonetheless, the emotional content of popular music performance is usually presented as originating from the singer’s personal experience (regardless of whether or not they actually wrote the song). This means the music projects a direct, emotional message, which audience members are unlikely to have difficulty interpreting.

In classical performance the roles of composer and performer are more explicitly separated: classical performers give no illusion that they have created the work. Indeed, moving back to the historical perspective, Weber (1977) suggests that intertwined with changing listening practices was a tendency for concert repertoire in the second half of the nineteenth century to revolve around the ‘dead “great composers”’, rather than around the new works of living ones, as had previously been the norm (p. 15). Lydia Goehr’s (1992) book *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works* consolidates this idea by examining the rise of the ‘work-concept’ in the late eighteenth century, especially through what she terms the ‘separability principle’, by which ‘it became the custom to speak of the arts as separated completely from the world of the ordinary, mundane, and everyday’ (Goehr, 1992: 157). While pieces of fine art could easily be placed within a gallery or a museum, the ‘ephemeral’ nature of music meant that it could not so easily be physically separated from the realms of ordinary life (Goehr, 1992: 174). Goehr argues that this situation led to the need for attitudes towards music to be framed by the work-concept, whereby composers and the works they produce hold the ultimate

authority over both performers and listeners. This held further consequences for the ways in which works were performed and received:

Just as transparency through fidelity was the ideal that regulated performing and conducting, the same ideal was decreed to regulate audience behaviour....Performances had not only to become foreground affairs, but they also had to be cut off completely from all extra-musical activities. It was with these sorts of ideas in mind that concert halls started to be erected as monuments and establishments devoted to the performances of musical works. (Goehr, 1992: 236; cf. Burkholder, 1983: 117-8)

The concert hall today

Goehr's work-concept also provides some explanation for the relative lack of research into present-day classical concert-going and audience experience, as musicology's primary concern has been with music as text, or object, rather than viewing it as a living, experiential event. Despite this, however, some writers have provided (non-empirical) commentary on their experiences of the concert hall. A minority express discomfort with this part of musical life, either with the repertoire it presents (Cook, 1998) or with the nature of the performance space (and consequent rituals) with which it is associated (Small, 1998). Although discussions of other types of concert venue are rarely considered, the notion of a purpose-built, large-scale concert hall provokes interestingly similar responses from a number of writers. Most either stress the concert hall's detachment from everyday life, or describe it as some form of 'sacred space' (Small, 1987: 29). Cook (1998: 35) writes that 'entering a concert hall is like entering a cathedral: it is literally a rite of passage, giving access to an interior that is separated from the outside world both economically (because you have to pay to get in) and acoustically'. Julian Johnson (2002: 91) likens the concert hall to the art gallery and museum, describing all three as 'reminiscent of the church in that they command a certain aura of the sacred', lending support to Abercrombie and Longhurst's (1998: 41) assertion that all performances – and especially those taking place in the simple audience context – 'will be invested with a sense of the sacred and the extraordinary'.

Even when religious comparisons are not employed, it is still evident that the concert hall is perceived as capable of instilling an element of the deferential in its inhabitants. Said's (1991: xv) description of concert occasions as 'always located in a uniquely endowed site' makes it tempting to wonder what types of behaviour such a

space elicits, especially when he later writes of 'the audience's receptivity, subordination, and paying patience' (p. 11). In general, the concert hall is typically characterised as a site for contemplative, passive listening (Chanan, 1994; Dibben, 2003; Johnson, 2002; Small, 1998) rather than for the more active forms of musical engagement reflected by audience behaviour at non-classical music performances. The attendant restrictions caused by this mode of behaviour are not always viewed positively: even Julian Johnson, who argues that contemporary listening practices rarely give classical music the attention it deserves, nonetheless describes the concert experience in oppressive terms: 'even the well-disposed can find this atmosphere rather stifling, and sometimes we leave these buildings with a sense of release, like swimmers coming up for air' (Johnson, 2002: 91).

Cottrell (2004) offers an alternative interpretation of the nature of concert experience through an exploration of the social functions of concerts, making use of both personal experience as an audience member and of theories of play. He refers to Huizinga's (1955) work on play, which draws remarkable parallels with experiences of the concert hall: play too is theorised as inhabiting a separate realm from our other activities, both within our own experiential 'cognitive space' and in the typical segregation of physical play areas in which it takes place (Cottrell, 2004: 174). Applying this to concert experience, Cottrell goes as far as calling the concert hall 'a magical world of make-believe' (p. 174) where 'we tend to lose ourselves, by which I mean that we become engrossed in the event and oblivious to the external reality around us' (p. 179). This description points to the effects of the space in which music is heard, consolidating the idea that simple audience spaces 'allow, encourage, [and] demand a *condensed*, intense experience' (Abercrombie and Longhurst, 1998: 55; emphasis in the original).

Cottrell proposes that musical performance events encompass elements of both ritual and theatre, all incorporated within the larger 'arena of play' (2004: 179). Others have focused instead only on the ritualistic elements of concerts and the ways in which these interact with the space in which they are performed. Environmental psychology's 'behaviour settings' concept offers one explanation, in its assertion that behaviour settings (e.g. a classroom, or a concert hall) exert a direct effect on users' behaviours within the space, meaning that different users inhabiting the space on different

occasions will still respond to the space in prescribed ways. Although writing from an ethnomusicological, rather than psychological, perspective, Christopher Small (1987: 29) puts forward a similar view (in rather more emotive language) when he describes the behaviour and experiences of a concert audience as 'inescapably subjected to the ritual requirements of the sacred space'. He provides as a comparison with the concert hall the ritualised space of the classroom, stressing the similar types of behaviour and social rules which both environments elicit.

Indeed, Christopher Small stands out amongst other writers on music in choosing concert experience as a main object of study, rather than merely using peripheral discussions of the topic in order to explore other trends or observations. Small's (1998) *Musicking* guides the reader through a hypothetical symphony orchestra concert, framed by theoretical interludes and his underlying concept of 'musicking', in which music is presented as a participatory activity, intrinsically involving a fundamentally social series of relationships. In this sense, Small builds on Becker's (1982) *Art Worlds*, which argues more generally that art forms should be conceptualised in terms of the activities of broad networks of people that contribute to the creation and reception of art works, rather than simply in terms of the works themselves.

Small, however, focuses explicitly on classical music as an art form, and uses this concept of music as 'activity' or 'event' (rather than as 'text') to highlight aspects of the symphony orchestra concert which cause him concern. Most notably, these are the isolated detachment of listeners both from other audience members and from the performers on stage, and the underlying assumption that music is produced for listening to, rather than for performing or participating in (Small, 1998: 8). Whilst postulating that 'we leave our sociability behind at the auditorium door' (p. 27), Small simultaneously argues that one of the primary functions of the orchestral concert is an 'underlying kinship between the members of the audience' (p. 41; cf. Gainer, 1995). This occurs, despite a lack of overt interactions in the auditorium, through compliance by audience members with unspoken rules and modes of behaviour, which it is plausible to suggest are determined by the nature of the space itself and the events which occur within it. As Barker states, behaviour settings

are not neutral places where people congregate for their own purposes; they are superordinate, self-regulating, dynamic entities that manipulate the behaviour of

their human components toward an equilibrium state for the setting. (Barker, 1987: 1421)

Small highlights what he sees as the strange social world of the classical concert: one where people come together only to sit in silence and show little outward response to the experience, other than exhibiting annoyance at fellow audience members who violate the expected patterns of behaviour:

during the actual performance total silence and as nearly as possible total immobility are enjoined. Even to move one's foot gently in response to the music's beat is to invite condemnation as an ignoramus or a boor' (Small, 1987: 10; cf. Goehr, 1992: 249).

So, why do audiences at classical concerts behave in such a prescribed way? While most musical genres elicit specific modes of behaviour from their audiences (Tomes, 2006), behaviour codes at classical concerts – for both audience members and performers – are particularly restrictive. Is this an effect of the spaces in which we hear classical music (in the form of behaviour settings, or social 'rituals', depending on which disciplinary alignment one chooses to take), an effect of prevailing attitudes towards the music itself (an ongoing ramification of the work-concept), or a combination of these and other factors?

In a rare account of the performer's perspective on these issues, pianist Susan Tomes describes her experiences touring in the 1980s with *Domus* – a chamber group which performed in its own portable geodesic dome, taking chamber music to areas where there was little opportunity to hear classical music. The group aimed to break down the barriers they perceived between performers and audiences through the use of spoken introductions to pieces and through the dome's informal setting, in which the performers often mingled with the audience after the concert. However, after a few years, the group decided to stop using the dome, instead returning to traditional chamber music venues. Tomes describes this decision, which was swayed by consideration of the types of behaviour required to play and hear classical music to the best possible effect:

We came to feel that presenting [the pieces] with nonchalant informality was betraying their real importance, and possibly even making it harder for the audience to sense their true dimensions....we very often noticed that great music needs and gets serious attention and absorption from players and audience alike. Everyone needs to acknowledge that profound immersion is the most rewarding

way to perform and to listen. In order for this to happen, one needs distractions to be kept to a minimum. (Tomes, 2004: 8)

Although making evident the complexities of events within a concert hall, the rich insights of Tomes and Small need to be pursued with more detailed and structured empirical investigation of classical concert experience. Given the depth of commentary available on the nature of concert experience, exploring what we do (and why we do it) when we attend performance events appears to be a promising area of investigation, responding to John Carey's (2005: 167) call for research to 'investigate the audience not the texts....and create a body of knowledge about what the arts actually do to people.'

2.3 Empirical research on classical music audiences

Stephanie Pitts' research at Sheffield's Music in the Round (MitR) festival moves away from previous literature's tendency to conceive of classical performances as generic symphony orchestra concerts, instead exploring the experiences of an audience at a long-established chamber music festival held at a small venue 'in the round'. Pitts (2005b) questions whether classical music audiences are really as passive as is commonly assumed, and through gathering data from interviews, questionnaires, and diary responses demonstrates the importance participants attributed to a sense of collectivity and community in their listening experiences, and to feeling valued *themselves* as 'active participants' in a socio-musical event (Pitts & Spencer, 2008: 228). This set of attitudes had been developed at the festival through a number of specific factors, including the concert venue's intimate 'in the round' setting and the presence of a core group of loyal audience members who had attended since the festival's inception. Overall, levels of performer-audience communication in this setting were noticeably higher than would be expected in a typical concert hall environment, with Pitts (2005a: 112) noting that,

This feeling of contributing to the musical event appears not to be transferable: many respondents mentioned their dissatisfaction with other, more formal concerts and were loyal to the particular festival and its main performers, rather than to the notion of live music in general.¹

¹ Another classical music festival, the larger-scale BBC Proms, has also been shown to command audience loyalty through its comparatively informal atmosphere and reputation for high quality performances (see Hewett, 2007; Kolb, 1998).

The importance of shared ethos and experience when attending classical concerts has also been stressed by Gainer (1995), who conducted in-depth interviews with ten regular attenders of the live performing arts to gain further insight into the role of 'ritual' in consumer behaviour. She found that sharing social experiences, including using arts events to 'build bridges' with distant acquaintances, or even just being able to talk about experiences of attendance with others who attend similar events, were key motivations for attending arts performances. She thus concludes that in some cases, 'the market for the live performing arts appears to be a market in the venue for social interaction, and not always a market in the performance on the stage' (p. 258), with individuals motivated to subscribe to concerts with another person or in groups in order to provide a regular forum for social interaction (p. 256).

Radbourne, Johanson, Glow, and White (2009) also present combined findings from arts attenders (in this case classical music and theatre audience members), although they widened the range of audience perspectives that is typically sought in audience research by running focus groups with subscribers to particular arts series and with audience members who were invited to attend a performance at a given series for the first time (specific data from the latter are discussed further below). They identified four key factors which held the potential to enhance or detract from the audience experience. First, knowledge played a role, especially in the idea that arts performances are a site of learning and of being exposed to previously unfamiliar things. The risk of attending a live performance was emphasised particularly by the new attenders (who were aware of the need to balance the cost of tickets with the fact they could never be guaranteed to enjoy the performance) while frequent attenders highlighted the distinctive aspects of live experience through comparison to recorded media, in that there is the potential for elements of the performance to 'go wrong' (p. 24). Relating to the findings by Pitts (2005a/b) and Gainer (1995) outlined above, Radbourne et al. identify 'collective engagement' as a third key part of the audience experience, noting the benefits of performers acknowledging the audience's presence, of a sense of shared response between audience members, and of the ability to articulate that response through talking to others present. Finally, they also note the importance of perceived performance quality in affecting audience enjoyment.

Sampling a broader range of concert-goers, Thompson (2007) asked questionnaire respondents to rate a range of pre-existing variables for their importance

in determining an enjoyable concert experience. Thompson proposes a preliminary model which incorporates factors which influence audience members' *anticipated* enjoyment of a concert (such as the listener's internal state, or their degree of familiarity with the concert venue), and their *actual* enjoyment of a performance (e.g. the degree to which a listener feels engaged in the performance). In contrast to Pitts' (2005a/b) findings, and more in line with Small's (1998) ethnographic portrayal of classical concerts, Thompson's set of variables placed emphasis on the individuality of the listening experience, highlighting the listener's personal responses to the performers and the performance as determinants of enjoyment. The potential for other listeners to shape concert experience is only considered at the extremes: in the form of attending with friends, or in other audience members creating unwelcome distractions while the performance is in progress. While Thompson's model does recognise the potential for performer-audience communication to affect enjoyment, it therefore neglects to consider the role of a sense of shared experience between audience members *themselves* – whether manifested through 'appropriate but generous applause, laughter, or even silence' (Radbourne et al., 2009: 26).

Importantly, although the respondents in Thompson's study were given the opportunity to identify additional factors that influence their enjoyment, few suggested variables that had not already been included in the questionnaire. It may be, then, that a sense of collective experience at classical concerts is not a key determinant of enjoyment for audience members attending one-off performances, in comparison to those attending a specific concert series (cf. Pitts, 2005b; Radbourne et al., 2009). A large-scale survey study of concert audiences in Belgium by Roose (2008) found that respondents valued the ability of concerts to facilitate an individual experience, with an emphasis on eliciting personal, emotional responses or a sense of escape from everyday life. Again, however, Roose's questionnaire presented respondents with a list of pre-existing motivations which they were asked to rate for importance on a Likert scale, rather than giving them the opportunity to articulate their own motivations for attendance. O'Sullivan (2009) conducted focus group interviews with audience members of one UK symphony orchestra, and identified a tension between individual and collective experience: they viewed listening within the concert hall primarily as an internal and private event, while simultaneously noting ways that the presence of other listeners can detract from or enhance an individual's listening experience – either by

creating distractions or by ‘facilitating each other’s experience by remaining unobtrusive’ (O’Sullivan, 2009: 219). However, O’Sullivan also found that audience members’ views on concert attendance, and particularly their attitudes towards the behaviour conventions at classical performances, were shaded by an overriding concern about declining and aging audiences, thus sharing the fears of respondents in research by Pitts (2005a: 98) that a ‘difficulty recruiting new, younger listeners’ may jeopardise the continued presence of classical concerts in the cultural landscape.

Wolf (2006: 7) has advocated a need for orchestras to ‘do more research on those who do *not* attend their concerts rather than focus on those who are already buying tickets’ (see also Roose, 2008: 250), and finding strategies for transforming ‘culturally-aware non-attenders’ (individuals who actively seek out arts and cultural events but do not attend classical concerts) into loyal audience members has been identified as a primary topic of interest for those involved in marketing classical performances (Winzenried, 2004). Recent initiatives to change the ways in which orchestras connect with their audiences (see Whitaker & Philliber, 2003) have focused on increasing the accessibility of classical concerts, which in some cases involves providing the audience with more – and often more *immediate* – information about the music they will hear in performance. As Brown (2004) describes, the practice of ‘embedding’ information into performances – whether through spoken introductions from the stage, or by using technology to supply audience members with short programme notes in real time as the concert progresses² – has been a contested issue:

Purists argue that the value of a live concert is implicit in the music – that everything you could hope to take away from a performance is obtainable through the act of listening. They believe that embellishment of any sort is unnecessary, invasive and even counterproductive. Others, armed with market research, believe that many in the audience want help becoming better listeners, but aren’t getting the help they want from program notes and pre-concert lectures that are seen as overly erudite. For these classical music lovers, and for those who are absent entirely from the concert hall, a new kind of concert experience is suggested – one with more embedded interpretive value – as a means of re-engaging with live concerts. (Brown, 2004: 13)

² The ‘Concert Companion’, a hand-held PDA device provided to audience members so that they can receive short electronic programme notes and close-up images of the performers, was the first technology used to do this (see Wolf, 2006). At the time of writing the expense of providing audience members each with a hand-held device has limited the idea’s uptake, although some orchestras have recently piloted using the micro-blogging site Twitter to similarly transmit short programme notes to audience members via their own mobile phones (see e.g. Midgette, 2009).

Spoken introductions during performances were an integral part of the Music in the Round chamber music festival, with Pitts (2005b) finding that audience members appreciated the additional knowledge and understanding that the introductions delivered, as well as valuing a heightened sense of informality that this more explicit form of performer-audience communication engendered (see also Kolb, 2001; Tomes, 2004). Little is yet known about the effectiveness of embedded interpretation for audience members attending classical concerts for the first time: how do, for example, spoken introductions affect new audience members' concert experiences, and how do their responses to concerts with embedded interpretation compare to concerts following the traditional format?

Kolb (2000) took three groups of students who had not previously attended classical music performances to one concert each, eliciting data from focus group interviews with the participants both before and after the concert. Each group attended a concert at London's Royal Festival Hall: either a programme of Wagner, Dvořák and Sibelius symphonic music, a light classical 'pops' concert, or a concert of science fiction film music by composer Michael Nyman. The group attending the pops concert found the experience most favourable, enjoying the heightened visual aspects of the experience, and expressing positive surprise at already being familiar with some of the music played. Those attending the 'traditional' concert of symphonic music were in general positive about the experience, despite expressing discomfort about the fact that 'everyone in the audience seemed a generation or two older than themselves' (Kolb, 2000: 19). In general, the students were perplexed that no one spoke from the stage to 'greet the audience and announce the music' (p. 24); while those attending the concert of Michael Nyman music found it strange that the composer was present in the audience yet did not acknowledge the audience's applause.

While Kolb's (2000) study is the only research to investigate the responses of audience members attending a classical concert for the *first time*, Radbourne et al. (2009) and Jacobs (2000) report on similar research undertaken with individuals for whom classical concert attendance was not the norm. Both of these studies provided participants with the opportunity to attend one performing arts event (from a range of performances including classical music concerts and theatre productions), obtaining data from focus group interviews with the set of participants that had attended each

performance. Jacobs (2000) recruited participants from a student population, and while he did not deliberately seek participants with little prior experience of attending arts performances, he nonetheless notes that the sample 'found the experience of attending the concert hall a forbidding one' (p. 137). Radbourne et al. (2009), meanwhile, sought participants from the general public who had not previously attended performances by the arts organizations with whom the research was conducted.

Considered as a group, a recurrent finding in these studies is that participants held the belief that in order to enjoy and understand live classical performance it is necessary to possess some 'special' knowledge of classical music (Kolb, 2000): unlike the audience members around them, they did not feel 'sufficiently "in the know"' about the music being performed (Radbourne et al., 2009: 23; cf. Jacobs, 2000). Because of this lack of knowledge, the participants were concerned that they were not able to make the 'correct' value judgements about the performances they had heard. Unsurprisingly, therefore, respondents in Radbourne et al.'s (2009: 24) study 'expressed a desire to know more about what they were viewing and to be given information relevant to the performance as part of the viewing experience', while those participating in Kolb's (2000: 22) research noticed a lack of accessible information, wondering why the concert's proceedings were being 'kept "secret"'.

A significant limitation of these studies is that they have obtained focus group data from participants after providing them with one single exposure to a live classical performance, meaning that participants' responses are highly likely to be shaped by the nature of the particular concert they attended. In the case of Kolb's (2000) study this approach proved useful by allowing consideration of the ways non-attenders react to different classical repertoire and presentational styles, but nonetheless the participants were left with little scope to contextualize their new experience, and the overall responses to each concert may have been influenced by differences between the three groups of participants.

2.4 Relationships between live and recorded listening

The area of recorded listening has attracted significantly more research interest than that of listening in a live performance situation, perhaps partly because rapidly changing technology has meant that new ways of using and consuming music regularly emerge. Studies have focused on the effects of the ubiquity of music in everyday life, particularly those, for example in consumer situations, in which the listener has little control over the music to which they are subjected (Areni and Kim, 1993; Milliman, 1986; Sloboda, O'Neill & Ivaldi, 2001). Research has also addressed the self-imposed use of music in everyday life, where recorded music is consciously used as a means of mood regulation, of enabling physical action, or of undertaking emotional 'work' (DeNora, 2000). An important element of this use of recorded music is the increasing portability of reproduction technology, with Michael Bull's (2007) study of iPod users making evident the way recorded music used as a means of configuring their experience of space and time can permeate almost any aspect of life (cf. Chanan, 1994: 15; Blesser & Salter, 2007: 25).

In this new cultural climate, where in theory a given piece of music can be heard on a momentary impulse whilst in any location (Bull, 2005), the purpose of live classical performance clearly needs to be reassessed. Now that we can listen to recordings whenever, and wherever, we wish, what role does the classical concert play in cultural life? According to Small, the concert itself now takes on even greater importance:

for if one can hear and these days even see the pieces performed without going to the concert, then the act of going to a concert, *when it is no longer necessary to do so in order to hear the works*, takes on a new and more concentrated ritual significance. (Small, 1998: 77; emphasis in the original)

Edward Said suggests that, live recordings excepted, the uniqueness of a concert performance lies in the fact that an individual concert cannot be 'revisited', unlike works of art which remain static in a gallery or museum (Said, 1991: xv).³ Julian Johnson (2002: 38) takes this idea further, arguing that the 'everyday' use of recorded music is anathema to 'the primacy of [classical music's] temporal form'. Johnson partially attributes the perceived 'crisis' state of classical music to our reluctance to give

³ Robert Philip (2004: 246) asserts that even most live recordings are 'corrected with editing, either from combining more than one concert, or by engaging the musicians for a "patching" session'; live recordings are therefore rarely completely representative of one particular performance.

it the time it deserves – as concert listening indeed does – arguing that ‘a contemplative mode of being is essentially denied to our generation’ (2002: 125). However, others propose not only that the classical music world is far from crisis, but that a younger generation of listeners will maintain an interest in classical music predominantly through consumption of recorded music as opposed to through live performance (Dempster, 2000: 49).

‘Seeing’ a concert: the role of the visual

One important difference between encountering music via recordings and through live performance is the role of the associated visual cues that constitute part of the live listening experience. As Susan Tomes (2004: 140) observes, at a concert the audience can ‘hear *and* see the player; body language can be expressive, and you add the information you get from seeing to the information you get from listening’. Cone (1974) also propounds the importance of visual information in the concert hall, especially if the piece being heard (and seen) is familiar to an individual from repeated hearings of one particular recorded interpretation. In this situation, Cone (1974: 138) suggests, visual cues are indispensable in helping the listener to ‘[accept] every event just as it comes and [resist] the temptation to fight each one by comparing it with a private version.’

Clarke (2005: 136) contextualises the role of visual cues in live performance from the perspective of ecological perception, in which wanting to identify and seek the sources of the sounds we hear is a typical example of a reciprocal cycle between perception and action. However, Clarke argues that the etiquette of the concert hall blocks the perception-action cycle – we can look and try to identify the sources of sounds, but rising from our seats to actively explore the ways in which the sounds we hear are produced would break the social rules of the concert hall. In some ways, therefore, experiencing music through recordings is less ‘disengaged’ than through listening in the concert hall: although when listening to recordings we cannot explore the sources of sounds directly, we can choose to listen more closely by replaying a passage, or by increasing the volume levels of the music (Clarke, 2005: 137). However, in a review of the empirical research available on listeners’ experiences of different presentational modes of classical music, Finnäs (2001: 57) proposes that live presentations are more effective than audio-visual or just aural means experiencing performance. He argues that the ‘vividness’ of live performance means that we pay

more attention to the situation, which consequently affects the way in which we remember the experience. Philip (2004: 249) consolidates this idea, arguing that while we remember the music heard in live performances as part of an event, recordings are unique in capturing in time a musical performance of which a listener has no memory. However, he also acknowledges the complexity of the relationship between live and recorded hearings, stating that ‘the most vivid memories are of events, not of recordings (though hearing a recording for the first time can itself be an event)’ (ibid.).

Familiarity and novelty

Hennion (2001) is one of very few writers to explicitly consider the nature of the relationship between live and recorded listening. In his account, the ubiquity of recorded listening changes the functions of the concert, as the use of recorded music means that the repertoire heard in the concert hall is likely to be familiar to listeners: ‘concerts now represent a standard of comparison: we assess and appreciate a concert after familiarizing ourselves with the music on disc’ (Hennion, 2001: 5; cf. Thompson, 2006). Hennion neglects to elaborate on the effects on concert experience that inevitable comparison with recordings might hold, although he does later strongly reaffirm the function of the concert hall in being a place where ‘extraordinary moments might happen’. Conversely, discs and radio are described as ‘humble tools’ used by listeners on an everyday basis as a means of developing their tastes and musical knowledge (Hennion, 2001: 15; cf. Pitts, 2005b: 99).

As well as the fact that audience members may be familiar with the works performed within a concert from recorded listening, it is also important to consider the effects of orchestral programming, where the repertoire that symphony orchestras present typically derives from a core number of symphonic works from the Western art music canon. The cumulative effects of these two situations – plus the relatively small amount of new music promoted by orchestras and concert venues – means that for regular concert attenders the concert experience may not usually involve novelty (Hennion, 2001: 4; Small, 1987: 13). Small (1998: 167) in particular describes what he regards as the negative effects of repeated hearings of canonic symphonic works, arguing that these result in a ‘loss of narrative meaning’. Similarly, Cone (1974: 116) writes that ‘it is hard to make overfamiliar compositions yield vital experiences’, yet

conversely in another essay stresses the potential benefits of repeated hearings in gaining insight into the meanings and structure of a musical work (Cone, 1989).

Psychological research provides possible explanations for the phenomena Cone describes. There are several different theories which attempt to describe relationships between familiarity and liking of aesthetic stimuli. The simplest is the mere exposure effect (see Zajonc, 2001), whereby an individual's liking for a novel stimulus increases with repeated exposure. This relationship between affective response and frequency of hearings has been demonstrated in numerous studies of a mere exposure effect for music (Peretz, Gaudreau, & Bonnel, 1998). In the field of 'experimental aesthetics', Berlyne's (1971) arousal potential theory (which unlike the mere exposure effect relates specifically to aesthetic stimuli) proposes that liking of a stimulus is determined by the degree to which it induces physiological arousal. As Hargreaves and North (2010) outline,

Berlyne suggested that the listener 'collates' the different properties of a given musical stimulus, such as its complexity, familiarity, or orderliness, and that these 'collative variables'...combine to produce predictable effects on the level of activity, or arousal, of the listener's autonomic nervous system. (Hargreaves & North, 2010: 520)

Berlyne (1971) states that liking stands in an inverted U relationship with arousal, so that stimuli which create intermediate levels of arousal are preferred. This theory has been developed through the concept of subjective complexity (North & Hargreaves, 1995), whereby liking is influenced by the listener's perception of the music's complexity. There is an optimal level of complexity for each individual listener, which depends on their degree of prior exposure. Repeated exposure increases familiarity and reduces the subjective complexity of the stimulus (ibid.) Therefore,

If the initial level of subjective complexity of a piece of music falls below a listener's optimum level, as in the case of a sophisticated critic listening to a very simple melody, repetition should have the effect of shifting liking further down the descending part of the inverted-U curve; that is, it should decrease liking still further. If the initial subjective complexity level is higher than optimum for the listener, however (e.g. in the case of a child or non-musician listening to a highly complex piece), repetition should serve to shift liking further up the ascending part of the curve; that is, liking should show an increase. (Hargreaves & North, 2010: 523-4)

Thus it appears that there is an inherent tension facing concert hall programmers between the potential over-familiarity with repertoire encountered by regular concert attenders, and the lack of familiarity that potential new audiences might face, perhaps leading to the alienating perception that they lack the 'special knowledge' required to appreciate and enjoy classical music performances (Kolb, 2000: 17). Indeed, the continued programming of 'the classics' in concert halls over many decades has been considered by Parakilas (1984: 11), who suggests that this repertoire projects a sense of comfort in listeners, who regard these oft-repeated works as simultaneously 'belonging' to both themselves and the musical and political 'authorities'. Others have argued that such works remain untarnished from repeated hearings, not because of their traditional associations, but because of something intrinsic in the nature of these works themselves:

What makes classics repeatable is not, ultimately, their status; it has to do with the immanent narration of newness that each performance of the work reenacts. The new in music is thus not literally new, or else it would wear out and cease to be new. It is an objective category of the musical work. (Johnson, 2002: 109)

If we follow Johnson's line of thought, it is plausible that Meyer's (2001: 352) suggestion that 'in the arts and in other "playful" activities...we actually relish and cultivate a considerable amount of uncertainty' can be related not only to performances of works which one has not heard before, but also to hearings of familiar works. Perhaps live and recorded renditions of works can interact positively in this sense, with recordings providing some familiarity with which to approach a live performance, while live renditions still provoke a sense of 'newness' both in the presence of visual cues, and in the presentation of new interpretations and insights.

Thompson (2006) explored the effects of familiarity on the enjoyment of listening within the concert hall, using a concert audience which, unlike those in Pitts' research, did not have the security of regular performers within a festival environment to counteract the effects of risky repertoire choices (Pitts, 2005b: 264). Aiming to identify factors that affect the enjoyment of a performance, Thompson's study found no relationship between enjoyment and prior familiarity with the repertoire performed. Thompson proposes that familiarity with a piece may even exert a negative effect on the enjoyment of a performance, as comparisons with a recorded version of the work known to a listener may be inevitable (2006: 233; cf. Cone, 1974: 138). This idea is supported by Roose's (2008: 247) finding from his large-scale survey of concert attenders that

'evaluating a concert according to the extent to which it contains familiar and easily recognizable tunes is negatively related with frequency of attendance'.

But is there a need to consider familiarity in concert experience more generally? In the case of Pitts' Music in the Round research, familiarity with the venue, with the host string quartet who performed at the festival, and with the specific 'ritual' of concerts at MitR played an important role in audience members' enjoyment and in their decisions to attend the festival's concerts (Pitts 2005a: 102; see also Pitts & Spencer, 2008). These decisions were also strongly influenced by the audience members' familiarity with the repertoire on offer, with the desire to hear familiar pieces finely balanced with a 'cautiously openminded' willingness to explore unknown works (Pitts, 2005b: 263; cf. Hennion, 2001: 13). However, as Pitts (2005b: 264) points out, although the audience members in this setting had the benefit of previous positive experiences when they had chosen to 'take risks' with unfamiliar repertoire, they 'rarely transfer[ed] their more adventurous musical choices to other settings'. This finding suggests the ways in which familiarity with repertoire, performers, and concert space might interact to influence attendance decisions. Perhaps familiarity with at least one of these is necessary for audience members to feel comfortable with their choices, offering an interesting perspective on studies addressing the barriers to arts attendance experienced by young people (see e.g. Harland & Kinder, 1999), who may have no knowledge of the music performed, the performers, or the classical concert venue.

2.5 Research aims

While the body of literature on empirical studies of classical music audience experience has significantly developed over the last five years, this topic of research is still relatively new, with most studies gathering data from one particular event or audience base. The specificity of this approach holds significant advantages in allowing the importance of distinctive features of different performance settings to emerge, but it also means that further investigations are needed to identify aspects of the audience experience at different types of classical music performances to begin to build a coherent picture of more general factors which influence audience enjoyment in the concert hall.

Further research is needed on the audience experience at orchestral concerts. Existing investigations of this type of event fall into two kinds: first, questionnaire studies (i.e. Roose, 2008; Thompson, 2006, 2007) have elicited responses from relatively large samples of concert-goers, but have not given respondents the opportunity to express in their own terms what they find enjoyable in concert attendance, and ultimately why they attend. Second, focus group studies (i.e. O'Sullivan, 2009; Radbourne et al., 2009) have succeeded in obtaining experiential accounts of concert-going, but through treating the data at the level of the group, they rarely report individual narratives or experiences in detail. It is therefore timely for research on the audience experience at orchestral concerts to take a more integrated approach, eliciting data from both questionnaires and individual interviews to achieve both breadth and depth: an approach which has successfully been employed in research on a chamber music audience (Pitts, 2005a/b).

In particular, there is scope to investigate further the roles of knowledge and familiarity in influencing audience enjoyment. This research aims to extend existing studies of new classical music audience members (Kolb, 2000; Jacobs, 2000; Radbourne et al., 2009) to explore whether repeated experience (i.e. attending more than one classical concert) exerts any effects on enjoyment. It also seeks to consider, from the perspective of new audience members, the effects of being provided with knowledge about the music during the events through spoken introductions and printed programmes. More broadly, this research aims to systematically investigate the effects of levels of familiarity on the enjoyment of concert attendance, by exploring the effects of familiarity with the repertoire, the performers, and the concert venue, and considering the ways in which these aspects may interact.

Extending the approach taken by Radbourne et al. (2009), this thesis aims to gain a composite understanding of audience experience and enjoyment by collecting data from new and existing audience members. Overall, the thesis aims to identify factors which influence audience enjoyment in the concert hall, and through gaining an understanding of audience experience it seeks to explore individuals' underlying motivations for attending classical concerts.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

3.1 Overview

This chapter describes the methods used to investigate the experience of classical concert attendance, outlining the rationale, design, procedure and analysis for three studies from which the findings of this thesis are drawn. Each study is described in turn, and lastly the approach used to produce integrative findings from the entire data set is outlined, accompanied by considerations of the validity of the research methods employed.

Given that this research primarily seeks to achieve an in-depth understanding of audience members' *experiences* of (and motivations for) concert attendance, qualitative methods of data collection have predominantly been used, in order to elicit phenomenological accounts of the nature of being 'in audience' at live classical performances. In addition, quantitative data has been collected where useful, through the use of self-report rating scales to measure enjoyment levels and perceived familiarity with aspects of the performance events. Where both qualitative and quantitative methods have produced data relating to the same phenomenon, these sets of data have been examined in conjunction, using a complementary approach to increase the explanatory power of the findings, and so creating a fuller and richer picture than the use of one method alone (Carey, 1993; Robson, 2002; Sale, Lohfeld, & Brazil, 2002). In Chapter 5, for example, quantitative measures take a more prominent role in investigating the effects of familiarity on the enjoyment of attending concerts, with qualitative data used to add explanation and interpretation to quantitative findings. The research therefore follows Flyvbjerg's (2004) assertion that

Good social science is problem-driven and not methodology-driven, in the sense that it employs those methods that for a given problematic best help answer the research question at hand. More often than not, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods will do the task best. (Flyvbjerg, 2004: 402)

Two main cohorts of participants contributed to the research: first, a purposive homogenous sample of classical music ‘non-attenders’ was provided with tickets to three orchestral concerts; their responses were sought through focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews. Second, audience members completed questionnaires distributed at an orchestral concert held at Cadogan Hall, London (these are referred to hereon as ‘questionnaire respondents’), ten of whom completed a follow-up semi-structured interview (‘attenders’ or ‘attender interviewees’). These two studies were run simultaneously, enabling both the non-attender participants and the attender interviewees to contribute to the longitudinal study which followed the event-based stages of the research. This lasted for six months, recording details of the participants’ attendance at live music events during this period and obtaining data on their listening habits.

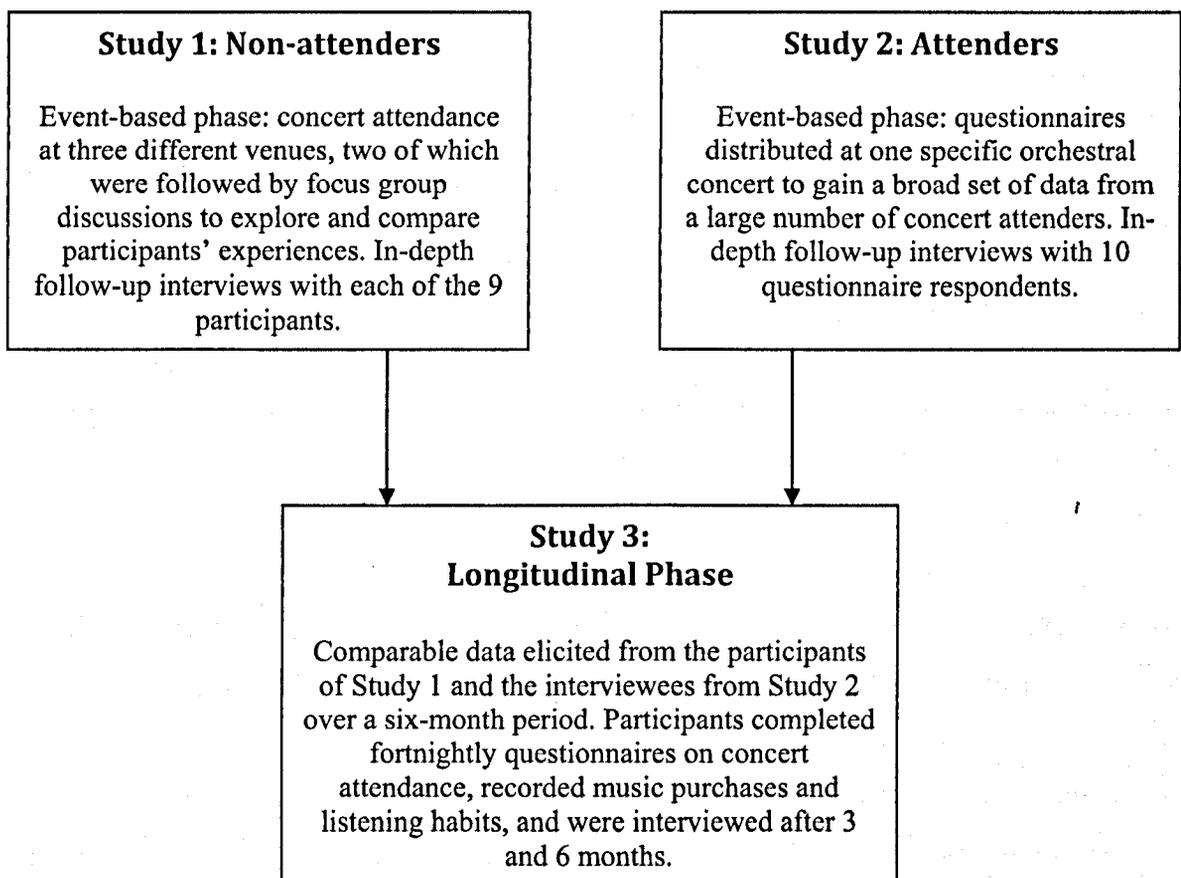


FIGURE 3.1 *Flow chart illustrating how the three studies relate*

3.2 Study 1: Audience research with classical music non-attenders

Rationale and design

Studies which investigate a particular service or product by eliciting data from non-users in addition to existing users are relatively common in a range of fields, including psychology, health, and communications research (e.g. Cohen et al., 2005; Hargittai, 2007; Talja & Maula, 2003). This approach enables researchers to understand which aspects of a service or product affect its perceived accessibility to different segments of the population and allows them to make changes accordingly in order to encourage service use. In the arts, while some recent research has taken a similar approach in obtaining data from both non-attenders and regular visitors to theatre and classical music performances (Radbourne et al., 2009) and museums (Kirchberg, 1996), other studies have focused more intently on the experience of non-attenders when invited to attend a theatre production (Scollen, 2008) or classical concert (Jacobs, 2000; Kolb, 2000) for the first time.

Exploring the assumptions and experiences of those who *do not* attend classical music concerts holds considerable potential for gaining fresh insight into the factors that affect the enjoyment and experience of concert attendance. Kolb (2000) explored the beliefs and experiences of young first-time attenders at classical music concerts, providing three groups of students with tickets to attend one concert each at London's Royal Festival Hall. The programmes of the three concerts varied widely, and the programming and related ambience of each concert exerted a considerable effect on the participants' responses to the experience (as described in Chapter 2). As the participants only attended one concert each, however, differences between the groups may have accounted for some of the variation in their responses to the individual concerts. Furthermore, Kolb's participants were left with little scope to contextualise their new experience on the basis of just one classical performance.

The present study built on Kolb's (2000) research, and responds to calls for further investigation into the experiences of new audience members at classical music concerts (Roose, 2008; Wolf, 2006). A repeated measures design was employed in which a group of 'culturally-aware non-attenders' (defined below) was invited to attend

three concerts performed by different orchestras at a range of venues. Unlike Kolb's approach, the initial intention was to keep the repertoire performed in the concerts as similar as logistically possible: I was more interested in investigating the effects of presentational style and concert venue on the participants' responses to the concerts than in exploring the effects of different repertoire styles on the responses of individuals with little prior exposure to classical performance. It was also intended that the ensembles performing in the concerts would remain as similar as possible and so orchestral programmes were primarily sought. The study was designed with the intention that the concerts would take place at a range of London concert venues and would cover a variety of presentational styles, including a 'traditional' concert in a large-scale, purpose-built concert hall; a concert in a church or a church converted into a concert venue; and an audience initiative event aimed at encouraging attendance from new audience members, either by making use of a non-traditional performance space,⁴ or by employing a more informal presentational style within an established concert environment. Figure 3.4 presents details of the concerts used in the study. Given the effectiveness of the use of post-performance focus group discussions to elicit data from participants in similar studies (e.g. Kolb, 2000; Jacobs, 2000; Radbourne et al., 2009), focus group interviews were held after the first and third concerts to record the participants' immediate impressions. In addition, the participants were interviewed individually in the weeks following the third concert to obtain more in-depth accounts.

An inherent limitation of the study's design is the potential for order effects to occur in the participants' responses. Briefly considered, but rejected, was the strategy of counterbalancing the orders in which participants attended concerts at the different venues. As concerts are temporally distinct and unique events, the participants would not have all attended the same concerts if this strategy were used. A between-subjects design of this nature would have placed undue emphasis on the effect of venue on concert experience, at the expense of keeping constant other factors that may affect the enjoyment of attending concerts. The design employed, whereby the participants were invited to attend all three concerts, provided considerable scope for cross-concert comparisons. It also enabled participants to meaningfully contextualise their experience of each concert and provided an immersion into the experience of classical concert

⁴ For example, 'Limelight', a monthly event where classical performers play in the 'rock and roll setting' of London's 100 Club (see <http://www.londonlimelight.co.uk/>).

attendance, exposing them to a range of concert venues, orchestras and presentational styles.

Setting up the study and negotiating access

A list of possible combinations of concerts was devised using the criteria for venues and presentational style outlined above. After researching possible concerts for inclusion in the study, it became evident that there was only one suitable ‘audience initiative’ event taking place within the necessary time-frame. This was *The Night Shift*: a late-night, one-hour concert given by the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment (OAE; see <http://www.oae.co.uk/thenightshift/index.html>). Held at the Queen Elizabeth Hall (a medium-scale concert hall located in London’s South Bank Centre), *The Night Shift* is promoted as an informal event, marketed with the tag line ‘classical music: without the rules’. Audience members are informed that they can talk, drink and move around the auditorium while the concert is in progress and that they can applaud whenever they wish.



FIGURE 3.2 *Image from a previous performance at The Night Shift (November 2007): Presenter Alistair Appleton interviewing conductor Vladimir Jurowski (photo by Joe Plommer, image taken from The Night Shift, 2010 [online])*

A key element of *The Night Shift*'s concept is verbal provision of information and context from the performers: audience members are provided with a free programme sheet rather than full programme notes, but a significant proportion of the concert's running time is devoted to discussion and 'talk' from the stage, facilitated by a presenter. With audience members invited to listen to music in the hall's foyer both before and after the concert, *The Night Shift* is promoted as an 'event' rather than a traditional classical music concert.



FIGURE 3.3 Audience members at *The Night Shift* (April 2008), listening to a DJ in the Queen Elizabeth Hall foyer after the main performance (photo by Joe Plommer, image taken from *The Night Shift*, 2010 [online])

Access to run the study at *The Night Shift* was negotiated first, so that once this was agreed two other concerts could be identified which complemented *The Night Shift*'s repertoire and date. Permission to run the study at *The Night Shift* was confirmed by the OAE's marketing manager who informed the venue that the study would occur, and offered free tickets for the participants in return for a summary of the data relating to the concert. As *The Night Shift* ended at 11pm, it would not have been feasible to run a focus group interview immediately after the concert. However, another suitable concert was identified which was taking place the following evening, meaning that the

two concerts could be discussed in a longer focus group interview after Concert 3 the next day.

Concert 3 was performed by the London Chamber Orchestra at St John's, Smith Square: a church building in Westminster which now solely functions as a concert venue. The concert's programme, although comprising works from the nineteenth (rather than eighteenth) century, was not dissimilar in genre from the music performed in *The Night Shift*, in consisting of an overture, piano concerto and symphony.

Programmes of the concerts used in Study 1

Concert 1. 13 February 2008 – London Symphony Orchestra
Venue: Barbican Hall, Barbican Centre (Conductor: Vasily Petrenko)

Joseph Phibbs: Shruti ('surprise' première)
Rachmaninov: Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini (piano: Ayako Uehara)
[interval]
Shostakovich: Symphony No. 15

Concert 2. 19 February 2008, 10pm-11pm – *The Night Shift*, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment
Venue: Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank Centre (Directors: Kati Debretzeni & Robert Levin)

Mozart: Overture to Der Schauspieldirektor
Mozart: Piano Concerto No. 21, movements 2 and 3 (fortepiano: Robert Levin)
Beethoven: Coriolan Overture

Concert 3. 20 February 2008 – London Chamber Orchestra
Venue: St John's, Smith Square (Conductor: Christopher Warren-Green)

Strauss: Die Fledermaus Overture
Schumann: Piano Concerto (piano: Ilya Rashkovskiy)
[interval]
Brahms: Symphony No. 1

FIGURE 3.4 *The three concerts used for Study 1*

Having now found an audience initiative event and a concert in a converted church building, I looked for a concert taking place in the Barbican Hall: a large-scale purpose-built concert venue which is home to the London Symphony Orchestra and

seats almost 2000 people. An all-Beethoven concert (comprising an overture, symphony and piano concerto) was taking place two weeks before Concerts 2 and 3, and would have matched the repertoire of the other concerts very well. However, this concert had already sold out by the time access to run the study at the Barbican was negotiated, and so a concert of twentieth century works held a week before Concerts 2 and 3 was chosen, which still comprised a symphony and a work for piano and orchestra. The Barbican Centre and St John's, Smith Square both granted permission for the study to take place at their venues, but both requested that I also ask permission of the orchestras performing in the concerts. The London Symphony Orchestra consented, as did the London Chamber Orchestra, who also offered reduced tickets for the participants in return for access to a summary of the data pertaining to their concert at St John's, Smith Square.



FIGURE 3.5 *The exterior of St John's, Smith Square, the venue for Concert 3 (photo by John Donat, image taken from St John's, Smith Square, 2010 [online])*

With this combination of concerts, all three events took place within the space of just over a week, meaning that the study was easily marketed to potential participants as a self-contained entity. Additionally, the short amount of time that passed between

Concert 1 and Concerts 2 and 3 easily facilitated a comparative discussion of all three concerts in the final focus group interview. As is evident from Figure 3.4, the repertoire of the three concerts chosen varied widely, meaning that the effects of repertoire on concert experience could not be controlled to the degree initially anticipated.



FIGURE 3.6 *Main entrance to the Barbican Centre, the venue for Concert 1 (image taken from Barbican Centre, 2010a [online])*

However, within the vast range of ensembles and repertoire that one might encounter under the banner of ‘classical music’, the concerts were linked cohesively by the nature of the ensembles performing: all were orchestral concerts, and all included a piece for piano and orchestra. If this study is viewed as a piece of action research,⁵ rather than a controlled experimental study, then this diversity in repertoire between the concerts can be recognised as a useful feature of the study’s design. Instead of encountering three

⁵ While the use of the term ‘action research’ connotes a drive to achieve change (Robson, 2002), it is important to note that recruiting or ‘converting’ new audience members was not an aim of this study. Rather, the study can be seen as belonging to the action research epistemology through its primary aim of seeking to understand new audience members’ experiences of classical concert attendance. A subsidiary aim, meanwhile, was to supply orchestras and concert organisations with transferable data relating to the ways in which the experience at their concerts might be made more appealing to this demographic. In this sense, the study primarily lies in the strand of action research which Robertson (2000: 309) identifies as devoted to ‘the development of knowledge’, rather than action research primarily comprising ‘the utilisation of knowledge’ (ibid.: 313, emphasis added; cf. Levin & Greenwood, 2008).

concerts of one single period of classical music, the participants were able to experience a wide range of classical styles (from period instrument performance to a première of a new work), providing a more realistic impression of the types of music that the label ‘classical music’ can encompass.

Participants

The ‘culturally-aware non-attender’ – an individual who actively seeks out arts and cultural experiences, but whose interest in cultural events does not extend to classical music concert attendance – is a target audience demographic for classical music marketing professionals (Winzenried, 2004). Culturally-aware non-attenders, rather than arts non-attenders *per se*, hold greater potential to effectively articulate the differences – and similarities – between classical music concert attendance and the experience of attending other arts events and therefore are ideal for gathering data on the experience of attending classical concerts specifically.

Eight culturally-aware non-attenders were sought to participate in the study, on the assumption that not all participants would be able to attend every concert. The criteria employed for identifying potential participants were:

- **Age:** Between 18 and 40. The use of this age bracket responds to claims that while younger classical concert audiences have been in decline (DiMaggio & Mukhtar, 2004), individuals from this age bracket do engage with classical music but predominantly through recorded music consumption rather than concert attendance (Dempster, 2000; Kolb, 2001). This study therefore provides an opportunity to explore why this may be the case and to discover how individuals in this age range respond to the experience of classical concerts if they are provided with an impetus to attend.
- **Previous classical concert attendance:** I aimed to find participants who had attended a maximum of one classical concert in the past twelve months, and who ideally had not attended any classical concerts during this period.
- **Knowledge of classical music:** Individuals who listened to classical music were not rejected for inclusion in the study, as long as this interest did not translate into regular classical concert attendance. Participants who *did not* listen to classical music at all were also sought, however. Potential participants who had considerable

experience of learning a classical instrument were rejected, as it is likely that they would have a greater degree of familiarity with the classical concert environment.

- **Attendance at other cultural events:** Participants were sought who regularly attended other arts events or spaces (i.e. galleries, museums, live music, theatre, dance, cinema, literary events). Regular attendance was defined by attending one event on average each month.

Participants were recruited using a range of methods. First, acquaintances were asked if they knew people who might meet the above criteria. Second, a social networking site was used to advertise the study, so that people I knew could pass on the details of the study to others and so on, thereby advertising the study to a network of people that it would not be possible to gain access to otherwise. Through these methods, details of the study were distributed to a wide range of potential participants, using the provision of free tickets to the concerts as an incentive. Third, on agreeing to take part in the study, participants were asked if they knew anyone else who met the criteria that they would like to invite. It was anticipated that participants taking part in the study accompanied by a person they already knew would diminish attrition rates, through introducing an element of accountability to the person with whom they were due to be attending. Furthermore, it was envisaged that attending the concerts and focus groups with a friend would reduce any anxiety about these experiences. Additionally, this strategy would enhance the study's ecological validity, as individuals in this age bracket predominantly view live music attendance as a social event, and it is unlikely that they would usually attend concerts alone (Kolb, 2001). Through the use of this strategy, six of the nine participants involved in the study knew at least one other person in the sample.

Potential participants who expressed an interest in taking part were asked to complete a preliminary questionnaire to assess their suitability for the study (provided in Appendix 2). The questionnaire collected demographic data (age, gender, occupation), asked participants to describe how they spent their free time, and requested how frequently they attended live music and other arts/cultural events. It asked for details of any classical music concerts the potential participants had attended during the past 12 months and for details of any period spent playing a musical instrument. It also

collected data on the frequency and means by which they listened to recorded music.

Ethical approval for the study was granted by the ethics committee of the Department of Music, University of Sheffield. Once a suitable participant's preliminary questionnaire was received they were invited to take part in the study by phone, to initiate a positive point of first contact and to attempt to establish an idea of how they might behave within a group dynamic (e.g. whether they were overly talkative). They were supplied with an information sheet (see Appendix 3) which informed them of the confidentiality of their data and that their responses would be anonymised. Once they had read the information sheet and confirmed that they wished to take part they were sent full details of the performances they would attend a week before the first concert took place (see Appendix 4). This sheet included meeting arrangements for each concert, an address for each venue plus a web link to each venue's website, details of the programme and performers of each concert, and estimated finish times for each focus group interview. On arrival at the first concert the participants were asked to sign a consent form (Appendix 5) which informed them of their right to withdraw from the study at any time.

The ages of the participants ranged from 24 to 36; five were female and four were male (see Table 3.1 for the participants' profiles). One participant (Dawn) attended the first concert but ended her involvement in the study at this point (although she was interviewed individually at a later date). Her replacement (Emma) attended the other two concerts. One further participant, Toby, was ill on the evening of Concert 2 and so did not attend that event. This left a core of six participants who attended all three concerts. However, data from all nine participants involved in the study has been included in the analysis: it was felt that that the responses of the three participants who failed to attend all concerts could still form a useful contribution to the data obtained, especially given that previous studies of classical music non-attenders (Kolb, 2000; Jacobs, 2000; Radbourne et al., 2009) have all generated useful findings from inviting their participants to one concert alone.

TABLE 3.1 *Non-attender participant profiles (continues on next page)*

Participant	Age	Occupation	How do you typically spend your free time?	Do you play any musical instruments, or have you done so in the past?	Previous concert attendance?	Listen to classical music?	Attended all concerts in Study 1?	Listening preparation status	Participated in longitudinal stage?
Carla	36	Project manager [local government]	'Reading, catching up with friends, cinema, theatre, musicals, travelling'	No: 'I am trying to learn to play the guitar, and I have one, but never gone further than a couple of notes.'	Once in past year, to see a friend performing in an amateur choral concert.	Several times a week: background listening when working.	Yes	LP: listened to repertoire in advance	Yes
Dawn	35	Project manager [local government]	'Running, gym, cinema, shopping, seeing family/friends'	Yes: 'Piano and violin (but to a very basic level many years ago!)	None in past year; attended once on a school trip	Once a week: background listening when working	No: attended only Concert 1	LP: listened to repertoire in advance	No
Dominic	27	Production manager [publishing]	'Music, reading, writing, film & TV, maybe the odd gallery'	Yes: 'Guitar, piano. Badly.'	Once in past year, when offered free tickets by a friend	Rarely	Yes	Non-LP	Yes
Emma	27	Freelance design lecturer, researcher & exhibition assistant	'Baking cakes, cleaning and housework, visiting art and design exhibitions'	No	Once in past year, when offered free tickets by a friend	Rarely: background listening when working	No: attended Concerts 2 & 3	Non-LP	Yes
Kerry	30	Fundraising	'Trips to theatre, drinking, eating, going to the gym and some voluntary work'	No	Attended opera once in past year; never attended a classical concert	Rarely	Yes	Non-LP	Yes

Rachel	25	Teacher (primary)	'Playing sports (hockey, netball, tennis, jogging), reading, cinema, socialising (restaurants/pubs)'	No	None	Once a week, when playing music to her school class.	Yes	Non-LP	Yes
Stuart	25	Assistant retail manager	'Cooking/ television/ eating out/ cultural events - music, theatre, art galleries'	Yes: 'Guitar - hobby ability'	None	Every so often	Yes	LP: listened to repertoire in advance	Yes
Tara	24	Production editor [publishing]	'Meeting friends, eating out, going to the theatre and cultural events in London, discovering new areas of London and returning to favorite areas too.'	Yes: 'Piano and recorder for a year when I was 15.'	None	Rarely; previously listened when a work colleague played classical CDs in the office.	Yes	LP: listened to repertoire in advance	Yes
Toby	27	Advocacy & Communications for conflict prevention charity	'Reading, watching films, surfing the internet, out with friends, going for walks, going to lectures / seminars, etc'	Yes: 'About ten years ago I began playing folk fiddle but didn't get very far - have started learning again recently.'	Attended opera twice in last 12 months when offered free tickets by a friend; never attended a classical concert	Every so often: background listening when working	No: attended Concerts 1 & 3	Non-LP	Yes

Pilot study

To test the materials and procedure for the study, five individuals were provided with tickets to an orchestral concert and took part in a post-performance focus group interview. Finding suitable participants for the pilot study who were not also being considered as potential participants for the full study presented some difficulties and so the criteria for inclusion were applied less stringently here. Some of the pilot study participants had experience of learning a classical instrument and attending classical concerts, while for others the pilot study was their first experience of classical concert attendance. As the primary purposes of the pilot study were for the author to gain experience of facilitating a focus group interview and for the effectiveness of the interview schedule to be assessed, it was decided that the heterogeneity of the group would not compromise the effectiveness of this stage of the research.

A focus group interview was held in the venue's foyer immediately after the concert. First, the participants were asked to complete a rating sheet to gather data on their familiarity with each work performed, their enjoyment of each work, and their enjoyment of the concert overall; these were completed without problems. The pilot focus group interview allowed me to try out the best places to position recording equipment and to test the effectiveness of recommendations provided in the literature on facilitating a focus group interview, such as the use of name cards and the positioning of participants around the table according to their personal attributes (i.e. by seating more vocal participants to the side of the moderator so that they were not within her direct line of sight; Kreuger & Casey, 2000: 104). It also allowed my assistant to develop a system of note-taking during the interview that recorded the essence of what each participant said.

The interview was transcribed and analysed. As the interview flowed well, only minor amendments in wording were made to the interview schedule. On a few occasions I had asked impromptu questions which were not listed in the schedule and after analysis of the transcript those deemed effective were included in the interview schedules for the full study. At the end of the interview comments were sought from the participants on the nature and wording of the questions and of the author's management of the group (e.g. whether they were provided with enough time to speak on a given

topic). No improvements were recommended and so I did not plan any major changes in my approach to facilitating the interviews in the full study.

Materials and procedure for each stage

Listening preparation task. To collect exploratory data on the effects of repertoire familiarity on the enjoyment of concert attendance, half of the sample (labelled 'LP') was provided in advance with recordings of the music to be heard in performance two weeks before the first concert took place. They received three CDs (one relating to each concert) and were asked to listen to the relevant CD at least once before attending the corresponding concert. As much as possible, recordings were selected which would exhibit a similarity to the live performances the participants would hear. For example, the CD relating to Concert 2 (*The Night Shift*, performed by the OAE – a period instrument orchestra) comprised recordings made by other period instrument ensembles, namely the London Classical Players (conducted by Roger Norrington) and the English Baroque Soloists (conducted by John Eliot Gardiner). Unfortunately, works which had not been listed in the available promotional literature were performed in two of the concerts and so in these cases the CDs did not completely represent the combination of works that the participants were to hear live. In Concert 1, as part of the UBS Soundscapes Pioneers scheme (which commissions new works from young composers), an unexpected new work began the concert: *Shruti* by Joseph Phibbs. In Concert 2, Mozart's Overture to *Der Schauspieldirektor* was not included in promotional literature for the concert, but was performed on the night.

For logistical simplicity, the first four participants to agree to take part in the study (Tara, Stuart, Carla and Dawn) were provided with recordings, as some of the later participants confirmed their involvement less than two weeks before the first concert. Each CD was accompanied by a ratings card in its case (see Appendix 6): the participants were asked to note the date of each occasion they listened to one or more of the tracks on the CD and to provide an enjoyment rating for each piece every time they listened to it. All ratings were on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 represents 'I did not enjoy it at all', and 7 represents 'I enjoyed it very much'. The CDs and rating cards were collected from the participants when they were interviewed individually at the end of the study. The participants were instructed that as long as they had listened to each CD once (and before the concert to which it pertained), they were free to listen to the CDs

as many times as they wished. They were told they could listen to the CDs in any situation, and were free to transfer the tracks from the CD to their computer or mp3 player should they wish, provided they still remembered to record listening details and responses on the rating cards.

One LP participant (Dawn) ceased her involvement in the study after the first concert. As I was notified of this on the day of Concert 2 there was not time for her replacement to be provided with recordings and asked to listen to them before attending the performances. Dawn's rating card for the CD relating to Concert 1 has nonetheless been used in the analysis. The four participants who did not receive CDs (labelled 'non-LP') were informed about the listening preparation stage of the study during the first focus group interview, when discussing the effects of repertoire familiarity on the experience of hearing a live performance. I decided that the possibility of these four participants having heard some of the repertoire before could not be controlled: they were not, for example, instructed *not* to listen to the music in advance. Rather, it was assumed that they were unlikely to prepare for attending the concerts by seeking out recordings of the works. Their perceived levels of familiarity with the works were obtained using a ratings sheet at each concert and were discussed in both the focus group and individual interviews.

Concert attendance. The participants were met at each concert venue shortly before the concert began to supply their concert tickets. At this point each participant was given a disposable camera with which to create a visual record their reactions to the venue and the concert experience, using a similar technique to Schiavo (1987), who sought to understand children's and adolescents' responses to their home environment through asking them to take photographs of important places to them within their home, before using the photos as a prompt for further discussion (Clark & Uzzell, 2006: 186). The non-attenders were informed in the instruction sheet (Appendix 4) that they could take photographs before the concert, in the interval, and after the concert, but not while the performance was in progress. They were also asked to be respectful of other audience members when using the cameras at the concerts. This aspect of the study was approved by all of the venues involved. One venue issued some additional restrictions on the use of cameras (for example, requesting that no images of copyright materials or of children were taken). These restrictions were listed on the participants' instruction

sheet; for consistency the participants were asked to adhere to these restrictions at all of the concerts (cf. Pink, 2004: 365). The photographs taken at the concerts were developed, and were then used when interviewing the participants individually both to remind them of each event and to use as a prompt when discussing various aspects of the concert experience.⁶ Provision of the cameras also acted as an 'icebreaker' at the beginning of the study, providing a topic of conversation between participants, and providing an activity for them to be involved in while waiting for the concerts to start. This aspect of the study may have diminished its ecological validity, making participants even more aware of the fact that they were not just audience members, but participants in a piece of research. However, as the photographs and commentaries by non-attender Dominic in Figures 3.7 and 3.8 demonstrate, the reflexivity prompted by this process did not necessarily detract from their experience.

Other than being provided with disposable cameras, the participants were asked to treat the concert as they would any other arts event they might go to. The instruction sheet informed them about the availability of printed programmes at each concert (i.e. whether they could be bought or were provided free at the venue), but the participants were left to decide whether they wished to obtain a programme. The participants were all seated together during the concerts. My assistant and I also sat with the participants during the performances, except at Concert 2 where the participants sat together but we were seated separately in another area of the auditorium. Seating the participants in pairs was considered, but the pilot study indicated that when the participants were seated together in a group they were likely become acquainted with each other during the concert and the interval. When the focus group interview began, therefore, each participant had already spoken to a few of the other group members. It was observed that the participants gradually developed a sense of group cohesion and social rapport as the study progressed. In some senses this was a positive factor: as previously mentioned, individuals in the age ranges of these participants view attendance at live

⁶ The participants' photographs are used at various points in the subsequent chapters, but as the quality of image from the disposable cameras was poor the majority of images used have been recreated using a digital camera, retaining the original composition as much as possible. Disposable cameras were deemed the most suitable photographic equipment for this study, given their low cost and, it was anticipated, their ease of use. But despite instructions on the camera itself, many participants did not use the camera's flash button, meaning that when developed many of their photos did not come out, compromising the potential effectiveness of this stage of the study. See Pink (2004: 363-8) for further discussion of factors influencing the choice of equipment when undertaking visual research.

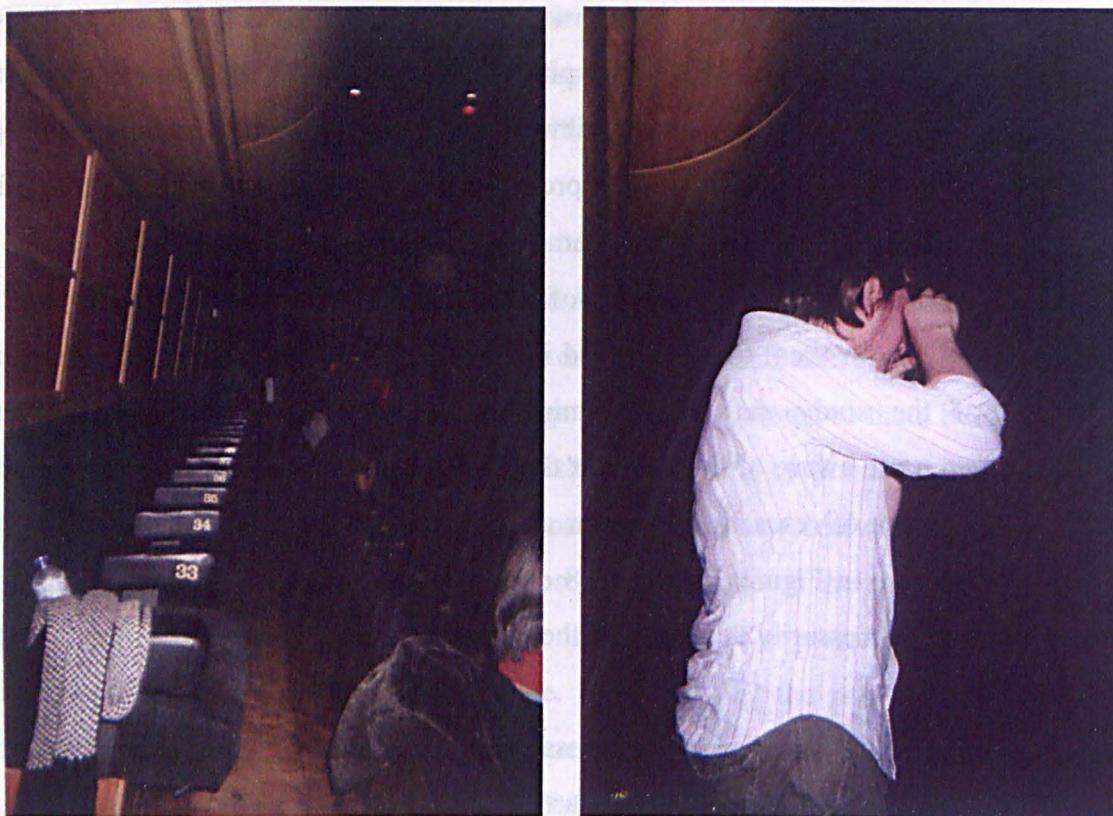


FIGURE 3.7 [left] *'So the first one is an empty row of seats at the Barbican. Which I think was just the sort of... 'cos this was the first one [concert], there was a sense of anticipation, so you know, this was the start of the classical music journey that we were about to embark on. So it was really, yeah, that it was about to be filled with our fellow classical music people.'* [NA Dominic I]

FIGURE 3.8 [right] *'That's [another participant] taking a picture of, he's taking a picture – I suppose I just was recording the fact that we were all taking part in the study and we were all taking pictures, which I thought kind of added to the experience...because it forced you to look around yourself as well.'* [NA Dominic I]

music events as a social experience and so the social cohesion that developed between participants may have contributed to the study's ecological validity. It also meant that the participants were forthcoming with their responses in the focus group interviews, particularly in the interview after Concert 3. However, this sense of social cohesion may have exerted a detrimental effect on the quality of the data elicited from the focus group interviews, with participants at times exhibiting tendencies to conform to a 'majority opinion' (Carey & Smith, 1994: 124).

The concerts had been chosen with the expectation that Concerts 1 and 3 would follow a traditional and formal mode of presentation, with programme notes providing

the only channels of context and information. In fact, both of these concerts contained some spoken introduction from the stage. Concert 1 unexpectedly opened with a discussion between the LSO's principal double bassist and the composer of the new work premièred, Joseph Phibbs. Together, they introduced the new work, and the composer outlined some of his sources of inspiration for writing the piece. In Concert 3 the conductor spoke from the podium at the beginning of the second half of the concert. He explained the rationale for the concert's programming, drawing biographical links between the composers of the three pieces performed that evening, before introducing the Brahms symphony which would follow. Concert 2, as previously mentioned, contained a significant amount of verbal introduction and musical demonstration. Movements of the piano concerto were interspersed with some 'talk' from the stage as is usual at *The Night Shift* where multi-movement works are rarely performed without a break between each movement.

Focus group interviews. Focus group interviews were held immediately after Concerts 1 and 3; as Concert 2 was a late-night event it was discussed the following evening in the interview after Concert 3. The focus groups interviews both took place in an area of the venue's foyer space. After Concert 1 this was in an upper level of the Barbican Centre's foyer; and at Concert 3 the interview was held in a reserved corner of the venue's restaurant. As recommended by Kreuger and Casey (2000), a name card was placed on the table in front of each participant to ease communication between members of the group. The name cards also helped the research assistant, who, to aid the transcription process, recorded the essence of what each participant said during the interviews (Kidd & Parshall, 2000). The participants were seated according to a pre-determined table plan, whereby individuals anticipated to be less forthcoming in the discussion were placed directly opposite me, while participants with a tendency to dominate the group were placed at the ends of the table, out of my immediate line of sight (Kreuger & Casey, 2000; Macnaghten & Myers, 2004).

When the participants arrived at the table they were first asked to complete a rating sheet which recorded their perceived familiarity with each piece; their enjoyment of each piece; and their enjoyment rating for the concert overall (see Appendix 7). All ratings employed a 1 to 7 scale, where 1 represented 'not at all', and 7 represented 'very much so'. As there was no interview after Concert 2, the participants were issued with a

ratings sheet for this concert at the beginning of the performance, and asked to return it at Concert 3 the following evening. Two recording devices (a Sharp MiniDisc portable recorder with attachable microphone and a Tascam Pocketstudio 5 portable digital multi-track recorder) were used simultaneously to record the interviews, as one recording device alone might not pick up the voices of those at either ends of a rectangular table. The use of two devices also ensured there would be a back-up recording should one device fail.

The interview schedules were designed so that the same information would be elicited about the participants' responses to each concert, while ensuring that the two interviews also prompted discussion on different topics associated with the participants' experiences of classical music, so that the second interview in particular did not feel too repetitive or formulaic (see Appendix 8 for the focus group interview schedules). As the participants were aware that the research was being conducted from a university Music department, there was a possibility that their responses might be inhibited by a perception of the author as an 'expert' on classical music (cf. Smithson, 2000). To attempt to dispel potential constructions of power, both focus group interviews began with an introduction which stressed that the research sought to highlight and understand the participants' views on the concert experience (MacDougall & Fudge, 2001: 120), and reiterated that all members of the group were similar in possessing very little experience of classical concert attendance.

The opening question was a factual one: each participant was asked to introduce themselves and to say whether or not they had visited the concert venue before. This technique functioned as an 'icebreaker', ensuring that each participant had spoken in front of the group before more detailed discussion ensued (Kreuger & Casey, 2000: 44). The first interview then comprised a core series of questions which were also used in the second interview to gain responses to each concert. Participants were asked how the concert compared with their prior expectations and were asked to identify any factors that they particularly enjoyed or did not enjoy about the concert experience. The topic of repertoire familiarity was then discussed, followed by questions seeking responses to the concert venue. The participants were also asked if anything could be improved about the experience of going to the concert overall. In the first interview more general questions were then asked about the participants' attitudes towards classical concert

attendance (e.g. 'Are there any reasons why you don't usually go to classical concerts?'). I also asked for their views on how attending a classical concert differs from the experience of attending other live music events, or other arts events in general. Both interviews ended with a summary of the study's aims, followed by a final question asking whether the participants thought any important topics had been omitted (Kreuger & Casey, 2000: 46). The first interview lasted 45 minutes.

In the second interview, Concerts 2 and 3 were discussed in turn using the core sequence of questions outlined above. It was made clear at the beginning of the interview that there would be time at the end for more general discussion and comparison between the three concerts. In this latter section, I asked if the degree to which the participants felt at ease with the social conventions of classical concerts had changed at all during the course of the study. I also asked if there was one concert that they had enjoyed the most overall. The participants were then asked to make predictions about their future listening habits and live music attendance (e.g. 'Do you think taking part in this study will have any effect on the types of live music events you'll go to in the future?'). The second interview lasted for one hour.

Individual interviews. An interview with each participant individually was arranged to take place two weeks after Concert 3, allowing time for transcription and preliminary analysis of the focus group interviews. Interviewing the participants individually was an integral part of the study, providing an opportunity to contextualise each participant's focus group responses within a wider understanding of their experiences of the study and their previous levels of involvement with classical music (Morgan, 1996: 134). All of the participants were interviewed in person, either at their homes or a convenient meeting place. The interviews were recorded using a Sharp MiniDisc portable recorder with attachable microphone; the interviews lasted on average 45 minutes.

The interviews were semi-structured, thereby following an interview schedule but allowing flexibility to explore deviations from the schedule with individual participants where relevant. The interview schedule (see Appendix 9) started with questions about the cultural activities and events that the participants engage in, before asking in more detail about their listening habits and their previous (if any) experiences of attending classical music concerts. They were asked whether they could identify

reasons why they had not attended classical concerts in the past. The questions then turned to concerts themselves – many of the questions were similar in nature to those asked in the focus group interviews, giving the participants the chance to comment fully on their own experiences of the events. To begin this process, the participants were given the photographs that they had taken at the concerts, and asked to provide a brief summary of their experience of each concert, while also explaining why they had chosen to capture those particular images. This method of photo elicitation acted as an aide memoire, reminding the participants of the concerts which had occurred several weeks previously (Harper, 2002). It also eased the participants into this section of the interview, by allowing them (and their photographs) to direct the focus of the discussion (Collier & Collier, 1986; cited in Banks, 2007: 65).

The topic of repertoire familiarity was then discussed. The LP participants were asked if they thought that hearing the music on a previous occasion affected their experience of hearing it in a live context. The non-LP participants were asked whether there were points in the music that they did in fact recognise; they were also asked if they would have liked the opportunity to hear the repertoire from recordings before attending the performances. The next section of the interview schedule addressed the provision of information at the concerts, discussing participants' views on the effectiveness of programme notes and spoken introductions from the stage. The participants were then asked if they could identify a preferred piece of music, venue and overall concert experience and were prompted to explain their choices. In order to contextualise these responses, they were also asked: 'What kinds of things are important in a classical concert in order for you to enjoy it?' Finally, the participants were asked if they thought their involvement in the study would have any effect on their listening habits and on their attendance at live music events. These predictions were tested out during a six-month longitudinal study outlined in section 3.4 below.

Data analysis

The interviews were transcribed. The two focus group transcripts were first analysed thematically using a grounded theory approach. The transcripts were each read repeatedly, with summaries, interpretations and initial theme titles noted in the margin. A list of theme titles from both transcripts was devised; the themes were then grouped together using axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) to produce a number of higher-

order concepts. The individual interview data was then analyzed in depth, using the themes created from the focus group data, but also creating new themes where appropriate. It should be noted that unlike the typical market research paradigm in which a number of different focus groups are interviewed using the same interview schedule, in this study the unit of analysis was at the level of the individual, rather than the group. This enabled themes identified in the focus group transcripts to also be applied, where appropriate, when analysing the individual interviews. While focus group interviews and individual interviews are rarely used in conjunction in market research, in academic research these two methods are often combined (Morgan, 1996), making use of the 'greater depth' of the individual interview and the 'greater breadth' achievable in the focus group context (*ibid.*: 134).

Given that the study's aim is to understand the responses and experiences of new audience members, it had been anticipated that the analysis would take a phenomenological approach through the use of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA; see Smith, 1995). However, there is some contention in existing literature about whether IPA should be used to analyse focus group data (Brocki & Wearden, 2006) because IPA is designed to explore participants' beliefs and experiences in detail (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). While a focus group interview can quickly generate a broad picture of participants' views and responses, it will never succeed in eliciting detailed, experiential accounts from every participant on each topic. As themes from the focus group interview had been used to shape and develop the individual interview schedule, and because it was preferable to be able to use both focus group and individual interview data when examining a given participant's response to the concert experience, the general analysis approach for the data set as whole used a thematic approach, based on – but not prescribed by – IPA.

The individual interview transcripts were read repeatedly, and while themes from the focus group interview were applied where appropriate, negative case analysis (looking for examples that discount an idea or trend) was also undertaken, ensuring that pre-existing themes from the focus group analysis would not overshadow the greater complexity of response generated by the individual interviews. As the number of analysed transcripts grew, previous transcripts were checked for instances of newly emergent themes.

The focus group interviews were then revisited, and a superordinate list of themes and sub-themes was produced which incorporated both sets of data. Theme files were created for each theme, containing indicative quotations and a comprehensive log of the location of every occurrence of each sub-theme. As Flowers, Duncan & Frankis (2000) note, whilst it is possible to draw themes from focus group and individual interviews in conjunction, it is also important to acknowledge that the data elicited in these two situations will have been shaped by different contextual factors. On this return to the focus group data, then, further attention was also paid to the effects of the group context and the presence of group processes (Carey, 1995; Carey & Smith, 1994; Kitzinger, 1995). The ways in which participants constructed and presented their responses to the concert experiences were examined and compared to their presentations of self (Goffman, 1956) within the individual interview context, in recognition of Smithson's (2000: 105) assertion that a focus group interview is 'not merely...a quick way to pick up relevant themes around a topic, but a social event that includes performances by all concerned'.

Pseudonyms have been used for all participants. Appendix 1 supplies the coding system used across the thesis to label the sources of quoted material. The non-attender participants are labelled in the subsequent chapters with 'NA' before their pseudonym. In addition, labels after their name indicate which interviewing occasion quoted material derives from (FG1 – focus group following Concert 1; FG2 – focus group following Concert 3; I – individual interview).

3.3 Study 2: Questionnaire study of classical music audience members

Rationale

This study sought to gather data from existing classical music audience members. While Study 1 manipulated a situation, inviting a purposive sample of participants to events they would not normally attend, Study 2 gathered data from a naturally occurring situation, using a cross-sectional questionnaire to obtain data from audience members attending a classical concert of their volition. To balance the small sample used in Study 1, the aim in this study was to elicit a broad set of data from a large number of audience members at one particular classical concert. A questionnaire was deemed the most

suitable method for this purpose, while follow-up interviews with a smaller group of participants could provide more detailed perspectives and allow a more flexible questioning approach.

This study was designed to investigate comprehensively the effects of familiarity on the enjoyment of a concert, including audience members' levels of familiarity with the repertoire performed, the concert's performers and the concert venue. In addition, it aims to identify other significant factors which may affect the enjoyment of concert attendance, including the roles of the concert venue, audience behaviour and the nature of the live listening experience. It also aims, significantly, to contextualise this one particular concert within the respondents' wider experiences of concert-going, by attempting to discover why people attend classical concerts, and to assess the importance of concert attendance in their (cultural) lives.

A professional orchestral concert was used for the event stage of the study. While this type of concert is often the subject of anecdotal musicological commentary (e.g. Johnson, 2002; Cook, 1998), most empirical audience studies investigating this type of concert come from the field of arts marketing, which is often more concerned with identifying audience members' motivations for attending a concert, rather than exploring their experiences once in the concert hall (see e.g. Kolb 1998, 2001). While a considerable proportion of classical music concerts are given by professional orchestras, the only other study of audience experience at orchestral concerts (Thompson, 2006) obtained data from a student orchestral performance held in a conservatoire, where audience members' motivations for attending and their expectations from the performance are likely to differ from those when attending a professional concert as a more anonymous 'consumer'.

Setting up the study and negotiating access

A questionnaire was devised for distribution at a concert performed by the English Chamber Orchestra at Cadogan Hall, London, during January 2008. Cadogan Hall

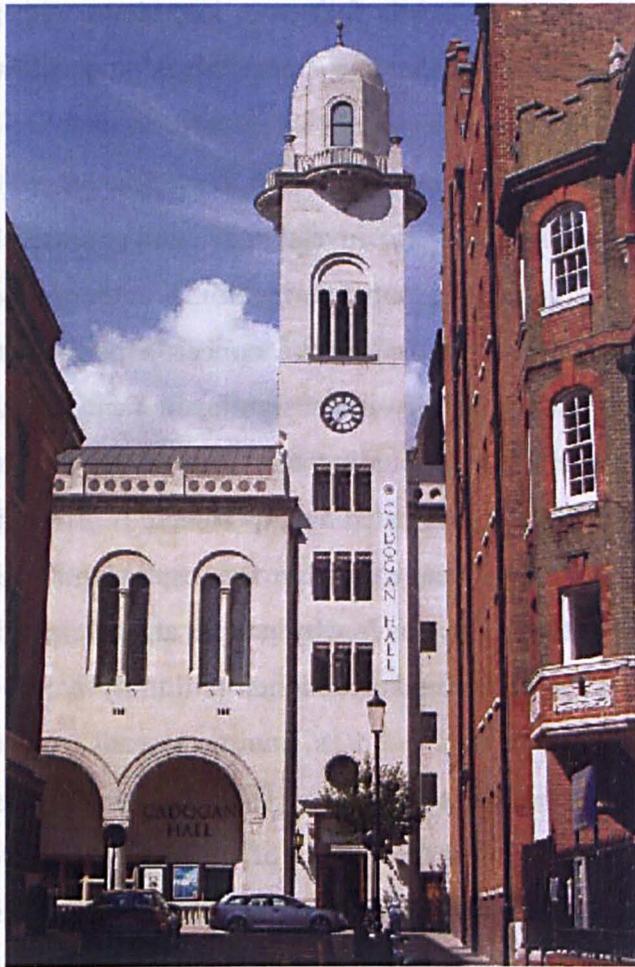


FIGURE 3.9 *The exterior of Cadogan Hall (photo © David Hawgood, licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic License. Image taken from Geograph, 2010 [online])*

opened as a concert venue in 2004, and is an aesthetically striking converted church which seats c. 900 audience members. The hall's size was a crucial factor in the decision to use it for this study: it is large enough to hold orchestral concerts, but small enough to enable the distribution of questionnaires during the concert to a significant proportion of the audience. The venue is the home of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the BBC Proms Chamber Music Series, as well as hosting a full programme of other orchestral concerts, recitals, and jazz and world music concerts.

Cadogan Hall's management granted permission for the study to take place. Additionally, their marketing manager obtained agreement from the English Chamber Orchestra for the study to run at their concert. A range of concerts taking place at Cadogan Hall during the required time-frame were considered. The English Chamber

Orchestra concert was chosen because it was a professional concert of purely orchestral repertoire. As I planned to run the study during January to correspond with the schedule for a further longitudinal stage (see section 3.4 below), the choices of concert were limited because many of the professional orchestras based at Cadogan Hall were not performing concerts during that month.

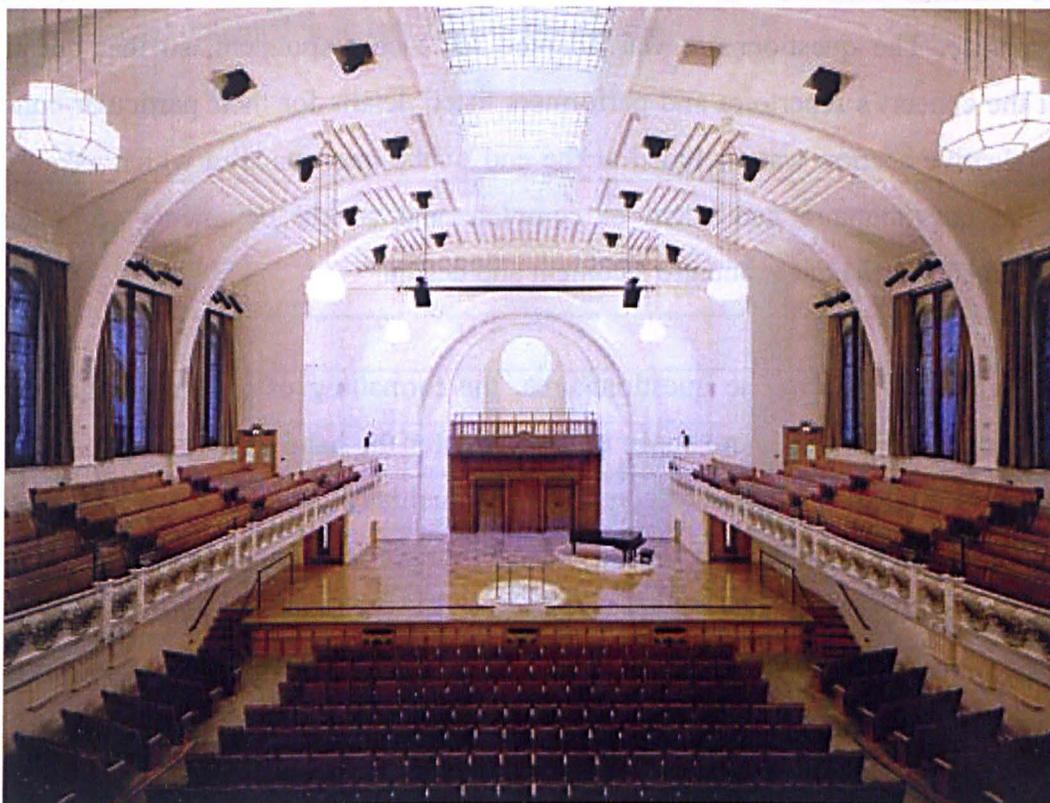


FIGURE 3.10 *The interior of Cadogan Hall (photo by Adam Parker, image taken from World Architecture, 2010 [online])*

As is evident from Figure 3.11, the concert chosen covered a wide range of repertoire, juxtaposing relatively rarely performed pieces such as the Haydn Symphony No. 84 and Shostakovich Piano Concerto No. 1 with Stravinsky's Pulcinella Suite and the Haydn Trumpet Concerto, which are more frequently performed live.⁷ A potential contrast between familiarity and novelty was also observable in the concert's soloists: while Alison Balsom is a well-known trumpet soloist, Igor Levit was not the piano soloist advertised in promotional literature for the concert – he was sought as a

⁷ In a search of available UK classical concert listings for the period between January 2010 and January 2011, the Haydn Trumpet Concerto appears in four upcoming concerts and Stravinsky's Pulcinella Suite in two, while the other two works do not appear (Concert Diary, 2010[online]).

replacement to the advertised pianist a week before the concert took place. The concert also marked Paul Watkins' debut as associate conductor of the English Chamber Orchestra.

Pilot study

To test out the questionnaire, eight acquaintances who were independently planning to attend classical concerts were asked to complete a questionnaire after attending a performance. The questionnaire was adapted for each respondent, so that questions about the concert's repertoire and performers listed details for their particular concert. An evaluative section was included at the end of the questionnaire which asked how long the questionnaire had taken to complete and sought comments on potential improvements to the questionnaire's content and design.

After analysis of the questionnaires, the formatting of the questionnaire was altered so that there was more space on the form for the hand-written responses to the open-ended questions. As the responses to the qualitative questions were meaningful and the questions which asked for ratings were answered without problems, very few alterations were made to the final questionnaire. Three of the respondents commented that they found one of the free response questions difficult to answer (Question 10 – 'Do you feel like "part of an audience" at this concert? *Please explain*'). However, four of the other respondents provided rich and useful responses to this question, and so it was decided to retain this question, even though it would potentially elicit polarised responses.

<p>English Chamber Orchestra concert at Cadogan Hall</p> <p>31 January 2008</p> <p>Stravinsky: Pulcinella Suite Haydn: Symphony No. 84</p> <p>[interval]</p> <p>Haydn: Trumpet Concerto (soloist: Alison Balsom) Shostakovich: Piano Concerto No. 1 (soloists: Igor Levit and Alison Balsom)</p> <p>Conductor: Paul Watkins</p>

FIGURE 3.11 Programme of the Cadogan Hall concert used for Study 2

Participants

Five hundred and sixty audience members attended the English Chamber Orchestra concert at Cadogan Hall. 330 questionnaires were distributed and 141 completed questionnaires were received, representing 25% of the audience in attendance at the concert. Of the sample of 141 respondents 64 were female, 59 were male, and 18 did not respond to the question. 29% of the sample (41 respondents) were aged between 56 and 65 and 22% (31 respondents) were aged 66-75; while the age brackets 18-25, 26-35 and 36-45 each contained less than 10% of the sample.

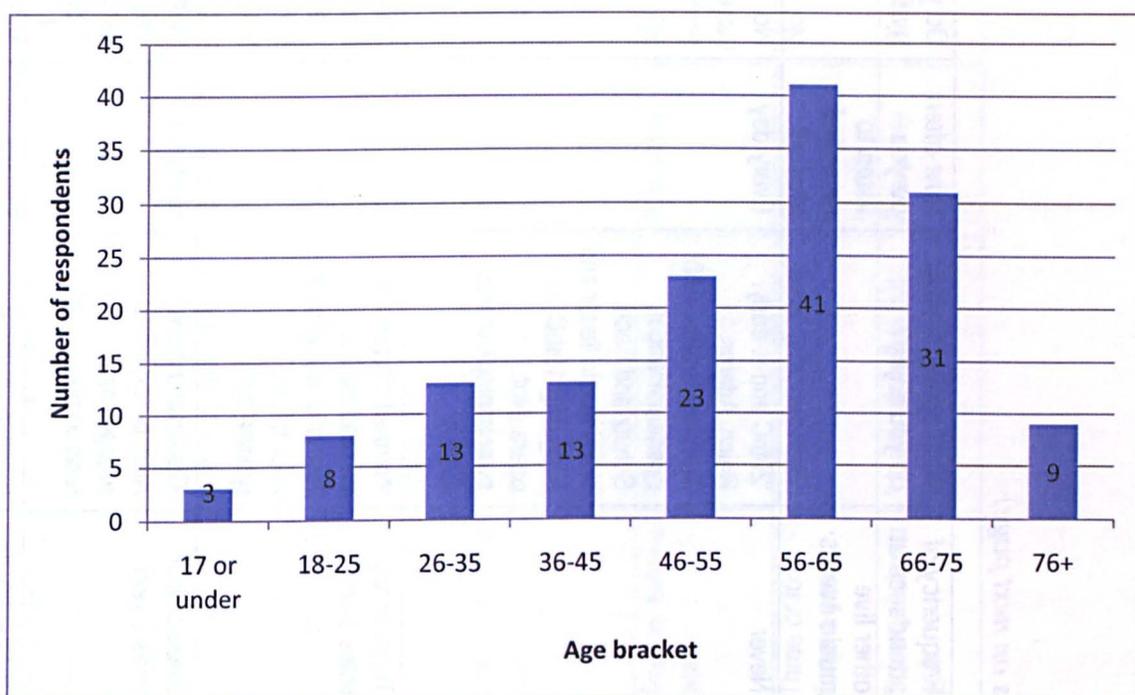


FIGURE 3.12 Bar chart showing the distribution of the questionnaire sample by age bracket

At the end of the questionnaire, respondents were asked if they would be interested in taking part in the follow-up stage of the research. This stage consisted of a semi-structured interview and participation in a longitudinal study (see section 3.4) which required fortnightly responses to an online survey over a period of six months. As the longitudinal study required participants with easy access to the internet, only respondents who provided an email address on the questionnaire were considered for inclusion in the follow-up stage.

TABLE 3.2 *Attender participant profiles (continues on next page)*

Name	Age bracket	Occupation	Frequency of attendance at classical concerts / opera productions	Frequency of attendance at other live music events	What types of music do you enjoy?	How often do you listen to recorded music?	Do you play or sing music yourself?	Participated in follow-up interview?	Participated in longitudinal stage?
Angela	56-65	Retired	Once a month	Never	'20thC and v. early. Reich. Adams. Turnage. Britten. ANY quartets. Handel, Schutz and Bach. Vocal music lieder and song. Not 19thC opera. Not symphonies - unless 20thC.'	Every day	No	Yes	Yes
Anna	18-25	Researcher	Several times a month	Three or four times a year	'Name it, I'll listen to it... "catholic" or "eclectic" would be the appropriate descriptors.'	Every day	'Violin, piano, sing...at least did for 20 years...work doesn't leave much spare time...'	Yes	Yes
Calum	46-55	Writer	Several times a month	Three or four times a year	'Classical mainly. Also, blues, world, reggae, jazz, rock/pop.'	Every day	'At a <u>very</u> basic level I play guitar, keyboard, percussion, harmonica (Note: <u>very</u> crudely!)	Yes	Yes
Cathy	36-45	Self-employed brass teacher	Three or four times a year	Once every two months	'Anything trumpet and/or Baroque especially. Brass band. Also 1980's rock!'	Several times a week	'Yes. I run a training brass band and play in a brass band myself too. Also teach brass privately.'	Yes	Yes

Conrad	66-75	Retired accountant	Several times a month	Once or twice a year	'Classical of all sorts (mainly "popular" and "light")'	Every day	No	Yes	Yes
Daniel	66-75	Retired	Several times a month	Never	'All "serious" art music from Monteverdi to Maxwell Davies'	Several times a week	'Sing with Putney Choral Society'	Yes	Yes
Grace	66-75	Retired editor	Once a week	Once or twice a year	'Classical: chamber music, choral works, solo artists, some opera. Jazz'	Every day	'Play the piano, including with other musicians. Sing in the local choir.'	Yes	Yes
Isabelle	26-35	Brand consultant	Once every two months	Once or twice a year	'Classical, French house & DJ, jazz (classical), I hate: Hip Hop, R&B'	Every day	'Occasionally. Sing with friends and family at Christmas'	Yes	Yes
James	56-65	Accountant	Several times a month	Once or twice a year	'Most classical'	Every day	'No - though wife sings - daughter is a professional musician'	No	Yes
Maria	36-45	Advertising	Three or four times a year	Three or four times a year	'Jazz, classical, world'	Several times a month	'No'	Yes	Yes
Patrick	56-65	Retired civil servant	Several times a month	Once or twice a year	'Nearly all types, but not rap, trance etc.'	Every day	'Sing in church'	Yes	Yes

All respondents providing an email address were sent details of the further stages of the research and asked if they would be willing to take part. Eleven participants (five male; six female) were recruited in this way, although it was only possible to arrange follow-up interviews with ten of these. As the ten participants interviewed contained a range of ages and occupational groups that was representative of the questionnaire sample as a whole, no more interviewees were sought.

Ethical approval for the study was granted by the ethics committee of the Department of Music, University of Sheffield. The questionnaire informed respondents that their responses would be confidential and anonymous. The follow-up participants were sent an information sheet (see Appendix 10) which informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time, and stated that their data would be treated anonymously. Those interviewed in person (see below) were asked to sign a consent form (Appendix 5), while those who were not met in person were sent a copy of the consent form by email and asked to confirm in writing that they had read the information sheet and were willing to participate.

Materials and procedure for each stage

Questionnaire. The questionnaire is provided in Appendix 11. The questionnaire required both qualitative and quantitative responses, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the factors that affect the experience and enjoyment of classical concert attendance. The questionnaire elicited data on reasons for attendance and on the audience members' responses to the concert venue. Rating scales (from 1 to 7) were included for levels of familiarity with the venue, the performers, and the repertoire performed; respondents were also asked to provide ratings for their enjoyment of each piece performed and for the concert as a whole. Free-response questions addressed the audience members' general views on classical concert attendance ('In your opinion, what makes the experience of attending a classical concert enjoyable?'; 'How important is attending classical concerts in your life?'). The questionnaire also asked whether the respondent would like to change anything about the experience of attending classical music concerts. In addition, data on the frequency of respondents' live and recorded listening were obtained.

As the questionnaire was of a substantial length it was not expected that respondents would complete it fully during their time at the concert. A stamped addressed envelope was therefore attached to each questionnaire for its return by post. The questionnaires were distributed during the concert's interval by placing a questionnaire on every other occupied seat of the hall. Audience members were also offered a questionnaire as they left the hall at the end of the concert. This strategy meant there was no obligation on the audience members to complete a questionnaire, but that those who did want to complete one were given sufficient opportunity to receive a copy. I wanted to receive ratings and responses for each piece performed, and so distributing the questionnaires at the interval and the end of the concert presented the best possibility of encouraging respondents to complete the questionnaire after the concert, providing responses to the concert as a whole. If the questionnaires were distributed before the concert began, there would have been a risk of participants filling in the questionnaire during the interval and then leaving the questionnaire at the venue for collection, meaning that responses to the second half of the programme would not be obtained.

Individual interviews. Semi-structured interviews with 10 follow-up questionnaire respondents ('attender interviewees') took place in March and early April, 2008. In the intervening period between the Cadogan Hall concert and the follow-up interviews the questionnaires were received by post, coded, and preliminary analysis of the questionnaire data was undertaken. This analysis informed the process of devising the interview schedule. Six interviews were conducted in person, either at the participant's home or at a convenient meeting place. The remaining four were conducted by telephone because of the geographical location of these particular participants. All interviews were recorded using a Sharp MiniDisc portable recorder with attachable microphone. The interviews lasted on average 45 minutes; the shortest was 30 minutes and the longest 90 minutes.

The interview schedule (see Appendix 12) sought to obtain more detailed responses to the Cadogan Hall concert, but also aimed to contextualise the participant's response to that one particular concert within their wider concert attendance. This method of using interviews to generate follow-up data to a questionnaire study has been effectively used in other classical music audience studies by Pitts (2005a/b) and Pitts

and Spencer (2008). Discussion of the Cadogan Hall concert was therefore viewed as a 'way in' to seeking an understanding of the participants' underlying motivations for attending classical concerts, and for identifying the functions that concert attendance fulfils in their everyday lives. The interview schedule therefore started with questions pertaining to the Cadogan Hall concert (asking them to say why they had chosen to attend that particular concert; to explain the enjoyment rating they had given the concert in their questionnaire responses; and asking for their responses to the concert's programme and to the concert venue). More general questions then ensued ('What kinds of things are important in a concert in order for you to enjoy it?'; 'How important to you is attending classical concerts?'), seeking to understand which factors contribute to their enjoyment of concert attendance. The questionnaire covered the topic of recorded listening and relationships between live and recorded listening, seeking to gain an insight into their respective roles in the participants' lives. Specific questions on the topic of concert venues followed, before questions which aimed to elicit further data on whether the participants viewed concert attendance as a shared, social, or individual experience. Finally, the participants were asked if there was anything they would wish to change about the experience of classical concert attendance.

Data analysis

Questionnaire data. Open response questions were first each analysed using content analysis: the responses to a given question were read repeatedly, through which a number of theme categories arising from the text were created (Gillham, 2008). Using a spreadsheet, each response was then examined in turn and coded under one or more themes. Using the data filter function, a list of the responses that belonged to each theme was created. These were then examined to ensure that coding had been consistent, and to identify any sub-categories within each theme. A list of the themes and sub-themes generated by each question was devised; to these were added percentages to indicate the proportion of all responses to a given question that had been coded under each theme; together with indicative quotations for each theme. The initial spreadsheet was then revisited to identify any frequently occurring combinations between themes in individual responses. Once this process had been applied to each open response question, the summary sheets for each question were considered as a set, with connections made between the themes created for individual questions, prompting further cross-question analysis. Ordinal data obtained from the rating scales for

familiarity and enjoyment were predominantly subjected to bivariate analysis, using correlation coefficient Spearman's *rho*. Other quantitative analyses were undertaken as appropriate to produce descriptive and inferential statistics.

Interview data. The follow-up interviews were transcribed and were analysed thematically using a grounded theory approach, following a procedure similar to that used to analyse the non-attender individual and focus group interviews (described in 3.2 above). Each transcript was read repeatedly, noting theme titles and interpretations in the margins. This set of transcripts was analysed after the non-attender data and the questionnaire data, and so themes and concepts that had already been created for those analyses were applied where appropriate. New themes were also generated, however, and often the greater detail obtained in the interview (as opposed to questionnaire) context led to new perspectives on the themes already created in previous analyses and the ways in which these interacted. As with the non-attender interview data, theme files for this set of data were created which listed indicative quotations for each sub-theme. The theme files were then cross-referenced with the question summary sheets from the questionnaire data, to provide a comprehensive picture of the attender data set as a whole.

Quoted material taken from questionnaire responses is labelled 'Q' followed by a unique number for each respondent (the questionnaires were numbered in the order in which they were received). Pseudonyms have been used for all follow-up attender participants. The attender participants are labelled in subsequent chapters with 'A' before their pseudonym. The code after their name indicates which interviewing occasion quoted material derives from (see Appendix 1 for the full coding system).

3.4 Study 3: Longitudinal stage

Rationale

The longitudinal study data gathered data from the non-attenders (Study 1) and from the follow-up respondents from the Cadogan Hall questionnaire (attenders; Study 2). All longitudinal participants completed the same fortnightly online survey for a period of six months, in which they were asked to record details of any live music events they had attended in the past two weeks. In addition, they were asked more general questions on

their listening habits during this period. However, the aims of gathering this data from the two cohorts were different. The primary aim of conducting a longitudinal stage with the non-attender participants was to test out the predictions they had made about their future live music attendance and listening habits (obtained in Focus Group 2 and their individual interviews). As longitudinal data can enable researchers to 'describe subjects' intra-individual and inter-individual changes over time' (Ruspini, 2002: 24), the longitudinal stage therefore sought to assess whether an initial exposure to classical concert attendance (and, for some, the experience of listening to classical music in general) would exert any effect on the participants' behaviour in the following six months.

The longitudinal stage was conducted with attender participants with the aim of further contextualising their questionnaire and interview data within their wider patterns of concert attendance, and methodologically was seen as an extension of the diary studies that have been employed in similar contexts by Pitts (2005a/b). While the questionnaire stage of Study 2 honed in on audience experience by investigating one single concert in detail, the longitudinal study allowed a broader focus by tracking the participants' responses to the concerts they attended over a six-month period, therefore gaining access to data from a wide variety of classical performances (including opera, chamber performance, amateur productions) taking place in a range of concert venues. It also provided the opportunity to obtain further data on the factors influencing attendance decisions.

Pilot study

Before final development of the online survey, the survey questions were administered as a questionnaire to four individuals who were not already taking part in the research. Because it was necessary to test all of the survey's questions, these four pilot participants had been chosen because they had all attended at least one live music event in the past two weeks and so were able to answer the live music section of the survey. As with the pilot questionnaire for Study 2, an evaluative section was included at the end of the pilot survey which sought comments on potential improvements to the questions and their wording. The pilot questionnaires all generated useful responses, and no suggestions for improvements were made.

Participants

Eight non-attender participants from Study 1 took part in the longitudinal stage (see Table 3.1 above), and 11 attender participants from Study 2 also participated (see Table 3.2).

Materials and procedure for each stage

Fortnightly online survey. A time series approach was used to obtain data on the participants' live and recorded listening habits for a six-month period, taking place between March and August 2008. Using SurveyMonkey, a web-link to an online questionnaire was emailed to the participants every fortnight; survey data was therefore collected on 13 occasions. The survey (see Appendix 13) remained the same on each occasion, except that the dates in the header line (see Figure 3.13) were changed each time. As mentioned above, on each occasion the survey sought to record details of the participants' attendance at live music events, their recorded music purchases, and their listening habits for the preceding two weeks. The survey first asked for details of any live music events attended. It was made clear that I wished the participants to record details of live music events of any genre, rather simply classical performances. This strategy was primarily employed to reduce demand characteristics in the non-attender cohort. If they had been asked every fortnight to comment only on *classical* concerts and *classical* music that they had listened to or purchased, it is likely that completing the surveys would either seem futile (as they would mostly have nothing to comment on) or that they might attempt to produce data that they thought the researcher was looking for.

For each event, participants were asked to provide free-response information on the nature of the event and where it took place; their reasons for attending; and their responses to the music venue. They were next asked a series of questions on familiarity, including providing ratings for their perceived familiarity with the music venue (on a scale of 1-7); their familiarity with the performers (on a scale of 1-7); and they were asked whether they had heard 'all', 'most', 'some' or 'none' of the music before. An additional comment box was included with each of these familiarity questions in case the participants wished to provide further information (such as being very familiar with one particular performer, but not knowing another at all). They were then asked for an overall enjoyment rating of the event (on a scale of 1-7), and asked to explain this rating

in a free-response box. If participants had attended more than one event within the two periods (as a number of the attender participants frequently did), the series of questions outlined above could be repeated a maximum of four more times.

The next section of the survey obtained details of any recorded music purchases that had been made during the two-week period. A section on recorded listening followed which asked the participants to identify how frequently they had listened to recorded music, by which means (see Figure 3.13). They were then asked to provide an indication of any music they had particularly enjoyed listening to during the preceding two weeks; to identify any music that they had listened to repeatedly; and whether any recent attendance at live music events had influenced their choices of recorded music listening. A free-response box was placed on the final page of the survey for additional comments; this was sometimes used by participants who had attended more than five live music events in the two-week period to provide brief details of other concerts they had attended.

Listening Survey: Monday 14 April to Sunday 27 April

Recorded Listening

1. How frequently have you listened to recorded music during this period?

- Every day
- Three or four times a week
- Once a week
- Once or twice a fortnight

2. In which ways have you listened to recorded music during this period? (tick all that apply)

- Listening to music you have deliberately selected (e.g. CDs)
- Listening to music on 'shuffle' mode on a computer / mp3 player
- Radio: please name the station(s) you have most frequently listened to:

3. Please indicate the means by which you have most frequently listened to music during this period:

- Listening to music you have deliberately selected (e.g. CDs)
- Listening to music on 'shuffle' mode on a computer / mp3 player
- Radio: please name the station you have most frequently listened to:

91%

<< Previous Next >>

Done Internet 100%

FIGURE 3.13 Screenshot of page 9 of the longitudinal survey

Email invitations to complete the surveys were sent to the participants on alternate Mondays, on the premise that they would be most likely to have attended live music events at the weekends, and so even the first weekend of the two-week period would have been just over a week ago. To increase response rates, follow-up emails (recommended by Vehovar, Batagelj, Manfreda & Zaletel, 2002) were sent to participants who had not yet completed the survey by the middle of the second week of the invitation. This gave them an opportunity to complete the most recent questionnaire over the weekend before the survey for the next time period was sent the following Monday. The survey did not have a 'save' button, meaning that in order for data to be retained the survey had to be completed in one sitting. A progress bar was included in the survey (see Figure 3.13) to encourage complete responses (Vehovar et al., 2002).

TABLE 3.3 *Longitudinal survey completion record for each participant*

Cohort	Participant	Survey													
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	
Non-Attender	Tara	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Stuart	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X				
	Dominic	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Emma	X		X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Carla	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Rachel	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	
	Kerry		X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	
Toby	X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Attender	Angela	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Maria	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X			
	Daniel	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Cathy	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Grace	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Patrick	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Isabelle	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Anna	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Calum	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	James	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Conrad				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Total	19	7	6	7	6	7	9	8	8	8	7	7	8	7	

X denotes survey completed

In general, response rates to the surveys were high (see Table 3.3). Of an overall sample of 19 (8 non-attenders and 11 attenders), the numbers of respondents completing each survey ranged from 16 (on two occasions) to 19 (on one occasion); on six occasions 17 respondents completed the survey. There was a marked difference in completion rates between the attender and the non-attender samples. Nine of the 11 attender participants completed all 13 surveys; while in the non-attender cohort temporary attrition was high: only one participant (Carla) completed the survey on every occasion.

Telephone interviews at 3 and 6 months. Short telephone interviews were conducted with the participants twice during the longitudinal stage as a means of obtaining more detailed data on their live music attendance than the survey responses could provide. They were also a means of re-establishing personal contact with the participants in the hope of maintaining survey response rates; additionally they enabled data to be obtained from non-attender participants whose response rates were low. One attender, Maria, was unable to participate in either phone interview and non-attender Stuart could not participate in an interview at the 3-month stage. The first set of phone interviews took place after survey 6 (see Appendix 14 for the interview schedule). The interviews were semi-structured; the participants were initially asked to talk about any live music events that they had particularly enjoyed during the past three months. For some of the attenders, who had attended many concerts during this period, this strategy enabled a more detailed exploration of why particular concerts 'stood out' among many other good ones. For the non-attenders, who in general attended live music events less frequently than the attenders, it enabled further insight into the types of live music that they choose to go to of their own volition, and of which factors influence their enjoyment of attending live music events. Importantly, as well as discussing their listening habits and recorded music purchases, the participants were also asked if their attendance at live music during this period was typical of their usual behaviour.

The six-month interview took place after the final survey of the longitudinal stage had been completed, and for the attenders contained the same key questions as the 3-month interview outlined above (see Appendix 15). The interview schedule for the non-attenders also contained these core questions, but in addition the participants were asked whether, with hindsight, they thought that taking part in the main part of the

research (Study 1) had altered either their attitudes towards classical music or their behaviour. If they had predicted at the end of Study 1 that they would be interested in attending classical performances again, they were asked (if appropriate) why they had not done so (see Appendix 16 for the interview schedule). Finally, at the end of the interviews both cohorts were asked whether the process of completing the longitudinal stage itself had influenced either their behaviour or their attitudes towards listening and concert-going (similar questions were also included at the end of the final longitudinal survey).

Data analysis

The survey data was collated into separate files for each participant, meaning that their responses to the longitudinal study could be viewed as a set. A review of each participant's longitudinal file provided familiarity with the data and added detail to my knowledge of their responses to the other stages of the research. Notable or indicative responses to the survey questions were highlighted in the file for future reference.

The telephone interviews were transcribed and were analysed using a grounded theory approach as described in the analysis sections of 3.2 and 3.3 above. When analysing the non-attender data particular attention was paid to coding for *process* (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) in order to track any changes in their attitudes and behaviour relating to classical music during the period between their individual interview at the end of Study 1 and the end of the longitudinal stage. After analysis of the 3- and 6-month interviews of both cohorts, it was felt that theoretical saturation (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) had occurred. As Strauss and Corbin describe, although saturation is often defined as reaching a stage where nothing 'new' is being discovered about the themes and concepts that have been generated from the data...

In reality, if one looked long and hard enough, one always would find additional properties or dimensions. There always is that potential for the 'new' to emerge. Saturation is more a matter of reaching the point in the research where collecting additional data seems counterproductive; the 'new' that is uncovered does not add that much more to the explanation at this time. (Strauss & Corbin, 1998: 136)

Given the wealth of survey data still to analyse when this point of saturation had been reached, it was decided that the survey data set would be analysed comprehensively at a

later date. Nonetheless, it was frequently used purposively during a further stage of integrative analysis drawing across the research as a whole (see 3.5 below) to check interpretations and assertions. Quoted material from survey responses is labelled with the suffix S, followed by the relevant survey number. The suffix 3m indicates material from a 3-month longitudinal interview; 6m denotes the 6-month interview.

3.5 Integrative analysis across the three studies

On completion of the longitudinal stage a period of integrative analysis was undertaken, where themes and concepts from all three studies were aggregated, producing interpretations and findings on which the subsequent chapters are based. This stage was similar to Strauss & Corbin's (1998: 143) description of 'selective coding' as a 'process of integrating and refining categories to generate theory', although it was also rooted in a process of comparison between the experiences and responses of the attenders and the non-attenders (Dey, 2004). A large number of themes had been created through the analysis processes described in this chapter and many concepts were associated with one or more others. There were often many ways to approach writing about a particular phenomenon; diagrams were frequently used in these instances to map themes and the associations between them. This strategy often enabled a clearer means of identifying the relative importance of themes and findings, informing authorial decisions on which findings would be included in the subsequent chapters, and assisted in shaping cohesive arguments (Mason, 2002).

The research took an inductive approach with themes and findings generated from the analysis of data, rather than the data being approached with the intention of testing hypotheses, as is characteristic of deductive reasoning (Dey, 2004). However, as the process of integrating the data indicates, the analyses were inevitably influenced by the author's perceptions and potential biases (Smith, Flowers, & Osborn, 1997). As the author is a classically-trained musician, this is especially important to acknowledge in relation to analysis of the non-attender data: a group of participants whose experiences and knowledge of classical performance differed markedly from the author's. This set of data was deliberately analysed first: if analysis of the non-attender data had been undertaken after analysis of the data from Study 2, there would be a greater danger of making the data try to 'fit' pre-existing theme categories that a) had been generated

from the responses of regular concert-goers and b) which would therefore most likely affirm the author's preconceptions.

Obtaining data from two categories of people – non-attenders and concert attenders – on a number of occasions and using different methods (interviews, surveys, questionnaires) enhances the validity of an investigation of the experience of attending classical concerts. Whilst triangulation of methods is too often used as a simplistic means of asserting the validity of one's research, obtaining data on a single social phenomenon (the classical concert) from these two different perspectives enables a multi-dimensional understanding of concert experience (Mason, 2002: 190). Gathering data on repeated occasions should increase reliability, while maintaining an awareness that using different methods to produce data on the same topics (such as administering both surveys and telephone interviews in the longitudinal stage) will necessarily elicit data shaped by the way in which it was obtained, as each '[interpretive] practice makes the world visible in a different way' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003: 5). There is an inevitable risk, however, that obtaining data from the same participants on so many occasions may have resulted in panel conditioning, whereby the process of participating in the research influences responses as the research progresses (Ruspini, 2002). However, Das, Toepoel, and Soest's (2007: 18) study of panel conditioning found that its effects were only evident in 'knowledge questions, and not in questions on attitudes, actual behaviour, or expectations concerning the future'. Indeed, the participants' responses to the reflexive questions included at the end of the final longitudinal survey and six-month interview indicated that while participating in the longitudinal stage may have made them more *aware* of aspects of their listening habits and preferences, and more reflective on their underlying motivations for attending concerts, it did not cause them to change their behaviour, with a typical response being that 'completing these surveys has made me think about what I like and why, but this hasn't really changed' [A Calum S13].

* * *

The following chapter, the first of four central data chapters, presents findings solely from Study 1, thereby foregrounding the experiences of new attenders at classical concerts. The subsequent three chapters draw on data from all three studies to develop

an understanding of the web of factors which influence the enjoyment and experience of classical concert attendance, cumulatively providing answers to the key question underlying the thesis: 'why do people choose to attend live classical performance?'

CHAPTER 4

Perspectives from non-attenders: the defining features of their concert experiences

Readers for whom classical music concerts are a familiar experience might find it difficult to identify a time when attending classical performances seemed daunting or unusual: some might have been introduced to concerts through musical training – either through playing in concerts themselves, or through acquiring knowledge of the basic premises underlying classical music and its performance. Others, as a result of parental interest, may have attended concerts for the first time as children (cf. Pitts, 2009), to the extent that it may be impossible for them to remember a time when they did not possess some knowledge of *how* to attend a classical concert, and did not feel comfortable doing so. Even for those who began attending concerts in adult life, their attendance would most likely have been prompted by *someone* (e.g. an invitation from a friend; cf. Gainer, 1995), or *something* (e.g. an interest developed through recorded listening): both of which would mean that the new audience member had access to at least some knowledge about the performance and how it might unfold. As a trained classical performer, music graduate, and regular audience member at classical performances, I occupy a similar space to these hypothetical readers: I cannot form an impression of what it would feel like to attend a classical concert for the first time without it inevitably being shaded by my existing knowledge and experience. So, what does a classical concert look (and *sound*) like to the ‘uninitiated’? Which features of classical performances mediate new audience members’ feelings of belonging in the concert hall setting, and, most importantly, enhance or detract from their enjoyment of the events?

I am not the first to consider an ‘outsider’ perspective on the (social) phenomenon of the classical concert. Through questioning fundamental assumptions surrounding the meaning of classical performance, Small’s (1998) *Musicking* provides a detailed theoretical exposition on the classical concert: one which stresses both the concert’s role in affirming the values of the audience members present, and its grounding in ritual – despite the outwardly asocial behaviour of its participants,

especially in comparison with the explicitly social nature of other performance events (*Musicking* is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2). Yet while Small deconstructs the classical concert with seemingly fresh eyes, his account is nonetheless *ethnographic*: drawing on the Geertzian tradition of 'thick description' and therefore rooted in his personal experience and observations (as previously noted in Chapter 1). Whilst *Musicking* may, by virtue of its detailed description, highlight aspects of the concert experience which are pertinent to new attenders, the voices of new audience members themselves are missing from this theoretical account. By obtaining empirical data (through Study 1, outlined in 3.2) it is, however, possible to foreground the experiences of new attenders, providing insights into the nature of classical concert experience that could not be gathered by researching existing concert attenders alone. This chapter therefore focuses on features that particularly defined the non-attenders' experiences of classical concert attendance, addressing the difficulties they encountered appraising the aesthetic worth of classical performances; the positive effects of accessible, verbal provision of context in Concert 2 (*The Night Shift*); and the challenges they encountered both in articulating their responses to the music they heard, and in negotiating the spoken and written discourse provided within concerts on classical composers or works. The non-attenders' reactions to other aspects of classical concert attendance (e.g. repertoire familiarity, qualities of the live experience, and emotional responses) will be discussed later in Chapters 5, 6 and 7, in combination with data from the concert attenders and questionnaire respondents. The long-term effects of a repeated exposure to classical concert attendance are noted in Chapter 8.

4.1 The challenges of appreciation

A commonly cited impediment to the perceived accessibility of classical concerts is the opaque nature of the event's codes of behaviour (for instance, those which relate to the points in a performance at which one should, *and should not*, clap), combined with the unequivocally disparaging reactions from fellow concert-goers when such rules are broken. According to James Johnson (1995: 284), these phenomena are an enduring legacy of nineteenth-century listening practices: 'a package of reflexes set on a trip-wire to protect the aesthetic moment, nudging the dozers, discouraging applause between movements, glaring at the coughers'. Although the participants did discuss the respective effects of restriction and informality in their concert experiences, it was

surprising to find that this topic was eclipsed by the difficulties they encountered in knowing *how much*, rather than *when*, to express appreciation of a performance:

I suppose with me with classical concerts the big thing is I always, unless someone's doing something really badly, which they never are, I find it impossible to tell really how good they are, because I've got nothing to measure it against. And so there have been one or two occasions where people go mad, they go absolutely berserk, and you're like 'well that was good, but is this good enough to go berserk to?' I don't know, I have no way of judging it, and you feel self-conscious if you're not going berserk, in case that makes you look like you're rude and you haven't appreciated it fully. So the bits where you did clap I didn't mind, but the kind of level of enthusiasm you should be displaying, I didn't have a handle on it. [NA Emma I]

Emma articulates many of the difficulties that the non-attenders encountered with showing the 'correct' levels of appreciation during the concerts. Their uncertainty about how much appreciation to exhibit was often a corollary of an underlying difficulty in judging the worth of classical performances. Some attributed this difficulty to their limited (or non-existent) experience of classical music, and their consequent lack of knowledge about it, meaning that they had 'nothing to compare it against' [NA Tara FG1]. In feeling 'self-conscious' and potentially 'rude', Emma above in particular seemed to be painfully aware of her own lack of knowledge. She demonstrates a desire to conform to the audience's general consensus on the performance's aesthetic value, perceiving an element of obligation in showing the 'correct' response. Others did not express concern about their lack of knowledge to the same degree, but in some cases nonetheless demonstrated an underlying lack of understanding in their responses. Stuart, for example, repeatedly questioned the respective roles of performer, composer, and conductor in determining the value of classical performances, and was therefore unsure about which aspect of the performance he was showing appreciation for:

it would be a long time before I could fully stand up and go "yeah that's wonderful, that was the best thing". I can still enjoy it, but I'm still in the dark about, you know, quite who I should be applauding [NA Stuart I].

This difficulty in knowing 'how to appreciate' classical music was exacerbated by what the participants perceived as uniformly enthusiastic responses from the concerts' audiences. Their observations of audiences 'going berserk' [NA Emma I] or greeting performances with a standing ovation (including, to their curiosity and surprise, the Shostakovich symphony in Concert 1) were frequently interpreted as indicative of

an ability to appreciate the performance at a higher 'level' (cf. Kolb, 2000). Some participants found that this exerted an alienating effect, making them feel detached from the overall concert experience:

I think as all of us as people who don't go a lot...you do feel a little bit on the outside. [...] It's weird, it feels a little bit like being, sitting in with a cult or something [NA Dawn: Yeah] because they do seem to appreciate it on a level that you just can't quite comprehend. [murmurs of consent] [NA Dominic FG1]

Dominic's description resonates with the finding in Kolb's (2000: 17) study that non-attenders felt that concert audiences possess a 'special knowledge' about classical music which enables them to fully appreciate and enjoy the performances. Dominic further explained his mystification at the level of audience response found in classical concerts:

And it's this whole thing when the concert finishes, it's like you get five minutes of applause, and three standing ovations, and you know...And I'm sitting there thinking 'well it's been great', but because I'm not coming from, I suppose it's a different type of audience for maybe the type of live music that I've seen, where you get your round of applause and everything, but it's much more, it *feels* much more dependent on quite how good it's been. [NA Dominic I]

An underlying reason for the difference in audience response that Dominic observes is that in most other styles of music audiences are able to express their responses to the performance in real time: by applauding after a solo in a jazz performance, or applauding when a pop singer enters after an instrumental introduction and begins to sing the song's first verse. In classical music, however, these modes of behaviour are generally precluded. The enthusiasm with which classical performances are greeted could be explained as an accumulation of positive response that audience members might have expressed spontaneously during the performance had behaviour codes allowed (cf. Ross, 2004; note the practice of applauding after the first movement of a concerto at the BBC Proms, for example). From another perspective, sustained applause could itself be interpreted as a required mode of audience behaviour: something that is done on 'autopilot', rather than representing – as the participants assume – an underlying ability to appreciate the subtleties of performance.⁸ Whether an automated, ritualized behaviour, or an accumulation of response from throughout the work, the non-attenders consistently expressed surprise, and often discomfort, with the

⁸ Pitts (2005a: 104), for example, identified a set of 'ritualised' enthusiastic responses displayed by regular attenders at the Music in the Round festival in Sheffield.

degree of enthusiasm that audiences displayed. The sense of detachment this behaviour instilled could have only been accentuated by the participants' familiarity with the norm of immediate audience response during non-classical performance, as they would be used to experiencing the *communitas* that this mode of behaviour inevitably engenders. Instead, applause occurring only at the end of classical performances elicited the opposite, alienating effect.

'It's classical, therefore it must be good': classical concert attendance and moral obligation

In addition to attributing their difficulty in judging performances to a lack of experience and knowledge, some participants also demonstrated a tendency to ascribe this difficulty to their own internal limitations. Carla, for example, returned many times in the interviews to a perceived deficiency in her aural skills – 'I love music but my ear for music is absolutely useless' [NA Carla I] – believing that this limited her ability to both discern the 'worth' of a performance, and to observe a difference between live and recorded sound. Other participants often rationalized their struggles to engage with a particular work by saying that they 'couldn't really understand it' [NA Kerry I], or 'didn't really cope with it very well' [NA Tara I] – rather than expressing an overt dislike for the piece:

And listening to that piece [*Shruti* by Joseph Phibbs, Concert 1]...I don't know, it seemed to me to be very broken up, really like, very kind of, odd pieces of music kind of strung together. And I kind of got frustrated that I didn't appreciate what I was hearing, you know, just because of my ignorance of the music really. [NA Dawn I]

I didn't engage with the first concert, I don't know why. I just didn't really, I was quite disappointed with myself because I just didn't feel like I appreciated it. Like there was this amazing music and this amazing orchestra, and I just was sat there not really feeling anything. [NA Kerry I]

Here, the belief that classical works, by their very nature, must be 'good' led to negative emotions (e.g. frustration and disappointment) when the participants' personal responses to the performance did not align with their ideas about the music's worth. It is easy to see how this could become a pattern characterizing the experience of new attenders: they do not have enough initial exposure to realise that within the sphere of classical music individuals' tastes vary, and that it is entirely legitimate to hold in high

esteem different works, composers and styles from the person sitting adjacent in the concert hall. Because they do not know (or believe) that they are 'allowed' not to like a work, they blame themselves when they find a piece 'hard-going' [NA Emma I]. This reinforces their perceived ignorance about the genre, reducing their enjoyment of the concert.

Some participants spoke of how they thought of classical pieces as unalterable entities that are always performed 'perfectly', a notion which could be interpreted as demonstration of the widespread and sustained effect of the work-concept (Goehr, 1992). Viewing classical music from this perspective compounded the difficulties they had already encountered in understanding audience members' levels of appreciation:

when I think about classical music I always think about it being perfect, and so it's hard to imagine there being a 'good' concert. [...] But if you expect it to be perfect, it's only going to live up to your expectations, and I don't know, they seemed to be, they really appreciated something, and I felt like I'd missed that. [murmurs of consent] [NA Stuart FG1]

Stuart's preconceptions of perfection seem to predominantly relate to the musical work, rather than its performance; indeed, he appears to lack an awareness of performers' scope to shape the performance, and, consequently, to affect the audience's response. Emma articulates how a sense of moral obligation affects her expectations relating to classical performance:

I suppose the thing with classical music is, for whatever reason, I suppose maybe it's because it's called 'classical', you have in your mind that it is all supposed to be uniformly fantastic. You know, and just unbelievably good. It's kind of like, it's the canon, you know, *you're told that this will be good and you should enjoy it*. And so there were some bits which I thought were a little dull, or just a little facile, you know, there wasn't particularly anything amazing or clever about them, and so you thought, slightly boring. But only again, only kind of short passages that seemed like they were kind of fillers between the more exciting bits. And maybe if the piece of music is telling a story then maybe they've got to be there. [NA Emma I; emphasis added]

There is again a tension here between the messages of extreme aesthetic worth that Emma infers about classical music ('you're told that this will be good...') and the reality of her experience. The suggestion that the points in the music she finds lacking might fulfil a narrative purpose could be interpreted as an attempt to qualify and explain the presence of the sections that she does not enjoy. It is important to note, though, that

Emma does express negative opinions about the music, rather than attributing a lack of enjoyment to an internal fault.

4.2 Understanding, communication and inclusion: provision of context in *The Night Shift*

Because the participants ascribed their difficulties with appreciation to their low levels of knowledge, the degree to which the concert experiences provided context and understanding took a strong role in determining their enjoyment of the events. Programme notes were the main sources of information in Concerts 1 and 3 but, as will be discussed in section 4.3, the participants largely responded negatively to these, finding that they assumed a substantial degree of prior knowledge. The means by which context was provided during *The Night Shift* (Concert 2) made the biggest positive impression on the participants: they frequently spontaneously mentioned how the information embedded in this concert shaped their high levels of enjoyment of the event.

'Now we're going to make it swing': understanding the role of the performer

All five participants who enjoyed *The Night Shift* the most of the three concerts said that a key determinant of their enjoyment was the provision of context and information; in particular they focused on a demonstration of a passage from the Mozart piano concerto, given by pianist and director Robert Levin. He played the same extract differently three times, making explicit references to jazz by drawing links between jazz improvisation and the baroque extemporization found in period performance (he mentioned Count Basie and Duke Ellington – even playing a snippet of *Take The A Train* at one point – suggesting that Mozart was no different from these more contemporary musicians: he, like them, enjoyed 'jamming' with his 'band'). The participants returned many times to this demonstration in the interviews, highlighting how it enhanced their understanding of what a performer 'does' in live classical performance:

Q: And was there anything you particularly enjoyed about last night?

I loved the way he played the same piece three times [NA Kerry: Yeaaaaah]. That really impressed me, it was like 'Ok, this is the stuffy version, a bit more

relaxed, and this is my input on it.' And I really liked the way he sort of broke that down...that was really interesting. [NA Rachel FG2]

A few minutes later in the focus group interview, Stuart picked up on Rachel's point, relating it to the difficulty he had experienced during Concert 1 in understanding what he was showing appreciation *for*:

Rachel's comment about...the pianist playing the three pieces to show you the difference of how he was going to play it: I think we sort of discussed it the other evening, about sort of knowing what to applaud when you go and see a performance, because there's some perception that it's got to be perfect, and knowing what they're going to bring to the piece on the night [NA Carla: Yah], you know, is it going to be any different from the CD? And what should I applaud, you know, if they're striving for perfection, you know, applaud just because they've done it? So it was really interesting to see exactly what, you know, how they could have changed it for the live performance. [NA Stuart FG2]

Evidently, a key feature of the demonstration was the way that Levin showed two extreme ways of performing the passage, followed by his own interpretation. But importantly, he also made clear that this interpretation was not a static entity, asking the audience to listen to the full performance of the movement to see how he would perform the extract in context. As Stuart's quote shows, this strategy provided the participants with an insight into the performer's capacity to shape a live rendition of the work – therefore demonstrating not only how different performances from the same player might alter, but also that different performers' interpretations might vary. This knowledge therefore eliminated some of the problems the participants encountered with appraising the worth of classical performances. It is also important to note that Levin introduced the idea that the passage could be performed in different ways gradually: at first showing very crude differences between two different styles of playing, and then asking the audience to appreciate the more subtle differences between the way he performed the passage the third time as his own interpretation, and the way it was delivered in the real performance. This seemed to be an effective means of providing the audience with an understanding about his role as a performer, evident in the way both Rachel and Dominic spoke of appreciating the demonstration because of 'the way he broke it down'.

Levin's demonstration further increased classical music's perceived accessibility through his references to jazz. By relating to a genre the participants felt they knew more about, the knowledge and context he imparted was more on their own terms: the features of classical music that Levin showed jazz shares could be more easily assimilated and understood. For four of the participants, the introduction of an existing conceptual framework (their knowledge about jazz) on which they could 'hang' their new knowledge aided their understanding and contributed to their enjoyment of the concert:

Q: And was there one concert that you enjoyed the most, overall?

I think overall it would have to be the South Bank concert [Concert 2]. [...] They talked you through it, and they kind of made a very deliberate attempt to kind of, to relate it to the kind of music that I was familiar with, which is jazz. Now I can quite see that when you're explaining anything basically, then probably you make oversimplifications, and people who knew more about it might be horrified, because it's probably not actually like jazz in lots and lots of ways, but I enjoyed that because I felt it gave me a handle on it. [NA Emma I]

In fact, the participants' responses suggest that the analogy drawn between classical music and jazz *specifically* is not what is important here: Dominic appreciated the links Levin drew with 'modern music', while Stuart noted that 'he associated it with things that we were a bit more familiar with [...] jazz is more similar to the music I listen to' [NA Stuart I]. So it is not the use of jazz *per se* that made the experience more engaging; more that Levin's analogy served to bridge a perceived chasm between classical music and other styles of music that the participants believe are available and relevant to them. This approach made the acquisition of knowledge and understanding about classical music more accessible, therefore further increasing the non-attenders' understanding of the role of the performer.

Levin's demonstration also helped to dispel the notions of perfection that the participants discerned in classical performance. Instead of viewing the performance as rigid and unalterable, they identified a valued sense of spontaneity in Levin's approach:

I think because yesterday [Concert 2], the conductor had sort of said how Mozart used to play it like a band. And he was almost treating his orchestra as if they were a band, and I think he was making a little bit more of, like a gig, or like you know, 'we're going to have a go and see how it goes'. Whereas tonight [Concert 3], you know, [the conductor] introduced it and [was] very friendly. Told us a little bit of information. He was still very formal. And it was very like

that they were going to play really precise music, and it was going to be perfect. [NA Rachel FG2]

you come to nights like tonight [Concert 3] and the Barbican [Concert 1] where you feel that it's just basically a stage full of excellent musicians, playing excellently, a piece that's exactly as it's meant to be played, from the page. And I loved the fact that yesterday [Concert 2] he said 'well this is what's on the page', and then... 'well this is what I'm going to do with it'. I thought that made it really accessible for non-classical music goers. [NA Dominic FG2]

As these quotations demonstrate, this sense of spontaneity was strongly situation-specific – the participants only identified it in *The Night Shift*, and rather than inform their understanding of the other performances encountered in the study, it only seemed to exacerbate the notions of perfection that they gleaned from the other concerts. These seem to stem in part from what the respective conductors have *said* to the audience, rather than just the impression given by the musicians during the performance: Rachel in particular focuses positively on the lack of *telos* Levin conveys by stating that he does not know quite how he will play the extract in the movement's final performance.

The participants did not all react in the same way to the spoken introductions at Concerts 1 and 3: some found these introductions useful because hearing the conductor speak provided insights into how the performance would take shape: 'the great thing about having the conductors talk to you is that they're then actually going to do it' [NA Emma I]. But perhaps this effect is accentuated in a demonstration, where the audience members see the same person both talk and perform. Understanding the function and purpose of the conductor in performance may be even more difficult for non-attenders than understanding the role of the performer: the relationship between player and instrument is easier to comprehend visually than the less tangible gestures of the conductor. Directing from the piano, Levin encompassed both roles, but the participants referred to him more frequently as 'pianist' than as 'conductor' or 'director'.

A further unique function of a demonstration is that the audience is given access to seeing the performers play in a context that is not 'performance' as such, giving further insight into how performers (and performances) operate. Demonstrations also help to reduce the impact of a problem intrinsic to the non-attenders' situation: *How do they distinguish between their response to the work and their response to the performance?* In short, they cannot; and so it is little wonder that they experience such

difficulties with appreciating performances in the ‘right’ way. But if, through notions of spontaneity, demonstrations project a message that performers can and do perform works differently each time, then new attenders are more likely to realise that their personal responses can legitimately vary in reaction to what the performer chooses to do: they are not morally obligated to like every classical performance they hear. Relating specifically to *The Night Shift*, however, it is unlikely that the participants realised that the spontaneity that they so valued in Levin’s demonstration and performance was enabled by his participation in a period instrument performance.⁹ The alternative interpretations that formed Levin’s demonstration did involve extemporizing, rather than only subtle changes in timing or dynamics (cf. Schubert & Fabian, 2006). Thus *The Night Shift* also shows the potential for the non-attenders’ ideas and reactions to be swayed by one formative experience – they still have little underlying knowledge with which to frame their responses to this particular concert.

Performers are people too: rapport and personality

The verbal provision of context in *The Night Shift* was also valuable from another perspective: it ensured that the audience members felt acknowledged by the performers on stage. Although this aspect was a key feature in most of the participants’ reasons for enjoying *The Night Shift*, Carla was the participant for whom this element took on the most importance:

I did like yesterday a lot the fact that, I don’t know, on the Barbican [Concert 1] it was like they were playing, and the feeling was like if we were not there it would have been exactly the same. Yah? Whereas yesterday [Concert 2] it’s like we were all in one thing, it’s like we were a part, and were completely a part of it. And I did, really did like that feeling [...] it was like, he was really talking to us, and telling us ‘This how it is, this is how it will be, this is how I’m going to do it, and I hope you like it’. I don’t know, it was like, yah, making us *part* of that, and I did love it, absolutely, it was great. [NA Carla FG2]

While Carla’s account does relate to the notions of spontaneity and perfection discussed above, it more strongly emphasizes the importance of a sense of inclusion and participation in the concert experience – one that can only really be facilitated by performers demonstrating recognition of, and interest in, the audience. Despite a relatively formal discussion in Concert 1 between a member of the orchestra and the

⁹ Although the rationale of historically informed performance was explained to the audience at *The Night Shift*, none of the participants gave any indication of recognising that the OAE was operating under a different set of ‘rules’ from the other two orchestras.

composer of the short piece premièred, this verbal element did not ameliorate the overriding feeling of detachment Carla experienced during the performance. Perhaps the key point in Carla's quote is the importance she attributes to Levin's 'I hope you like it'. By demonstrating to the audience that he cares about what they think of his performance, Levin not only explicitly acknowledges their presence, but adds weight to their status as listeners (cf. Radbourne et al., 2009: 25). Emma reiterates the perception that this sense of rapport was unique to *The Night Shift*: the verbal introductions provided in the other two concerts, however useful at providing context, did not engender the sense of interaction that made the participants feel 'more involved' [NA Rachel FG2] at Concert 2:

I was thinking, partly unconsciously, why the performance on the South Bank [Concert 2] felt more like going to a gig of another kind of music that wasn't classical music, and it was because there was a rapport with the audience. Which you frequently get in other kinds of music, if you go to kind of like, yeah a pop concert or something, there'll be interaction. So I think that's what the difference was, again I really enjoyed that. [NA Emma FG2]

The way in which the participants were able to glean a sense of the performers' personalities also contributed to their engagement and enjoyment of *The Night Shift*. The significant amount of 'talk' during the concert enabled the non-attenders to view the event as a social experience, whereby rather than the performers 'inhabit[ing] a separate world from the audience' (Small, 1998: 64), 'it's like they were human people, you know, it's like we're all similar' [NA Carla FG2]. This aspect was epitomized by the way they reacted to Levin's 'fantastic sense of humour' [NA Tara FG2]:

And where I enjoyed the first one because, more for the music, it was surprising and interesting and different; the one on the South Bank [Concert 2] was more enjoyable, just like I smiled all the way through the concert, partly because of the interaction with the performers, they had some funny stories to tell, and it just made it a lot easier to enjoy it. [NA Stuart I]

This description of *The Night Shift* being 'easy to enjoy' superficially presents it as an entertaining, rather than educative, experience – despite the way in which the embedded information in this concert aided the participants' understanding of classical performance to a far greater extent than in Concerts 1 and 3. *The Night Shift* again shares this element of entertainment with other musical genres that the participants are more familiar with, and it was instilled through the performers' visible enthusiasm:

they all seemed quite passionate about what they were doing, and that kind of rubbed off, because it made you more excited about it and enthused. And I think you don't always get that with classical music because people are, it's more formal, they know they have to be a bit stiff about it, if that makes sense. [NA Kerry FG2]

As Kerry's quotation suggests, in comparison with popular music, classical musicians possess more limited means with which to manifest their personalities on stage, as deviations from the confines of the musical score are smaller in scale. Talking about the provision of context and performer-audience rapport in *The Night Shift*, Stuart stated:

Well I also think that helps you to kind of identify with the composer [NA Carla: Yah]. Like in the kind of concerts, pop concerts or whatever, just through various...immediate things, you tend to know quite a lot about their story. You know, 'he's very miserable', and you go 'oh, that's why he plays miserable music'. And so when [Levin] sort of talked about Mozart, and particularly the way he talked about Mozart, so yeah you got a much better idea and sense of why the music was how it was. [NA Stuart FG2]

The participants are therefore accustomed to performers having 'a personality' (even if, as Auslander (2006) suggests, it is merely a persona constructed for the sake of the performance event) and use their knowledge of the performer's personality and 'life story' to inform their understanding of the music. Although Stuart speaks above about the usefulness of knowing information about a *composer's* life, arguably it is important also from the non-attenders' perspective to glimpse aspects of the performers' personalities, whether through hearing them speak, or gleaning something of their natures by watching them perform (cf. Pitts, 2005a: 68). The effectiveness of Levin's demonstration and performance, then, was shaped in part by the fact that he *was* a personality: he was a charismatic speaker whose enthusiasm was seemingly infectious: 'he lived and breathed Mozart it seemed, he really genuinely loved what he was doing' [NA Kerry I]. His enthusiasm and 'larger than life' character was consistently demonstrated through his musical *performance* too, in his use of large gestures and exaggerated facial expressions, although Auslander's (2006: 115) assertion that a performer's persona is 'by interaction with the audience...a social construct, not simply an individual one' suggests that Levin would be aware of the need to play an engaging

rôle within the context of *The Night Shift*.¹⁰ Through this strategy, Levin's performance strongly conveyed to the participants that classical performers *are* people, and that classical performance can serve as a vehicle for the expression of personality – or, at the least, personae.

4.3 Negotiating discourse on classical music

Verbally articulating responses and preferences

The participants' responses to taking part in the study were often framed by an awareness of their lack of knowledge and experience of classical music. Rachel, for example, spoke of her perception that a degree of knowledge was a requisite for engaging in classical music: 'there is...an idea that, you know, you *have* to be quite musically educated: you don't *have* to be, but it would help' [NA Rachel I]. For others, concern about lack of knowledge applied not only to the performances themselves, but also manifested itself in anxiety about participating in the focus group discussions: 'I think I was really worried that everyone would know a lot more than I did [and] be able to talk about things more fluidly' [NA Kerry I].

The participants were thus in a doubly challenging situation: attending classical concerts for the first time was a new and potentially daunting experience, after which they were then asked to discuss the experience with others, the majority of whom they did not know. Additionally, as Edward Said (2008: 307) has suggested, in comparison to other art forms music is both 'the most directly affecting and expressive as well as the most esoteric and difficult to discuss' (cf. Adorno, 1976: 4; Mitchell & MacDonald, 2009). While the participants generally seemed willing to put forward their personal reactions to the music they had heard, their responses were frequently curtailed by their use of language in this context. They were forthcoming and articulate when discussing other aspects of the concert experience (e.g. their responses to concert etiquette or to the concert venues), but less assured about the language they used to communicate their

¹⁰ To my knowledge, there are no available video recordings of Levin performing any piano concerti with which to compare his live performance at Concert 2, but a general sense of his manner of speaking and playing can be gained from the bonus DVD which accompanies his 2006 Deutsche Harmonia Mundi recordings of Mozart Piano Sonatas K. 279, 280 & 281. Most likely because he is here performing a solo piano sonata without a live audience, his gestures when playing are less exaggerated than those during his performance at *The Night Shift*, but note his frequent characteristic use of large hand gestures when speaking. Clips from this DVD can also be viewed by accessing <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RWKbOGMqDVw> and related links (accessed on 5 May 2009).

musical preferences. Two participants in particular (Dominic and Rachel) demonstrated uncertainty in the first focus group interview about the vocabulary with which they articulated their responses to the first piece in Concert 1, stating that they were not sure of the ‘correct’ terminology with which to describe the music:

I have to admit I wasn't a big fan of the first one. [NA Carla: Me neither] [NA Dawn: laughs] It kind of, in a way it seemed to work quite nicely with the Shostakovich, because it was quite sort of strange and I would say quite modernist, I don't know what the word is. But I, you know, it felt slightly pretentious to me, the first one. I can imagine if you've come for the Rachmaninov, and you're there anticipating the Rachmaninov... [NA Dominic FG1]

And I think it was that sort of disjointedness about it, I don't know if that's the right term or not, but I just, I didn't quite like that one as much as the others. [NA Rachel FG1]

Rachel's quote appears shortly after Dominic's in the focus group interview. She adds a similar caveat on one further occasion in her individual interview, suggesting that this uncertainty about using terminology originates from a perceived lack of knowledge about classical music, and about the way in which it should be discussed. Alternatively, demonstrating doubt about her use of terminology could be interpreted as a manifestation of group behaviour. My attempts to obtain the participants' responses to the music were complicated by the way they frequently did not use composers' names or standard titles of works (e.g. ‘symphony’ or ‘concerto’) to identify the pieces they were discussing: instead distinguishing pieces or movements by their chronological order within the concert (see e.g. Figure 4.1). Along with Toby, Dominic mentions the names of the composers whose works were performed (i.e. Rachmaninov, Shostakovich) with the greatest frequency during the first focus group interview. This, plausibly, would suggest to the other participants a degree of assurance in talking about classical music. Not only is he confident in pronouncing the composers' names, but in naming Shostakovich and Rachmaninov in succession he demonstrates that he knows which work in the programme was which (cf. Elliot, 2006; the participants' difficulty matching works to composers is further discussed below). The quote above is the only occasion in the interview where Dominic mentions Shostakovich, but his reference to this composer combined with his demonstration of uncertainty about the use of terminology might convey the message that if Dominic – who appears conversant with the genre – lacks confidence in his ability to correctly talk about classical music, then

the other participants too, should be cautious in this respect. Moreover, the participants' lack of previous experience of classical concert attendance is a primary unifying group characteristic, and so it is possible that a given participant would not wish to be perceived as *too* self-assured in their use of 'specialist' terminology, to ensure that they conform to the norms of the group (Carey & Smith, 1994).

The participants articulated their musical preferences more confidently during the second focus group interview. Carla, Emma and Rachel in particular spoke about their reasons for not liking sections of the music performed in Concert 3 (see Figure 4.1). Their use of the adjectives 'broken', 'fussy' and 'choppy' to describe aspects of the music to which they responded negatively suggests that they were more comfortable using their own language in front of others on this occasion, rather than trying to use what they perceived as musical or technical terms. In addition, probably because they have used 'everyday' adjectives to qualify their negative responses, none exhibited uncertainty about whether their use of such terms was 'correct'. In this context, the participants displayed what Lehrer (2009), in her study of talk about wine by those drinking it, describes as 'critical communication' (adapted from Isenberg, 1949), which arises from a social situation where there is 'less of a need for the language of the speaker to meet any external public criterion of established use' (Lehrer, 2009: 207).¹¹

This more relaxed approach to talking about music could be a result of repeated experience: the majority of participants had now attended three classical concerts during the course of the study, and hence were likely to have been more confident in their own responses – and in their ability to articulate them in front of others. Six of the eight participants who attended Concert 3 indicated that they were more at ease at this event having attended the previous concerts, noting either an increased confidence in 'sitting down listening to it, because of listening to other ones' [NA Rachel FG2], an ability 'to appreciate it more' [NA Tara I], or simply that they were 'more comfortable with the

¹¹A comparison between talk about wine and talk about music is continued on the pages which follow. Wine and classical music share the potential to be seen as requiring specialist knowledge in order to be fully appreciated; as well as an array of technical terms and 'product' names, often in languages other than English.

FIGURE 4.1 *Extract from Focus Group 2: negative responses to the music of Concert 3*

Q: Was there any music tonight that you really didn't like?

NA Carla: Yeah the first one after the interval. I just, I mean I was really kind of like, really bad. The first and last one, yep, the last one I just loved it, it was really good. But the first one after the interval...

So the first kind of movement...

NA Carla: Yeah the score was once again kind of really broken, and I find that really difficult, I find it really difficult! [chuckles]

NA Emma: I found the music just before the interval very fussy, so it didn't appeal to me quite so much, but...

NA Rachel: Yeah I was saying to Kerry at the interval that the first one, I couldn't really explain why I didn't like it at first. [NA Kerry: Yeah] I think what you were saying, the sort of choppy, and it was, I don't know whether there was a chime or something in it that I just didn't like.

whole experience' [NA Stuart I]. Similarly, they may have felt more assured within the group dynamic in the second focus group interview because of a greater familiarity with the other members of the group,¹² and because of an awareness that they all possessed roughly the same levels of knowledge and experience of classical music: any perceived disparity at Concert 1 between those who had and had not previously attended a classical concert would most likely have diminished.

Earlier, it was suggested that use of composers' names in participants' discourse may relate to a sense of assurance in talking about classical music. Given that the majority of participants noted an increase in confidence by Concert 3, it might be expected that in the second focus group interview they would more frequently use composers' names when discussing their musical responses. While the names of the composers featuring in Concert 1 were mentioned a total of twelve times in the first focus group interview, in Focus Group 2, in which the participants discussed both

¹² Carla, for example, described feeling more at ease at Concert 3 because she had 'warm[ed] to people towards the end [of the study]' [NA Carla I] and appreciated being able to comment informally about the concert to others before the focus group interview began.

Concerts 2 and 3, composers' names were only used six times. This unexpected finding might further suggest that the participants were now more comfortable within the group context, having established their own (usually effective) ways of talking about the music which did not require the use of composers' names or work/movement titles, or the use of what they perceived as specialist descriptive terms (cf. Lehrer, 2009). This trend is precursor of a theme that will be considered in more detail below: the idea that the acquisition of knowledge and understanding about classical music should not require conscious 'work' on the participants' behalf, and rather should be supplied by the concert experience itself.

Assumptions of prior knowledge and the effective delivery of context: printed programmes vs. spoken introductions

Alternatively, the participants' disinclination to use composers' names or work titles in their talk may have been compounded by a lack of knowledge about the typical subdivision of movements in given types of musical works (e.g. that a symphony usually contains four movements, while an overture is a single movement piece). Given that it may be difficult for non-attenders to distinguish a movement within a larger work and a work in itself, this lack of knowledge may create difficulties in identifying their location within the concert's proceedings:

There were bits of the music in the second concert [Concert 3] that I enjoyed, but the problem is I find it quite difficult to distinguish what bits they were, I suppose because it's not kind of really clearly labelled. And so...you know, again I suppose this is one of my slight problems: not really knowing what's going on. If there was a bit...often I don't know, I've lost track of what composer we were on, so you don't even know who it's by. And there were some bits towards the end that I really enjoyed, but of course that's not very helpful, because it's just kind of 'towards the end' of the St John's concert. [NA Emma I]

Emma was one of the few participants at Concert 3 who bought a programme specifically to help her navigate the concert, but described how 'even that was so dense that I found it difficult to really follow what was going on in the music' [NA Emma I]. It is notable, then, that despite having access to a printed list of the works and their constituent movements at the front of the programme, this information was seen as inaccessible, perhaps because of the style of language used in the programme notes themselves (this is discussed in more detail below). Emma therefore still encountered

problems in identifying the names of the composer and work of the music she enjoyed, and, like the majority of the other participants, would have preferred Concerts 1 and 3 to contain a basic spoken introduction to each work, 'at least to know what the title of the music is', rather than being 'left feeling a little bit lost as to what was going on' [NA Rachel I].

Knowledge about classical composers and programmes of music is therefore somewhat analogous to knowledge about wine. If one does not possess basic paradigmatic knowledge about the way in which the information on a wine bottle is presented and conceptualised – such as being able to distinguish between types of grape varieties and regions (or *terroir*) in which they are grown – then it is more difficult to read and understand the label: although the necessary information is presented it cannot necessarily be deciphered easily (cf. Elliot, 2006). Similarly, if you lack the knowledge and experience to read the metaphorical wine label of the classical concert – through knowing how to gain information about the works performed and their constituent parts – then it is more difficult to acquire knowledge about which works or composers you enjoy listening to. If you have no conceptual framework with which to assimilate this knowledge, then it is more difficult to make informed and confident attendance decisions in the future, therefore making classical concerts a less accessible cultural choice.

Perhaps for these reasons the non-attender participants expressed a strong desire for information about the concert's repertoire to be provided as part of the event, often through spoken introductions. The participants cited the provision of information and context *during* the concert experience in *The Night Shift* as a major contributor to their high levels of enjoyment. Through an emphasis on 'explaining the basics' [NA Rachel FG2] this mode of presentation did not assume that the audience possessed any prior knowledge about the music: 'it seemed to accept that people weren't...hugely educated [...] you could enjoy and appreciate the music with a sort of comfort blanket of knowing that you didn't need to really understand it all' [NA Rachel I].

Indeed, some participants demonstrated a perception that they should not have to work at acquiring knowledge about classical music, and that all knowledge they needed

in order to appreciate a performance should be provided within the concert experience. Kerry described enjoying the conductor's talk in Concert 3 because...

It kind of felt like he was sort of talking to you like you were an equal rather than 'You should know this, if you don't know it then you shouldn't be here'. [NA Carla: Exactly! (laughs)] And sometimes I get that sort of feeling, not necessarily just with classical, but just for anywhere really that you're supposed to automatically walk in and understand what it's all about. [NA Kerry FG2]

Although Carla had realised over the course of the study that she did appreciate information provided in spoken introductions, she admitted to rarely reading programmes in any cultural domain, preferring to focus on her own aesthetic response rather than feeling that attending the event should necessarily involve an element of 'studying'. This is perhaps preferable to the type of perception Kerry depicts above, whereby one can only appreciate a classical performance by possessing some knowledge about the music in advance. Obviously, as some participants acknowledged, the extent to which a concert is perceived to be based upon assumptions of prior knowledge depends on the match obtained between the level of audience members' experience with classical music and the tone and content of the information provided. In particular, these participants distinguished between Concerts 1 and 3, where those providing introductions 'talked like a closed shop' [NA Dominic FG2], and *The Night Shift*, where the audience was addressed 'in layman's terms' [NA Carla I].

The participants consistently characterised the printed programmes available at Concerts 1 and 3 (which constituted the majority of background information provided at those concerts, as is the norm at classical music performances) as assuming a significant degree of prior knowledge. As a result, the content of the programmes, and particularly the language in which they were written, projected a message of exclusivity (see Figure 4.2). The participants also held the view that while both programmes used language which they found difficult to read and understand, Concert 1's programme was more accessible and useful than that of Concert 3, which, when faced with its 'selection of very detailed and scholarly essays' [NA Emma I] the majority found 'just totally incomprehensible' [NA Dominic I]. Despite being more accessible, Concert 1's printed programme still caused confusion, as the extract in Figure 4.2 shows. Stuart's observation of a difficulty equating his listening experience with the 'expert' description provided in the programme notes draws similarities with recent research indicating that

wine consumers are frequently unable to match wines they have tasted to wine critics' descriptions (Weil, 2007). This mismatch between 'expert' and 'novice' description of an individual, sensory experience perhaps creates a perception that those who choose to attend concerts frequently must possess considerable musical expertise or understanding. (Whether concert audiences do, in fact, possess these levels of expertise is considered in Chapter 6.) The provision of printed programmes thus instilled a sense of alienation in the participants, by implying that classical concert audiences are a knowledgeable, distinct group: 'there is a set that goes to them [...] and knows they're happening [...] you get the sense that [...] they really appreciate the music and they really, they *know*, they know the music intimately' [NA Dominic I].

FIGURE 4.2 *Extract from Focus Group 1: responses to Concert 1's printed programme*

NA Stuart: Yeah, it was interesting and sort of useful in parts, the parts where it said how he [Shostakovich] was sort of quoting almost other composers. I mean the bits he was quoting didn't mean anything to me either. But then other parts in the programme sort of left me a bit more confused, when they said that there were like 'naïve' woodwind instruments and [laughter] you know, left me scratching my head a little bit with that. But, and I didn't know if that's just because classical music's unfamiliar to me, but it's hard to see how that kind of description matched up. But...

Yeah. Did anyone else find that, that it didn't quite make sense to you or...bits you didn't understand about the programme?

NA Dawn: Oh yeah the programme was very technically written, yeah, [NA Kerry: Yeah] for people who know what they're on about! [laughs] Which I didn't, so! [laughter] I just was interested in hearing the sort of background to the person really rather than the breakdown of the instruments and...yeah. The naivety! [laughs]

NA Kerry: -I think it felt a bit like it was you were one of the people who came a lot to hear their performances, kind of it sort of talked in a very familiar way. And certain words, if you're not quite familiar with them, or don't really know what they mean, it can make it quite hard. It can be a bit off-putting at times.

NA Dominic: It talked about the musical structures and at some points it's referencing the notes, the actual notes of the chords that he's using, which if you, if you don't, if you're coming to these nights a lot...Which I get the feeling that, you know, most people here probably do come to these nights a lot. But if you're not then it can be a little bit, a little bit off-putting I guess.

It may be that the idiosyncratic and 'technical' language [NA Dawn FG1] used in the concert programmes heightened any difficulties the participants perceived in talking about the music (especially in the focus group interviews immediately following Concerts 1 and 3) by projecting a message that there are prescribed and approved conventions in discourse on classical music, to which the non-attenders could have little hope of conforming. Overall, then, the participants were not able to extract much useful information about the context of the works from the programmes. In contrast, the provision of a narrative, some background context, or suggestions of points in the music to listen out for were primary reasons for appreciating spoken introductions, increasing some participants' enjoyment. In addition, and as previously noted in section 4.2, spoken introductions were seen as a preferable means of communicating information and context because they enhanced the social nature of the concert:

Having the contact and the rapport between someone on stage, like an actual person speaking to you, that's much better than everyone in the audience sitting down and reading the same, you know the same programme in silence [chuckles]. [NA Toby I]

Some participants particularly seemed to appreciate the provision of context when it gave them an insight into the human agency that had contributed to the performance event in which they were participating, helping them to understand the motivations behind the creation of individual works. This was reflected in a desire for more information about the reasons behind choosing the pieces making up a given concert programme. There was a particular emphasis, however, placed on how knowing about the circumstances of a composer's life could provide a better 'sense of why the music was how it was' [NA Stuart FG2]:

it helped sort of, it gave a bit of background to the music and where it came from, and how it should have been viewed in the day that the music was written, and that's quite nice because often you don't really understand what it's about or why, and sometimes you don't understand why someone did what they did. [NA Kerry I]

Although some did glean this type of information from printed programmes, a verbal, rather than written, introduction is more likely to be viewed as being in accord with a sense of seeing classical performance as a dynamic process, shaped at all stages by the

decisions of composers and performers, rather than as a static and unalterable canonic entity.

4.4 Conclusions

In many senses, the features that strongly define the non-attenders' experiences of classical concert attendance all interact with their levels of knowledge, confidence and experience relating to classical music performance. A key emergent finding from the non-attender data is the sense of moral obligation some participants experienced in relation to classical listening: with the idea that classical works are by default 'good' meaning that the non-attenders perceived deficiency in themselves if they did not enjoy a given piece of music (cf. Kotler & Scheff, 1997: 533). Reflecting on music and value in *Why Classical Music Still Matters*, Lawrence Kramer (2007: 219) asserts dramatically that 'classical music turns deadly when we venerate it'. Later, however, he suggests that...

Despite the frigid connotations of its label, classical music [...] is the very opposite of frozen in its presumed grandeur. Lend it an ear, and it will effortlessly shuck off the dead-marble aspect of its own status and come to as much life as you can handle. (Kramer, 2007: 225)

The non-attenders' experiences indicate that 'lending an ear' to classical music may not be as simple as Kramer depicts. Conforming to Kramer's earlier statement, they did at first seem to venerate the music – and with detrimental effects – expecting performances to fulfil a Platonic ideal of rigid perfection, rather than apprehending classical music's ability to 'renew itself with each repetition' (Ross, 2004: III).

This perception of classical music was reinforced by audience behaviour, especially the standing ovation the participants witnessed in Concert 1, which made many doubt their own ability to 'appreciate' the music. As they had very little prior experience with which to compare the concerts they attended, they were unaccustomed to the convention of enthusiastic applause following classical performances, interpreting this as an indication of the other audience members' increased ability and confidence in assessing a performance's aesthetic worth. Brown (2004: 3) argues that participation in standing ovations is intrinsically related to affirming the validity of audience members'

presence in the concert hall, writing of 'the deep need to...identify with those who can tell the difference between a good performance and a great one – even when you can't' (the effects of the degree of concordance between individual and group response are explored in Chapter 7). This aspect of audience behaviour reinforced the participants' awareness of their lack of knowledge and experience, leading them to believe that their personal responses to the work were not valid. The non-attenders' lack of knowledge thus also exacerbated the effects of feeling morally obligated to enjoy all aspects of classical music performance: perhaps if they attended a greater number of concerts they might come to discern differences in audiences' levels of applause for different performances, rather than perceiving these to be uniform.

Drawing across the main defining features outlined in this chapter, it is also evident that the non-attenders' levels of knowledge and confidence – and the degree to which the concert experiences contributed to supplementing them – exerted significant effects on their feelings of belonging in the concert hall. The perceived quality and accessibility of context provision took on a significant role in shaping the non-attenders' experience of the concerts: because they had little existing knowledge about classical music, they relied on information provided during the event to contribute to their understanding and appreciation. Robert Levin's demonstration at *The Night Shift* stood out positively in their accounts, particularly because it compensated for the participants' lack of experience by providing them with understanding of the ways in which performers contribute to and shape the final performance product. (Chapter 8 considers the implications of the effectiveness of Levin's demonstration for the practice of performers and orchestras.) Additionally, performer-audience interaction heightened the inclusiveness of the experience, meaning that the practice of embedding information created a rapport with the audience, as well as providing understanding. Radbourne et al. (2009) have stressed the importance of 'collective engagement' in audience members' assessments of 'performance quality', and while the spoken introductions (or 'embedded information') in Concerts 1 and 3 alienated some participants by reinforcing their perceived ignorance through assumptions of prior knowledge, the strategies employed in *The Night Shift* promoted a sense of inclusion rather than one of detachment. (The factors that mediate a sense of belonging in the concert hall are further considered in Chapter 7.) It must also be noted, however, that this was one of a number of elements which engendered a feeling of inclusion in Concert 2; in particular

the participants' similarities in age and appearance to the audience members surrounding them also contributed to this sentiment.

Through the scholarly approach and technical language used in the printed programmes, the context provided through this medium in Concerts 1 and 3 created feelings of exclusion from, rather than integration with, the other audience members present. This convention was easily interpreted by the non-attenders as an assumption of prior knowledge, which created a palpable sense of detachment from the other audience members. Thus the ways in which the printed programmes were written suggested to the participants that classical music audiences do possess an exclusive, 'hidden' knowledge (cf. Kolb, 2000). This idea resonates with the concept of the 'interpretive community' proposed by literary theorists (see Fish, 1980). The term is used to describe a group of readers who employ similar interpretive strategies when approaching a work, and who share 'assumptions about how a text should be read' (Dorfman, 1996: 454).

Through the combination of impenetrable programme notes and at times unfathomably enthusiastic audience receptions, it seems the non-attenders came away from Concerts 1 and 3 with the impression that audiences at traditional classical concerts form a singular interpretive community. Sociological studies of audiences across domains (Abercrombie & Longhurst, 1998) and of more specific 'art worlds' (Becker, 1982) categorise audience members into different types dependent on their expertise and/or commitment – therefore suggesting the presence of multiple interpretive communities. Indeed, recent research on classical concert attenders by Roose (2008) discerns three different audience segments, each of which display different expectations about, and approaches to, the listening experience. Rather than viewing classical audiences in this way, the non-attenders saw their fellow audience members at Concerts 1 and 3 as a more unified group. In some participants' accounts, through descriptions of 'a "them and us" feel' [NA Stuart FG2], this was suggestive of outgroup behaviour (Tajfel, 1981). Tajfel's accentuation principle – in which individuals exaggerate both the differences between the characteristics of their group and other groups, and the similarities *within* their own group – provides an explanation for the participants' tendency to regard the audience as one distinct group of knowledgeable enthusiasts. The design of the study itself may have contributed to the

development of this perception, through placing the participants in a minority group and then encouraging in-depth discussions of their shared experience.

The emphasis the participants placed on the need for accessible context and information suggests that classical music ‘appreciation’ requires a degree of knowledge acquisition – it is not sufficiently straightforward to necessarily warrant immediate enjoyment or understanding. It is unlikely that many cultural forms *are* that simple; more that many of the participants will have developed a knowledge of ‘how to appreciate’ particular art forms through repeated experience. Toby, for example, explains the ease with which he has been able to appreciate opera on previous visits because of its shared features with theatre:

I think maybe [opera is] a good transition into classical music, because it’s half like going to see a play, so [laughs] which I’ve done loads of times, so you know how to appreciate that. So you’ve got what’s going on on stage to draw you in, and then it sort of dawns on you that there’s all this music kind of going on. [NA Toby I]

Similarly, Bortolussi and Dixon’s (1996) study of the effects of literary training on students’ reading of a text found that those who received formal training (which included providing literary and cultural context about the genre of magical realism) demonstrated increased understanding and appreciation of a magical realist text than controls who did not receive training in the genre. However, they also suggest that it is ‘entirely conceivable’ that similar levels of expertise could be attained without formal training, through exposure and experience (ibid.: 473).

Could the same be said of classical music, or is it in some way more intrinsically difficult – in comparison with other art forms – to informally acquire knowledge and understanding about the genre? Classical performance is not dominated by narrative, as in theatre, nor does it entail the degree of visual spectacle found in dance performance. Because of these elements, knowledge and context are arguably needed *less* in these art forms for an engaging and enjoyable audience experience. Unlike theatre, classical music’s abstract nature means that it cannot provide you with context itself: unless, that is, the audience member possesses enough knowledge to infer context from what they *hear*, using the music’s acoustical properties to situate it within a conceptual framework.

Another difference is that classical music (and performance) contains comparatively little scope for the inclusion of contemporary references. The contemporary relevance of canonic theatre works can be articulated through their production and design. A recent television adaptation of the Royal Shakespeare Company's *Hamlet* (RSC; directed by Gregory Doran), for example, used closed-circuit television cameras as a framing device to portray Hamlet's sense of 'being watched'. Importantly, in an era where surveillance culture and an impinging sense of lost privacy are frequent topics in media debate – or in other words, by visually tapping into a current zeitgeist – this strategy holds the potential to develop the audience's empathy with Hamlet: we, too, lead lives in which we are frequently and involuntarily caught on camera. Crucially, then, the production used contemporary referents to articulate a key theme of the play; in stressing a similarity between Hamlet's situation and ours, it uses *empathy* as a means of shaping our approach to the literary text by developing our awareness of an underlying theme. Through showing us *how* to approach the play, therefore, it also begins to incorporate viewers into an interpretive community. Moreover, perhaps partly because of the contemporary relevance of the production (notwithstanding its use of some star actors) the adaptation was deemed accessible enough to be broadcast on BBC2 at a primetime evening slot on Boxing Day 2009. By reaching some 900,000 viewers who may not have visited Stratford-upon-Avon to see the production at the theatre (Sweney, 2009), the RSC significantly increased its potential audience base, and through exposure, has ensured that potential new audience members already have some perceived confidence in 'how to appreciate' a theatrical work.

Symphonic music (unlike opera) cannot so easily be made to feel 'contemporary': performers and conductors can brandish a work with a new interpretive stamp, but, as the non-attenders' experiences have shown, new audience members are unlikely to recognize these elements as a representation of contemporaneity. Ironically, classical music that really is contemporary – that written by living composers – is often more easily characterized as esoteric or inaccessible than familiar canonic classical works, despite the similarities in sound between some contemporary classical music and genres of contemporary popular music (Hewett, 2003; Ross, 2007). So again, perhaps the key problem here is the predominantly abstract nature of classical music. Literary art forms have been noted for their ability to question or criticise societal assumptions

about status and value (de Botton, 2004; Carey, 2005), or to make political comment: features which demonstrate a dialogue with society, even if it is not one of our time. While classical works also hold this capacity, when we listen to them a hundred or more years removed this conversation with contemporaneity cannot so easily be heard – unless we know the historical and political context of a work's conception in advance. This, therefore, explains the importance the non-attenders attributed to the effective delivery of context. One observation on the content of this chapter might be that it is lacking in discussion of the non-attenders' responses to the music itself, focusing instead on superficially more peripheral aspects of classical performance. But the extent to which the context provided enabled the participants to gain an understanding of the way a work is shaped by a) the cultural and political climate in which a composer was operating, and b) the personality and musical decisions of the performer(s), exerted significant effects on their approaches to, and experiences of, listening to the works. The enjoyment of concert attendance, for new audience members at least, relies on far more than listening alone.

* * *

The next chapter incorporates data from the attenders – respondents to the Cadogan Hall audience questionnaire, and the follow-up attender interviewees – as well as the non-attenders to explore the role of familiarity in concert attendance. As we have seen, the non-attenders' responses to the concert experience were shaped in part by a perception that classical music audiences know the music they are going to hear well. The chapter examines whether this is the case: for audience members who may possess the background knowledge and understanding which the non-attenders were lacking, what respective roles do familiarity and discovery play in their concert experiences, and in their motivations to attend? And, from the non-attender perspective, how do those who participated in the listening preparation task respond to listening to the music from recorded media – before they had received any context about the works – and what effects did this prior exposure exert on their responses to hearing the works in live performance?

CHAPTER 5

The effects of familiarity on the enjoyment of concert attendance

Writing in 1995, Lawrence Kramer produced a doom-ridden prognosis for the future of classical music performance, attributing the genre's purported demise in part to having 'neither the prestige nor the popularity of literature and visual art, and [squandering] its capacities for self-renewal by clinging to an exceptionally static core repertoire' (Kramer, 1995: 3-4). Christopher Small (1998) has similarly maligned concert programmes' reliance on a perennial repetition of canonic symphonic 'masterworks', suggesting that instead of holding the power 'to upset, to excite, to disturb, to disconcert' as they once did, the main function of the performance of repertory stalwarts is to '[reassure] those who attend [that] things are as they have been and will continue to be so' (p. 119).

And so whilst (as outlined in Chapter 2) research in experimental aesthetics has provided explanations for the effects of familiarity on listeners' *liking* for a musical work (e.g. Berlyne, 1971; North & Hargreaves, 1995), little empirical consideration has been given to what familiarity with a work (or with the classical repertoire in general) might mean in broader terms – in both shaping listeners' experiences within a concert, and their initial decisions to attend. How do audience members respond to hearing familiar works in the concert hall and to what extent do they seek familiarity or novelty in their concert experiences?

The only study to explicitly consider the effects of repertoire familiarity on the experiences of concert attenders in a live setting (Thompson, 2006) found no clear relationship between enjoyment ratings and prior repertoire familiarity. Given that, in a real-world setting, enjoying a piece in a concert performance is likely to be mediated by many other variables ranging from the listening environment to the listener's internal state (Hargreaves, Miell, & MacDonald, 2005; Thompson, 2007), the present research also sought to obtain exploratory data on the effects of familiarity with the concert

experience in general, with the concert venue, and with the performers. These aspects have emerged as contributors to the enjoyment of concert experience at a chamber music festival in research by Pitts (2005a/b) and Pitts & Spencer (2008). In a preliminary model by Thompson (2007) familiarity levels with the concert venue and with the performers are grouped together (based on a principal components analysis) and taken as contributing to the anticipated enjoyment of a performance, by representing 'the extent to which the context of the concert is familiar' (p. 27). Through widening the lens to examine the effects of familiarity with these different aspects of the classical concert, and through considering the perspectives of both regular concert-goers and non-attenders, we may begin to see indications of how levels of familiarity with these different constituent parts of the live performance situation might interact (cf. Thompson, 2007: 30), and can explore the possibility that individuals might *engineer* such interactions for deliberate effect.

The structure of this chapter takes a 'top-down' approach: first considering the effects of familiarity with the concert experience in general, and then focusing on the implications of familiarity with the concert venue and with the concert's performers. Finally, quantitative findings are presented on the relationship between repertoire familiarity and enjoyment, before a detailed consideration of qualitative data on the respective functions that familiarity and novelty with the music play in shaping the experiences of attenders and non-attenders.

5.1 Frequency of attendance and familiarity with concert experience

As shown in Chapter 4, the non-attenders believed that classical concert audiences were characterized by a core group of individuals who attend very frequently. Data from the audience questionnaire distributed at Cadogan Hall (Study 2) can be used to test this idea and, using frequency of attendance as an indicator of audience members' familiarity with concert experience (following an approach taken by Roose, 2008), these data can be used to explore whether frequency of attendance at classical concerts exerts an effect on enjoyment levels. Although this is not strictly measuring familiarity with the experience as such (someone who has attended only once in the past year may have spent previous years attending concerts weekly) it can still provide a useful means of

beginning to explore the effects of repeated attendance on audience members' enjoyment.

The Cadogan Hall concert received predominantly high overall enjoyment ratings (see Figure 5.1). On a rating scale where a rating of 1 equalled 'not at all' and 7 equalled 'very much so', 13% of respondents gave an enjoyment rating of 5, 28% a rating of 6, and 54.5% gave the concert the highest rating of 7.¹³ The mean rating for enjoyment of the concert was 6.31 (SD = 0.94).

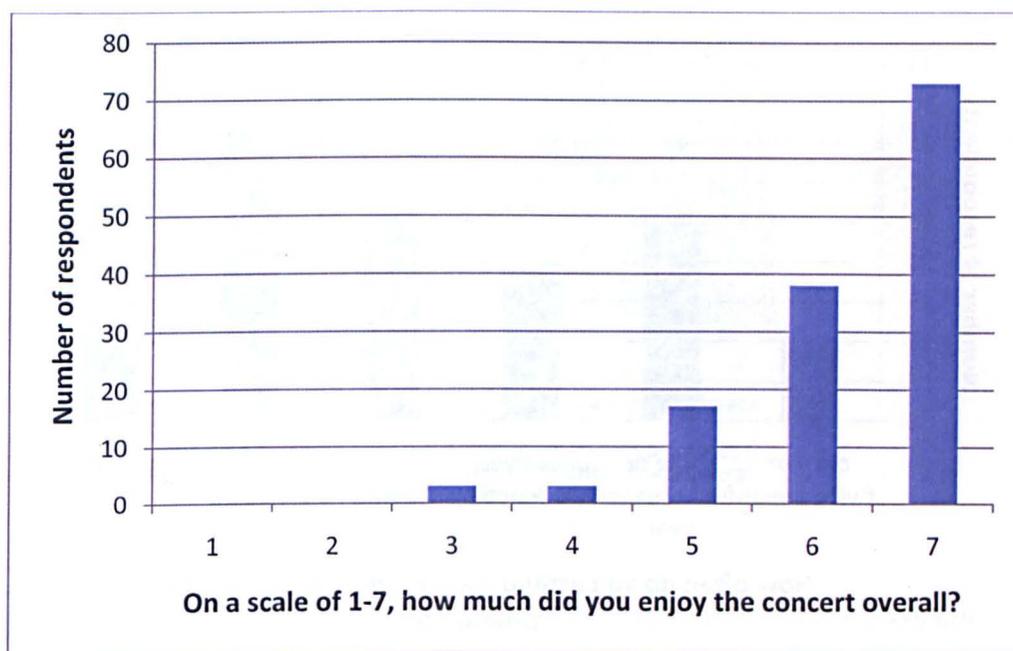


FIGURE 5.1 Bar chart showing the distribution of overall enjoyment ratings for the Cadogan Hall concert

Figure 5.2 shows the frequency at which respondents reported attending classical performances over the past year: a majority of 30% attended several times a month. At the extreme ends of the scale, 7.5% attended once or twice a year, and 9% once a week. Using Spearman's rho,¹⁴ overall enjoyment ratings and frequency of attendance at classical performances did not correlate ($\rho = -0.052$; $p = 0.558$). Yet the eta coefficient

¹³All ratings obtained in the questionnaire were on a 1-7 scale; missing cases have been excluded on an analysis-by-analysis basis.

¹⁴Spearman's rho (the non-parametric equivalent of correlation coefficient Pearson's r) has been used throughout the analysis presented in this chapter. It was deemed the most appropriate coefficient to use because the questionnaire rating scales elicited ordinal, rather than interval level data, and many variables were not normally distributed (de Vaus, 2002).

($\eta = 0.256$) is considerably larger than the value for rho,¹⁵ suggesting that overall enjoyment and frequency of attendance may be associated, but not in a linear function. Using a curve estimation procedure, a quadratic curve provided the best statistical fit ($R^2 = 0.051$, a medium effect; $p = 0.04$).¹⁶ Examination of the scatterplot with this curve superimposed (Figure 5.3) shows a flattened inverted U, with enjoyment ratings, while still remaining very high, decreasing at either end of the continuum for frequency of attendance: for those who attend concerts once or twice a year, and those who attend weekly.

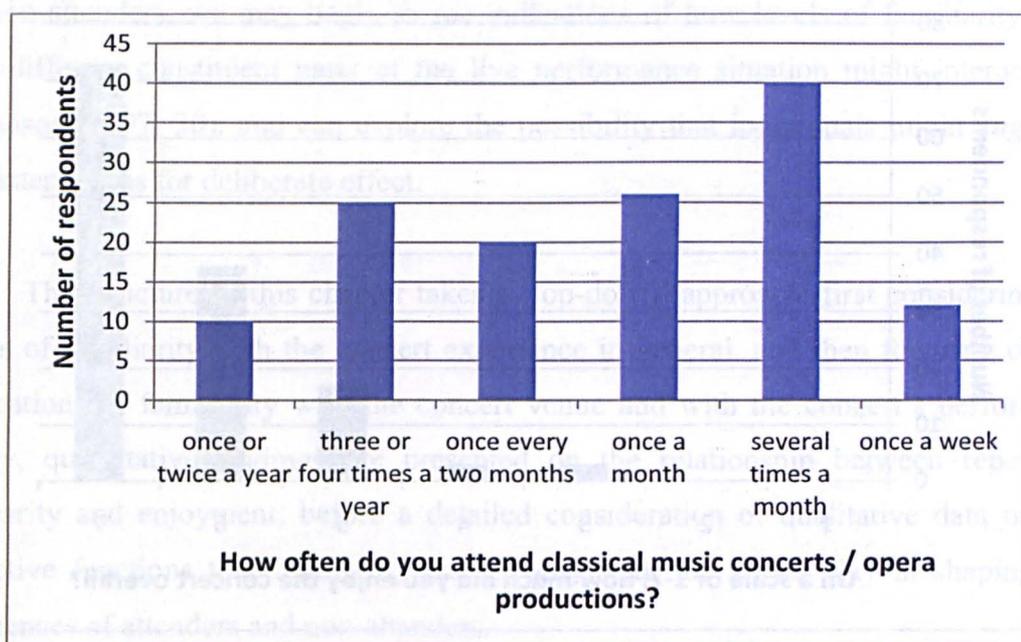


FIGURE 5.2 Bar chart showing questionnaire respondents' reported frequency of attendance at classical music performances

The familiarity ratings for the four pieces performed in the concert all positively correlated with frequency of attendance with low to moderate strengths of association¹⁷ (Haydn trumpet concerto: $\rho = 0.219$, $p = 0.012$; Shostakovich: $\rho = 0.310$, $p < 0.001$; Haydn symphony: $\rho = 0.329$, $p < 0.001$; Stravinsky: $\rho = 0.364$, $p < 0.001$). The Haydn trumpet concerto (for which the association between these two variables was weakest) received the highest mean familiarity rating of the four pieces (see Figure 5.9),

¹⁵ The eta coefficient is sensitive to non-linear associations, and so was consulted as one indication of whether the variables may be associated in a non-linear function (de Vaus, 2002).

¹⁶ Guidance on effect size for values of R^2 has been taken from Kinnear & Gray (2009: 400).

¹⁷ See Figure 3.11 for full details of the works performed at the Cadogan Hall concert.

indicating that, as would be expected, the strength of association between frequency of attendance and repertoire familiarity is more acute for lesser-known works.

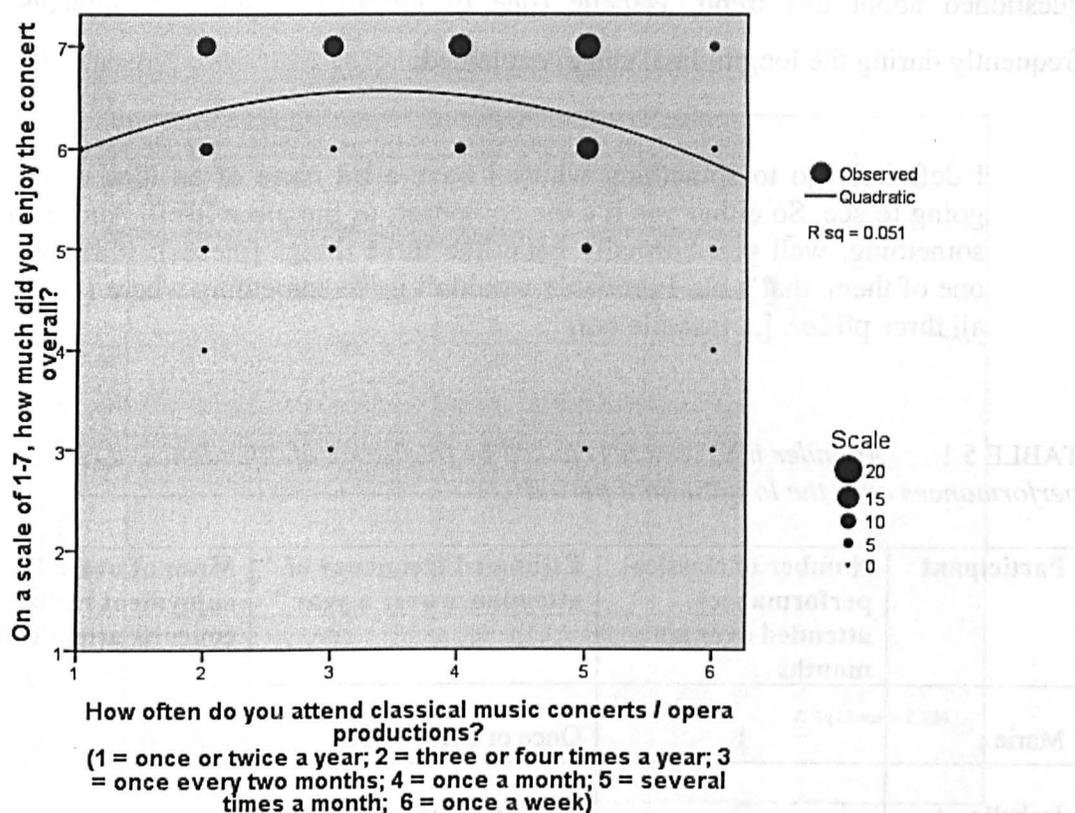


FIGURE 5.3 Scatterplot of frequency of attendance against overall enjoyment

Longitudinal data from the attender interviewees enables consideration of an association between frequency of attendance and overall enjoyment using participants' actual, rather than estimated, attendance frequencies. The longitudinal approach also increases the likelihood of obtaining data from concerts which may not have received such predominantly high enjoyment ratings as the Cadogan Hall concert. Table 5.1 shows the number of classical performances the participants attended during the six-month longitudinal period and the mean of the overall enjoyment ratings allocated to each concert they attended (again, all ratings were on a 1-7 scale). Frequency of attendance at classical performances over the 6-month period was negatively correlated reasonably strongly with mean overall enjoyment ratings for the concerts attended ($\rho = -0.632$; $p = 0.037$). The scatterplot in Figure 5.4 shows a cluster of four participants who attended most infrequently around the highest mean overall enjoyment scores; suggesting that they operate on a selective basis, attending only performances that they

know they will enjoy. (However, as with all of the associations between variables discussed below, a significant correlation cannot be used to determine causation, and so the interpretations of the associations presented here are merely inferences.) When questioned about this trend, Isabelle (one of the participants who attended least frequently during the longitudinal stage) explained:

I definitely go to something where I have a bit more of an idea of what I'm going to see. So either yes it's the composer, or the piece itself. And then if it's something, well you normally have like three things [pieces]: if I don't know one of them, that's ok. I probably wouldn't go to something where I don't know all three pieces. [A Isabelle 6m]

TABLE 5.1 *Attender interviewees ranked by frequency of attendance at classical performances over the longitudinal period*

Participant	Number of classical performances attended over six months	Estimated frequency of attendance over a year ¹⁸	Mean of overall enjoyment ratings for all concerts attended (SD)
Maria	1	Once or twice a year	7.00 (0)
Isabelle Calum	2 2	Three or four times a year	7.00 (0) 6.50 (0.71)
Anna	3	Once every two months	6.67 (0.58)
Cathy Conrad James Angela Grace	9 10 14 17 19	Several times a month	5.11 (1.76) 5.70 (1.25) 6.43 (0.85) 5.00 (1.80) 5.95 (1.47)
Patrick Daniel	30 31	Once a week	6.03 (0.93) 5.74 (1.59)

The remaining participants who attended more frequently produced lower mean overall enjoyment ratings, with higher standard deviations, indicating greater variation in the enjoyment ratings they gave the concerts they had attended. There are several possible interpretations for the negative correlation between frequency of attendance

¹⁸ The appropriate frequency category for each participant was obtained by doubling the number of classical performances they attended during the six-month longitudinal period.

and mean overall enjoyment ratings: first, that attending with greater regularity means that concerts lose a sense of being a unique occasion and so overall enjoyment ratings are therefore less swayed by the physiological arousal induced by attending a live performance event (Thompson, 2006).

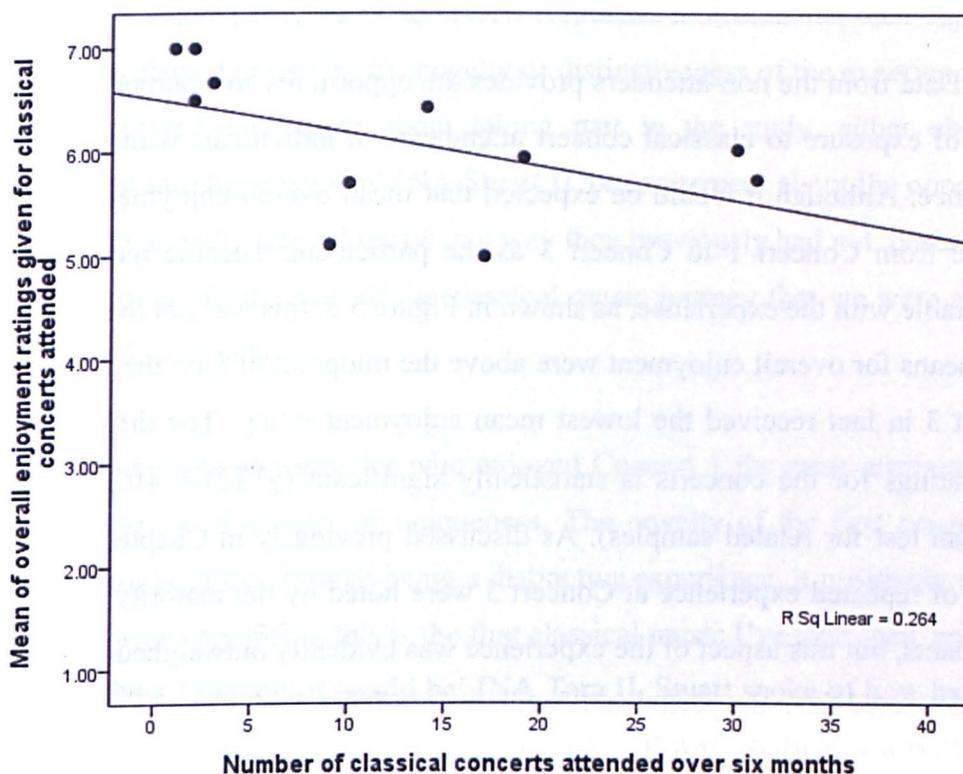


FIGURE 5.4 Scatterplot showing attender interviewees' frequency of attendance at classical performances over the longitudinal period against the mean of enjoyment ratings given for each concert attended

Second, attending more frequently provides a greater repertoire of experiences with which to compare the present one and therefore the likelihood of negative comparisons is increased. Third, as will be discussed later in section 5.6, the four participants who attended the most frequently all sought to seek out new works or performers in their concert choices: as they were therefore more adventurous, the likelihood of highly enjoying every concert thus diminishes because they take more risks in their attendance decisions. It is interesting to note, however, that the dots on the scatterplot (Figure 5.4) representing the two most frequent attenders (Patrick and Daniel) lie above the interpolation line: their mean enjoyment scores were higher than those of some participants who attended with intermediate frequency. In fact, a curve estimation procedure showed that a quadratic curve provided a better statistical fit for the data than

the linear function ($R^2 = 0.559$, a large effect; $p = 0.038$). The curved formed a U shape, indicating a rise in mean overall enjoyment ratings as frequency of attendance moves from 20 to 30 concerts over six months. One possible interpretation is that the two most frequent attenders attend so often that while still trying to seek new experiences, they are better informed about *which* experiences they will enjoy.

Data from the non-attenders provides the opportunity to examine the cumulative effects of exposure to classical concert attendance in individuals with very little prior experience. Although it would be expected that mean overall enjoyment ratings might increase from Concert 1 to Concert 3 as the participants became more familiar and comfortable with the experience, as shown in Figure 5.5, this was not the case. While all three means for overall enjoyment were above the midpoint of 4 on the 1-7 rating scale, Concert 3 in fact received the lowest mean enjoyment rating. The difference between mean ratings for the concerts is statistically significant ($\chi^2(2) = 10.571$; $p = 0.005$; Friedman test for related samples). As discussed previously in Chapter 4, the positive effects of repeated experience at Concert 3 were noted by the majority of non-attender participants, but this aspect of the experience was evidently outweighed by other factors which detracted from the participants' enjoyment of this final concert.

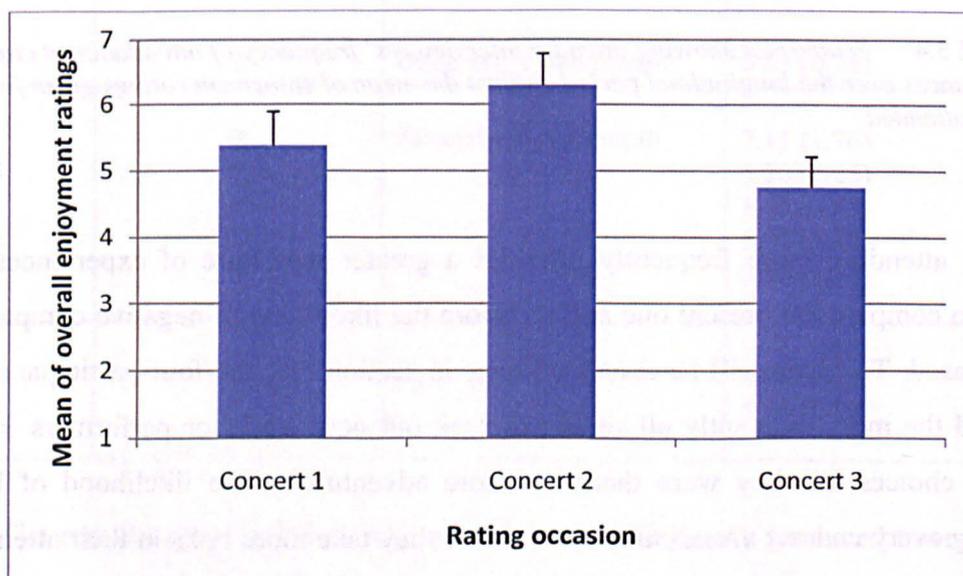


FIGURE 5.5 Bar chart showing non-attenders' mean overall enjoyment ratings for the three concerts attended in Study 1. Error bars represent 1 standard deviation.

It is also interesting that although Concert 1's programme contained ostensibly the least accessible works (the other two concert programmes comprised music from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, while all works in Concert 1 were written after 1900 and one was a world première), it still has a higher mean enjoyment rating than Concert 3, by which point the participants had amassed some experience of attending classical concerts. Some participants' interview responses indicated that their enjoyment of Concert 1 was shaped in part by the novelty or distinctiveness of the experience. Four participants expressed excitement about taking part in the study, either about the element of 'going into the unknown' [NA Stuart I], or excitement about the opportunity presented to engage with classical music in a way they previously had not, describing 'a sense of anticipation [at] the start of the classical music journey that we were about to embark on' [NA Dominic I].

Two participants in particular who enjoyed Concert 1 the most attributed their enjoyment to a sense of novelty or uniqueness. The novelty of the first concert was enjoyable for Tara because, through being a distinctive experience, it positively met her expectations: 'It was very much, this is the first classical music I've ever seen, and it did kind of fit with how I thought it would be' [NA Tara I]. Stuart spoke of how he 'really enjoyed the whole experience [of attending Concert 1]...it was exciting, it was different, it was new', and later described finding more difficulty engaging in the third concert, in part because 'the novelty had worn off from the first one' [NA Stuart I]. Evidently, the influence of order effects must therefore be considered, as these participants may have responded in a positive way to whichever concert they attended first. It is also likely that given the popularity of *The Night Shift* (Concert 2), Concert 3 (which the participants attended the next evening) might have received higher enjoyment ratings had it preceded Concert 2, or even if it had not followed Concert 2 in such quick succession.

Taken together, the findings from the questionnaire data, attender interviewees and the non-attenders suggests that frequency of attendance (or in the case of non-attenders, familiarity with concert experience) does not exert a major influence on a listeners' enjoyment of a concert. New audience members can enjoy the experience of attending a classical concert for the first time, while attender interviewees who attended concerts relatively infrequently (once every two months or less) over the longitudinal

period produced consistently high enjoyment ratings. The non-attender participants who enjoyed the aspect of novelty in Concert 1 particularly valued the distinctiveness of the classical concert as an experience, especially in comparison to the other cultural experiences in which they engage. It may be that existing concert-goers who attend relatively infrequently also value this aspect, deriving enjoyment from an experience that is not ‘everyday’. The next section examines whether familiarity with the concert venue, or a sense of being ‘at home’ within an event, exerts an effect on listeners’ enjoyment.

5.2 Familiarity with venue

Familiarity with Cadogan Hall as a venue received a mean rating of 4.14 (SD = 2.48) from the questionnaire responses.¹⁹ As Figure 5.6 shows, there were two modal responses: ratings of 1 (‘I am not at all familiar with the venue’) and 7 (‘I am very familiar with the venue’) each received 29% of responses to the question.

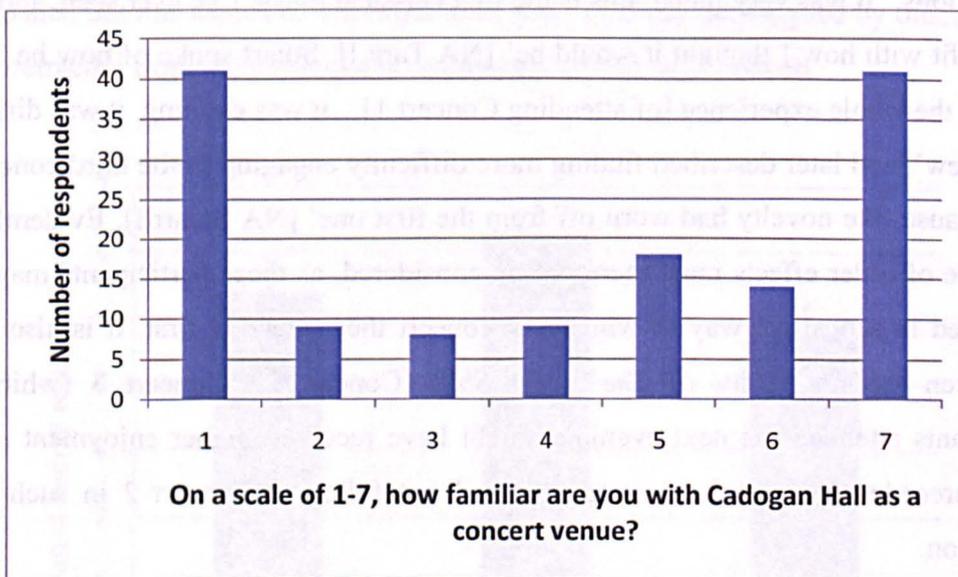


FIGURE 5.6 Bar chart showing distribution of venue familiarity ratings for Cadogan Hall

¹⁹As the notion of venue familiarity could be interpreted in a number of ways, respondents were also asked to indicate how many times they had attended concerts at Cadogan Hall in the previous twelve months. There was a strong positive correlation between the responses to this question and ratings for venue familiarity ($\rho = 0.866$, $p < 0.01$), showing that the question had been interpreted as intended.

However, there was no significant association between familiarity ratings for Cadogan Hall and overall enjoyment ratings for the concert ($\rho = 0.047$, $p = 0.590$), as the highest concentration of enjoyment scores of 6 and 7 fell at either end of the venue familiarity spectrum, on those who were visiting the venue for the first time and those who had visited on many previous occasions.

It is therefore unlikely that being familiar with the concert venue was a key determinant of audience members' enjoyment of the Cadogan Hall concert. Of the 102 responses to the question which asked respondents to explain the overall enjoyment rating they had given the concert, only two responses were related to a sense of familiarity with or belonging to the venue. These results therefore contrast with findings from Pitts and Spencer's (2008) case study of audience experience at the Music in the Round festival in Sheffield. They explain the audience's long-lasting loyalty to the festival using the concept of place attachment, whereby 'cognitive and emotional connections with a place are reinforced by positive memories of events that have occurred there' (ibid.: 235). Perhaps because Cadogan Hall was a relatively new concert venue, opening in 2004, those kinds of long-lasting positive memories had not yet been formed, especially for an audience that is likely to attend many other concert venues in London other than just Cadogan Hall. However, the findings reported here are more in line with those by Thompson (2007) in which being familiar with the concert venue received the second lowest rating of 22 possible variables that might determine enjoyment of a performance. As Pitts and Spencer (2008: 237) note, the Music in the Round festival audience is, in comparison to other classical music audiences 'perhaps more unusual in their loyalty to a specific event'.

Audience members' attendance decisions therefore seemed to be guided by other factors that took preference over venue loyalty. As Chapter 7 will show, a sense of belonging in the concert hall was still important for some participants but was not reliant on repeated attendance to one particular venue or concert series to be facilitated. Other aspects of concert venues also played stronger roles in defining audience experience than purely familiarity with the venue (these are explored further in Chapters 6 and 7). It seems likely that an audience member who has visited a venue a number of times will probably still like or dislike the same aspects that they identified on their first

visit, and that these factors play more of a role in determining their enjoyment of a performance, rather than their familiarity with the venue *per se*.

5.3 Familiarity with performers

As Figure 5.7 shows, the questionnaire respondents' mean familiarity ratings with the orchestra, soloists and conductor of the Cadogan Hall concert were all relatively low, falling below the rating scale's mid-point of 4. The mean ratings for the orchestra and the trumpet soloist exhibited the greatest variance. The difference between the four means is statistically significant ($\chi^2(3) = 137.62; p < 0.01$).

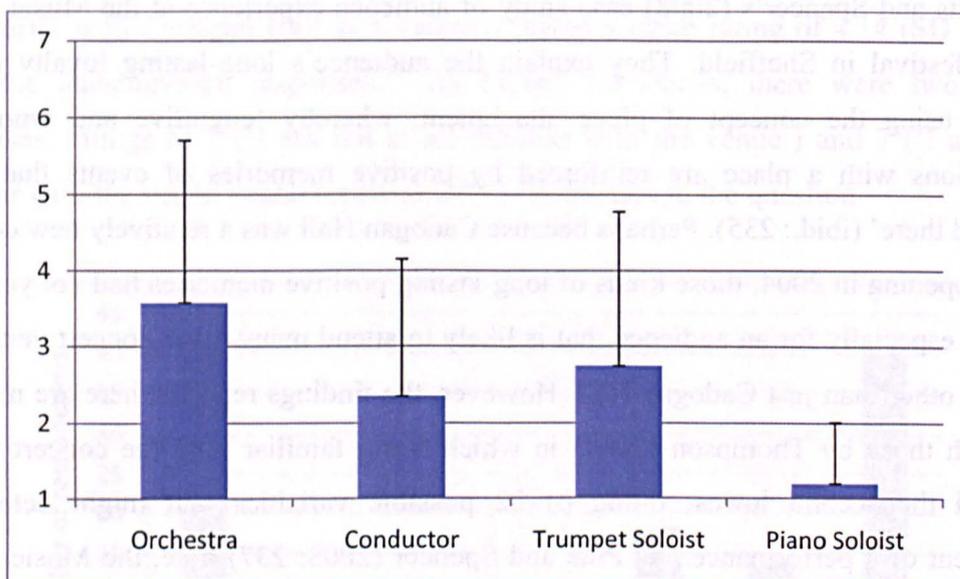


FIGURE 5.7 Bar chart showing mean familiarity ratings for the performers of the Cadogan Hall concert. Error bars represent 1 standard deviation

As mentioned in Chapter 3, several factors meant that key performers in the concert may not have been known by the audience: this concert marked the conductor's debut with the English Chamber Orchestra, while the piano soloist was a replacement and not billed on the original programme. 49% of respondents also gave the trumpet soloist the lowest familiarity rating of 1. Therefore it is not surprising that significant associations between enjoyment and performer familiarity were only evident for familiarity with the orchestra. Familiarity ratings for the orchestra and overall enjoyment ratings did not stand in a significant linear relationship ($\rho = 0.137, p = 0.116$) but a curve estimation

procedure showed that a cubic curve fitted the data the best ($R^2 = 0.067$, a medium effect; $p = 0.030$). As the scatterplot in Figure 5.8 shows, this curve indicates high enjoyment ratings from those who were not familiar with the orchestra at all, perhaps demonstrating the effects of a positive sense of surprise. The curve then dips with some familiarity, rising towards the higher ends of the familiarity scale, possibly suggesting the effects of knowing and liking the orchestra's style of playing.

Scatterplot showing familiarity ratings for orchestra and enjoyment ratings for the concert overall

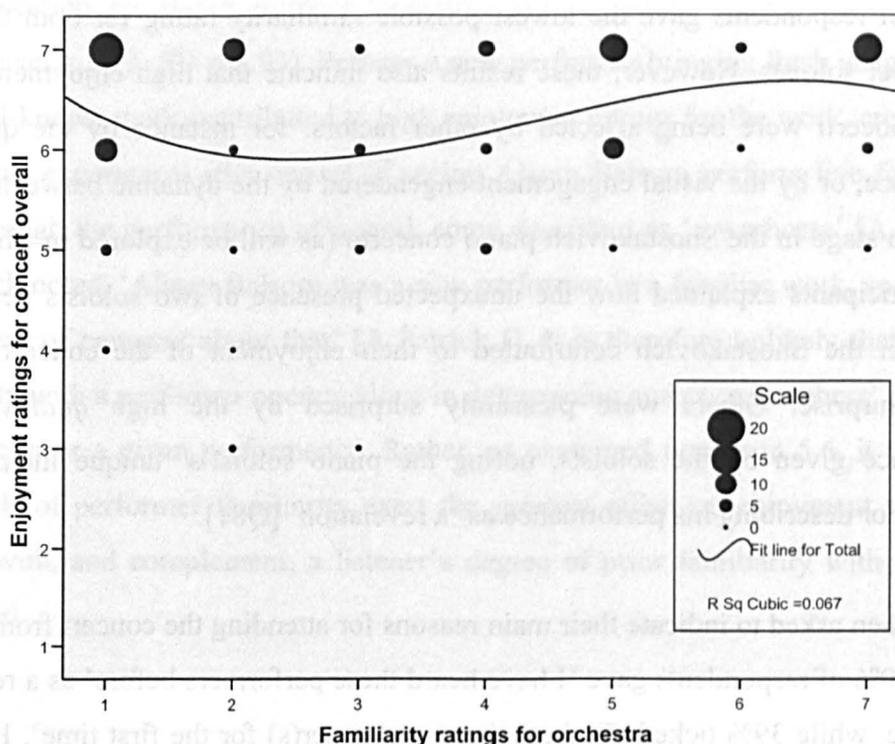


FIGURE 5.8 Scatterplot of familiarity ratings for the orchestra against overall enjoyment ratings for the Cadogan Hall concert

Analysis of possible associations between performer familiarity and enjoyment for each individual piece showed a correlation of low strength between familiarity ratings for the orchestra and enjoyment ratings for Stravinsky's Pulcinella Suite ($\rho = 0.174$, $p = 0.041$); there was also a near-significant correlation between familiarity with the orchestra and enjoyment ratings for the Haydn symphony ($\rho = 0.164$, $p = 0.060$). There were no other significant associations between performer familiarity and enjoyment ratings for the individual pieces. This may have been simply because the

other performers were relatively unfamiliar to the majority of respondents. However, it is also of note that the two pieces with significant or near-significant correlations between familiarity with the orchestra and enjoyment (the Stravinsky and Haydn symphony) were the two pieces in which only the orchestra performed. This suggests that those who were familiar with the orchestra enjoyed the repertoire in which the orchestra, rather than a soloist, commanded the audience's attention.

The lack of association between familiarity ratings for the soloists and enjoyment ratings for the concerti could merely be explained by the fact that the majority of respondents gave the lowest possible familiarity rating for both the piano and trumpet soloists. However, these results also indicate that high enjoyment ratings for the concerti were being affected by other factors: for instance by the quality of performance, or by the visual engagement engendered by the dynamic between the two soloists on stage in the Shostakovich piano concerto (as will be explored in Chapter 6). Some participants explained how the unexpected presence of two soloists performing together in the Shostakovich contributed to their enjoyment of the concert through positive surprise. Others were pleasantly surprised by the high *quality* of the performance given by the soloists, noting the piano soloist's 'unique intensity' [A Patrick I], or describing his performance as 'a revelation' [Q81].

When asked to indicate their main reasons for attending the concert from a list of options, 30% of respondents gave 'I have heard these performers before' as a reason for attendance, while 39% ticked 'To hear these performer(s) for the first time'. However, this emphasis on seeing 'new' performers was not so clearly represented when respondents were asked to explain the overall enjoyment rating they had given the concert. Only 6 of 123 respondents included levels of familiarity with the performers in their answers to this question. While one mentioned 'listening to emerging/young artists' [Q25] and another enjoyed live performance because 'you get to know the pieces and the artists' [Q87], the remaining four focused on 'watching star performers' [Q92] or 'seeing and hearing favourite soloists/orchestras' [Q76].

The Haydn trumpet concerto is worthy of further consideration here: Alison Balsom, the solo trumpeter, is a relatively young artist whom some of the audience had come to the concert specifically to see. But interestingly, while 49% (68 respondents)

gave the trumpeter the lowest possible performer familiarity rating, when asked about any ways in which they had previously encountered the performers, only 5 of these indicated that they were ‘aware of her but had never heard her work’ (three of these 68 respondents indicated they had heard her perform on radio and one owned recordings she had made). This suggests that many attended the concert without any prior knowledge or expectations of the trumpet soloist.²⁰ A new experience or not, it was undoubtedly a positive one: the Haydn concerto received the highest enjoyment rating of the four pieces, with a mean rating of 6.46 (SD = 0.88). Perhaps here, repertoire familiarity interacted with a lack of performer familiarity: as will be explored further in the next section, the Haydn trumpet concerto also received the highest mean familiarity rating (mean = 5.13; SD = 2.03). Perhaps a new performer bringing fresh insights to this very well-known work contributed to high enjoyment ratings for the work, creating new memorable experiences (the impact of seeing Alison Balsom perform live for the first time) through the performance of a work some described as ‘a warhorse’ [A Daniel I]. As Patrick noted, ‘Alison Balsom was a new performer in a familiar work, so there was an element of newness about that’ [A Patrick I]. It is therefore unlikely that levels of familiarity with a performer operate alone in determining audience members’ enjoyment of a concert or a given performance. Rather, as examined further in 5.6, it is possible that levels of performer familiarity exert the greatest effect on enjoyment when they interact with, and complement, a listener’s degree of prior familiarity with the music performed.

5.4 Repertoire familiarity

Quantitative data from questionnaire respondents

Figure 5.9 shows mean familiarity and enjoyment ratings for each piece performed in the Cadogan Hall concert (see Figure 3.11 for full details of the concert’s programme).

²⁰ Interestingly, 8 of the attender interviewees cited seeing Alison Balsom perform as major reason for attending the concert. One further attender participant cited the original pianist as main reason for going, meaning that 9 of the 11 were driven to attend partly because of a solo performer. In this respect the attender sub-group that I have obtained further data from is not representative of the questionnaire sample as a whole.

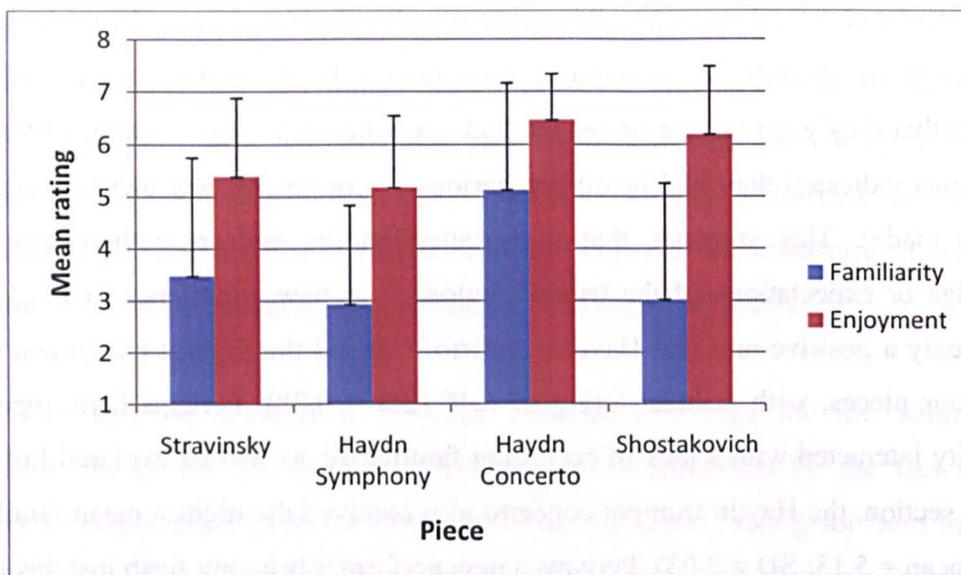


FIGURE 5.9 Clustered bar chart showing mean familiarity and enjoyment ratings for each piece in the Cadogan Hall concert. Error bars represent 1 standard deviation.

The differences between mean repertoire familiarity ratings for the four pieces were statistically significant ($\chi^2(3) = 106.322$; $p < 0.001$), as were differences between mean ratings for enjoyment for each piece ($\chi^2(4) = 111.747$; $p < 0.001$). The two concerti (Haydn and Shostakovich) held the two highest mean enjoyment ratings, even though the Haydn trumpet concerto held the highest mean familiarity rating, and the Shostakovich piano concerto held the second lowest mean familiarity rating.

All pieces except the Shostakovich exhibited significant linear correlations of low to moderate strength between familiarity and enjoyment ratings (Stravinsky: $\rho = 0.236$, $p < 0.01$; Haydn symphony: $\rho = 0.310$, $p < 0.001$; Haydn trumpet concerto: $\rho = 0.180$, $p = 0.035$), indicating a rise in enjoyment ratings as familiarity ratings increase. However, curve estimation procedures showed that a cubic curve was a better statistical fit than the linear function for the associations between familiarity and enjoyment for all pieces except the Haydn trumpet concerto (Stravinsky: $R^2 = 0.087$, a medium effect, $p = 0.007$; Haydn symphony: $R^2 = 0.156$, a large effect, $p < 0.001$; Shostakovich: $R^2 = 0.071$, a medium effect, $p = 0.027$).

Scatterplot showing enjoyment and familiarity ratings for Stravinsky Pulcinella Suite

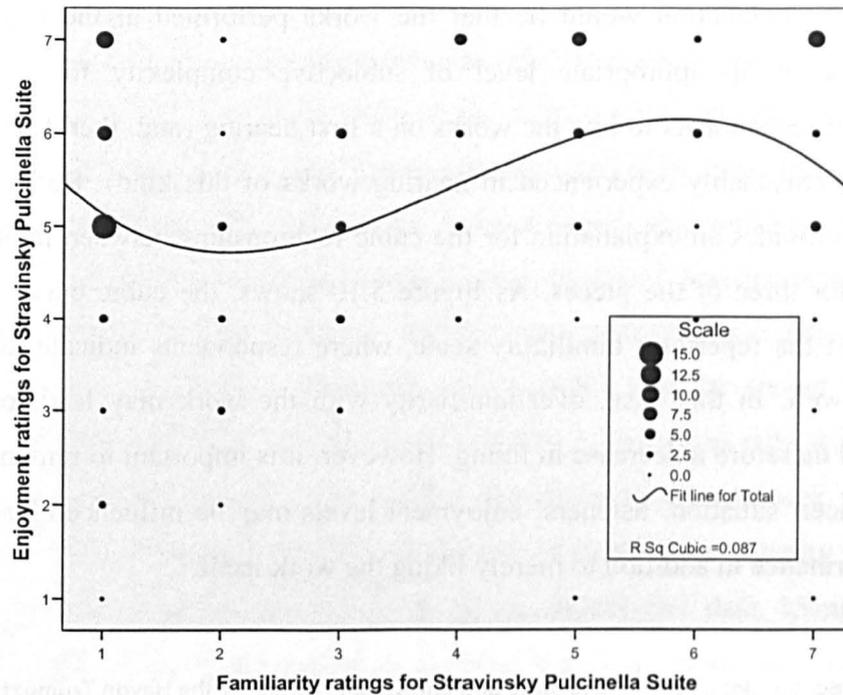


FIGURE 5.10 Scatterplot of familiarity against enjoyment for the Stravinsky

Surprisingly, all pieces received a large proportion of reasonably high enjoyment ratings from those with no prior knowledge of the works (i.e. who gave a familiarity rating of 1). As Table 5.2 shows, this trend was greatest in the ratings for the two concerti. In the Shostakovich, the highest concentration of *all* respondents (26%) rated 1 for familiarity yet 7 for enjoyment. The opposite was the case, however, for the Haydn trumpet concerto, where the greatest concentration of all respondents (65%) gave the highest rating of 7 on both the familiarity and enjoyment scales.

TABLE 5.2 Percentages of respondents with no prior familiarity giving enjoyment ratings above the rating scale's midpoint of 4

Piece	Percentage of respondents rating 1 for familiarity and ≥ 5 for enjoyment	Percentage of respondents rating 1 for familiarity and ≥ 6 for enjoyment
Haydn symphony	53%	40%
Stravinsky	77%	42%
Shostakovich	88%	76%
Haydn concerto	94%	65%

Considering these findings from the perspective of experimental aesthetics research, one explanation would be that the works performed at the Cadogan Hall concert were at an appropriate level of subjective complexity for a significant proportion of respondents to like the works on a first hearing (and, therefore, that these listeners are reasonably experienced in hearing works of this kind). Berlyne's (1971) theory also provides an explanation for the cubic relationships between familiarity and enjoyment for three of the pieces. As Figure 5.10 shows, the cubic curve dips at the upper end of the repertoire familiarity scale, where respondents indicate knowing the work very well. In this case, over-familiarity with the work may lead to decreased arousal, and therefore a decrease in liking. However, it is important to remember that in the live concert situation, listeners' enjoyment levels may be influenced by enjoyment of the performance in addition to merely liking the work itself.

Scatterplot showing familiarity and enjoyment ratings for the Haydn Trumpet Concerto

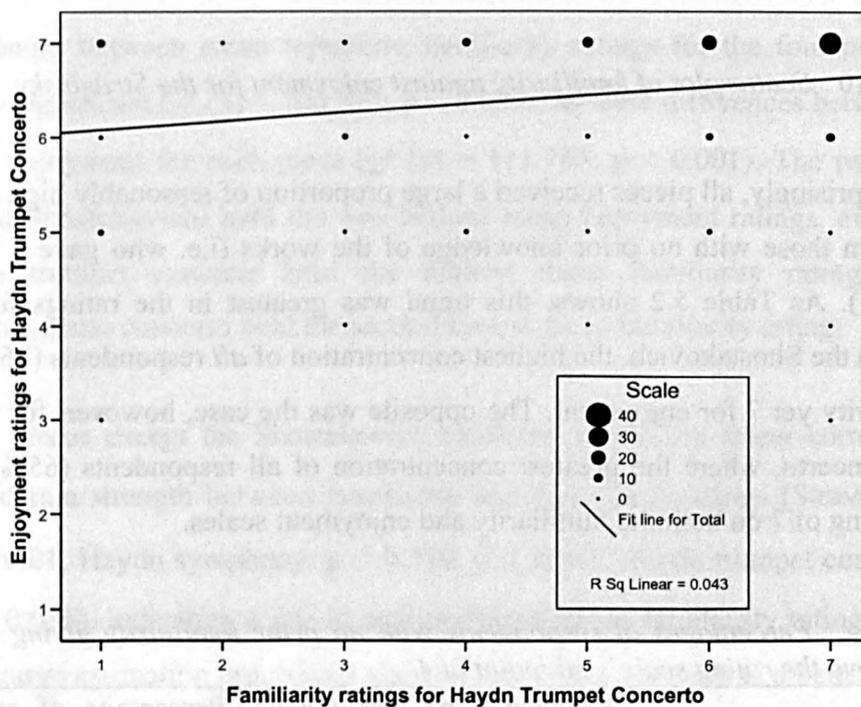


FIGURE 5.11 Scatterplot of familiarity against enjoyment for the Haydn concerto

The Haydn trumpet concerto, for example, was the only work in which a significant cubic association between familiarity and enjoyment was not evident, but as Figure 5.11 shows, it did exhibit a significant linear correlation. The interpolation line starts above the enjoyment rating of 6 for the lowest familiarity rating, suggesting a

degree of immediate accessibility for listeners new to the work. In comparison to the other works, there are no statistical indications of habituation (a diminished response to a familiar stimulus) in those allocating the concerto the highest familiarity rating. This is unexpected given that this piece received the highest mean familiarity rating of the works performed. One might expect that habituation would be more likely to occur in this context than with the other works that were generally less well-known. It may be that, as will be discussed in the following chapter, listeners' positive responses to the *performance* of the trumpet concerto eclipsed any potentially negative effects of knowing the work very well. Additionally, it is possible that the greater familiarity a listener has with the concerto, the greater their ability to recognise (and enjoy) the high quality of the performance. However, as the questionnaire did not seek respondents' ratings for liking of each piece or their perceptions of performance quality it is difficult to unpick these relationships more fully using the quantitative data. Using qualitative data, the effects of performance quality are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Quantitative data from non-attenders

The clustered bar chart in Figure 5.12 shows the non-attenders' mean familiarity and enjoyment ratings for the pieces performed across the three concerts in Study 2.

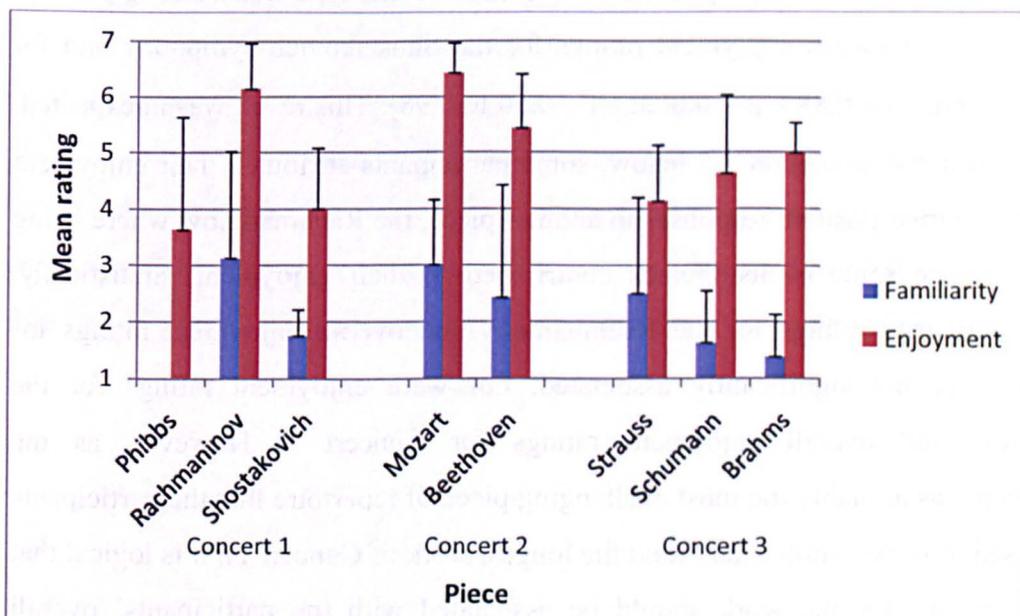


FIGURE 5.12 Clustered bar chart showing mean familiarity and enjoyment ratings for each concert attended by the non-attenders in Study 2. Error bars represent 1 standard deviation.

Although the two pieces with the highest mean enjoyment ratings (Mozart and Rachmaninov) also held the highest mean familiarity ratings, familiarity and enjoyment were not statistically associated in either of these works. As Chapter 4 has shown, the participants' enjoyment of the Mozart in particular was shaped by many factors other than familiarity. In fact, there were few associations between familiarity and enjoyment ratings across the set of eight pieces. The only piece to exhibit a significant linear association was the Strauss overture in Concert 3, which showed a strong positive association between the two variables ($\rho = 0.801$, $p = 0.017$; CI = 0.22 to 0.97).²¹ Additionally, while familiarity and enjoyment ratings for the Brahms symphony did not stand in a linear relationship, a curve estimation procedure showed that the data was a perfect statistical fit to a U-shaped quadratic curve ($R^2 = 1.000$, a large effect, $p < 0.001$). It is likely that this association is an anomaly caused by the small sample size: a majority of 6 participants gave Brahms a familiarity rating of 1 and an enjoyment rating of 5 and so the other responses mapped by the curve represented the ratings of only two other participants.

Further analysis was undertaken to determine if enjoyment ratings for each individual piece were associated with *overall* enjoyment ratings for the concert in which they were performed. The only significant association of this type was a strong positive linear correlation between enjoyment ratings for the Shostakovich symphony and for Concert 1 overall ($\rho = 0.889$, $p = 0.003$; CI = 0.50 to 0.98). This result was unexpected: as will be discussed in section 5.5 below, some participants attributed their enjoyment of Concert 1 to their positive responses to another piece, the Rachmaninov, where being able to recognise some of its themes contributed to their enjoyment. Statistically, however, familiarity ratings for the Rachmaninov and overall enjoyment ratings for Concert 1 were not significantly associated; nor were enjoyment ratings for the Rachmaninov and overall enjoyment ratings for Concert 1. However, as the Shostakovich was arguably the most challenging piece of repertoire that the participants were exposed to in the whole study (and the longest work of Concert 1), it is logical that enjoyment ratings for the work should be associated with the participants' overall enjoyment ratings for the whole concert: the five participants who gave the Shostakovich an enjoyment rating of 4 or less gave Concert 1 an overall enjoyment

²¹ Confidence intervals of 95% are provided where possible because of the small sample size of the non-attender group (Altman & Gardner, 1992). An interval which does not span zero indicates that the two variables are likely to be associated.

rating of 5, while the three participants who rated the Shostakovich 5 for enjoyment gave an overall enjoyment rating of 6.

The non-attender data therefore adds weight to the finding from analysis of the Cadogan Hall questionnaire data that low prior familiarity ratings do not preclude high enjoyment ratings. The next sections unpick respondents' beliefs about the ways in which repertoire familiarity influences their concert experiences, first considering the effects of the listening preparation task on the non-attender sample.

5.5 The effects of listening preparation and recognition on the non-attender sample

The effects of repertoire familiarity on the non-attenders' enjoyment of the music can be examined further by looking at whether the listening preparation task (outlined in section 3.2) undertaken by half of the sample exerted any effect on first, their familiarity ratings, and second, their enjoyment ratings (see Table 3.1 for each participant's listening preparation status). As Figure 5.13 shows, the listening preparation task did affect familiarity ratings: the group of LP participants produced higher mean familiarity ratings than the non-LP group for all 7 pieces included on the CDs provided (see Figure 3.4 for full programme details for Concerts 1 to 3).²² However, these differences were only statistically significant in ratings for the Beethoven overture (Concert 2; $U = 0$, exact $p = 0.029$, one-tailed) and the Schumann piano concerto (Concert 3; $U = 0$, exact $p = 0.018$, one-tailed). Differences between the two groups were near-significant in ratings for the Strauss overture (Concert 3; $U = 1.5$, exact $p = 0.054$, one-tailed) and Mozart piano concerto (Concert 2; $U = 0.5$, exact $p = 0.057$, one-tailed).

²² The CD for Concert 1 did not include the new work premiered (*Shruti* by Joseph Phibbs).

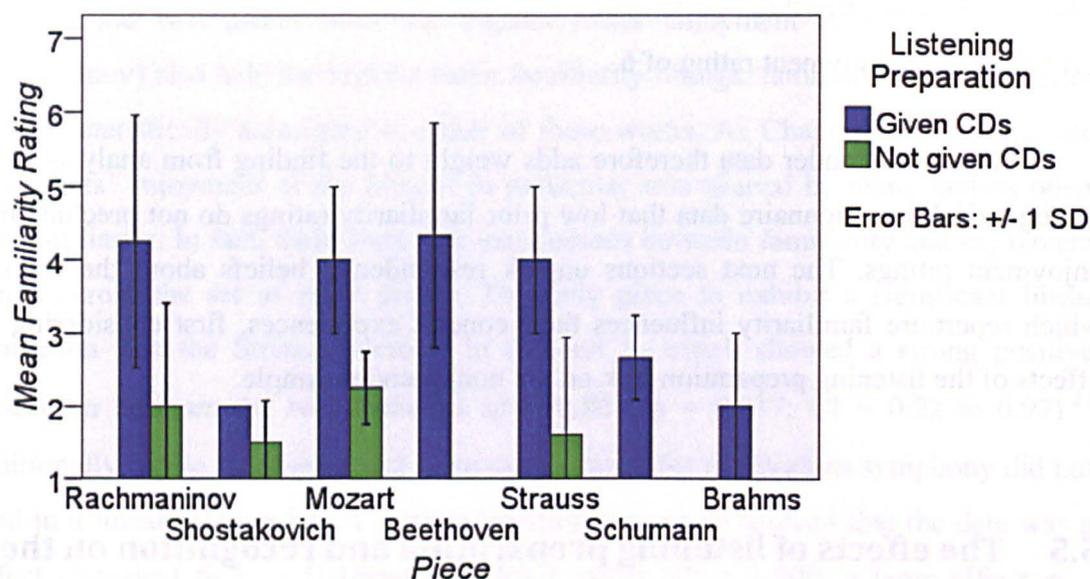


FIGURE 5.13 Clustered bar chart showing mean familiarity ratings for each piece from the LP and non-LP non-attender participants

While the listening preparation task did exert an effect on the LP participants' perceived familiarity, this did not result in statistical differences between the enjoyment ratings the LP and non-LP groups provided for each piece. As shown in Figure 5.14, the LP group produced higher mean enjoyment ratings than the non-LP participants for 4 of the 7 pieces for which ratings were obtained.²³ The lack of a significant difference in enjoyment ratings between the two groups is surprising given the strong empirical evidence for a mere exposure effect in music, whereby repeated exposure to a novel stimulus leads to an increase in liking (Peretz et al., 1998; cf. Huron, 2006).

Notably the two symphonies that the participants listened to over the course of the study (Shostakovich and Brahms) were the pieces in which the mean familiarity ratings from the two groups were the closest (see Figure 5.13). These two works were also the longest, raising the question of whether the listening preparation task was effective in increasing the LP participants' perceived familiarity with the longer works performed. Two LP participants (Stuart and Dawn) felt that the lengths of even the individual movements of classical works hindered their ability to become acquainted with the music from listening in advance:

²³ In addition, there were no significant differences between the overall enjoyment ratings for each concert provided by the LP and non-LP groups. The mean rating for the non-LP group was marginally higher than the mean LP rating for overall enjoyment of Concerts 1 and 3.

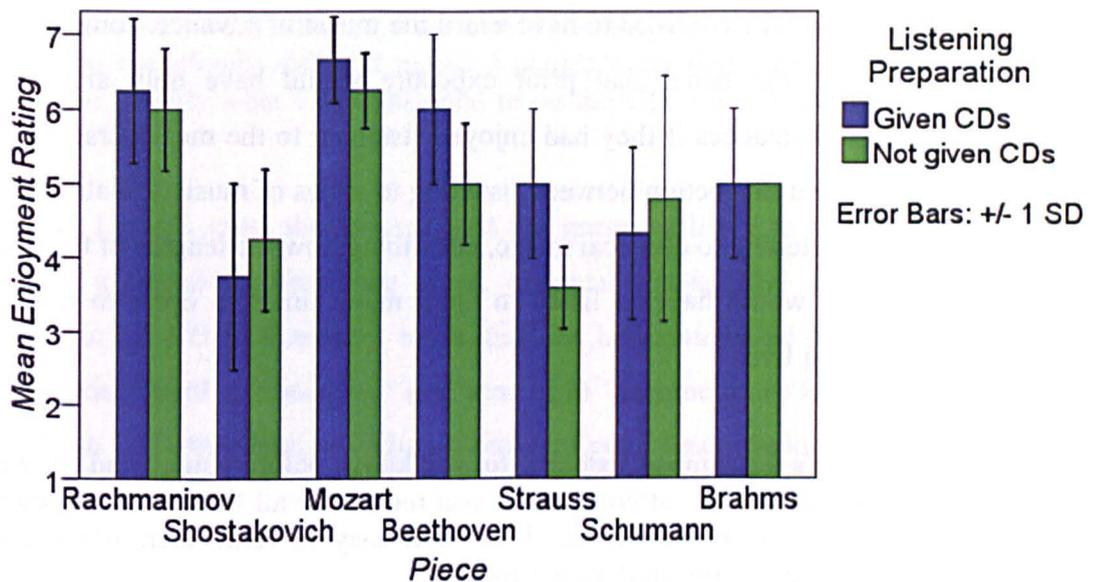


FIGURE 5.14 Clustered bar chart showing mean enjoyment ratings for each piece from the LP and non-LP non-attender participants

even though I've listened to it sort of several times, apart from the few really recognisable bits that probably people who haven't even heard the CDs would recognise [...] some of the songs are whatever, fifteen minutes long and so listening to it a few times it was impossible to remember them, so it was just as surprising as if I hadn't heard the CDs before. [...] But I think I would have had to listen to them a lot of times before I was able to remember, you know, most of the piece. [NA Stuart FG1]

Because of this difficulty, some of the participants concurred with Stuart that listening to the pieces only a few times in advance did not (or would not) provide an adequate level of familiarity. This problem was accentuated for the other two LP participants, Carla and Tara, both of whom noted difficulties finding time to listen to the recordings, especially as they did not own a portable music device (e.g. an mp3 player), and so could only listen to the CDs when at home.

Similarly, Stuart described a sense of obligation to complete the listening preparation task, again relating this difficulty in part to the length of the works:

I definitely sort of had to go out of my way to listen to them, I had to sort of set aside time... There was an element to them which was sort of a little bit arduous having to listen to them all the way through. [NA Stuart I]

When asked if they would have liked to have heard the music in advance, some non-LP participants expressed the belief that prior exposure would have only aided their enjoyment of the performances if they had enjoyed listening to the music first on disc. Emma (non-LP) made a distinction between listening to styles of music she already has an affinity with and listening to classical music, describing how the lengths of the pieces would mean that she would have to listen to them many times in order to reap any benefits when listening live:

I don't think it's the same as listening to, you know, before you go and see a pop concert you listen to the album just so you remember all the words so you can sing along. [...] [Classical music's] not that easy to remember, it's not that simple, it's more complicated. [NA Emma I]

One interpretation of Stuart and Emma's responses is that they are willing to prepare for concert attendance for other styles of music but when considering doing so for a classical concert, preparation is viewed in more negative terms as 'work'. This is understandable, given that they were asked to devote time to listen to music which they had no inclination towards – unlike music that they do have an emotional connection with, where listening in advance of seeing a live performance forms part of that performance ritual (Cavicchi, 1998). In addition, with popular styles of music they have the benefit of a cumulative exposure to – and thus schemata of – the music and its conventions, making new music they are exposed to within these styles easier to assimilate, remember and recognise (Meyer, 1967: 287).

Overall, all four LP participants were in agreement that listening in advance did not always provide an ability to recognise the music in live performance. They particularly noticed this in relation to the Shostakovich symphony in Concert 1, where Dawn and Stuart talked of *only* recognising the quotations from Rossini's *William Tell Overture* – 'I remember bits of it, because I remember the old you know "de dede de dede de DE DE"' [NA Dawn FG1] – despite having listened to it more than once. While some were merely surprised about this, two participants in particular (Carla and Dawn) interpreted their lack of recognition as an almost personal failing. Carla described her lack of recognition, as well as being surprising, as 'a bit embarrassing', finding that despite listening to each CD at least once she did not recognise any of the music she heard in the concerts:

I don't know whether it's my music memory or whatever. Because it's like it was completely different music. I couldn't say that what I have listened today was exactly what I have listened to on the CD. I don't link it at all. [NA Carla FG1]

In Dawn's case, the provision of the music to listen to in advance seemed to reinforce a perceived ignorance about classical music. She spoke of consciously listening to the CD of Concert 1 more than she had anticipated because she found the Shostakovich 'hard to remember' and wanted to 'become more familiar before I went' [NA Dawn I]. Rather than providing a sense of confidence through prior exposure and knowledge, the listening preparation instead instilled a sense of pressure:

It was useful, but I think it was also...it also kind of made you think 'Oh gosh, I don't know this piece.' 'I know that I don't know this piece; I'm going to a concert, I don't know the piece, and I can't possibly get to know it that well in the short time I've got before I go.' Because obviously, you know, when you like pieces, you find pieces you like – you play them continually over a long period of time and you get to know them. It becomes subconscious, almost...what you know about them. So I think in some ways, listening to pieces I didn't know didn't make me look forward to it so much. Yeah, that's probably a very ignorant way of seeing it. [NA Dawn I]

By increasing Dawn's awareness of her *lack* of knowledge of the music performed, it is plausible that the listening preparation task heightened negative perceptions about her competence as a listener. The inclusion of the task in the study may have reinforced (or even instigated) participants' expectations that classical audiences know the music well (discussed previously in Chapter 4), especially now that they have an idea of how many hearings would be necessary to really be familiar with a work on the scale of the Shostakovich symphony.

In addition, Dawn's quote further reiterates the implications of the limited ecological validity of the listening preparation task. Dawn notes the difference between the organic process by which she usually gets to know a piece of music (from initial hearing and liking, to repeated listening, to familiarity) and the artificial nature of the task, whereby she is required to listen in a relatively short space of time to works that she does not necessarily like on first hearing. Szpunar, Schellenberg, and Pliner (2004) ran three experiments on the effects of exposure on liking and memory, each using stimuli with a different level of ecological validity. They found that 'repetition led to greater liking as well as increased recognition' in the more ecologically valid contexts

(*ibid.*: 378). By the standard of Szpunar et al.'s experimentally controlled stimulus contexts (which ranged from short tone sequences to 15-second excerpts from orchestral recordings), the listening preparation task was highly ecologically valid. The LP participants did recognise its artificiality, however, and so it is possible that, in line with Szpunar et al.'s results, liking and recognition may have increased if there had been a more ecologically valid means of providing the LP participants with prior exposure (cf. Hargreaves & North, 2010).

Because of the time constraints of the task, the average number of occasions on which the participants listened to each CD decreased as the study progressed: the majority listened to the CD of Concert 1 three times, Concert 2 twice, and Concert 3 once. Tara, who undertook the fewest hearings, described most of her listening taking place 'the night before all of them' [NA Tara I].²⁴ The participants' experiences of the listening preparation task thus resonate with Meyer's (1967) assertion that...

Because listening to music is a complex art involving sensitivity of apprehension, intellect, and memory, many of the implications of an event are missed on first hearing. For to comprehend the implications of a musical event fully, it is necessary to understand the event itself clearly and to remember it accurately. Hence it is only *after* we come to know and remember the basic, axiomatic events of a work – its motives, themes, and so on – that we begin to appreciate the richness of their implications. It is partly for these reasons that a good piece of music can be reheard and that, at least at first, enjoyment increases with familiarity. (Meyer, 1967: 46)

Perhaps for these reasons, the participants' perceived familiarity with the music (and its perceived accessibility) was also mediated by whether they recognised the music when *first* listening to the CDs. Pieces they did not instantly recognise on the first hearing were perceived as music they 'didn't know', even after repeated hearings. In Stuart's case, not being able to recognise a piece when first listening to the CD seemed to be an overriding factor in the degree to which he perceived the music to be accessible and relevant to him:

The third CD I think I enjoyed least; I didn't like the music as much and there was very little of it which I recognised or had heard before. It wasn't very easy

²⁴ For all pieces, there were no significant differences between enjoyment ratings for each listening occasion and the rating provided at the concert. In the Rachmaninov, Beethoven and Mozart, all LP participants gave their highest ratings to the live performance. But in some works, enjoyment ratings *decreased* from recorded hearings to the live event, counter to Meyer's suggestion above and to the mere exposure theory.

to listen to, I didn't find much that was easy to enjoy. [...] Yeah, it was less accessible [...] I suppose the classical concerts were the first time I'd gone to see something which, whilst I'd listened to the CDs, it wasn't something I'd listened to before, before that, you know. I tend to go to gigs of things I know of, and like. [NA Stuart I]

This finding is concordant with Peretz et al.'s (1998: 898) identification of a preference bias for melodies that participants already knew prior to testing, in comparison with novel melodies which participants were exposed to repeatedly in the experimental situation.

Three LP participants did recognise Rachmaninov's Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini when first listening to the recordings, and with this piece they cited anticipation as a positive effect of the familiarity developed through the listening preparation task. They talked of being 'genuinely excited' [NA Stuart FG1] about hearing it live, describing how knowing 'how it was going to start' and 'what was possibly going to happen next' [NA Tara FG1] increased their enjoyment of the performance. Combined with the primacy effect of being the first work that they would have heard on the first CD, this aspect may have been accentuated by prior exposure. Participants in both groups described recognising two distinct 'hooks' in the Rachmaninov: the theme (which most recognised as the television theme tune to *The South Bank Show*) and Variation 18 (which has appeared in various film soundtracks). Notably, the theme occurs within thirty seconds of the opening of the piece, meaning that the LP participants would have heard something they knew almost immediately on their first hearing of the work. The appearance of Variation 18 later on provided the LP participants with a degree of schematic geography with which to approach the work, meaning that from the beginning of the live performance they were expecting – and looking forward to – this later recognisable section (Meyer, 1956). Similarly, three of the non-LP participants felt that familiarity would have heightened their enjoyment, precisely because prior exposure to a piece 'acts as a bit of a mental guide' [NA Toby I]. For those in the LP group, therefore, this unexpected recognition on their first hearing may have helped create an enjoyable first experience of encountering the entire piece, engendering positive expectation about subsequent hearings and the live performance (Huron, 2006: 327).

Non-LP participants' responses to unexpected recognition

Despite not being asked to purposely listen to the works in advance, most of the non-LP group coincidentally recognised some sections of music during at least one of the concerts. In Concert 2, some had a general sense of familiarity with the Mozart piano concerto but without being able to identify specifically where they had heard it previously, describing how 'because Mozart sort of is so ubiquitous...you feel like even if you haven't heard that particular piece, sometimes you feel like you've heard that [before]' [NA Dominic I]. In Concert 1 they all directly recognised small sections of the Rachmaninov and/or Shostakovich. In general, recognition was viewed positively because it put them at ease within the concert situation and provided confidence. Recognition appeared to instil a sense of emotional security in the non-LP participants: '[it's] like a sort of comfort toy...It was quite a nice feeling, like thinking "oh I recognise that from so and so" or "oh I've heard that before"' [NA Rachel I]. As the non-LP group had no reason to assume that they would know the music, recognition exerted stronger positive effects on these participants compared to their LP counterparts, whose expectations about how much of the music they would recognise were frequently not met, despite (particularly in relation to Concert 1) having invested time in getting to know the music.

Unexpectedly, the effects of recognition were not exclusively positive: two of the non-LP participants described recognition of the music as a distracting feature, rather than finding that it increased their engagement in the performance. Kerry, for example, didn't 'know whether it enhanced my enjoyment. [...] I think I spent more time trying to work out where I'd heard it before, rather than going "ok, yeah, this is quite nice to have heard it"' [NA Kerry I]. In Toby's experience, meanwhile, recognition 'actually cheapens it slightly, because you just end up thinking "Ah, it's a Direct Line advert" or whatever it might be' [NA Toby I]. Both of these accounts highlight a difficulty for non-attenders, whose only prior exposure to classical music may have been through popular media and music used in advertisements (where it is re-appropriated, creating new meanings and associations, as Toby demonstrates). Recognition perhaps reinforces their perceived limited experience, highlighting a disparity between their levels of knowledge and exposure to classical works, and the greater depth of knowledge that they assume other audience members possess (discussed in Chapter 4). This seemed to be the case for Rachel, who describes her

positive surprise at recognising some of the Rachmaninov, but stresses the ‘low-art’ setting from which she assumes she has encountered it previously, demonstrating a degree of tension between the positive effects of recognition and her perceived level of knowledge:

When that bit came on [Variation 18 of the Rachmaninov Rhapsody], I was like ‘Oh! Is that what it is’ [laughter] ‘Oooh!’ [...] I don’t know whether it was just a surprise thinking ‘Oh, I recognise this’. Like because apart from that thing I don’t know very many...er...many tunes or anything. I mean listening to this one, I was like ‘Oh, I have heard that before’. But as you say it’s probably off some...popular culture show. [NA Rachel FG1]

Perhaps because of this tension between recognition and knowledge, Dominic valued being able to assimilate new information from the context provided during the concert and then identify particular elements of the music during the performance, rather than focusing on the effects of direct aural recognition *per se*:

I do love, and again it probably comes back to this familiarity thing, but being able to read about a piece before the music starts, and then actually spotting it, again you give yourself brownie points if you spot that, you know, this is where this movement cuts off and this movement starts, or this is this particular little bit that means this to the composer or something. And, I guess in the same way if a presenter says ‘watch out for this’, and you recognise this, I think again you just give yourself a pat on the back. [NA Dominic I]

It is plausible that increased confidence through this form of recognition lends a degree of perceived validity to Dominic’s presence in the audience, confirming his ability to assimilate knowledge and learn about the music, and therefore validating his status as someone who belongs in the concert hall, rather as an ‘ignorant’ outsider. This process therefore holds the potential to make clear to new audience members that while audience members’ knowledge about classical music may at first appear ‘hidden’ or ‘exclusive’, it is not in fact entirely unobtainable, and can be cultivated through repeated experience and effective provision of context.

5.6 The effects of repertoire familiarity on the listening experience of concert attenders

As previously noted in section 5.4, questionnaire respondents' familiarity ratings for each piece in the Cadogan Hall concert were relatively low, with mean ratings for three of the four pieces falling below the scale's mid-point of 4 (see Figure 5.9 above). Considering that the non-attender LP participants rated four of the seven pieces they listened to in advance with a mean familiarity rating of 4 or *above*, it appears that in the case of the Cadogan Hall concert at least, classical audience members did not exhibit the degree of repertoire familiarity that the non-attenders generally assumed. It is important not to place too much emphasis on this comparison between attenders' and non-attenders' familiarity ratings, however, as their conceptions of what constitutes being very familiar with a classical work are likely to differ.

Unlike the non-attender LP participants, the concert attenders may not have made a deliberate attempt to prepare specifically before attending a live performance. Only 9% of the Cadogan Hall questionnaire respondents said that they had prepared in advance for attending the concert, most frequently by listening to recorded versions of one or more works in the programme. Additionally, 12% of respondents had attended the performance's pre-concert talk, although a considerable number indicated that they had not been aware that it had been taking place. There were no significant differences in familiarity or enjoyment ratings between those who had and had not prepared in advance for attending the concert, or between those who did and did not attend the pre-concert talk.

The attender interviewees held mixed views on preparation: some found listening to the works in advance useful, but others put the greatest emphasis on the experience of hearing the music live (discussed in detail in Chapter 6). These participants would only listen in advance if they were going to see something completely new, to 'get a feel of what the style was' [A Daniel I]:

I don't think I sort of practise in advance, no. And prepare myself. I might if it was something really unusual and I thought I wasn't going to get the best out of it, but then I think it makes most impact when you first see and hear it performed, so I'm not sure that it would help enormously. [A Grace I]

There therefore appears to be some discrepancy between the specific knowledge of the works that some of the non-attenders perceive other audience members possess, and the lesser importance that attenders place on knowing the particular works in the concert programme. As will be discussed, this is most likely because the concert attenders can approach listening to works which are new to them against a backdrop of knowledge of a particular composer or style. This sentiment was evident in attender questionnaire responses to Question 24, which asked them to describe the experience of going to a classical concert to someone who has never attended one before. 10% of respondents stressed that new attenders should familiarise themselves with classical music before attending a live performance to attain some degree of 'background' knowledge and exposure:

People who are not into classical music would not enjoy it. You have to have some understanding of classical music, or the ability to appreciate it. If you listen to classical music on CDs at home, or are studying music at school/college/uni, or play an instrument, then definitely go to one. [Q43]

This would depend on whether they had ever heard any classical music before – If they had I would say that by attending a live concert one will feel more 'involved' in the music. If they know nothing about classical music I might suggest they listened to some accessible pieces before making the effort to attend. [Q64]

Continuing from the attender interviewees' thoughts on preparation above, however, the most frequent response type to Question 24 (22%) emphasised the appeal of seeing *live* classical music, with some responses indicating that the live experience might compensate for a lack of familiarity or knowledge:

If you are at all interested in classical music, please go and hear a live orchestra and you will never regret that you did so. [Q74]

So, when considering what shapes their enjoyment of concert experience, do concert attenders attribute importance to familiarity with the music performed? Table 6.1 in the following chapter provides a summary of responses to Question 18, which asked respondents to provide an explanation for the overall enjoyment rating they had given the Cadogan Hall concert; and Question 19, which asked 'In your opinion, what makes the experience of attending a classical concert enjoyable?'. The most frequent responses to Question 18 related to the quality of performance (66%) and to a sense of

energy, enthusiasm or commitment from the performers (17%; these aspects are explored in Chapter 6). Next, however, was a cluster of response types relating to familiarity with (11%) and novelty of (13%) the works performed. In Question 19, familiarity with (9%) or novelty of (7%) the music were mentioned less frequently than a number of other aspects of the concert experience, including performance quality, live experience, and the presence of visual stimuli (again, these are discussed in Chapter 6).

Effects of familiarity

40% of the questionnaire respondents indicated that one of their reasons for attending the concert at Cadogan Hall was ‘to hear pieces I know and like’. A small proportion who wrote about familiarity in their responses to Questions 18 and 19 focused on the excitement of hearing works they knew well in the context of live performance (a sense of excitement from live listening is considered in more detail in Chapter 7). This exception withstanding, few respondents or attender interviewees articulated clearly why listening to familiar works was enjoyable. One reason is already evident in the words ‘know *and like*’. That enjoyment, familiarity and liking should be intertwined seemed self-evident to some respondents (cf. Thompson, 2006):

We usually always thoroughly enjoy concerts at Cadogan Hall. We choose music and performers we like very much. [Q137]

We are creatures of habit let’s call it, because we enjoy listening to and watching the playing of pieces that we know well. We’re not all that adventurous in terms of finding a lot of new pieces to listen to. [A Conrad I]

In one way, then, it is difficult to distinguish a discussion of the effects of familiarity on enjoyment from a discussion of *taste*: people go concerts to hear music they like; and in order to like the works they must, at least to some degree, *know* them. This is especially true when considering the effects of repertoire familiarity on attendance decisions, as opposed to considering detailed accounts of the underlying phenomenological experience of listening to familiar music.

Few such accounts were obtained from the attender interviews. The intrinsic enjoyment of listening to a familiar (and liked) work might seem so obvious that participants did not feel the need to justify *why* the experience should be enjoyable. Huron’s (2006) work suggests that familiarity can be inherently pleasurable (although too much familiarity can also lead to boredom, as will be discussed below). With

familiarity we are able to make predictions about what we will hear next: accurately predicting musical events leads to a prediction response which ‘serves the biologically essential function of rewarding and reinforcing those neural circuits that have successfully anticipated the ensuing events’ (Huron, 2006: 140). Moreover, while not all music is inherently predictable, with familiarity we can learn to ‘expect the unexpected’, and therefore reap a positively-valenced prediction response even from music which violates expectations on a first hearing (ibid.: 365).

A more specific line of questioning in the follow-up attender interviews might have obtained more detailed accounts on the effects and functions of repertoire familiarity. The participants were asked to describe how their live and recorded listening interact, and in relation to the Cadogan Hall concert, were asked ‘Do you think that knowing some/most/all of the music had any effect on your enjoyment of the concert?’ – rather than being asked to articulate the effects of familiarity more generally. Responses to the question on the effects of familiarity on enjoyment at the Cadogan Hall concert again assert that familiarity is not merely arbitrary – it is reliant on taste, which also shapes enjoyment:

Yes, most certainly. On the other hand you pre-select don’t you, you know, you have chosen those works because you know you love them. And therefore you have probably heard them quite a lot, and familiarity does help I think. [A Grace I]

I always hate that question because there’s really no way to know. Because if I didn’t know the music then how would I know that not knowing it could have affected my enjoyment? So, and it’s not like I can not know the music now that I know it. [...] There’s very little orchestral music out there that I’m not at least vaguely familiar with. So I can’t really answer that one. [A Anna I]

As familiarity as a variable cannot be isolated, then, it is difficult to ascertain its effects. This is especially true of attenders with considerable exposure to classical music, like Anna, where some degree of familiarity with most of the orchestral oeuvre is the norm, meaning that familiarity is not a primary motivation for attendance. This perhaps explains the way that the non-attenders seemed able and more willing to articulate the influence of familiarity or recognition on their concert experiences (describing effects of knowing what to expect on their emotional responses, for example). From the non-attenders’ perspective, it is novelty, rather than familiarity, that is the norm. So when

recognition occurs it is distinct, and its effects can be more easily attributed. Following this logic, for attenders who possess considerable prior exposure to classical music, it may be that the effects of *novelty* are easier to identify and to discuss.

Effects of novelty

Aspects of novelty played an important role in the attendance decisions of most of the attenders. For Patrick and Daniel in particular, novelty and discovery were central to the purpose of concert-going; a desire to ‘seek new things’ was an important part of their identities as concert-goers and listeners:

Do you think knowing the works had any effect on your enjoyment of the [Cadogan Hall] concert?

Erm, well I like to think not so, because I rather like going to new music too. And I’m looking for something new to enjoy, and something new to inform, and therefore new music is an interest to me. And old music is, it’s fine you know, you know a piece, you enjoy it and it’s nice. But the interest is in finding, is in being exposed to something fairly new. And of course you weren’t exposed to something terribly new in that particular concert. [A Daniel I]

I used to do a seminar with Felix Apprahamian, he was a critic of *The Sunday Times* years ago. And he said that music lovers can be divided into the ones who seek out new experiences and the ones who don’t. And I am definitely someone who seeks out new experiences. So I do go to things that are unfamiliar and I go and hear new works and new performers. [A Patrick I]

As noted earlier in this chapter, Patrick and Daniel were the two attender interviewees who attended classical performances most frequently during the longitudinal period, attending on average at least once a week. Their desire for seeking novelty – especially within the context of frequent concert attendance – is perhaps related to what Huron (2006: 268) has identified as an ‘extraordinary repetitiveness’ inherent in music: both within and across individual works. While Huron theorizes that this repetition contributes to our pleasure in listening to music (through the limbic reward effects of being able to approximately predict what will happen next), he also considers the negative effects of habituation in individuals with considerable exposure to music listening. Meyer (1967: 48) notes similar effects, writing that ‘the better we know a work, the more difficult it is to believe in, to be enchanted by, its action’.

Most of the other attenders sought an element of newness in some of their concert experiences, but this was often less through seeking completely new composers

or styles and more through seeking to hear works by composers (or in styles) with which they were familiar and knew they liked:

I think I have worked out what makes a good live event for me: it is a composer and/or genre that I am familiar with – but a new to me work – or one I haven't experienced live before. [A Angela S9]

In this sense, novelty is experienced against a backdrop of prior exposure and knowledge: there is a degree of underlying familiarity, even though the work itself may be new, perhaps meaning that new works can be easily assimilated and understood using existing schemata. This situation was evident when asking Grace what had appealed to her about the programme of the Cadogan Hall concert: she answered that it was 'partly because of the Shostakovich, which I knew I would adore' [A Grace I]. Existing familiarity with a composer or style therefore enables a concert attender to make informed choices about new works to hear, minimising the risk of not enjoying a concert's programme.

Additionally, background (but not specific) familiarity reduces the chance of high expectations about a work not being met. Isabelle suggests that because she is familiar with Shostakovich and Stravinsky but did not know the specific works by these composers that were performed in the Cadogan Hall concert, she was 'more open-minded' due to not having 'any preconception of what it would be like' [A Isabelle I]. This situation therefore alleviates the risk of being disappointed by a performance of a work that one does know and like. Perhaps a key element of seeing unknown works by familiar composers is the presence of confined risk: there is an element of surprise and unexpectedness but this occurs within the security of knowledge (or schema) of a composer's style (cf. Huron, 2006; Meyer, 1967). A longitudinal survey entry by Angela exemplifies this combination of familiarity and novelty: in her description of attending a Handel opera that she did not know ('love Handel and hadn't heard this opera before') one of her reasons for enjoying the performance highly was 'and of course I didn't know what was coming next' [A Angela S4].

Concert attendance was also viewed by some participants as a means of increasing their background familiarity or knowledge (although for others, notably Calum, this was achieved primarily through building a library of recordings). Patrick's

attendance decisions were particularly driven by composers' anniversaries, which he saw as an unmissable opportunity to immerse himself in a composer's oeuvre, learning about and hearing rarely performed works. The participants varied in the degree to which they saw themselves as 'knowledgeable' about classical music and the degree to which they *ought* to be knowledgeable – Angela here describes how her attendance decisions are based around her levels of knowledge with the works:

And where instrumental music is concerned then I will go, I'll choose it on the basis of something I want to know better, and something I jolly well ought to know. And either, you know I might discover something I think is utterly wonderful, or I might realise that 'No, I was quite right not to go to that!' [laughs]. [A Angela I]

In some senses, it therefore seems that while the non-attenders felt a moral obligation to *like* all classical music, some of the attenders felt a degree of obligation to constantly increase their personal repertoire of works with which they are familiar: as if not knowing given work or style could be interpreted as a personal failing. Cathy (a brass teacher) described how her attendance decisions were mostly motivated by seeing brass ensembles, or particular brass solo performers (like trumpeter Alison Balsom), but stated 'I suppose I shouldn't be like that, I should go and check out completely different things, but I don't....I hone in on brass basically' [A Cathy I]. Even Maria, who superficially seemed unconcerned about concert attendance as a function of an accumulation of knowledge, was slightly self-deprecating about her attitude in this respect ('I think for me I'd much rather enjoy the music than really know who composed it or who was playing it. I know that sounds lame, but that's just me') [A Maria I]. Interestingly, however, she still did perceive in classical concerts a valuable opportunity to be exposed to works and performers she did not yet know:

that's why I enjoy going to concerts more and actually *do* try to pay attention a little bit more, because I think sometimes it would be nice to have a point to reference. [...] sometimes I think it is nice to hear different interpretations of things, and know them and *be* aware. [...] I guess essentially build up your repertoire of...you know 'I've heard that piece by these people, and this orchestra, and the same piece by this orchestra'. [...] So I guess it's really just kind of experiencing new things. [A Maria I]

In this case, novelty is valued because hearing something for the first time leads to familiarity and knowledge, informing future listening experiences. So there are at least

two functions of seeing works that are personally new: first, the excitement and surprise of ‘not knowing what will happen next’, and second, being able to increase personal repertoires of works or styles that *are* known.

Combinations of novelty and familiarity

A significant proportion of questionnaire responses which mentioned novelty described it in conjunction with familiarity, noting, for example ‘the warmth of familiar favourite pieces and the excitement of appreciating unfamiliar works’ [Q76]. 16% of responses to Question 18 (which asked respondents to explain the enjoyment rating they had given the Cadogan Hall concert) mentioned the combination of familiar and unfamiliar pieces in the programme, appreciating the ‘mixture of loved and familiar with new and interesting’ [Q99]. More broadly, 72% of respondents indicated that one of their reasons for attending the concert was because ‘the programme appeals to me’, although typical comments noting the ‘imaginative juxtaposition of works’ [Q72] did not specifically relate to the combination of familiarity and novelty.

Most of the attender interviewees expressed a preference for the compromise of a mixed programme containing some works they knew and others they did not, saving at least one work as a ‘novelty’ [A Angela I] or ‘surprise’ [A Isabelle I].²⁵ It could be argued that this type of programme therefore serves the dual purpose of increasing personal repertoires but also, through familiarity, confirming the attender’s status as a ‘valid’ or ‘knowledgeable’ listener. Four participants (Angela, Patrick, Conrad, and Grace) spoke specifically of the enjoyment of hearing live renditions of familiar works but Angela in particular focused on the way in which hearing familiar works still does include an element of inherent novelty:

My experience is that no matter how well you think you know something, if you go and hear it live, you hear something new in it. So if I’m looking at concert programmes, as I did with this one, I’ll be thinking ‘Ah, I know that but I’ve never heard it live – I must go’ and ‘Ooh, that’s new!’ [A Angela I]

²⁵ This trend may have been influenced, of course, by the nature of the concert at which these participants were recruited, which contained one work they would most likely know (the Haydn trumpet concerto) and others which may have been less familiar.

As will be discussed in the next chapter, these elements of newness in live performance rely on the actions of the performers to bring an element of surprise into the hearing of a familiar work. As Leonard Meyer has pointed out,

Insofar as each performance of a piece of music creates a unique work of art, to that extent the information contained in the performance is new. And by creating new information, the performer helps to make the rehearing of music rewarding and enjoyable. (Meyer, 1967: 48)

And from the opposite perspective, a tendency to deliberately mix aspects of the new and familiar was also evident in the responses of attenders who were loyal to particular performers. Cathy, Calum, Daniel and Angela all spoke of going to see unknown works performed by performers they knew or trusted. In this situation they are assured by the presence of the favoured performer(s) that the quality of performance will be high; thus alleviating some of the risk in going to see a completely unknown work and increasing the chance that their first experience of the work will be a good one. Calum, for example, describes choosing to attend a concert of this type ‘to expose myself to...a great performance but of works that I’m not familiar with’ [A Calum I]. A sense of comfort and security originates from familiarity with the performers in this situation, rather than from familiarity with or knowledge of the music: Angela described one such experience as ‘lovely to hear something new unfold before you – and to feel utterly safe in the performers’ [A Angela S10]. In this sense, while the work itself may be new to a listener, there may be an aspect of relying on a trusted performer – seen as an ‘expert’ on the work – to guide the listener through the piece. As the next chapter will explore, this may be particularly pertinent in the context of *live* performance, where visual cues help to communicate the performer’s intent (cf. Cone, 1974).

5.7 Conclusions

A key finding of this chapter is that a complete lack of prior familiarity with an aspect of concert experience (especially in the case of repertoire familiarity) does not seem to hinder listeners’ capacities to enjoy a performance highly. Indeed, it seems likely that a concert in which a listener was very familiar with all components of the experience (the venue, the music, and the performers) would not be an ideal listening situation for many. Rather, a combination of known and unknown elements was frequently sought

by concert attenders. Most often, this was evident within the single realm of repertoire familiarity (through a 'mixed' programme of familiar and new works), while data from the attender interviewees gave further insight into how a combination of novelty and familiarity in interaction across the concert's components can be deliberately engineered for positive effect. In this way, through the presence of trusted and familiar performers, hearing a new piece need not be a completely novel experience; just as the experience of hearing a very familiar piece can be injected with an element of newness when played by performers with whom the listener is not familiar. (Or, in some cases, this element of newness may be engendered by the sheer fact that it is a *live* performance, as discussed in the following chapter.)

A sense of trust in a group of performers and their repertoire choices has been shown to broaden listeners' attitudes to hearing personally new works within the context of a chamber music festival (Pitts, 2005b), while Meyer (1967) has suggested that implicit in the performer's role is the ability to enable listeners to hear the 'new' in familiar works. This is the first study, however, to show that concert attenders themselves take an active role, through their attendance decisions, in deliberately moderating the degree of familiarity they will experience within a performance. These findings therefore situate familiarity and novelty (and the interactions between them) as being among the 'conditions' that a listener might seek when preparing for concert attendance, in order to provide an assurance of facilitating a desired state of aesthetic response and/or emotional experience (Gomart & Hennion, 1999; this idea is considered further in Chapter 7). While Thompson (2007) categorises familiarity as a variable with the potential to affect a listener's *anticipated* enjoyment of a concert (neglecting to consider that it may directly influence a listener's *actual* enjoyment), the findings of the present research indicate that levels of familiarity with both the music and performers not only may influence anticipated enjoyment, but also hold the capacity to shape the moment-by-moment listening experience itself.

In a principal components analysis aiming to clarify understanding of the variables that may affect a listener's enjoyment of a concert, Thompson (2007: 25) excluded the variable 'I don't know the music/performers but am curious to hear them' from the analysis because the questionnaire responses to this statement 'correlated poorly with all the other variables'. In taking an exploratory approach, breaking this

variable down to individually consider the potential effects on enjoyment of novelty with the concert experience, concert venue, performers and repertoire, this study has allowed insight into the importance some concert-goers place on the presence of novelty in their concert experiences, especially in relation to performers and repertoire. Further research is needed to explore in detail *why* novelty is deemed important, although preliminary insights are offered here.

The roles of novelty and surprise in concert experience are easier to explain when we begin to consider more fully that a concert performance is not an isolated event in a listener's musical trajectory: live listening is part of a repertoire of behaviours through which individuals engage in music. As recorded music has become increasingly accessible, it could be argued that novelty and surprise (whether with a performer, a work, or a performer's *take* on a work) assume more importance in live performance. Through recorded music consumption in a digitised age, a given piece of music may not retain 'novel' status for long. Performances, works and artists one is curious to hear can be accessed at a click of a button, meaning that through consumption, 'what is new' turns into 'what is familiar' at a faster rate than previously possible. While this does of course entail an even greater capacity for the discovery of new things, the period of anticipation between identifying something you wish to hear and actually hearing it may be diminished.

Thus the presence of novelty in a classical concert perhaps reemphasizes live classical listening as a distinctive, special experience, as it is distinguished by a greater period of anticipation from the more immediate gratification of recorded listening (discussed in more detail in Chapter 7). Of course, having chosen to attend a concert containing a work with which they are not familiar, listeners may then take the opportunity to access a recording of that work prior to attending the performance. But in the case of the Cadogan Hall questionnaire respondents, the majority did not prepare for the performance in this way. Live performance thus involves what might be called 'suspended' novelty, where, in comparison to recorded listening practices, the process by which a novel experience becomes a familiar one is protracted, heightening anticipation. Isabelle, for example, noted how she would listen to music in advance for attending a concert of popular music, but would not do so for classical music. When asked why this was the case, she responded:

Hmm...I don't have a proper explanation for that. So it's maybe the element of surprise that I still want to have for classical music. And also, like in the example of that 29th January programme [Cadogan Hall concert], I wouldn't have that recording at home, so I couldn't listen to it before, but nowadays on iTunes you could probably get it, if you really wanted to. But classical music I wouldn't do that, no. [A Isabelle I]

She is therefore actively preserving the novelty of a concert she has planned to attend; her preparation for the concert, in this context, constitutes deliberate non-action. Seeking new experiences in this way could be interpreted as a desire to situate classical music concert attendance as being beyond 'the everyday' – a theme that is returned to in Chapter 7. Although there is little existing empirical evidence to support this idea, it may also be that hearing a work for the first time in live performance (rather than from a recording) changes the way a listener subsequently remembers, engages in, and identifies with that work in everyday life (cf. Eschrich et al., 2008).

Considering repertoire in particular, the non-attenders placed greater emphasis in their accounts than the attenders on the effects of familiarity and recognition, although their knowledge of the study's design, whereby some had listened in advance and others had not, might have prompted them to think more than they otherwise would about the effects of familiarity. The findings of the listening preparation task were surprising as there was a statistically significant difference between the LP and non-LP groups' familiarity ratings in only two of the seven pieces. It is likely that this result was influenced by the small sample sizes, as the LP group did exhibit higher mean familiarity ratings for all of the works. However, the design of the study may also have played a part, as the participants were not asked to devote full attention to the music when listening to the CDs and they therefore most frequently engaged in 'incidental' (i.e. background) rather than 'active' or focused listening. Szpunar et al. (2004: 370) found that listening strategies were critical in determining subsequent recognition, with those who engaged in focused listening improving their ability to subsequently recognise musical stimuli in comparison to those who listened 'incidentally'. However, asking the listening preparation participants to engage in focused listening during the task would have reduced its ecological validity, and would have most likely diminished the likelihood that the participants would complete the task at all.

It was also surprising that participating in the listening preparation task did not increase the LP group's enjoyment ratings in comparison to those of the non-LP group as the mere exposure theory would dictate. Silva and Silva (2009) found that mere exposure did not improve an unfamiliar song's appeal, but that providing information about the artist or an endorsement from an authority figure did. In alignment with Silva and Silva's findings, the piece rated most highly for enjoyment by both the LP and non-LP groups was the Mozart piano concerto in Concert 2, about which the greatest degree of accessible context was delivered (see Chapter 4). Importantly, the participants' responses indicated that this provision of context was more instrumental in increasing their enjoyment than prior exposure. However, it is also possible that prototypicality played a role in their preference for this work: Martindale and Moore's (1988) findings indicate that aesthetic preference is influenced by the degree to which a stimulus conforms to mental schemata, so that 'typical instances of any category should be preferred because they give rise to a stronger activation of the relevant cognitive representations than atypical instances' (Hargreaves & North, 2010: 525). Of all pieces, the Mozart received the highest mean familiarity rating from the non-LP group, but unlike other works they felt some familiarity with, the participants did not identify particular passages or sections that they recognised, nor could they identify a specific context in which they had heard the Mozart previously. Rather, they noted feeling familiar with Mozart 'in general', suggesting that the piano concerto conformed to their preconceptions of what Mozart, and possibly even *classical music*, should sound like.

These findings indicate that when considering listening in real-world situations, the mere exposure theory does not adequately provide explanations for listeners' responses, as the effects of exposure are inevitably mediated by cultural and/or social factors. This was especially evident in some of the LP participants' negative responses to undertaking the listening preparation task. One of the most important findings to emerge from the non-attender data was the significant role of recognition on a first hearing, and the way in which, for some participants, this was a greater determinant of enjoyment than repeated exposure. While unexpected, these results do hold potentially useful applications, suggesting that it may be better for new audience members to have heard short, recognisable extracts from the music in advance, rather than being advised to listen to a whole work. Orchestras such as the Philharmonia and the London Symphony Orchestra already include short audio clips amongst the concert listings on

their websites, while the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, in its section on advice for first-time attenders, highlights works in their upcoming season that listeners may recognise, noting in which film or television soundtracks the music has featured.²⁶ A more integrated approach, using both of these methods (so allowing prospective audience members to hear short extracts in advance, but also pointing out where they might have heard them before) would provide prior exposure, but would also serve to legitimise the state of being familiar with classical music from 'popular' sources alone.

Taking a broader view of the findings on repertoire familiarity, it seems that while the non-attenders usually benefitted from being able to recognise some of the music heard in performance, the effects of repertoire familiarity with the specific works performed were not as clear in the attender group as a whole (questionnaire respondents and interviewees): with significant proportions enjoying performances highly without knowing the works, or seeking a balance between familiarity and novelty within the concert. These findings are concordant with the concept of subjective complexity (see e.g. North & Hargreaves, 1995) whereby there is an optimum level of complexity for each listener (depending on their prior experience of listening to a given type of music) which, through arousal potential, results in liking (described in greater detail in Chapter 2). Familiarity and repetition can interact with subjective complexity, and so in the case of the non-attenders it would be expected that hearing something they know within a concert (and perhaps particularly by surprise) would reduce subjective complexity, bringing them closer to an optimal level of arousal and thus liking (Hargreaves & North, 2010). Experienced listeners are likely to perceive less complexity than the non-attenders in standard classical works, and so in this case repetition may *decrease* liking – explaining the unexpectedly prominent role of novelty in the attenders' responses.

This chapter began by noting Kramer's (1995) assertion that the prominence of oft-repeated core repertoire in classical concert programming was contributing to an ostensible decrease in the popularity of classical music performance. From the perspective of new audience members, the reverse may in fact be true, with the performance of well-known classical works meaning that it may be possible for them to recognise some of the music performed without any deliberate previous exposure. While subjective complexity and the arousal potential theory suggest that Kramer's

²⁶ See <http://www.cbso.co.uk/?page=concerts/firstTimers.html> (accessed 11 March 2010).

concerns should be valid in relation to frequent attenders, the reliance of studies testing these theories on stimuli lacking in ecological validity (Orr & Ohlsson, 2001) has not fully taken into account the possible effects of novelty in *other* aspects of a performance. Future research needs to devote more attention to the possible interaction between levels of familiarity with programming and performer, as the preliminary results from qualitative data here suggests that the common assumption that listeners attend concerts to *hear works* (e.g. Small, 1998) should be challenged by consideration of the extent to which attendance is driven by a desire to *see performances*. Perhaps masterworks are repeated so often because it is in fact the performance and performers that audience members come to concerts to see, as works that are known can highlight a star performer's individual contribution more clearly than works which are unfamiliar (cf. Gilmore, 1993).

Overall, the results of this chapter indicate that many factors other than familiarity might contribute to the enjoyment of concert attendance. In particular, situational factors need to be considered more fully (cf. Konečni, 1982): it has already become evident that the live nature of classical performance mediates the influences of familiarity: making unfamiliar works engaging and accessible, while also helping to retain experienced listeners' interest in familiar music performed. Moving from the deductive approach taken in this chapter, Chapters 6 and 7 take a more inductive approach to unpicking enjoyment as a variable, predominantly focusing on participants' qualitative explanations of the factors that shape their experiences and enjoyment of concert-going. The role of live experience is considered next in Chapter 6, while Chapter 7 considers the types of listening experiences that the concert situation can facilitate.

CHAPTER 6

Live experience as an underlying motive for attendance: Key features of witnessing a live classical performance

This chapter is framed by a single question: given the accessibility and quality of recorded media (Clarke, 2007; North & Hargreaves, 2010), what is it that makes seeing classical music performed live a preferable activity? In *Liveness*, Auslander (2008) argues that in our current era live performances are increasingly indistinguishable from mediatised performances: because mediatised forms are now culturally dominant, live events seek to emulate their mediatised counterparts. In the realm of music, while Auslander's thesis fits more comfortably with discussions of popular music performance than with classical concerts (most of the book's space devoted to music focuses on rock culture), his argument is nonetheless worth considering: to what degree are live classical performances valued experiences that are distinguishable from recorded listening? For the cost of a concert ticket, listeners can buy recorded versions of the works they wish to hear (usually free from imperfections), and can listen to them when and wherever they wish – recreating a concert in their living room and concentrating solely on the aural experience, or using the music to enable a multitude of states of being within their everyday lives (DeNora, 2000) – in essence, retaining the ultimate control over how and when they hear their chosen music. What, then, is so unique and distinct about seeing classical music live that in an age dominated by mediatised culture (Auslander, 2008) audiences still choose to witness classical performance in person – rather than through the often more convenient forms of televised broadcasts, radio, or recordings?

Unlike Auslander, this chapter does not primarily seek to define the nature of live performance by reference to recorded music consumption (although comparisons are employed where useful), but rather aims to explore the extent to which aspects of the live experience contribute to audience members' attendance decisions and

enjoyment of a performance. Assessments of performance quality within the live context are considered first, followed by a discussion of the key aspects of the live experience (notably the fragility and immediacy of live performances). The degree to which audience members actively seek a holistic experience which unifies vision and sound is explored next, before specific functions of visual performance cues are outlined and discussed.

6.1 Overview: Interactions between performance quality and live experience

Table 6.1 shows response types to Questions 18a and 19 of the Cadogan Hall audience questionnaire in rank order. These questions respectively elicited reasons for enjoying that particular concert, and for enjoying concert attendance more generally. The quality of performance or performers was the most frequent response category to both questions, although as would be expected from a concert that was enjoyed very highly (see Chapter 5), the percentage of respondents giving this as a reason for enjoyment was higher when explaining (in Question 18a) their enjoyment rating of the concert they had just attended. When asked to think more broadly about what they find enjoyable about concert attendance in Question 19, performance quality was closely followed in frequency of response by live experience, and it is a premise of this chapter that, in the context of appraisals of live classical performance, these two features are closely connected.

Statements on performance quality elicited from both questions were frequently issued in general terms, with comments such as ‘brilliant playing’ [Q108] or ‘an excellent performance’ [Q114] frequently given in response to Question 18a without any elaboration on what had made the performances of such high quality (this was the case in just over two thirds (45 of 67) of responses on performance quality). This feature was reiterated in responses to Question 19, where hearing ‘good music well performed’ [Q69] by a ‘top class orchestra and good soloists’ [Q63] were typical of responses that were coded under performance quality: with less than a quarter (9 of 53) of these responses specifying what they constituted as being ‘of quality’ (those that did focused predominantly on the communication of enthusiasm or emotion).

TABLE 6.1 *Theme categories for Questions 18a and 19, ranked by frequency of response*

Question 18a: Explanations for overall enjoyment rating given for the Cadogan Hall concert		Question 19: What makes the experience of attending classical concerts enjoyable?	
<i>Theme</i>	<i>% of 102 responses</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>% of 123 responses</i>
Quality of performance/performers	65.5%	Quality of performance/performers	43%
Programme (combination of pieces)	16	Live experience/immediacy	36.5
Novelty of music performed	13	Programming/the music performed	30
Aspects of venue	12	[Combined categories for emotional response]	22
Familiarity with music performed	11	Aspects of venue	18
Energy/enthusiasm/commitment (from performers/performance)	10	Visual stimuli	13
Familiarity with performers	9	Quality of live sound or acoustics	13
Haydn Symphony 'dull'	5	Well-behaved audience	10
Visual stimuli	4	Performer involvement/enthusiasm/interaction	9
Atmosphere/'ambiance'	3	Familiarity with music performed	9
Live experience	3	Relaxing/reconciling/escape/transporting	8
New experience	3	Atmosphere/'ambiance'	8
Acoustics	2	Novelty of music performed	7
Lack of printed programme	2	Stimulating/exciting/uplifting/inspiring	7
		Other emotional response	7
		Learning/self-improvement	3
		Socialising	2
		Cultural capital	1

This trend might suggest that performance quality is an easy, default answer to questions which seek explanations for the respondents' aesthetic or affective responses – as Thompson (2007: 33) notes, respondents may not be accustomed to considering their responses and behaviours in such depth.

General remarks about performance quality (i.e. extending no further than, for example, 'excellent performances by all' [Q24]) may therefore be a type of response that people who perceive themselves as non-specialists in the field of classical music can feel comfortable in giving, without needing to articulate any further what it is they enjoy about concert experience. Responses of this type do nonetheless indicate that attending a concert for the *performance* is an important part of the experience (rather than merely hearing the works played in a good acoustic setting, for example), and that how the works are played is of significance. Providing this type of response also

implicitly suggests that respondents do feel qualified to make value judgements about the quality of performance, especially in contrast to the non-attenders, who, as shown in Chapter 4, encountered difficulty in making appraisals of this kind. Just under a third of responses to Question 18a which were coded under performance quality did explain why they deemed the performance or performers to be of high quality. Some respondents were clearly able to articulate the reasons for their responses to the Cadogan Hall performance (see Table 6.2), commenting on the ‘wonderful ensemble and dynamic variation’ [Q135] and, more critically, that ‘I would have liked the strings to “sing” more’ [Q64] or that the ‘ECO didn’t seem quite on form behind the front desks’ [Q132].

TABLE 6.2 *Sample responses to Question 18a from respondents who specifically explained their appraisal of the Cadogan Hall performance*

Respondent	Sample performance quality explanations from Q18a (22 of 67 responses on performance quality)
Q28/Grace	Lively, intelligent playing; superb soloists; orchestra players looked happy!
Q69	Very well performed and conducted. Very warm personalities – soloists and conductor.
Q85	The orchestra and conductor gave splendid performances with great musicality and plenty of freshness and energy. Superb soloists. The Shostakovich was exhilarating!
Q96	Contrary to the other members of my party, I felt the ECO performance] (especially in the Pulcinella) was spontaneous and not clinically perfect. I enjoyed the fact that the orchestra members ‘went for it’ and consequently the result was occasionally ragged but fresh.
Q123	Remarkable soloists, esp. trumpeter. Pianist an excellent technical performance – perhaps not serious enough in the serious passages.
Q139	Stunning trumpet playing; enjoyed the Stravinsky, Shostakovich and Haydn T[rumpet] C[oncerto] very much; found the performance of the Haydn Symphony a little stodgy (perhaps used to period instruments in this sort of repertoire now).

As Table 6.2 shows, these respondents did assess performance quality on a variety of terms, from the quality of sound and historical authenticity, to the technical facility of the soloists, to more explicitly subjective judgements on the merits of energy and commitment at the risk of refinement. The comments from Q69 and Q28 in Table 6.2 point to a theme evident in the data more broadly. Being able to encounter the performers in a human capacity (rather than at a remove, as is the case in mediated forms of listening or viewing; see also Davies, 2001: 340) was an important element for

the concert attenders, for whom live concerts were an opportunity to hear particular combinations of works and performers not available via recordings, or to hear live renditions of ‘performances’ they may have already heard on disc. ‘Hearing good orchestras and soloists in person’ [Q129/Conrad] thus provides a chance to experience what performers are capable of in a live, real-time situation, rather than relying on the ‘false’ perfection of a recorded performance produced from multiple takes (Philip, 2004; cf. Tomes, 2009). As one respondent described, concert attendance ‘sets the benchmark of truth for all listening at home’ [Q117/Calum].

A duality therefore emerges in relating recorded listening to the importance the respondents placed on performance quality. Do audience members place an emphasis on high quality of performance because they have been primed by the perfection of recordings and expect to see and hear live renditions without mistakes? Taking this view, Davies (2001: 328) suggests that repeated listening to a single recorded performance of a given work decreases ‘[the listener’s] sensitivity to aspects of the work, to its demands on the performer, and to the performer’s responses to those challenges’. On the other hand, do audience members in fact recognise the specific demands of live performance,²⁷ and so particularly value performers that are able to attain high standards of accuracy in the live performance context? (These issues are explored further in section 6.2 below.) Anna (one of the two attender interviewees who had undertaken musical training at tertiary level) took a different view, believing that performers will never perform to their best in the studio (cf. Tomes, 2009), therefore explaining the importance, to her, of seeing music live:

listening to recorded music and live music are two different experiences. And it’s extremely unusual for a performer to be able to duplicate their performance live and on a CD. So to a certain extent you’re always going to be disappointed with a CD performance. Which is why you should always go and hear the performers you have CDs of. [A Anna I]

From the perspective of the non-attender participants, while even those who had listened to the works in advance experienced difficulties judging a performance’s

²⁷ As Tomes (2009) makes clear, recording and live performance require different approaches and qualities from a performer, and given that most performers spend the majority of their time giving concerts rather than producing recordings, adapting to the demands imposed by the recording studio usually requires a process of adjustment. Conversely, most people listen to classical music from recorded media more frequently than they attend live performances (Philip, 2004: 4), and so it is possible that they may similarly need to adjust their expectations and approach to listening when attending a live event.

aesthetic worth (see Chapter 4), they still took enjoyment from visually apprehending performers' expertise. Dominic, for example, described his enjoyment of 'seeing really, really talented musicians playing their instruments really well' [NA Dominic I]. Some comments operated at the level of the group: such as a description of the enjoyment of seeing 'twenty violinists with their bows all in unison' [NA Stuart I], while individual players were also picked out:

I quite liked in the first one, I think it was the lead violinist. They were obviously all kind of playing together, but his movements were kind of so much more exaggerated, and he seemed to be getting into it so much more that I found myself looking at him, and watching him again and again. I think that adds more to it. [NA Tara I]

The non-attenders therefore may not believe that they understand what makes an overall performance better or worse than another, but they did express enjoyment at watching a pianist's virtuosity (cf. Kubovy, 1999), being engaged by watching the gestures of one particular violinist within a section, or the apparent ease with which a double-bassist moved around their instrument. The visual cues that the non-attenders received were therefore a vital element in appreciating, and enjoying, this skill and expertise (the role of visual stimuli in the experiences of attenders and non-attenders is explored in sections 6.3 and 6.4). In this sense, experiencing classical music live was particularly important: as Tomes (2004: 140) notes, 'a player's relationship to his instrument is something that can be hinted at, but not completely conveyed, by a sound recording'.

However, this focus on watching performers did lead to frustrations at the limited sightlines available at St John's, Smith Square (the venue for Concert 3) for four participants in particular. The limited visual cues rendered the experience of concert attendance predominantly auditory, removing important performative features:

Apart from looking at the lovely surroundings, there was no visual element of the actual music performance for St John's [Concert 3]. Which makes it harder because you *just* have to concentrate on the music, which not being someone who's very familiar with classical music is quite hard, because I suppose I can't evaluate it technically, and I don't, I've never really heard it before, so that's quite hard-going. [NA Emma]

These participants noted that the lack of visual stimuli contributed to a feeling of being 'disconnected' or 'distanced' during Concert 3: they were purely listening to music with

which they had little affinity, without the experience becoming ‘personalised’ through the ability to see or interact with the performers, as was the case in the other concerts.

As the non-attenders’ experiences make clear, the effects of the co-presence of audience and performers means that recorded performances cannot necessarily be equated directly with live performances as Auslander (2008) suggests. This co-presence inevitably engenders some kind of interaction between audience and performers, even if neither group strays beyond their typically ritualised responses (see Small, 1998). When questionnaire respondents did elaborate on what they meant by high quality of performance when thinking about their enjoyment of concert attendance more broadly in Question 19, the most frequently-occurring response category constituted comments on the enthusiasm, energy, or commitment shown by the performers:

Quality of performers (inc. their enthusiasm and personal expression – i.e. perfection combined with character). [...] A spark that flies between audience and performers. [Q110/Isabelle]

Arguably some of these facets of performance quality can only really be gleaned in the live performance situation – a recorded performance may supply ‘perfection’ but can it also convey a combination of ‘enthusiasm’, ‘personal expression’, *and* ‘character’? As in the case above, some respondents placed importance on this first-hand experience because it engenders communication or a feeling of interaction with the performers:

I’ve had many enjoyable musical experiences which were not of the top quality, in the conventional sense. And equally I have been to allegedly top-quality events where I felt totally alien from what was going on. [...] It comes back to the communication, the sense of a nexus between you and the [musicians]. [A Angela I]

As well as showing the ways in which ‘performance quality’ can mean very different things to different people (and can vary in the degree to which it determines enjoyment) this quote also demonstrates how going to concerts inevitably involves a degree of risk (cf. Radbourne et al., 2009). Unlike a recording or a film, it is impossible to read a review of the exact ‘product’ before you ‘buy’ it; but, counter-intuitively, expectations about the performance may be higher, generated by the anticipation of seeing a unique performance that is therefore a rarer commodity than more widely available mediatised products (these issues are discussed further in 6.2 below).

Therefore, as findings in Chapter 5 have already indicated, favourite performers can become a guarantee of performance quality, as an ‘insurance’ against the inherent risk entailed in witnessing a live performance – whether an audience member is looking for technical perfection or visible commitment and communication; or a combination of the two. For the pool of audience members accessed by this research, solo performers played a strong role in this respect, as would be expected from a sample of concert-goers who had chosen to attend a concert (unusually) containing two concerti. A description of enjoyment being shaped by ‘watching star performers, hearing new interpretations’ [Q92] reiterates that live experience offers *authenticity*: it allows concert attenders to experience the work of performers whom they know they like, but in a live capacity: therefore witnessing performance quality in the most direct way possible, as well as being privy to a performance by a well-regarded player that will never be repeated exactly.

Furthermore, liveness holds the potential to expand existing notions of performance quality. Traditionally, performance quality has been conceptualised from the perspective of those whose role it is to evaluate a performance (e.g. competition adjudicators or examiners for graded practical music examinations), with a focus on technical facility, accuracy, and interpretation (see Thompson & Williamon, 2003). The data presented in this overview suggest that audience members might evaluate performance quality more broadly, with performers’ abilities to communicate (whether their character, enthusiasm, or their intent in realising the work of the composer) also contributing strongly to audience appraisals. This is as would be expected when considering that, as a whole, concert audiences will contain a smaller proportion of musically trained individuals than adjudication panels – they are therefore likely to focus less on specifically evaluating aspects of technical facility or accuracy of notes. Live performance therefore, as has been shown, enables untrained audience members to apprehend more fully (through visual stimuli) the degree of skill involved in musical performance, but additionally allows greater access to these other (perhaps more interactive) aspects which audience members also use to define quality: the importance of performance quality present in the respondents’ reasons for enjoyment is therefore facilitated by the live performance context.

Just as the enjoyment of a performance can be affected by an array of variables (Thompson, 2007), performance quality as a variable therefore appears to be multidimensional (at least in the context of concert attendance), encompassing more than simply whether the right notes are played at the right time, or that the score is faithfully realised. 'Performance quality' as a term is used with widely different meanings in existing classical music audience research. Radbourne et al. (2009), coming from an arts management and marketing perspective, advocate a move towards the assessment of the audience experience itself as a measure of performance quality – relating mainly to situations where the 'products' of concert organisations and orchestras are evaluated for their impact and ability to secure future funding. Within this remit, therefore, they identify factors such as a sense of 'collective experience' among audience members as a key determinant of 'performance quality', thereby bringing the variable closer to what Thompson (2007: 20) identifies as 'affective experience', or simply 'enjoyment of the performance as a whole'. (Aspects of a shared experience within the concert hall are considered in the next chapter, but are seen as an entirely separate variable from performance quality.)

At the other end of the scale, Thompson's (2006) questionnaire study defines performance quality using three dimensions (technical proficiency, musicality, and presentation/communication), differentiating these from measures of whether the listeners found the performance 'engaging' or 'emotionally moving' (and in fact finding that emotional engagement was a better predictor of enjoyment than performance quality). Thompson (2006: 235-6) sees the 'fragmentation' between judgements of performance quality and affective response as a primary area of interest, finding that his respondents 'were able to [acknowledge] a good performance whilst not being personally moved or engaged by it'. In this chapter, I suggest that being emotionally engaged or moved (through effective performer communication), is for some concert attenders a vital part of how they evaluate quality of performance; and the very fact that audience members might consider these affective components as constituent parts of performance quality has interesting implications in itself.

The remainder of the chapter focuses on performance quality in the context of liveness by focusing on key elements of the live experience, finding that through describing what is important (and enjoyable) about the live experience, respondents also

articulate more clearly what they mean by ‘performance quality’ – both illuminating the factors that contribute to a valued performance, and enabling an exploration of how these are realised and/or amplified in the live context.

6.2 Qualities of ‘liveness’

Capacity for variance and the fragility of unique performances

In answering Question 19 of the audience questionnaire (‘What makes the experience of attending concerts enjoyable?’), 37% of respondents mentioned live experience and/or a sense of immediacy: commenting on the nature of live performance, or on the live ‘atmosphere’. This was the second most frequent response category to this question, preceded only by comments on performance quality. Some participants simply stated ‘live music’ or ‘live performance’ as a reason for enjoyment; but from those who did elaborate, key aspects of the live experience emerged: the capacity for variance, a sense of uniqueness, and the immediacy of the experience. Live performance was presented as preferable to consuming music via recorded media partly because of an element of potential uncertainty or deviance within the performance – aspects which are usually eliminated in recordings. As Davies (2001: 317) writes, ‘studio recordings trade immediacy and spontaneity for accuracy, consistency, and finish’; and some respondents similarly valued ‘not hearing something clearly edited and too “perfect”’ [Q96], noting that the live concert experience was ‘like going to the theatre instead of watching TV. Anything can happen’ [Q99].

Two attender interviewees (interestingly, the only two in the attender sample who had received musical training at tertiary level) took this further in characterising the live experience in terms of ‘the possibility of mistakes’ [A Anna I]. Resonating with Dunsby’s (1995: 14) assertion that ‘*music is always a risk*, for everyone, all the time’ (emphasis in original), Cathy described valuing how in comparison to a ‘perfect’ recorded product, ‘at the live thing, you’ve got the blemishes’ [A Cathy I]. As Davies (2001) suggests, this preference is probably best not interpreted as a vicarious desire to see ‘performances come to grief’ but rather as a consequence of being ‘aware of the challenges faced by the player’ (p. 312). Perhaps because these two participants had considerable experience of performing themselves, the presence of mistakes signals that those on stage are fallible and therefore human; meaning that these two highly trained

amateur performers could more easily identify with the performers whom they were watching. Interestingly, the only other two questionnaire respondents who identified the presence of imperfections or uncertainty as contributory factors to an enjoyable performance both either played, or used to play, music themselves.

For most respondents who identified the capacity for variance as an enjoyable element of live performance, this preference was not related to identifying absolute imperfections, but more about recognizing and valuing the idiosyncrasies of a unique performance, to the extent that performances which were deemed ‘technically correct’ without ‘really coming to life’ were viewed by some as ‘missing that last bit of the jigsaw’ [A Angela 3m]. The uniqueness of live performance increased the appeal of very familiar works, as ‘the same piece can sound quite different on two different occasions, even played by the same people’ [A Daniel I]. This feature of performance has been empirically tested by Chaffin, Lemieux, and Chen (2007), who found that there were notable differences in a pianist’s self-recorded practice performances, despite the fact that the pianist was attempting to reproduce the same performance each time. They express doubt that listeners would necessarily be able to identify these differences (p. 469), but they concede that differences in performances would most likely be accentuated in the live context (cf. Gould & Keaton, 2000; Seddon & Biasutti, 2009). Using more ecologically valid video data from a piano trio’s rehearsals and live performances, Doğantan-Dack (2009) conceptualises live performance as a site for ‘knowledge production’, suggesting that the ‘in-built indeterminacy’ of live performance often delivers unexpected creative solutions to problems which have not been solved during rehearsal. Thus ‘the uncertainty of live performance’ [Q42] is a feature that can contribute positively to the experiences of both performer and listener.

As seen in Chapter 4, the non-attenders, at least initially, had vastly different ideas about classical performance, characterizing it in terms of rigid perfection rather than recognising any capacity for ‘indeterminacy’. While the demonstration during Concert 2 did change the non-attenders’ understanding and attitudes to an extent, their lack of knowledge and previous experience still meant that it was difficult for them to identify moments of variance in performance. Stuart, for whom the tension between spontaneity and perfection was most resonant, believed that the capacity for variance was far greater in pop performance rather than in classical concerts:

I suppose after the second concert...when they explained the process, you became more aware of how it could be different live. How it was more about the input of the conductor [...] Whilst it was different to the actual sort of, you know the written music, they were still playing it ostensibly perfectly, there was hardly any idiosyncrasies that you get from a regular concert, pop concert.
[NA Stuart I]

The tension Stuart highlights here might originate from the way in which non-classical genres exhibit a greater capacity for variance or deviance from the musical 'score' (see Gould & Keaton, 2000 on this feature relating to classical music and jazz). Importantly, Stuart participated in the listening preparation task, yet he still felt there were few idiosyncrasies to identify in the classical performances he heard. As well as usually being more familiar with the music he hears in 'regular concerts', it is also possible that the idiosyncrasies that occur in pop performance are often signalled with greater clarity through the use of more emphatic performance gestures. In the classical context, being able to identify and appreciate moments of variance usually either requires knowing the particular work, or knowing the style of music enough to be able to detect that a moment of interpretative import has taken place (or, indeed, having sufficient experience of watching classical performances to be able to 'read' the performers' gestures to greater effect). Notably, when Robert Levin provided the non-attenders with enough experience of a particular extract of the Mozart piano concerto during his demonstration in Concert 2, they were able to appreciate the differences when he performed the full version, and were able to understand more broadly the scope for variance within live classical performance (as previously discussed in 4.2).

In his demonstration, Levin presented spontaneity and variance in performance as a function of performer-audience communication: he was transmitting to the audience how he felt about this particular passage at a particular moment, rather than creating the impression that his performance was a static entity which he had prepared. At the root of this is a sense of responsiveness to the performance situation which is manifested in how performers shape and present the work, and is a feature that the attenders valued too:

Can you say any more about what you like about hearing music live?

It is the, I think spontaneity, the sense of risk...Going back to this Shostakovich [piano concerto] performance and Igor Levit [at the Cadogan Hall concert], he's

obviously a risk-taking performer, and spontaneous performer. [...] So it's a sort of sense of direct communication. And I think I don't draw a hard and fast line between classical music and jazz, because I think there is an element of improvisation in classical music very often. With early music obviously you can improvise with the composer's permission as it were. But with something like...this Shostakovich where all the notes are written down, you can still bring a great deal of spontaneity to the performance. So there is the sense that once it's gone, it's gone forever. [A Patrick I]

Results from Chaffin et al.'s (2007) study also suggest that solo performers view variability in performance as a form of communication, with spontaneity used for areas of interpretative import, while less variability is usually exhibited in more difficult sections in order to retain technical control. As Patrick's quote above indicates, the element of variance in live performance combines with a sense of immediacy or inclusion from performer communication to produce a 'unique experience' [Q32] that cannot be replicated, described by one respondent as 'the live – this night only – magic happening just for you by real people' [Q67/Angela].

Although notions of music-related collecting are more usually associated with images of material objects – rows of CDs or LPs, and shelves of scores – three attendee interviewees (Patrick, Daniel and Angela) were identified during analysis of the data as collectors of live experiences. All three far preferred to experience music live (rather than from recordings) because of the combination of a sense of responsiveness or communication and the uniqueness of each performance event:

live music is a fully authentic experience in the sense that, you know, what you're listening to is a piece which is being interpreted and performed on that occasion, for that audience, by that group. And you won't get that repeated *ever*. It's a unique experience. [A Daniel I]

Live performances were therefore treasured by these participants, and the value they placed on experiencing live renditions was perhaps heightened by a recognition of exclusivity: not necessarily in an elitist sense, but in the knowledge that, in vast contrast to the potential ubiquity of recordings, only a relatively small number of people are able to witness each particular, ephemeral live performance.

Indeed, the inherent fragility of a unique event sometimes meant that that if a particularly good performance had been witnessed these participants would then hesitate

to attend a performance of that same work, particularly if given by the same performers. They wanted to retain the memory and essence of their own treasured live rendition. In Patrick's case there was a tension in this respect: he acknowledged the fragility of live performance in saying 'if I've had a really good experience that can sometimes be a reason for not wanting to repeat it exactly' [A Patrick I]. But he also built lists of his favourite performers or performances: he ascribed a greater level of permanency to these experiences by routinely describing many performances he had attended during the longitudinal stage as 'something I shall remember for the rest of my life' or as experiences that are 'going to stick with me forever' [A Patrick 3m].

A small number of attender interviewees used recordings to *sustain* memories of the fragile live experience, although again treading a careful balance between maintaining memories of the live event and, through the use of recordings, transforming a certain work or experience into the quotidian. Talking about her favourite piece of music (Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*) Isabelle said:

Yes, so I have it at home [on disc], but I wouldn't listen to it because it's too precious to me to listen to it at home, I wouldn't put it on and do the ironing. It's more...I want to listen to it properly. So I would maybe put it on if I'm on my own and I turn it up quite a bit, and I immerse myself in this experience remembering how it is when it's live. But I wouldn't listen to pieces I love as background music. [A Isabelle I]

An essence of the live performance is now something that the audience member 'owns', and recordings can be used to 'relive' (or even *re-live*) this experience. This may be through using memories of the visual impression of the live performance to add an extra dimension when listening to a recording – Patrick describes listening to a Tasmin Little recording after seeing her perform: 'it's impossible to play that CD without imagining her sort of standing there playing it' [A Patrick I] – or in terms of recalling the emotion of shared audience response (discussed further in Chapter 7):

And would you ever come back from a concert and then want to listen on CD to the works that you've heard?

No, I don't think so. I might a day or two later. And I did so in fact with the Rach[maninov] Two piano concerto that Lang Lang played. I've got that on one of my CDs and I got it out and I played that final movement, just that, just to hear it again. Because I could sort of picture him finishing off and the crowd just erupting again. [A Conrad I]

Some participants were more discriminatory about how they relived the performance than others. While most would happily use a studio recording by different performers to relive a performance of a given work, from Angela's perspective it was important for live and recorded renditions to be as closely related as possible. She describes going 'to a lot of trouble to get home-made tapes or CDs of something [a live event] that I've been to' [A Angela I], and talked of predominantly listening only to these live recordings of concerts she has personally attended (rather than any other commercial recordings) when outlining her listening behaviours in daily life. By doing this, she is collecting her live experiences in the most physical form possible, and ensuring that her recorded listening experiences are grounded in personal associations and memory – 'I can think "Oh yes I remember", you know, "that's where the trumpets were", whatever. And also it feels more like *mine*' [A Angela I] – rather than originating from an anonymous product that any consumer can own (cf. Baumgartner, 1992).

Live listening as an immediate and/or holistic experience

Attending live performances was important to the participants because it provides access to experiencing live sound, which increased the degree to which the listening experience was perceived as 'holistic'. 13% of questionnaire respondents indicated that either the hall's acoustics or the quality of live sound contributed to making concert attendance an enjoyable experience:

Live music is what matters most in music appreciation. To hear live sound, well-played in a good acoustic setting...ah! [Q117/Calum]

Additionally, 12% of responses to Question 24 ('How would you describe the experience of going to a classical concert to someone who has never attended one before?') refer to live sound, and particularly emphasise its increased impact in comparison to listening to recorded media. Respondents appreciated the sheer 'volume of sound' [Q125], also noting that 'the dynamic range is so much greater than listening on the radio and therefore mind blowing' [Q107]. This is perhaps an important feature because, fairly uniquely, in classical performance listeners are able to experience music of relatively high levels of volume that is produced *without* amplification. One respondent presented live concerts as the only occasions at which he could listen to music at the volume level he would prefer:

Hearing the music "live" especially louder pieces (my wife won't let me have the CDs on loud!!) [Q125]

The participants also valued hearing live sound because they considered it to be qualitatively different from recorded sound: a prominent theme, especially among the attender interviewees, was the inability to replicate the quality of live sound when listening to recordings. The quality of stereo equipment did not seem to be instrumental in alleviating this problem: while Anna describes how she 'can't really reproduce the sound that you get in a concert hall in an apartment with crappy speakers' [A Anna I], Calum also finds that despite his 'quite good audio kit', listening at home 'doesn't match live sound, it doesn't match the same sonics and the same timbre of appreciating live performance' [A Calum I]. While all of these responses perhaps implicitly suggest that live sound is appreciated in part because of the reverberations felt by the body (rather than the sound heard just by the ears), Isabelle was the only participant to articulate this feature directly:

What is it about hearing music live that you particularly like?

As I said earlier, you can feel the effect in your body, so if there's a bass note, it vibrates with you, so it's more a surrounding feeling [...] Yeah, so yeah, it feels more holistic and penetrating when you listen to it live. [...] Even if you have a good stereo at home it's never the same. [A Isabelle I]

The disembodied nature of recording listening was one reason of several why Isabelle rarely listened to her favourite classical pieces via recorded media. But it is interesting that, within the concert hall, an embodied engagement with live sound rarely seems to necessitate an enacted physical response (at least of the magnitude that might cause one's movements to be noticed by other audience members), as the action-perception cycle of ecological perception theory would suggest (Clarke, 2005). While one might expect that the classical concert environment's preclusion of most physical responses to the music would be seen as restrictive by listeners who choose to attend classical concerts precisely because of the 'holistic and penetrating' nature of live sound, Isabelle makes no mention of this, and is in fact, of the attender interviewees, one of the most vociferous defendants of the behaviour codes found in most classical performances.

Interestingly, some of the same participants for whom the immediacy of live sound was particularly important also mentioned that they dislike sitting so close to the

stage that the sound ‘becomes rough’ [A Anna I] and where they are subjected to ‘the noises that as an audience you should normally not hear...the actual sounds of the instrument’ [A Isabelle 3m]. So while these listeners value the immediacy of live sound, there is a limit to how ‘real’ or authentic they wish the sound to be. It could be that they are primed by the perfection of recordings, from which such noises are usually erased (Hamilton, 1999). Calum, however, who described himself as an ‘audiophile’, actually appreciated the quality of sound on one occasion when he sat unusually close to the performer (in this case a cellist) on stage:

it was amazing to be so close to the musician, and hearing the sound coming straight from the instrument at such close quarters is a bit different to being in a big hall or being, or listening to a recording. [A Calum I]

It is possible that extraneous sounds produced by the instrument distract the listener, meaning that the overall sound is experienced as fragmented rather than all-encompassing. The holistic nature of live listening was an important feature of concert attendance for many questionnaire respondents – it emerged as a more prominent feature of liveness than the element of risk or variance. It was also important for articulating what was distinctive or special about *classical* performance, with the most frequent response (22% of respondents) to the Question 24 (‘How would you describe the experience of going to a classical concert to someone who has never attended one before?’) either mentioning the quality of the live experience in comparison to recorded music...

I would describe how much better it is to hear first-hand the sound generated by a symphony orchestra compared with listening to recorded music. [Q55]

...and/or identifying it as a holistic experience:

To listen to music in all facettes [*sic*], to penetrate and being surrounded by the sound, which is different from just ‘consuming’ music. [Q9]

6.3 The presence of visual stimuli in live performance: Is a 'holistic' experience always preferable?

Responses on the holistic or immediate nature of live performance also frequently included the role of visual stimuli. Overall, moreover, the significant amount of data elicited on the role of visual stimuli in concert experience from both Studies 1 and 2 was surprising, and so the remainder of this chapter focuses on this topic. This section considers the extent to which audience members regard visual stimuli – and indeed, a holistic experience – as an important part of concert-going. The specific effects of visual cues are explored later in section 6.4, focusing on the role visual stimuli play in increasing audience members' understanding of the music and the performance, and considering the visual cues elicited by performers as a form of communication and/or spectacle.

Although comments on the visual aspects of the performance were frequently made throughout the Cadogan Hall questionnaire data set, of the 34 questionnaire responses to Question 19 ('What makes the experience of attending classical concerts enjoyable?') which referred to live experience, just under a third (11) explicitly mentioned the role of visual stimuli. This proportion is smaller than expected, although it is possible that frequently-given types of responses such as 'watching live performance' [Q73] or 'nothing beats live music – whatever kind it is' [Q37], intrinsically encapsulate recognition of the visual aspect too. Alternatively, it could be that visual stimuli are really not seen as a key part of the live experience by a proportion of respondents, perhaps because in a mediatised culture, their presence in live performance is not considered to be significantly different from, or superior to, the visual stimuli provided by televised recordings of classical performances (Auslander, 2008). However, the few respondents who mentioned televised broadcasts preferred being able to watch the performance in person, either because 'someone else chooses what you look at' [Q28/Grace] during televised broadcasts, or because of the greater level of detail that can be observed when watching live: 'Being able to see the performers – see their fingers move, their bows working hard etc – it is so amazingly different when you are up close, rather than on the TV or radio' [Q69].

Looking more broadly, 13% of responses overall to Question 19 mentioned visual stimuli as a contributor to the enjoyment of concert attendance,²⁸ and seven of the nine non-attender participants felt that being able to see the performers enhanced the listening experience. Although only a few respondents/participants mentioned or articulated the role of visual stimuli in creating a holistic or all-encompassing live experience, those who did provided some rich data. One respondent described ‘seeing and hearing world class performers capturing one’s whole being’ [Q20], while another characterized live concerts as ‘an experience for the senses’ [Q12]. These descriptions relate to recent research in music cognition which has found that when participants can both see and hear a performance (as opposed to visual-only or auditory-only conditions) higher levels of physiological arousal are observed, leading to the conclusion that ‘the interaction between the two sensory modalities conveyed by musical performances created an emergent property, a holistic perception that was greater than the sum of its parts’ (Chapados & Levitin, 2008: 646; see also Vines, Krumhansl, Wanderley, & Levitin, 2006). Indeed, Angela describes her preference for being able to watch (as well as hear) performances in terms of the concert experience as being ‘about a lot of different things coming together to make a whole, and to make a Gestalt-sense’ [Angela I].

In evolutionary terms, auditory and visual cues would usually be associated and thereby experienced in conjunction: it is only relatively recently that we have been able to experience music without the related visual stimuli that come from being in the presence of the musicians creating it (Chapados & Levitin, 2008; Kania, 2009; Ross, 2005). As will be explored in more detail in section 6.4, some questionnaire respondents therefore appreciated that in live concerts the music was being created by ‘real people’ [Q67/Angela] and that being able to watch the musicians allowed them to apprehend a sense of ‘reality and striving’ [Q47] inherent in musical performance:

Seeing the musicians live is obviously interesting in a people-watching sense but also makes it more “real”. If you listen at home you have nothing to look at. [Q23]

²⁸ A further theme category, ‘performer involvement/enthusiasm/interaction’ (9% of responses to Question 19), also contained a considerable proportion of responses which mentioned visual stimuli, but these concepts are not solely visual constructs.

This quote presents recorded listening as a sensorily-deprived experience – a feature that has been under-recognised in discourse about music, in which the auditory is usually given precedence (Thompson, Graham, & Russo, 2005). From this perspective, and given that recorded media are considered the norm in how most people experience music (Wanderley & Vines, 2006), it is surprising that more respondents did not relate being able to see the performers to the identification of an holistic or all-encompassing experience. It is possible, however, that they did not think to express this feature in such terms, but that in identifying specific functions that visual stimuli fulfil (such as enjoyment watching the enthusiasm or commitment of performers – an aspect which will be explored later) which do contribute to the holistic nature of concert experience, the participants demonstrate which aspects of the cross-modal experience of attending a live performance are most valuable to them.

An alternative explanation is that a cross-modal experience is not necessarily what all audience members attend concerts for. While some attender interviewees saw visual stimuli as an integral part of the performance ('it would be a bit odd to go to a live event and not watch [the musicians]' [A Patrick I]), others viewed concerts as mostly an 'auditory' or 'listening' experience, describing how for this reason 'one doesn't want too much visual input' [A Grace I], or noting a tendency to listen in the concert hall with their eyes closed. Notably, Anna and Calum, who were the two attender interviewees most focused on the quality of live sound, had the least to say on the visual aspect of the performance when asked about its role in their concert experience at Cadogan Hall, extending no further than commenting on trumpeter Alison Balsom's 'nice dress' [A Anna I]:

Was watching the musicians important for you?

Well I remember Alison Balsom's dress! It was quite spectacular. She was very nicely presented, yes. Otherwise, it was just you know, generic classical musicians [chuckles]. [A Calum I]

Calum's description of 'generic classical musicians' contrasts highly with the types of observations made by other attenders about the visual stimuli and cues they received from the performers (explored later in section 6.4). This indicates that some concert attenders may be primarily motivated by the auditory aspects of live performance, almost viewing classical concerts as an improved version of recorded listening (through

the addition of live sound), but not as an experience that is in other respects qualitatively different from active (rather than background) listening via recordings.

A potential division between preferences for a predominantly auditory or a cross-modal experience is also demonstrated by the questionnaire responses to Question 19 ('What makes the experience of attending classical concerts enjoyable?'). The quality of sound or acoustics²⁹ and the presence of visual stimuli were each mentioned by 13% of the respondents to this question. Of the 16 respondents whose responses were coded in each of these categories, only two mentioned both quality of sound/acoustics and visual stimuli in their responses. The pattern of responses to Question 24 ('How would you describe the experience of going to a classical concert to someone who has never attended one before?') was slightly different: nearly half of all respondents who mentioned sound quality also mentioned visual stimuli (5 of 11 respondents). This may be a result of a perception that being able to watch the performance contributes to making the experience more interesting or accessible for new attenders:

I would describe how much better it is to hear first-hand the sound generated by a symphony orchestra compared with listening to recorded music. I would also try to explain how the whole musical experience is enhanced by seeing the music being made as well as listening to the sound. [Q55]

However, one of these respondents mentions both auditory and visual stimuli in the context of a dialectic between the two:

You have to balance the joy of seeing the orchestra and the soloist – seeing how the music develops physically across the space – with not being so captivated by the vision that you lose track of the sound – but it is a remarkable spectacle. [Q20]

This quote suggests that the cross-modal balance needs to be actively managed by the audience member in order to get the best out of the experience; although the final caveat ('it is a remarkable spectacle') suggests an almost begrudging obligation to divert attention away from the allure of watching the performers. Isabelle talked of a similar experience where visual stimuli 'took [her] ear away' at a performance of Stravinsky's

²⁹ These two aspects were coded under the same category, as attributing importance to the quality of the acoustics implies that the quality of sound is important too for the respondent. Half of the responses in this category explicitly referred to the quality of (live) sound.

The Rite of Spring in which a dancer and visual projection were also present on stage. In this context, there was a tension between auditory and visual stimuli because not all visual aspects of the performance in its entirety were related to the production of the music. This means that by focusing on the extra-musical aspects of the performance, visual cues from the players could not simultaneously be used to elucidate or interpret the sound. But Isabelle continued to describe how in more general terms...

your eyes are so overpowering, they take a lot away from your ears, so the visual sense is so much stronger than the hearing I think. So I do sometimes catch myself if something is really, really nice and whatever is happening, [if] it's too visually distracting then I would look away and close my eyes to appreciate it more. [A Isabelle I]

...therefore suggesting the idea that even visual stimuli that *are* related to the production of the music can distract from a 'pure' appreciation of the sound (cf. Putman, 1990: 364).

Given the evolutionary precedence for experiencing events using both sound and vision (Chapados & Levitin, 2008), it is somewhat incongruous that some concert attenders should either experience a tension between focusing on auditory or visual stimuli, or that they should express a preference for focusing predominantly on listening in the context of a live performance. This could be related to prevailing attitudes towards the authority of the musical work (an issue that will be explored more fully below), or might indicate that we have become accustomed and sensitized, through the dominance of recorded media, to experiencing music as a disembodied entity. For example, in their study of the effects of sensory modality on the experience of tension (as a measure of emotional response), Vines et al. (2006: 107) found that visual information in fact 'dampen[ed] the intensity of emotional response' in participants who were musically trained at some points during a test piece of music.

It appears that some people attend concerts to experience the musical work through live sound – and may begrudge elements of the performance situation which might distract from this primary motivator; while others attend to experience – and watch – the performance. Alperson (2008: 47) describes something similar when he writes of a 'double consciousness' involving 'the performance of the work and the performance in the work', although the data reported here suggests that some audience

members might instinctively attend to one of these aspects over another. Of the participants who mention wanting to concentrate on sound over visuals (Calum, Anna, Isabelle, Grace), the first three were among the four participants to attend the fewest classical performances over the six-month longitudinal period (see Table 5.1 in the previous chapter). Although this might be a function of age and taste (the four most frequent attenders were all retired; while Anna, Isabelle and Maria – the most infrequent attender – were three of the youngest attender interviewees), it is plausible to suggest that this sub-group of participants *can* get what they want from music by concentrated, ‘active’ listening to recorded music – Isabelle listening to *The Rite of Spring* with the volume turned up loud when at home on her own, or Calum, who predominantly engages in active, rather than background, listening ‘select[ing] a few CDs...as if to create my own kind of concert’ [A Calum I].

This trend is supported by further analysis of the questionnaire data: Figure 6.1 below shows how frequently respondents who either referred to sound quality (16) or visual stimuli (16) in their answer to Question 19 indicated that they attend classical performances.

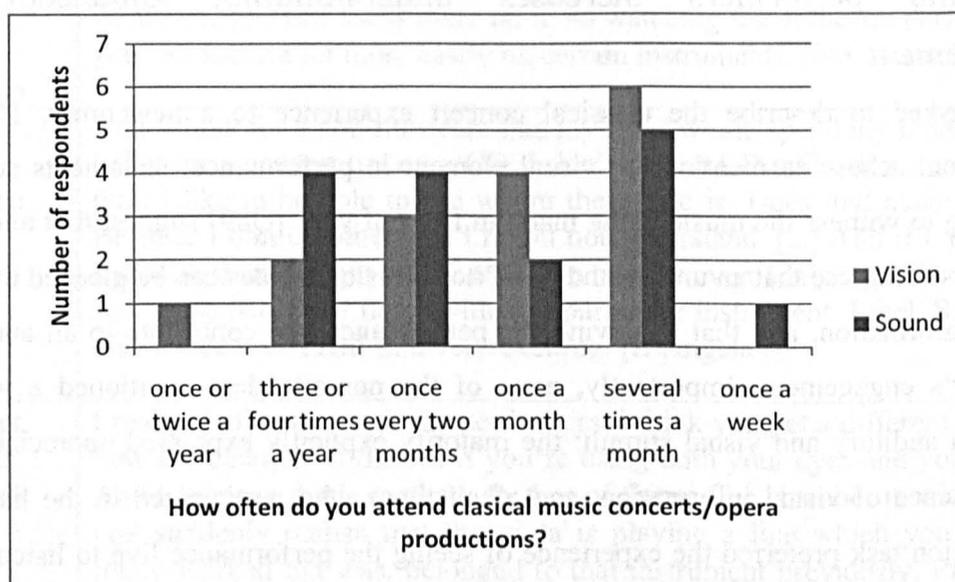


FIGURE 6.1 Clustered bar chart showing frequency of attendance at classical concerts by those who included visual stimuli or the quality of sound in responses to Question 19

While there seems to be a rising trend for respondents who place importance on visual stimuli to attend more frequently than once or twice a year (peaking at several times a

month), there is a less clear pattern for individuals for whom sound quality is important (although statistical tests to determine a difference in the frequency distribution of these two groups produced no significant results). One interpretation of this observation is that people who exhibit a preference for hearing works manifested in live sound are more likely to be selective about what they attend: they may already know or possess a few different favourite recorded interpretations of a given work, and so will only want to attend a live rendition that they know will be of high quality, to reduce the chance of comparing the performance negatively with recorded versions (Thompson, 2006). Conversely, those who value visual stimuli may be more motivated by the performative aspect of concert experience, and are perhaps less concerned with what is being performed, meaning that they are more likely to attend more frequently in order to obtain their 'fix' of liveness. But for these audience members, and others who less explicitly articulate a preference for visual stimuli, how, specifically, does being able to *see* a performance contribute to the experience of concert attendance?

6.4 Specific functions of visual stimuli within the concert hall

Watching performers increases understanding, knowledge or engagement

When asked to describe the classical concert experience to a newcomer, 15% of respondents chose to mention the visual element in performance: statements such as 'exciting to witness the music being made in front of you' [Q89] suggest that audience members recognise that an understanding of how music operates can be gleaned through visual information, and that observing the performance can contribute to an audience member's engagement. Importantly, none of the non-attenders mentioned a tension between auditory and visual stimuli: the majority explicitly expressed appreciation at the presence of visual information, and all of those who participated in the listening preparation task preferred the experience of seeing the performance live to listening to recordings of the works. Four non-attenders believed that visual information was an important part of the experience because it provided understanding and/or engagement:

When you can see the performers, and you can watch them and see what they're doing, and sometimes there might be central performer who's, you know, who's making a bit more of a performance, then I find that more enjoyable, and kind of also it helps me follow the music. [NA Emma I]

In Emma's case, being engaged by a performer's expressive gestures helped her to focus on the progression of the music. Stuart described being 'constantly surprised' by the structure and motivic development in the pieces performed in Concert 1 (especially in the Shostakovich symphony), but visual cues enabled him to find the experience exciting rather than bewildering:

the anticipation when you see everybody sort of prepare themselves, and then they launch into it. [murmurs of consent]. Particularly when you see the guy with the cymbals at the back [laughter] you know a big bit's coming! [laughter] [NA Dawn: Yeah] So yeah, that's great. [NA Stuart FG1]

These accounts therefore relate to Davidson's (1995) proposal that visual cues are a performer's most effective means of musical communication with non-musicians. Indeed, even Vines et al.'s (2006) sample of musically-trained participants used performers' movements to anticipate the beginning of new phrases (p. 105).

TABLE 6.3 *Sample responses on the use of visual stimuli for source-localization, from individuals with varying levels of listening and performing experience.*

Non-attender, non-musician	When you can actually watch, you know, the violin or the cello, or whatever, you can focus more on it, so watching the orchestra performing you can focus a lot more easily on certain instruments. [NA Stuart I]
Attender, non-musician	And I think for a non-musician like myself, I would spend my money on a ticket for a concert not on a CD. I don't have a CD collection, 'cos I like that, I like to be able to see where the music is. Does that make sense? Because I don't...otherwise I might not understand. [...] And if I am only listening then I might not hear all the bits, or even I might not be able to link those particular notes with that particular instrument, I feel. So being able to see it is, I still find very exciting. [A Angela I]
Attender, amateur musician	I really do like to watch the performers. I think you get a different idea of how the balance works out if you're using both your eyes and your ears. And I suppose that's particularly true of things like chamber music where you suddenly realise that the viola is playing a line which you hadn't really worked out was, belonged to that instrument previously. Probably bad ears or something, but you know it obviously does bring it to life. [A Grace I]

It was not only non-attender participants for whom visual information was an important means of providing understanding. Table 6.3 gives examples of individuals with varying levels of experience in classical music who all valued visual stimuli

because they believed they were more effective than purely auditory information in enabling the sources of sounds to be identified (or ‘source-localization’; Schutz, 2008). Despite attending concerts regularly, Angela evidently feels that her status as ‘non-musician’ impacts on her ability to appreciate what she hears in classical music. Even though incorrectly attributing a sound to a particular instrument when listening to a recording is unlikely to drastically alter her experience of a work, her perceived lack of knowledge and skill relating to music appreciation – and the role of visual stimuli in remedying this – shades her motivations for attending live performances. Interestingly, while Angela equates not always being able to identify the sources of sounds when purely listening to not being a musician, Grace (an amateur cellist and pianist) similarly notes the value of being able to watch a live performance in enabling source-localization. Grace’s comment about having ‘bad ears’ combined with Angela’s belief that without visual stimuli she ‘might not understand’ or ‘might not hear all the bits’ are reminiscent of a tendency by some of the non-attenders to attribute dislike of a piece of music to an internal fault (discussed in 4.1), in that they seem to stem from an idea that there is a ‘right’ way to hear classical music. Watching the performers seemed to be as important to those who possess considerable musical training as it was to other participants, although these appeared to be less swayed by concern about appreciating music in the ‘right’ way: an A Level music student described how the ‘experience of actually watching an orchestra/soloist perform a piece is vital to my understanding of music’ [Q43], while Cathy, a peripatetic brass teacher and regular amateur performer, specifically spoke of watching trumpeter Alison Balsom’s performance from a player’s perspective, observing both her technique and her deportment on stage.

Seeing performers’ energy/commitment increases audience members’ engagement/enjoyment

An unexpectedly prominent theme was the enjoyment that both attenders and non-attenders gleaned from watching performers who themselves seem to be enjoying, and engaged in, the performance. 10% of questionnaire respondents explained their enjoyment rating for the Cadogan Hall concert (Question 18a) by mentioning a sense of energy, commitment, or enthusiasm from the performers, while 9% of respondents mentioned performer involvement, enthusiasm, or interaction (with other performers and/or with the audience) when identifying factors that contribute to their enjoyment of concert experience in general (Question 19; see Table 6.1 above for full response

categories to Questions 18a and 19). This adds weight to findings by Thompson (2007) in which, when asked to identify the factor most important in determining enjoyment, audience members most frequently cited engagement in the music, with ‘around half of these responses [specifying] that the perceived engagement of *the players themselves* was paramount’ (p. 32). Similarly, research on music and emotion by Gabrielsson (2001: 443) found that respondents’ strong emotional responses to music were frequently attributed ‘to the qualities of the performance – the skill, concentration, and involvement displayed by the musician(s)’. Indeed, the category ‘energy/enthusiasm/commitment’ from responses to Question 18a (see Table 6.4) could equally be viewed as a sub-category of performance quality, as all of these responses were coded under quality of performance too. The responses coded under ‘performer involvement/enthusiasm/interaction’ from Question 19 were slightly different in scope: while some respondents valued ‘enthusiastic performances’ [Q95/Daniel], ‘the passion of the soloists’ [Q124] or ‘a little humour creeping in now and then’ [Q131], others were more focused on the interaction between the performers themselves: on being able to watch the musicians ‘working together’ [Q120] (this is explored in more detail below).

TABLE 6.4 *Sample responses to Question 18a (‘Please explain the overall enjoyment rating you have given [the Cadogan Hall concert]’) coded under ‘energy/enthusiasm/excitement’*

Sub-theme	Sample responses
Enthusiasm	Wonderful music. Wonderful performers. Sheer excellence and enthusiasm of orchestra and conductor. [Q131] Lively, intelligent playing; superb soloists; orchestra players looked happy! [Q28/Grace]
Energy	The orchestra and conductor gave splendid performances with great musicality and plenty of freshness and energy. Superb soloists. The Shostakovich was exhilarating! [Q85] Plenty of verve and panache. Good ensemble work from the orchestra. [Q140]
Commitment	I dislike the Stravinsky (I dislike <u>all</u> Stravinsky) so didn’t expect to enjoy it: the other pieces were played with skill and commitment. [Q93] I enjoyed the fact that the orchestra members ‘went for it’ and consequently the result was occasionally ragged but fresh. [Q96]

Overall, these responses categories seem to identify facets of performance that are easier to discern in the live context than from listening to a recording. These theme categories are not solely visual constructs, but the language respondents used to describe performers' engagement or enthusiasm was at times couched in visual terms, for example as when a respondent described 'seeing the commitment and enthusiasm being displayed in the individual pieces' [Q49]. Whilst a recording is undoubtedly capable of conveying a 'committed' as opposed to an 'un-committed' performance, a sense of energy, perceptions of the performers' involvement, and in particular enthusiasm are all easier to discern when using both auditory and visual information. Being able to observe a performer's body movements (Davidson, 1993) has been shown to more effectively convey a performer's intended expressive manner than sound alone, while a case study of popular music performers' non-verbal behaviours by Kurosawa and Davidson (2005) has hinted at the role of performers' facial expressions in the communication of their musical intent. Juchniewicz (2008) found that ratings of performance quality increased in line with performer's degree of body movements (from 'no movement', to 'head and facial movement', to 'full body movement') when the auditory stimulus was the same in each condition. In addition, Broughton and Steven's (2009: 148) research on the effects of body movement on appraisals of solo marimba performance indicates that presentation of performance 'through auditory and visual channels offers enhanced opportunities [for the musician] to engage and communicate with an audience'. It is plausible, therefore, to suggest that visual stimuli can also heighten perceptions of a performer's engagement, commitment or enthusiasm – aspects of the performance that were important to a proportion of this particular sample of concert attenders.

A sense of commitment was noted by one respondent at the Cadogan Hall concert, writing of 'the look of satisfaction in the faces of the players as they do what they do so well' [Q47], indicating that in this case performance quality and performer engagement are seen as distinct but related qualities which in combination lead to audience enjoyment. The idea of visible commitment is developed by Angela, here talking about a performance of Handel's opera *Flavio* which stood out as a particular highlight of her concert attendance during the longitudinal period:

partly it's the fact that the performers were totally into what they were doing.
...and they seemed to be enjoying the music, and then there was this freshness

about it. Not something that you'd heard time and time again. Yes. And it came, there wasn't any barrier between the musicians and the audience, you know. And Handel does this thing about emotion so well. The narrative is neither here nor there! [laughs] It's just you know a silly story, but...if you're going to do emotion then you have to be able to communicate the emotion don't you. In the music, but also in your physique, and in your commitment, you know. There's no point in singing about somebody who is mad with jealousy if you're standing there in a DJ looking rather pompous. [A Angela 3m]

As this quote suggests, a visible demonstration by the musicians that they are committed and involved in the performance serves to validate the uniqueness of live performance that audience members so value (see section 6.2). If the musicians look tired or uninspired, however, then they create the impression that what they are doing in performance is routine, even mundane – it is not the special, memorable event that an individual audience member can 'own' or treasure, and simultaneously calls into question whether the performance they have been producing is a 'fresh' or 'unique' interpretation.

Often, in orchestral performance at least, the musicians' work may be tiring and routine (Parasuraman & Purohit, 2000), and individual players may have little scope to shape the overall interpretation of the work (Brodsky, 2006; Dobson, in press). But the data presented here suggests that even if this is the case musicians are more likely to retain their audiences by *looking* as though they are engaged and involved in the performance. This may involve making an effort to look at the audience during performance: Antonietti et al. (2009) conducted experiments in which the performer (playing non-classical pieces) was instructed to turn his head to face the 'audience' (in the form of a video camera) with varying degrees of frequency, and at regular, predetermined intervals during the piece (i.e. not at structurally significant moments). They found that directing the gaze towards the audience increased observers' ratings of the performer's communication and expressivity, and suggest that looking at the audience 'might convey the implicit message that the performer is present and performing especially for his audience' (Antonietti et al., 2009: 104).

From one attender's perspective, the extent to which performers visually communicate enthusiasm or enjoyment influences the degree to which audience members feel included and involved in a live event as active participants:

And what kind of things are important in a concert in order for you to enjoy it?

The enthusiasm of the performers I think, that's absolutely paramount. If they look as if they're enjoying it, and they can convey that sense of enjoyment to the audience and to me, then it's made it into a really live experience. Quite distinct from listening to a CD or a DVD. This is something which you can involve yourself in. And if the performers are involved as well, and enthusiastic, then you feel that you've really gone to something which is a very satisfying, integrated experience, rather than just sort of looking at it from the outside.
[A Daniel I]

Observing the energy and enthusiasm of performers was also a key point for the majority of the non-attenders, who described enjoyment and excitement 'watching people getting so into their music' [NA Tara I], and 'see[ing] how they put...emotion onto what they're doing, and how passionate they can be...how strongly they move when they do something' [NA Carla I]. Conversely, Tara noted that at Concert 3, where the participants' sightlines to the stage were extremely limited, she found difficulty 'connect[ing] with the music...because I wandered a lot more because I couldn't really see what was going on' [NA Tara FG2] – therefore adding weight to Thompson et al.'s (2005: 204) belief that 'visual aspects of music personalize the music, drawing performers and listeners closer together in a shared experience'.

This poses the question of whether a performer's internal and/or projected state, presented primarily through gesture and visual cues, can affect the way audience members respond to the performance: if the performer seems engaged, does this increase the likelihood of the audience, too, being engrossed in the performance? Non-attender Toby, for example, enjoyed Concert 1 the most because...

the performer gave a really visceral, exuberant...[performance]. Yeah I really felt that the pianist was in the moment there, you know. She wasn't just playing a piece, she really sort of, she'd lost consciousness of what was going on around her. [NA Toby I]

...and at other points he describes how 'it was great watching the pianist, [...] that was theatrical. The way she was stamping at the keys and everything, I hadn't realised that that could be quite so engaging' [NA Toby FG1], noting that 'it was actually quite a transfixing performance to watch as well as to listen to' [NA Toby I]. Toby perceives

the performer as being transported; meanwhile, he is transfixed.³⁰ This finding could be interpreted as evidence of the audience member as merely passive *voyeur*, but the status of the audience member can also be conceptualised in somewhat more participatory terms through consideration of the phenomenon of emotional contagion (see Hatfield et al., 1994). The theory of emotional contagion suggests that perceiving motor expressions in another person can create the same muscular response in the observer, so that we mimic the emotional states we see in others (Scherer & Zentner, 2001: 370). It has been proposed that emotional responses to music itself can be explained through emotional contagion, based on evidence that emotions can be ‘caught’ from speech as well as facial expressions, and that we therefore respond to the ‘voice-like aspects of music’ – although this idea is still ‘somewhat speculative’ (Juslin, 2009: 136). The findings of this chapter indicate that when thinking about the effects of emotional contagion in music, greater consideration should be given to the roles of the performer, rather than merely the composer (cf. Scherer & Zentner, 2001).

The ‘mirror neuron’ system suggested by neurological research over the past two decades has been proposed as an underlying mechanism of emotional contagion (Gallese, 2006; Preston & de Waal, 2002). Through the system, the observation of actions in another person causes mirror neurons to fire in the same action regions in the brain of the observer: ‘the theory holds that at a basic, unconscious, and automatic level, understanding the actions, intentions, and emotions of another person does not require that we explicitly *think* about feeling them – our brain has a built-in mechanism for *feeling* them as we feel our own intentions, actions, and emotions’ (Overy & Molnar-Szakacs, 2009: 491). Cathy (a trumpeter) describes a remarkably similar experience when talking about watching Alison Balsom’s performance of the Haydn trumpet concerto:

I like [Cadogan Hall] because you can get up really close to the performers [...] And then so I’m like looking right down on her, you know I can see her fingering, I can see her breathing, and I can feel, I almost feel like I’m sort of playing it with her if you know what I mean! [laughs] [A Cathy I].

³⁰ Toby’s account of the pianist’s performance is reminiscent of Elsdon’s (2006) analysis of a performance by jazz pianist Keith Jarrett, in which he argues that Jarrett’s physical gestures ‘visually [represent] what it is to be “in the groove”’, suggesting that Jarrett ‘appears to be played “by” the music rather than playing the music’ (pp. 203–4).

Witnessing interaction: the effects of visible collaboration in performance

The analysis of data suggests that audience members like to see a sense of the performers' human qualities: they like to glean musicians' personalities, and observe how they interact (see also O'Sullivan, 2009). In orchestral performance it is perhaps the most difficult to obtain a sense of performers' personalities, or to ascertain whether they are enjoying the performance: partly because of the number of people on stage, and, Auslander (2006) would argue, because the performance rôle (or persona) of most orchestral musicians (and particularly section players) does not require being noticeable. Respondents' comments about the enthusiasm or engagement of musicians at the Cadogan Hall concert were often made about the solo performers and conductor, but were also offered frequently in general terms about the performances as a whole (thereby implicitly including the orchestra), although individual orchestral players were rarely picked out. Daniel expressed a preference for chamber music because 'you can watch people interact, and feel much more involved with them than you are in an orchestral concert' [A Daniel I], while a questionnaire respondent similarly identified his enjoyment of concert attendance in...

Feeling part of it – good sound, intimate, passion and good chemistry between performers. [Q60]

In having two soloists, the Shostakovich concerto performed at the Cadogan Hall concert increased the elements of personality and interaction to a level that might more often be identified in chamber music performance, meaning that as well as the 'visual interaction between conductor, soloist and orchestra' [Q49] that may usually be present,

the two [soloists] together, how they interacted, was very, very interesting. And also the play between two people, not just the two instruments, the whole personality that played into it, that was very good. [A Isabelle I]

These responses suggest that observing interaction between musicians enables or consolidates a perception of the performers as social agents, and therefore affirms the performance as a social process which audience members too can participate in and 'feel part of' [Q60]. Furthermore, through highlighting that performance is a process, visual interaction between the performers may also reinforce the fact that the performance being witnessed is a unique one: making evident that its creation is reliant

on the collaboration of the performers on stage, rather than being a repeatable recorded 'product' (see section 6.2). Small's (1998) *Musicking* argues that because of the authority placed on the musical work, 'the act of performance itself is no longer central' in the classical concert (p. 154), and these findings about the role of visible performer interaction relate to what he calls 'the great paradox of the symphony concert':

that such passionate outpourings of sound are being created by staid-looking ladies and gentlemen dressed uniformly in black and white, making the minimal amount of bodily gesture that is needed to produce the sounds, their expressionless faces concentrated on a piece of paper on a stand before them, while their listeners sit motionless and equally expressionless listening to the sounds. (Small, 1998: 155)

As the data here have shown, Small's description of orchestral musicians' 'expressionless faces' and limited body movement is clearly something of a generalization, and while the degree to which performers display visible enthusiasm may be a feature that varies between orchestras (and even between sections within the same orchestra), the performers' enjoyment or involvement was clearly evident to, and valued by, a proportion of the Cadogan Hall audience. Underlying Small's account, however, is a key difference between orchestral and chamber performance: the role occupied by the conductor. Because of the forces involved in symphonic performance, and the way in which the orchestra is laid out, it is impossible for orchestral musicians to interact with eye contact at all points in the performance where communication would be useful (Cottrell, 2007). Instead, the conductor, who has the greatest 'licence to respond physically to the music' (ibid.: 78), is the one person on stage who maintains regular eye contact with a substantial proportion of the orchestra, with his gestures then 'mediating between the performers and providing a substitute for the direct eye contact that they themselves are unable to make' (ibid.: 86). Crucially, the audience rarely sees the conductor's face during the performance: they may see players looking *at* the conductor, but are not able to witness the player-conductor interaction itself (cf. Adorno, 1976; DeNora, 2003).

Observing social interaction on stage is perhaps particularly resonant for audience members because music performance is one of the few domains in which it is possible to watch other people on stage who are playing not a character, but *themselves* (cf. Frith, 1996): one respondent noted her interest in observing the extra-musical

'dynamics on stage, and, you know, see[ing] how different people sit, how women are different to men' [A Maria I]. As Sawyer (2005: 55) suggests, 'we like music because it represents, in crystallized form, the essence of human social life' (see also Cook, 2003), and therefore watching live performance, in one sense, could be conceptualised as a legitimised form of people-watching. The performers are not in costume as such; indeed, male performers' 'uniform' of dinner jackets has been associated with the idea that 'good' performers are notable by their absence of presence on stage, allowing more of the audience's attention to be devoted to the transmission of the work itself (Cook, 1998: 25-6). But, in their dress of standardised black and white, it could also be argued that the differences between individual performers are more easily observable; moreover, the connotations of 'service' instigated by wearing a dinner jacket (Cook, 1998, notes the similarities in dress between male performers and waiters, for example) may encourage audience members who wish to fully embrace their role as spectators, rather than merely 'listeners': as, after all, they have paid for the privilege of watching the performance and the performers.³¹

A key element of this spectacle is that while the performers look 'like us', and are clearly not on stage with the purpose of playing a character other than themselves, they nonetheless execute tasks of a complexity that the majority of audience members might not imagine ever being able to personally achieve – despite often possessing amateur skill and/or considerable knowledge about *what* is being performed (cf. Frith, 1996; Said, 1991). Classical performers are therefore intrinsically intriguing: it seems that rather than observing their uniformity, some audience members wish to be privy to their quirks, seeking proximity to the stage because it allows them to observe the performers in detail: 'the pulse on the neck' [A Cathy I], or 'their movements, fingers, face expression' [Q110/Isabelle]. (The role of proximity to the stage is discussed further in Chapter 7.)

For audience members who do not seek a primarily auditory experience (see section 6.3), visual details therefore enhance the concert experience: allowing audience members to regard performers as *people*. This is perhaps particularly of importance

³¹Of course, for other types of audience member, responses to performer dress may be very different, connoting a sense of elitism and perhaps causing them to question whether they themselves are dressed with enough formality for the occasion.

because classical performance is one of the few Western musical genres where performances take place without musicians verbally acknowledging the audience as a matter of routine. It may be that observing the musicians visually while not being able to hear them speak even feeds a degree of intrigue about the performers' personalities. The emphasis some respondents placed on gleaning information about the performers' states when describing their enjoyment of concert experience is interesting, as a tendency to (literally) see performers as 'people' runs counter to the work-concept (Goehr, 1992), which, through placing the ultimate authority on the work created by the composer, 'suggests that performance should be self-effacing' (Clarke, 2002: 194). The findings in this chapter suggest a need for a reconsideration of the value that the work itself holds in the performance event, relative to more performative aspects of the experience. As Abbate (2004: 512) has noted, 'the experience of listening to a live performance solicits attention more for the performers and the event and far less for the work than is perhaps generally admitted'.

Taking an extreme position, one could suggest that one of the primary functions of the work – within the context of the concert hall – is as a vehicle for audience members to experience *performance* (Small, 1998). For example, this may be one potential means of encouraging new audience members to attend classical music concerts: by emphasising the excitement of watching skilled musicians perform in a live, unamplified context. Whilst it might seem obvious to assume that the implications of these findings for musicians are that only positive effects can be reaped from purposefully communicating with the audience, or from not suppressing social behaviours on stage, it may be that the enduring legacy of the work-concept is perhaps even more tangible for musicians than for audiences, and that a complex balancing act is at large in the process of performing classical music. For example, just as Clarke (2002: 194), writing about the work-performance dialectic, notes 'a deep-seated uncertainty about what one is, or should be, listening to'; from the performer's perspective, Tomes (2004) describes ambivalence about whether she should be performing simply the work, or performing herself-in-the-work:

Perhaps this straddling of the private and public worlds is what makes classical chamber music ambiguous for the performer. Should I, as a performer, relate to the composer or to the audience? To the other players? Which aspect of the music is more important, the public or the intimate? Should we look or not look involved? (Tomes, 2004: 171)

However, that the effects of the act of performance are heard (and seen) by the listener is to an extent inescapable (Clarke, 2002: 194). Somewhat disconcertingly for performers who view their role primarily as enablers of a faithful transmission of the composer's work, recent research has indicated that observers' ratings of their liking for a piece of music increased in conditions where the performer turned his head and addressed his gaze to the audience, in comparison to performances in which the performer was instructed not to do so (Antonietti et al., 2009). Superficially, this finding would suggest that what is played is not of great importance, as long as a performer makes an effort to visibly communicate with the audience. However, I would argue that this view undermines the role that the inherent nature of classical works themselves plays in providing a certain framework of performance conditions that may not be found in other genres of Western music. The conditions forming this framework (not exclusively) include: the intense demands the works place on performers, and thus the capacity of the music for facilitating a display of skill, virtuosity and commitment; the abstract (as opposed to programmatic) nature of most non-vocal works, which enables the emotion and expression conveyed by the performer to be attributed in part to their internal state, rather than being more explicitly directed by narrative; and that being able to hear different performers playing the same work is the norm (unlike in popular music performance, with the exception of 'covers'), which enables a separation of 'the music' and 'the performance', while simultaneously acknowledging the value of both.

6.5 Conclusions

In section 6.1 it was noted that through identifying aspects of live experience that contribute to the enjoyment of concert attendance, the respondents also more clearly articulated their conceptions of the meaning of the term 'performance quality'. A unifying feature of the topics covered in this chapter is the importance respondents attributed to performers or performances which conveyed a sense of responsiveness. This was present in accounts of the indeterminacy of live performance, with some respondents valuing performances which were responsive to the nature of the live event in creating a seemingly 'fresh' or unique interpretation. However, the importance also attributed to technical refinement and prowess in performance must not be underplayed: both in itself, and in the fact that a performer needs considerable technical facility in

order to communicate musical ideas effectively, and therefore to exhibit responsiveness to the performance situation (Dobson, in press).

Responsiveness was important too for respondents whose judgements of performance quality were influenced by the visual stimuli available in the live context, particularly where performers who appeared 'involved' in, or enthusiastic about, the performance contributed to a sense of performer-audience communication, enhancing respondents' engagement or enjoyment. Overall, I suggest that discerning a sense of responsiveness from the performers heightens audience members' evaluations of performance quality by affirming the concert's nature as a unique – and, in some respects, *social* – event. Creating a sense of responsiveness perhaps makes audience members more aware of their role in the contingency of the event: if they were not present, the musicians would have no one to respond (or perform) to. Therefore, this underlying component of responsiveness in many respondents' accounts suggests that it may be beneficial to expand existing notions of performance quality, taking into consideration the degree to which the performance is perceived as a shared process in which the audience can play a role (cf. Radbourne et al., 2009). Vital to this component of performance quality, therefore, is the first-hand, direct experience of performer-audience communication enabled by the live context.

The findings in this chapter indicate the importance of the presence of visual information in some concert attenders' underlying motivations to attend classical performances. Additionally, data from the non-attenders again suggests that seeing classical music live is a more accessible entry point to classical music consumption than merely listening to recordings, primarily because of the understanding and engagement that the presence of visual stimuli provides. While there is a wide body of literature concerned with experimentally testing the effects of performers' body movement and gesture on observers' ratings of emotional response or the performers' perceived expressivity, the present study is among the first to elicit data on audience members' experiences of watching classical performances in a real-world setting. The effects of visual stimuli from the performers appear to be multidimensional: as well as their gestures and body movements conveying expressive intent, enjoyment and engagement are also engendered by watching performers who themselves appear committed, enthusiastic, or 'involved', irrespective of the emotional content of the music.

Importantly, for some respondents seeing performers interact contributed to their assessments of the degree to which the performance was committed or communicative, highlighting that experimental studies of the effects of performers' visual cues should be extended beyond their current focus on observers' ratings of performances by a solo musician (e.g. Dahl & Friberg, 2007; Vines et al., 2006).

It is somewhat of a truism that the effects of visual stimuli in the experience of concert attendance are likely to assume greater significance now that the majority of people experience classical music predominantly through recorded media (Philip, 2004; Wanderley & Vines, 2006), and therefore without a live performance's associated visual cues. It is important to consider, however, that contemporary listening practices themselves (shaped by the miniaturisation and portability of playback devices, such as mp3 players; see Bergh & DeNora, 2009; Bull, 2007) may hold the capability to alter how audience members experience the process of listening within the concert hall. As Clarke (2007: 63) notes, listening to recorded music 'leaves vision "unattached" and uncomfortably redundant': unless listening with closed eyes, we are always seeing *something* while we hear, which means that when listening via a portable device we are subject to an array of potential juxtapositions between what we hear and what we see (ibid.: 51).

If this is the norm in the daily listening experiences of a given audience member, then being in the concert hall environment where the sources of sound and vision are organically associated may have a number of possible effects, and would be an interesting research avenue to explore further. For example, research on iPod users by Bull (2007) identifies a sense of omnipotence reported by some users when listening to music while navigating their urban environment, with their perceptions of the surrounding world rapidly altered by each new song they hear. One of Bull's participants describes how listening on her iPod...

[makes] the world look smaller – I am much bigger and more powerful listening to music. The world is generally a better place, or at the very least it is sympathetic to my mood. (Bull, 2007: 48)

From the listener's perspective, then, the visual world responds to their internal experience – especially as, when listening over headphones, the source of the music

does feel internal, 'conjur[ing] up a virtual musical space that is primarily located inside the listener's head – an extreme of individual, autonomous listening' (Clarke, 2007: 65). Thus the process of listening via headphones (where the sound seemingly emanates from within, shaping your perception of the outside world, which in turn appears to respond to what you hear) is in vast contrast to the outwardly less autonomous process of listening within the concert hall, where the sources of sounds are visible and externalised, meaning that the listener, now cocooned from the outside world and in fact required to stay still, is the one forced to (internally) respond. Although merely speculation, this may be another underlying reason for why responsiveness is such a valued part of the live experience: the listener cannot escape responding to what they hear, but if the performers appear to be visibly communicative, then the concert more closely resembles the dynamics of social life which may constitute a daily accompaniment to a listener's musical experiences from recorded media.

Returning to Auslander's (2008) thesis on the status of 'liveness' in a mediatised age, the main findings in this chapter show the disadvantages of Auslander's approach in neglecting to consider the possible experiential distinctions that audiences might discern between live and mediatised forms (Reason, 2004). As the discussion directly above shows, live experience may still be defined in terms of its more culturally-dominant mediatised counterpart (see Clarke, 2007), yet this fact does not preclude audience members from finding the experience of hearing and seeing music performed live as qualitatively different from listening to recorded media, nor from articulating the distinct value held by live performance within their personal repertoire of listening practices. And so, while Auslander (2008: 184) rejects the premise that live and mediatised performances are 'ontologically different', the present study has shown that, in the case of the experiences of classical music audiences at least, this supposition does not necessarily hold true.

This may partly be because in classical music the dominant medium of mediatised culture is still the audio recording; in comparison with popular music, classical performances are rarely seen in audio-visual format on television, and unlike in live popular performances, mediatised elements (with the exception of large screens at outdoor events) are rarely found in classical concerts. Yet even when comparing a live classical performance to a live television broadcast of the same concert, the responses of

the audience members surveyed in this study indicate that watching the two events would be experientially different, with, for instance, audience-performer communication perceived 'at a remove', a diminished sense of contribution to the contingency of the event, and a lack of autonomy over the visual cues supplied. This difference between the two forms is augmented still further when considering the different ways one might *behave* during the two performances. When watching a live broadcast from the BBC Proms on television one might also talk, flick through the day's newspaper, get up to make a cup of tea, receive a phone call, and so on. With the exception of perusing the programme notes, it is rare that one would do those things while in the audience at the Royal Albert Hall.

* * *

So, how does the live classical concert situation, in restricting certain types of behaviour, affect the experience of concert attendance? The next chapter considers the role played by the listening environment in mediating audience members' enjoyment of a classical performance. It explores the kinds of listening experiences the classical concert hall can provide, especially in comparison to the more outwardly social musical events of other genres. And while we have seen in this chapter that audience members value a sense of communication with the *performers*, the next chapter explores the extent to which audience members consider concert attendance as a social activity – how do they relate to their fellow listeners?

CHAPTER 7

Affordances of the classical concert: Internal processes within a shared experience

In Chapter 6 we saw that concert-goers make an active choice to attend live classical performances, distinguishing between the attributes of live and recorded listening. But the features identified in Chapter 6 that are unique to live *classical* performance are most likely outnumbered by those which classical concerts share with performances of other musical idioms: the enjoyment of watching a saxophonist's virtuosity up close at a jazz gig, for example, or of hearing a pop singer spontaneously sing a verse differently, deviating from the recorded version his or her fans have previously heard. Chapter 6 therefore tells us more about the experience of witnessing a live performance (albeit from the perspective of classical music listeners, shaped by the particular features of performance that they value) than about the experience of attending a classical concert *per se*. Yet as performance events, classical concerts are distinctive: with restrictive, ritualised codes of behaviour for audience members and performers alike (Cook, 1998; Small, 1998; as previously outlined in 2.2). And so, despite the way in which respondents in Chapter 6 described the experience of live classical listening in enthralling terms – stressing the 'all-encompassing' nature of this 'immediate' experience – the static, rigid behaviour of classical audiences, would probably *not* suggest to an uninitiated observer that the process of listening in the concert hall is in any way an 'active' event for the spectator.

In areas of both music (see e.g. Cook, 2001) and sociology (DeNora, 2000, 2003), the musical 'work' has been treated as a point of resistance from which to forge new paths in how we think about music (as performance, as embodied action, as a means of self-regulation). Yet at times, in the move away from the privileging of the musical work, the practice and possible meanings of listening to classical music within the concert hall seem to have unwittingly become tangled up en route, most likely because the stereotypically 'contemplative' mode of listening at classical concerts has

long been associated with the authority of the musical work (Goehr, 1992; Johnson, 1995). For example, DeNora (2003) writes that:

the concern with [cultural] repertoires leads away from thinking about music in isolation from other features of social situations and settings – the traditional way in which music is conceptualised by musicology. On the contrary, most music perception occurs well away from the concert hall. It is integrated into the fabric of social settings and ongoing interactions. By turning attention to these necessarily grounded topics and their focus on social performance, it is possible to pose the question of music as a technology of ‘control’ in terms of its mechanisms in real time and space. (DeNora, 2003: 119)

In stressing the importance of considering music’s roles within a far wider range of social settings, suggesting that we need to move away from musicology’s preoccupation with viewing music as text – as objects dissociated from the human agency involved in their production and reception – DeNora’s account also highlights a tacit assumption observable in discourse on music more generally: that the practice of listening within the concert hall is somehow ‘asocial’ and therefore a reflection of musicology’s traditionally work-centred approach. But while individuals’ engagement with music *may* primarily take place away from the concert hall (cf. Dibben, 2003), the classical concert is nonetheless a social event itself, and one in which individuals have actively chosen to operate – presumably because of the specific ‘mechanisms in real time and space’ of hearing music in this context (DeNora, 2003: 119).

DeNora’s (2000) *Music in Everyday Life* was influential in providing an account of the many ways in which people choose to use (mostly recorded) music: including as a mechanism for structuring their time, enhancing or ‘working through’ a particular emotional state, regulating their energy levels, or as a means of articulating a sense of self. Using the concept of ‘affordance’ (‘the reflexive process whereby users configure themselves as agents in and through the ways they relate to objects and configure objects in and through the ways they – as agents – behave towards those objects’; DeNora, 2000: 40), DeNora shows how individuals are active themselves in engineering music’s effects to structure events within their daily lives: because of music’s ‘interpretive flexibility’, for instance, an individual may in fact turn to the same piece of music on very different occasions, using it for varied means (ibid.: 43; cf. Gabrielsson & Lindström Wik, 2003). As yet, though, this idea has not been extended to look in similar terms at how individuals may choose to ‘use’ live classical listening: it seems

that the functions of live listening have been under-theorised and under-researched (see also Pitts, 2005a: 96). Indeed, in a chapter within the recent *Oxford Handbook of Music Psychology* on individuals' motivations for choosing to hear music, Sloboda et al. (2009: 431) categorise 'niches' in existing literature that cover music's uses for travel, physical work, brain work, body work, and emotional work, before a final category of 'attendance at live performance events'. As they note, while the functions of recorded listening have been well-documented, 'the live performance situation and the audience's response to it are only beginning to be understood from a psychological perspective' (ibid.: 437). So, then, in the context of the categories outlined above, what kind of 'work' can attending a classical concert enable or afford?

While Chapter 6 focused on aspects of the musical experience that are enhanced by the live performance context, this chapter draws more explicitly on ideas from music sociology, considering whether classical concert-going can be seen as part of a repertoire of individuals' uses of music as a 'technology of the self' (DeNora, 2000). It questions whether there is something more active about concert-goers' apparent passivity in the concert hall: do classical concert attenders identify the concert hall in any way as a social setting, seeing the performance as a collective event? Or do they attend for a primarily individual experience – and if so, what might this constitute? This chapter therefore also aims to build on recent research by O'Sullivan (2009) which identified a tension in concert attenders' accounts between seeking an individual or collective experience (see Chapter 2), but here uses a larger sample of concert attenders to investigate these features of concert experience in more detail.

This chapter begins by considering respondents' attitudes towards the behaviour codes found at classical concerts – an aspect of concert attendance that has only exacerbated the perception of the listening experience as a passive act, though requiring that audience members do not talk or move while the performance is in progress. I then consider concert attendance as an individual experience, looking at the forms of internal 'action' that respondents identified and sought in live classical listening. The extent to which concert attendance is viewed as a social or shared experience is explored next, with additional reference to aspects of classical concert venues that can contribute to a perception of the concert hall as a site for shared, as well as purely individual, experiences.

7.1 'Good' audience behaviour as a facilitator of focused attention

Sharing the concert experience with a 'well-behaved audience' [Q139] was surprisingly important to concert-goers, and even to some non-attenders. As shown in Table 6.1 in the previous chapter, 10% of respondents to Question 19 identified good audience behaviour as a contributor to their enjoyment of concert attendance; a proportion that exceeds that for both familiarity with and novelty of the music (9% and 7% respectively; discussed in Chapter 5), and performer involvement, enthusiasm or interaction (9%; see Chapter 6). Audience behaviour was especially important for some respondents in maintaining an absence of distractions. They stressed the importance of 'a quiet and attentive audience' [Q93]; one objected to the concert hall being 'a bit stuffy with strange protocol' yet nonetheless still expressed a desire to 'ban those who cough at the quietest moments!' [Q22]. There was a consensus among those who commented on audience behaviour that 'the audience really ought to make itself not noticeable during the music itself' [A Anna I], even if their actions do not audibly detract from the sound produced by the performers:

what really annoys me is if there are people who are coughing or fiddling around or just, I'm aware of them not paying attention. That distracts me, even if it might not make any noise. [...] So I'd like a well-disciplined audience, who doesn't clap in the wrong places and all that kind of thing. [laughs] [A Isabelle I]

As will be discussed in more detail in 7.3, this kind of distracting behaviour was interpreted as an indication that others in the audience were showing a lack of respect both for the music/performance and for other listeners. This meant that those who had been distracted were uncomfortably aware of a division between the ways that different people within the concert hall were responding to the listening experience.

There were, however, distinctions in how a 'well-trained' audience was conceptualised. Some, unlike Isabelle above, differentiated distracting actions during the performance from difficulties newer audience members may experience in knowing when to applaud. Audience behaviour was important to Maria (even though she thought she sounded 'snobby' for saying so), but she clearly distinguished between actions that are inconsiderate and those that are merely misinformed:

if people are on their Blackberry, that really upsets me. But if people clap a bit you know when they're not supposed to it's fine. But I think it's nicer if people kind of know the etiquette. But in a way I think it's more important for people to go and enjoy it, rather than know when to clap. [A Maria I]

Similarly, although the non-attenders appreciated the feeling of freedom and lack of restrictions at *The Night Shift* (Concert 2), they were aware of the potential for audience behaviour to obscure the performance within this more informal event, with some describing how 'it was almost a little bit annoying with people eating or chatting all the way through' [NA Tara I].

Given findings from Chapter 6 which indicate that audience members like to see evidence of the performers as 'people', it is slightly incongruous that concert-goers lament any involuntary *audience* behaviour (i.e. coughing or sneezing) that betrays their own humanity. Actions such as using a mobile phone (albeit silently) or eating noisily during the performance can be more readily understood as voluntary, and therefore as demonstrating a lack of respect and/or attention to the music and performers. The effects of both sets of behaviours are more salient in classical performance than other genres because the instruments are rarely amplified and will often encompass a vast dynamic range. But attitudes towards classical music also differ from other genres in attributing a greater level of importance to the musical *work* and its composer (as discussed in section 6.4 of the previous chapter): despite valuing the performative element inherent in live concerts, a significant proportion of respondents still attributed 'programming' or 'the music' to their enjoyment of concert experience (30% of responses to Question 19). From this perspective, it is easy to see how musicologists have written about the passive receptivity of classical concert-goers: they attend to appreciate and experience works created by composers and recreated by performers – thus celebrating the creativity and skill of others – but then seem to be denied any humanity or outward action themselves in doing so: they have to suppress being human in order to experience the work/performance.

This element could be conceptualised in less passive terms if we consider that a quiet, attentive audience enables a more active internal experience for the listener.³²

³² Sloboda and Juslin (2001: 454) suggest that 'in one sense, the still silent member of a classical audience is no less active than the performer on the stage. It is simply that the form, vectors, and boundaries of that activity are different.'

Instead of using music to facilitate and accompany physical activities through ‘background’ (rather than ‘active’) listening (see e.g. Bull, 2007; DeNora, 2000), audience members’ engagement with the music – and with the performance – can be heightened through lack of interruptions or distractions, meaning that the behaviour codes of classical concerts enable a degree of concentration on the music that may rarely be possible elsewhere. Therefore audience members are not necessarily forced to suppress their responses to the experience through adherence to the concert hall’s rules; rather, their responses to the music are just less visible during the performance. The focus is on an internal, rather than external, experience, with the concert situation providing, at the least, ‘a chance to sit and listen in detail to classical music’ [Q120]. As Table 7.1 shows, for some respondents the live experience and the restrictions of the concert hall were intertwined, with the concentration enabled by the listening context augmenting respondents’ engagement in the live performance.

TABLE 7.1 *Sample responses from Question 19 on live listening enabling concentration*

Respondent	Sample response
Q57	The immediacy of a live performance. Also you have to sit and listen whereas if listening to a CD or radio you can do other things.
Q72	The opportunity to concentrate on the music and to enjoy the immediacy of a live performance.
Q107	It's total concentration on the music and musicians who are performing.
Q85	CDs are great but the live concert enhances the experience because it is visually interesting and I concentrate more.

Some non-attenders reported being curious prior to Concert 1 about how they would engage in the performance. A key concern was whether, and *how*, they would be able to concentrate on the music, describing wondering ‘how you kind of focus on the whole thing’ [NA Tara FG1] or ‘will I be awake enough, and will I be like, you know, interested in it?’ [NA Rachel FG2]. As already noted in Chapter 6, even those who completed the listening preparation task found that they listened more intently within the live context, not only because of the presence of visual stimuli, but also because the formality of the concerts engendered attention and concentration on the music:

the kind of environment it sets up, it really forces you to concentrate on the music and think about it in a way that you probably wouldn't normally. [...] Yeah like from listening to the CDs, you just put them on in the car...you sort of zone in and zone out, and you pick up on bits and pieces. But when you're in, you know, the hall, and you have to be quiet and you have to focus, you think about it in a different way. [NA Stuart FG1]

This was not the case for all of the non-attender participants. The enforced concentration of the concert situation was difficult for some, with Dominic and Kerry noting that they found it much easier to engage with the performance within the less restrictive atmosphere of *The Night Shift*. Some found the physical restriction of the concerts debilitating for two reasons: first, because they were used to listening to recorded music while 'doing something else at the same time', experiencing difficulty in listening in the context of a classical concert while 'nothing else is going on' [NA Carla I]. The second, related reason was that they found that the experience of attending a classical concert differed from their usual experiences of live music, in which the listener can respond with physical action:

I needed time to kind of adjust to actually listening and concentrating, because I suppose that's the big culture shock for me with classical music. You know, you can't have a quiet chat to someone, you can't kind of jump up and down and have a sort of little dance or whatever, you've got to sit there and concentrate on it. And so for the first half [of Concert 3] I ended up just worrying about work, and my mind was wandering all over the place, but I think I'd kind of worked out how to actually just listen by the second half, and so enjoyed it a lot more. [NA Emma I]

Emma's quote highlights that the behaviour codes of classical concerts cause a tension with the increasing trend for mediatised culture to involve consumers overtly as participants or even informants (Auslander, 2008). When listening to classical music with which they were unfamiliar, the non-attenders did not feel that they were contributing to or shaping the final performance product in some way and, unlike in their usual listening, would not have been able to anticipate that the music might facilitate a particular emotional state or response (DeNora, 2000). This lack of deliberately orchestrated internal 'action' is mirrored physically through the blockage of the perception-action cycle caused by the concert hall's rules of behaviour (Clarke, 2005):

classical music I don't feel is the kind of music that you participate in as you do with pop music or something, where you might sing along or dance or punch your arm in the air or whatever...classical music demands almost that you pay attention to the music, and you follow its nuances and its intricacies. [NA Toby FG1]

In recognising that a lack of outward participation during classical performance may hold potential benefits, Toby's response above contrasted with the majority of the non-attenders' views on this topic. It is possible that the non-attenders' difficulties with the restrictiveness of the concert hall might stem in part from being used to prioritising an outward sharing of their responses to the music (or 'physical freedom') over concentrating purely on an internal experience ('mental freedom') – whether the latter in fact involves following the path of the music in a concentrated manner as Toby suggests, or allowing one's mind to wander, as will be explored in more detail below.

7.2 Elements of an individual experience

The behaviour codes of classical concerts enable audience members to devote increased attention to the listening experience in a way they may not always do when listening to recordings. Because audience members are generally precluded from talking during the performance, the degree to which one can outwardly register a response while the music is in progress is usually limited at the most to small signals to the person sitting adjacent, such as a smile or a raised eyebrow at a given moment. This restriction in outward response means that listening in the concert hall allows (and almost requires) a predominantly individual experience. While the audience questionnaire did not directly ask respondents about the degree to which they viewed concert attendance as an individual or shared experience, data on the topic was elicited by Question 10 ('Did you feel like "part of an audience" at this concert?'). With hindsight this question could have been worded more specifically, but it did enable 11% of respondents to this question to provide a negative response, asserting that they viewed the experience as an individual one (a slightly larger percentage of 17% of respondents indicated in some way that they did not feel 'part of an audience', without specifically stating that they viewed concert attendance as a primarily individual experience). One respondent described how she did not feel like 'part of an audience' because 'I always drift into my own world whilst listening to classical music' [Q137], while another noted that despite being a regular audience member at English Chamber Orchestra concerts (which meant that they did

regard the concert as a 'sociable event') this aspect 'doesn't enhance the experience, which is a personal/private one' [Q136].

The attender interviewees were asked more directly whether they viewed the concert experience as primarily social or individual: they often discerned elements of both, but with a tendency to view listening to the performance itself as a solitary pursuit (cf. Pitts, 2007). Some interview and questionnaire respondents also expressed the idea that a key motivation for concert attendance was to engage in an intensive listening experience:

I would not like to sit in the middle of a concert hall by myself, and listen to a concert. And so to that extent it's a social occasion. But primarily it's to listen to music than to get involved in a social interaction. [A Daniel I]

I prefer to ignore the audience – which is easiest among an audience that is well "trained" (coughing in breaks, not clapping between mvmts, etc)...those at Cadogan Hall usually are. It is the music that is important, not the listeners. [Q126]³³

From this perspective, it is clear that far from being an unnecessary remnant of nineteenth-century listening practices, the behaviour codes of classical concerts are actually valued and fulfil a distinctive purpose for some concert attenders, providing a vehicle for experiencing live performance in a context where it is not obligatory to show outward signs of response *during* the performance.³⁴ More energy can thus be directed to internal responses to the experience – which some have argued that classical music⁴ in fact demands in order to be fully appreciated (Johnson, 2002).

³³ Compare these quotes with the following by a respondent cited in Gabrielsson (2001: 437), describing a strong experience with music at a concert given by Prince: 'The music began before the curtain rose, and you just stood there as semi-paralysed and screaming. [...] It is very much the atmosphere in the audience that gives this concert feeling. If I was standing there all by myself looking at Prince, it would not be the same thing at all...One feels so free somehow. At concerts one can dance, jump, scream and sing as much as one wants. You are like a part of it all, not just a spectator. Throughout the whole concert the audience was in total ecstasy. It was only one thing that mattered: the music!' All of these quotes emphasise that 'the music' is the most important part of attending a live event, but for Gabrielsson's respondent, the audience's presence and participation are perceived as intrinsic parts of experiencing of 'the music', rather than as potentially distracting factors.

³⁴ Becker (2001, 2004) identifies the Hindustani classical music tradition as one non-Western tradition in which similar listening practices are observed.

What can an individual, live classical listening experience afford?

The limited literature on responses to live listening suggests that live performance, in comparison to recorded listening, generally engenders strong listening experiences. In a large-scale study, Gabrielsson (2010) found that the majority of respondents' strong experiences with music had occurred when listening rather than performing (81%) and that 73% of strong experiences took place during a live music event rather than recorded listening. Just over half of these experiences occurred with classical music. The majority of emotional responses identified by respondents in the present study fell into two distinct categories: the first related to finding the experience relaxing, reconciling, transporting, or a means of 'escape'; while the second related to finding the experience stimulating, exciting, uplifting or inspiring. These response categories are discussed below. Other sub-themes of emotional response are outlined in Table 7.2; these occurred in addition to responses which identified an emotional experience in less detail, describing it as 'moving' [Q59] or as 'when music stirs feelings and they can be identified' [Q8], for example. In total, therefore, just over a fifth (22%) of responses to Question 19 identified some form of emotional response as a contributor to their enjoyment of concert attendance.

TABLE 7.2 *Sample responses to the category 'other emotional response' from Questions 19 and 24*

Sub-theme	Q19: sample responses coded under 'other emotional response' (7% of responses to 'What makes the experience of attending a classical concert enjoyable?')	Q24: sample responses coded under 'other emotional response' (6% of responses of responses to 'How would you describe the experience of going to a classical concert to someone who has never attended one before?')
Depth of response	It's like reading classic literature – it touches heart strings that are otherwise untouched. [Q104]	Listening to classical music makes you aware of emotions (pain, joy, danger) that you hardly find in nowadays songs. [Q113]
Soul/mind dualism	It touches the soul, parts of the brain that need to be stimulated in order to chill out. [Q9]	At its best classical music speaks to the emotions, the intellect and the soul. [Q85] Synchronizing your brain to your heart. [Q2]
Absorption / immersion	The live aspect of it, the atmosphere and most important of all in being absorbed by the music. [Q134]	Wonderful experience, feeling in touch with the music! [Q115]

As noted above, across the questionnaire data set as a whole a clear division emerged between the different states of being that live classical listening affords: these could essentially be categorised more broadly as ‘low-arousal’ states (relaxing, reconciling, transporting, escape) and ‘high-arousal’ states (stimulating, exciting, uplifting, inspiring). A similar distinction between high- and low-arousal states was also identified within Gabrielsson’s (2010: 559) category of ‘positive feelings’ from strong experiences with music (with high-arousal states here comprising ‘elation, excitement, tension’, and low-arousal states comprising feelings of ‘peace, calm, harmony, stillness’). This duality between reported emotional states emerged consistently across responses to Questions 19, 20, and 24 of the audience questionnaire, and the proportion of responses falling under each category was fairly balanced for each question (see Table 7.3). Only a small proportion of respondents gave similar answers to more than one of these questions.³⁵ Notably, the greatest proportions of responses for both categories are given in answer to Question 24, suggesting that these respondents see the facilitation of these types of states as a distinctive feature of *classical* concert attendance in comparison to other musical genres and their associated listening contexts.

TABLE 7.3 *Proportion of responses to Questions 19, 20 and 24 which included either ‘high-arousal’ or ‘low-arousal’ states of being*

Question	Low-arousal states	High-arousal states
Q19 – ‘What makes the experience of attending a classical concert enjoyable?’	8% 10 of 123 responses	7% 9 of 123 responses
Q20 – ‘How important is attending classical concerts in your life?’	13% 17 of 127 responses	12% 15 of 127 responses
Q24 – ‘How would you describe the experience of going to a classical concert to someone who has never attended one before?’	15% 14 of 94 responses	13% 12 of 94 responses
Total number of responses (with duplicates across questions from the same respondents deducted)	37	33
Percentage of total sample of 141 respondents	26%	23%

³⁵ Additionally, 12.5% of respondents to Question 28 described classical concerts as ‘more relaxing’ than concerts of other genres.

Low-arousal states

As Table 7.3 shows, just over a quarter of all questionnaire respondents viewed classical concert attendance as relaxing, reconciling, transporting, or a means of 'escape'. The prevalence of each sub-theme differed across responses to Questions 19, 20, and 24. While the majority of responses to Question 24 (which asked respondents to describe classical concert experience to a newcomer) focused exclusively on the opportunity it provided to relax, in responses to Question 20 ('How important is attending classical concerts in your life?') there was a roughly equal spread of the four sub-themes. In responses to Question 19 ('What makes the experience of attending a classical concert enjoyable?'), there was an emphasis on the experience either being relaxing or an escape 'from everyday problems' [Q66].

TABLE 7.4 *Sample responses to the sub-themes of 'low-arousal states'*

Sub-theme	Sample responses
Relaxing 18 of 37 responses (49% of responses coded under 'low-arousal states')	Just open your mind and listen. Just relax. [Q60, response to Question 24] Quite enjoy it for relaxation and thinking time. Every time I say 'should go more often'. [Q23, response to Question 20]
Reconciling 8 of 37 responses (22%)	Very important. Mental equilibrium. [Q34, response to Question 20] Reconciles me to the world. [Q2, response to Question 20]
Transporting 7 of 37 responses (19%)	Very, they take to another world for the duration of the concert and for quite sometime after. [Q74, response to Question 20] Very. You can actually get away from everything. It is quite transporting. Felt this particularly the night after 9/11 – and you could see the audience did too ([at] RFH). [Q37, response to Question 20]
Escape 6 of 37 responses (16%)	Forget the problems of the world. [Q46, response to Question 19] The enjoyment of listening to music, the immersion and the switching off from everyday problems. [Q66, response to Question 19]

For some, these states of being were facilitated by the holistic nature of live performance (explored in Chapter 6), with a description, for example, of 'the live aspect of it, the atmosphere and most important of all in being absorbed by the music, feeling

very relaxed' [Q134]. It would be simplistic to assume that *any* live classical performance, by nature of its 'holistic' attributes, can facilitate these states:

What is it you enjoy about going [to classical concerts]?

...It's a magic. [laughs] I can't put it really any other way. It's, you're just in another world, and whatever stresses you have got, if it's the right concert, and the right performers, they drive it all out of your head. [...] It's pure escapism!
[A Angela I]

As Angela's quote makes clear, 'escapism' in concert attendance is a conditional feature which may require planning on her part to book the concerts she suspects may facilitate this state (Gomart & Hennion, 1999). Through the necessity for pre-planning and allotting time to concert attendance (Pitts, 2005a), concert-going is a less immediate means of facilitating such states than recorded listening (as previously noted in 5.7), although it may be that its very distinctiveness from everyday life – and the fact that it is not a commodity simply available 'on tap' – enables heightened responses to the musical experience, especially in terms of anticipation of the event (Lamont, 2009). There is also an inherent element of risk, amplified by this heightened anticipation, that the performance will not be 'right' and therefore will not induce the desired state. This then reiterates the importance noted in Chapter 6 of performers whose 'quality' (as defined by each individual) is established or known to have a history of consistently producing the 'right' responses in the listener.

The proportion of respondents using classical concert attendance because it is 'transporting' or a means of 'escape' (see Table 7.4) is notable, especially given the tension characterized in musicological literature between notions of active and passive listening states within the concert hall. DeNora (2000) showed that people use music in everyday life to facilitate a variety of actions or states of being and as a vehicle for 'emotional work'. Despite the predominant associations with internal action which the term 'emotional work' might bring to mind, DeNora (2001: 171) includes within this concept the use of music 'to regulate moods and energy levels, to enhance and maintain desired states of feeling and bodily energy (e.g. relaxation, excitement), and to diminish or modify undesirable emotional states (e.g. stress, fatigue).' Importantly, the present study shows that people use live classical listening for some of the same purposes, with the physical restrictions of the concert hall meaning that they are forced to do nothing else for the duration of the performance, and therefore can use this listening situation as

an opportunity to relax and/or to enable a sense of being transported from daily life. Some participants were aware of music's dual function in enabling physical action in their everyday lives while facilitating more contemplative states in the live listening context:

Music enlivens – the most mundane task becomes ok. If you're decorating; I can remember doing decorating whilst listening to Bruckner symphonies. Whereas to just do it in silence would be a real pain. So it fulfils these rather mundane roles on the one hand. But on the other hand it, in the sort of concentrated listening, it I think has a spiritual role in my life. A certainly very profound and serious role. [A Patrick I]

The term 'spirituality' was mentioned in three responses coded under 'low-arousal states', and was coded under the sub-theme 'transporting'. There is a degree of hesitance in some existing literature in the use of the word 'spiritual' to describe the listening experiences of Western classical listeners. Pitts (2005a: 71) describes spirituality as 'a term sometimes drawn into discussion of the "special" nature of musical experience, since the vocabulary is otherwise lacking', which could be read as implicitly questioning the appropriateness of characterising musical experience in this way. Becker (2001), meanwhile, notes outward similarities between the listening states of the Western and Hindustani classical traditions, but argues that in terms of what might be labelled 'spirituality', the listening experiences of these two types of listener are qualitatively different:

While the quiet stance and introverted demeanour of the listener in the prototypical Western case and the Hindustani classical listener is similar, the understanding and interpretation of what is supposed to happen in each case differs. In one case [Western], the listener may be exploring the emotional nuances of his or her inner self or identifying with the emotional interiors presented by the music: In the other [Hindustani], the listener is trying to bring about a kind of 'sea' change, a different self altogether, one that comes closer to divinity. (Becker, 2001: 144)

Descriptions such as 'being transported into the recesses of one's private thoughts and imagination as the music swells and floods the hall' [Q137] attest to Becker's stance, but what about listeners who show no hesitation or qualms in conceptualising their listening experiences as 'full of spirituality' [Q135], or in describing classical music listening as 'touch[ing] one's soul and satisf[ying] one's deepest spiritual longings' [Q84]? Given that Becker (2001, 2004) provides no empirical evidence on which to

base an account of her 'prototypical Western listener', it would be disingenuous to privilege her view of the extent to which live classical listening can be experienced as spiritual over the phenomenological accounts of the listeners themselves. Interestingly, Becker's characterisation of the Hindustani listening experience in fact seems rather similar to Gomart and Hennion's (1999: 227) finding that the Western listeners interviewed in their study, through a seemingly passive act, worked to achieve a state in which the self is 'abandoned'.

Whether or not listeners view the experience in spiritual terms, Pitts (2005a: 71) likens concert halls to churches in 'offer[ing] a haven to escape *to*, enabling participants to return to everyday life refreshed and enriched.' For some, concerts function as 'enforced quiet time' where 'you're not doing anything else, you don't have to do anything else because you're there just to enjoy the music' [A Maria I]. They are also distinct in this sense from non-classical concerts, where it may feel almost obligatory to actively demonstrate involvement or engagement in the performance. Thus the behaviour codes of classical concerts provide a useful function perhaps not found elsewhere, in facilitating time in which to just 'be', whether it is used for focused listening, or for facilitating 'the ability to "switch off" and drift away with the music' [Q137].

The concert attenders thus seemed comfortable with how they chose to use live classical listening, valuing it for its relaxing, transporting or spiritual roles. Using live music to mentally 'drift' to or to enable a sense of escape were not viewed as a negative reflection on their levels of knowledge, nor on the validity of their presence at the event. In contrast, the non-attenders expressed concern at the tendency for their minds to wander during the performances, seeing this as opposed to 'serious' listening and engagement in the music, despite the difficulties they encountered in maintaining concentration throughout the performances. The only exception was Toby, who, like the concert attenders, highlighted classical performance's relatively unique position as an abstract art form in providing time and space in which to 'drift off into thought' [NA Toby I].

Other than Toby, the non-attenders' attitudes exhibited a disparity: a number of them described a habit of using recorded classical music in the background to help them

concentrate while working (see the participants' profiles in Table 3.1), yet they assumed that in live performance they must concentrate solely on the music. Perhaps this is because they are used to actively participating in other forms of live music, and so view letting their mind drift to classical performance as allocating insufficient attention or respect to the experience. This finding could be interpreted as evidence of a generation of music users who are adept at manipulating recorded music as a 'technology of the self' (DeNora, 2000), but lack an ability to listen to (classical) music in a contemplative sphere (Johnson, 2002). But given that a proportion of concert attenders use live classical listening as a means of relaxing, escaping, or letting their minds wander, it cannot be assumed that the contemplative, focused mode of listening that Johnson (2002) endorses is universally engaged in by classical concert attenders, nor seen as the ultimate purpose of live classical listening. A better way to interpret the non-attenders' difficulties in judging exactly how they should be listening is through the idea that the listening skills required by different musical contexts are informally learnt (Benzecry, 2009; Clarke, 2002; Stockfelt, 1997). Emma describes such a process when discussing her experience of Concert 3 (the first 'formal' concert she had attended in the study, as she did not attend Concert 1), noting that although she experienced internal distractions (worrying about work) during the first half of the concert, 'I'd kind of worked out how to actually just listen by the second half, and so enjoyed it a lot more' [NA Emma I]. The non-attenders' lack of exposure to 'the shared context of culture' (Becker, 2004: 71) of classical music concerts means that they have not had the opportunity to assimilate or establish from more seasoned audience members what classical concert attendance can be used for, and therefore are forced to learn about the concert hall's potential affordances from experience.

High-arousal states; occurrences of both states within a single experience

As noted at the beginning of this section, a further group of states of being was also afforded by the attenders' individual listening experiences, categorised as 'high arousal'. This group of states suggested a more active involvement in the present, characterized by adjectives such as 'stimulating', 'exciting', 'uplifting', 'exhilarating' (here coded under 'stimulating') or 'inspiring'.

TABLE 7.5 *Sample responses to the sub-themes of 'high-arousal states'*

Sub-theme	Sample responses
Stimulating 11 of 33 responses (33% of responses coded under 'high- arousal states')	A really 1 st class conductor/orchestra can make the hair on your neck stand up. Very exhilarating. [Q105, response to Question 24] As an ex-musician, it is an enjoyable and stimulating way to spend an evening. [Q126/Anna, response to Question 20]
Exciting 10 of 33 responses (30%)	Stirring emotions positively. 'Buzz' of successful concert. The warmth of familiar favourite pieces and the excitement of appreciating unfamiliar works. [Q76, response to Question 19] Exciting, rigorous, fundamental. [Q53, response to Question 24]
Uplifting 10 of 33 responses (30%)	Opportunity to experience musicians at the top of their profession. It's uplifting. [Q30/Cathy, response to Question 24] Uplifting – interesting to see the whole orchestra working. [Q82, response to Question 24]
Inspiring 6 of 33 responses (18%)	It inspires me and I learn from it. And it's a pleasant way to spend an evening of course. [Q30, response to Question 20] Important, it's my profession and I need to be inspired by other like-minded colleagues. [Q12, response to Question 20]

Again, the frequency with which these main terms were used varied depending on which question they were elicited by. 'Uplifting' was the most frequently recurring word in responses coded under 'high-arousal states' to Question 24 (7 of 12 responses), which asked the respondent to describe the experience of classical concert attendance to a newcomer. Question 20 ('How important is concert attendance in your life?') elicited more detailed, personal responses on these states. While only two responses to this question described the experience as 'uplifting', 8 of 15 respondents here described the experience as stimulating or exciting, with two describing music, or live listening, as a kind of 'drug' [Q22] (cf. Gomart & Hennion, 1999):

A good concert is a real shot in the arm. The excellence of the music and performance has a real effect, mentally, for days. [Q131]

In contrast to previously noted assumptions in musicological literature that concert attendance is primarily a passive endeavour for audience members (especially in comparison to the types of active involvement that individuals have been shown to engage in when listening to recorded music (DeNora, 2000)), for just under a quarter of

the Cadogan Hall respondents concert attendance involved far more than a passive, or merely 'contemplative', mode of listening:

Listening to music from a CD is an opportunity to relax, going to a concert keeps you on the edge of your seat. [Q61]

Indeed, as Table 7.5 shows, high-arousal states were not triggered merely by listening to 'the music itself', but also by aspects of the performance, with elements of 'performance quality' that were identified in Chapter 6 (the enjoyment of watching expertise, or of witnessing interaction on stage) now functioning as contributors to the production of high-arousal states, particularly in responses to Question 19 ('What makes the experience of attending a classical concert enjoyable?'). As one respondent described:

The experience can be both exciting and uplifting and is enhanced when the music making is of the highest calibre. For this reason, while I attend local concerts occasionally, it is always worthwhile travelling to London to attend concerts there. [Q55]

Returning to a theme first proposed in Chapter 6, in this sense the music serves as a vehicle for audience members to witness performance, with some respondents therefore seeking high-quality performances in order to facilitate these high-arousal states. The quote directly above shows one individual's knowledge of what kind of experience they wish to gain from attending a concert, and a degree of conscious action (planning to attend higher quality concerts further away from home) in engineering that state. This conforms to Gomart and Hennion's (1999: 227) observation (of drug users and music lovers) that in order to induce a desired state, the user must 'meticulously *establish conditions*: active work must be done in order to be moved'.

The responses which described active, high-arousal listening states could suggest an engagement in a succession of 'present moments' during live classical listening, lending support to Levinson's (1997) theory of concatenationism, in which he argues that musical pleasure and enjoyment in listening are fostered through our responses to the music on a momentary basis, rather than being mediated by our degree of apprehension or understanding of the work's large-scale structure. And so, as seen above, while some listeners valued being 'out of the (musical) moment' in terms of

mentally drifting or letting their minds wander, others valued the excitement of a focused engagement in the music and the performance – a state of being ‘in the moment’. These two types of states need not be mutually exclusive: some responses indicated that these states can and do alternate within the same person, presumably within a single concert experience (see Table 7.6).

TABLE 7.6 *The eight questionnaire responses which included both high- and low-arousal states*

Respondent	Response
Q2	Very – it stimulates me. Reconciles me to the world. [response to Question 20]
Q57	Enjoyable, stimulating and relaxing. Means can leave other worries/cares. [response to Question 20]
Q64	I find attending concerts both stimulating and releasing but as I live out of London I cannot attend very frequently as travel can be a problem. [response to Question 20]
Q78	Relaxing but also stimulating. [response to Question 19]
Q79	I learn something, also relaxation – excitement. [response to Question 19]
Q83	Important. An uplifting yet calming experience. [response to Question 20]
Q110 /Isabelle	Quite important, for inspiration, relaxation, treating myself, intellectually challenge myself – all at the same time. [response to Question 20]
Q131	I go to be uplifted, to top up the spiritual batteries. Someone who has never attended one [a classical concert] should be amazed at the skill, the noise and sheer excellence of performers and transported by the brilliance of the composers. [response to Question 24]

In their experience sampling study, Juslin et al. (2008) found that ‘calm-contentment’ and ‘happiness-elation’ were the two most commonly experienced emotion categories in response to both musical and non-musical events, although these emotional states were experienced *more frequently* with musical events rather than on other occasions. It is possible, therefore that the groups of high- and low-arousal states identified in this study are merely more general responses to music listening rather than a result of the concert occasion itself. Juslin et al. were unable to explore whether the

presence of certain emotions might have correlated with others during musical experiences because their experience sampling method asked respondents to identify only one main emotion category that they were experiencing at a given moment (e.g. 'happiness-elation'; 'nostalgia-longing'). The responses above, however, indicate that for some concert-goers, classical concert attendance is an important activity in their lives because of its ability to facilitate both high- and low-arousal states within a single experience.

For example, Maria described attending concerts primarily for 'relaxation', but when asked to articulate what she enjoys about live classical performance, also notes:

I think it's much more stimulating. And kind of...not exhilarating, but it's much more kind of...all-encompassing. I mean a CD, you know your iPod or whatever can be, but I mean realistically you're going to be doing other things, or you know cooking or whatever else you're doing. Like a concert I think, you're there and you're focusing on that, it has a much kind of more, it has a broader, like a more overall effect on you. [A Maria I]

It could be that in identifying the concert experience as 'stimulating' or 'exhilarating' the respondents are in fact responding to the increased physiological arousal produced by a cross-modal (i.e. both vision and sound) experience (Chapados & Levitin, 2008: 646; discussed previously in Chapter 6). Importantly, in the context of the classical concert, this state of increased arousal occurs within the temporally and physically demarcated space of the performance event. This means that more attention can be paid to the experience of this heightened state, and that these states may be experienced within an overall feeling of relaxation facilitated by the escape from everyday life that the concert hall might facilitate, in which nothing other than sitting relatively still is demanded of audience member while the performance is in progress. As Anna described, 'going to a classical music concert is a way of getting my brain to shut off for a while without sort of vegging; it's sort of an active enjoyment, without having to think' [A Anna I]. In comparison to narrative-based performances (such as theatre or film), attending a classical concert can truly be an escape from one's normal existence because letting one's mind drift does not necessarily detract from the quality of the experience (O'Sullivan, 2009). While attending a narrative-based performance requires concentration and memory in order to make sense of the work (Woodruff, 2008), the enjoyment of a classical concert as an event (rather than merely as a performance) can

come from engaging with the music/performance and/or with one's inner dialogue.

7.3 Aspects of 'community' in classical concert attendance: distinctions between a 'social' and a 'shared' experience

A social event – aside from the performance itself

Although the questionnaire respondents typically characterised live classical listening as a predominantly internal experience, some did prefer the event as a whole to take on a social realm through either talking to others after the performances, or socializing more explicitly before or after the concert (cf. Gainer, 1995; Pitts, 2007; Radbourne et al., 2009). Discussing their responses to the music with others was important as a means of comparing individual experiences perhaps because, as previously noted in Chapter 4, classical performance does not enable audience members to exhibit their responses in real time to the degree that is frequently found in other genres. One respondent noted that 'it is difficult to feel part of an audience as a whole when, as an individual, you concentrate on, and listen to, the music in silence' [Q55], meaning that any social element was as a result of conversing with others present outwith the performance itself, which another noted 'adds to the social ambience [...] it adds a human element' [A Grace I].

Half of the non-attender participants mentioned valuing the focus group discussions following the concerts precisely because they provided an opportunity hear others' responses to the music and/or to the concert setting more broadly, meaning that they could therefore benefit from discussing experiences they had all shared (Jacobs, 2000; Radbourne et al., 2009). However, some also particularly enjoyed the way in which at *The Night Shift* (Concert 2) they were more able to share the experience in real time with others:

I liked the opportunity that you could, if you wanted to kind of pull a face at the person you were sitting next to, or maybe whisper a comment then you can. Because that's one of the things that I find a bit off-putting about being in environments where I feel that I can't, if something exciting happens, I can't turn to the person sitting next to me and kind of, you know, mark it in anyway. [NA Rachel: Yeah] I mean not have a long, a loud conversation about it, but maybe the odd whisper. You know, the 'his head's about to explode, he's holding that note for far too long!' kind of comment. [NA Emma FG2]

The non-attenders particularly valued this element of *The Night Shift* because within the context of the cultural events they generally attended they predominantly viewed live music as a more social occasion than other forms of performance, such as theatre or dance. Live music was described as 'a joint appreciation as opposed to just being sat in a seat, being sat stationary' [NA Kerry I], or a chance to 'to see friends and let off steam and relax more than...to listen to the music' [NA Toby I]. As one questionnaire respondent noted, the experience of attending live *classical* music is usually very different from the predominantly social experience of attending other live music events:

In my view, attending classical concerts results in a flight to one's inner life and imagination. The music is processed and enjoyed internally. Rock and other concerts are "external" i.e. more part of a crowd than an individual within a crowd. [Q137]

Some of the non-attenders did recognise this distinction and, while they viewed the purposes of classical performance and other music performance differently, they did not necessarily see one listening context as 'better' or 'more enjoyable' than another. As Tara described:

I think kind of how I view classical music and how I view going to see a gig are two very different things. And classical music I'd be quite happy to sit and just watch without saying anything. I think it's quite different at a gig, it's quite a lot noisier and the venues are different, it kind of encourages talking and standing up in a slightly different way. Whereas kind of seated, just the atmosphere kind of suits not talking so much. [NA Tara I]

These responses therefore illustrate Stockfelt's (1997: 137) idea of 'adequate' modes of listening, which occur 'when one listens to music according to the exigencies of a given social situation and according to the predominant sociocultural conventions of the subculture to which the music belongs.'

Some of the attender interviewees viewed concert attendance as an occasion that could become social through attending with friends and spending time with them before or after the performance. For this reason some rarely attended concerts alone, wanting

to share the experience with at least one other person. [...] it's not like you go there like art critics and then talk about what exactly happened. It's more this general inspiration and then being in the mood together and doing something

afterwards would be nice. So it's more the inclusive feeling you get from it.
[A Isabelle I]

Others, however, were aware of the potential for attending with others to involve compromises, both in the choices of concerts they would attend, and in the fact that differences in taste may mean that their levels of enthusiasm after a performance would not necessarily match (the effects of degrees of concordance between the responses of self and others is explored further below). Angela, for example, preferred to prioritise her choices of concerts over the availability of people with whom to attend, but nonetheless liked to be able to socialise 'around' the concert (note before, rather than after, the performance) if the opportunity arose:

I have a friend, and we now come to this accommodation that we book independently for the Proms, because we even like to sit in different places, and then sort of match up [chuckles] 'where do we overlap?' And if we do we meet for a meal beforehand. [A Angela I]

In contrast, the availability of others with whom to attend classical concerts was a key feature in the non-attenders' predictions about whether they would attend again during the longitudinal period of the study (cf. Kolb, 2000) and continued to be prominent when discussing in their three- and six-month interviews the reasons for whether or not they had since attended a classical concert of their own volition. The importance the non-attenders attributed to the potential for the overall concert experience to be a social one was reflected in their attitudes towards the three concert venues they visited during Study 1. They indicated preferences for the two venues (the Barbican Centre and the Queen Elizabeth Hall/South Bank Centre) which, as well as housing a concert auditorium, also provide spaces such as cafes, bars and restaurants that cater for a social element that can be 'tied' to the performance event itself. While the non-attenders appreciated other aspects of St John's, Smith Square (particularly its architectural features; see Figure 7.2), the lack of amenities that surround its location in Westminster combined with its comparative lack of foyer spaces was seen as a hindrance (cf. Small, 1998). Venues that were 'multifaceted' (in the sense of providing more than just a concert hall) were viewed positively, especially because they promoted a feeling of inclusion by allowing access to the foyer spaces and amenities of the venue to the general public, rather than only to ticket holders:

what I like about here [Queen Elizabeth Hall foyer, South Bank Centre] was this kind of atmosphere. It was like a place where a lot of people found what they wanted, and it was kind of a lot of people doing slightly different things. Because some people were listening, and some people were talking, some people were sitting, some people were drinking, some people were waiting, some people were there picking up information, and I like those spaces where, I don't know, there is kind of a place for everybody. [NA Carla I]

The importance of multifaceted spaces was also linked to the idea of the 'cultural hub', where, as in arts centres such as the Barbican Centre and the South Bank Centre, the concert hall is surrounded by other cultural spaces (theatres, galleries and so on). This means that other users of the arts centre might be attending any number of different cultural events. This was a positive feature of these venues from the non-attenders' perspective for at least two reasons: first, they were surrounded by cultural venues and events with which they were more familiar and with which they therefore felt more 'at home'. Second, they felt less aware of standing out among an audience made up of only classical music attenders:

at St John's the whole, everyone who was at that venue who was going to that concert was in the audience, it was all the same. Whereas at the Barbican, when you're milling round outside, there's all the people going to the art galleries, and the films, and just coming to have cups of coffee and tea and things. And people who work there and live there and train there. And because it's just a busier, more involved hub of activity. So when you're outside you're not actually so sure who's in the audience for the concert and who's not. [NA Toby I]

Emma, for example, described the 'friendly and fun environment' [NA Emma I] of the South Bank Centre, indicating that through providing multifaceted (and cultural) spaces, a concert hall can be viewed as part of a cultural centre which provides a site of 'play' for users (Cottrell, 2004) rather than reiterating any perception that the classical concert hall is a place of austerity or exclusivity (see also Ross, 2007). As attender Angela noted when talking about the Barbican Centre, venues which offer spaces in which to 'muck about' as well as housing cultural events serve to diminish any perceptions of a distinction between 'expert' and 'lay' arts attenders:

I like the fact that I can have a pasta for five quid in [the Waterfront cafe], or I can take my own picnic and get a glass of water and, you know, and there's lots of places to sit. And it feels, again, it is this sense of everybody's there, because there are theatre people there, and sometimes there are kids there. [...] the Barbican has democratised artistic experiences. Because you can go there to the

theatre, or go to the cinema, and you can go to the art. Or you can just muck about, you know. [A Angela I]

Indeed, one of the main complaints from the questionnaire respondents about Cadogan Hall as a venue was its limited foyer areas and lack of social spaces, indicating that the concert attenders too valued venues that were multifaceted, catering for socialising before or after a concert.

Elements of a shared experience during the performance

There is a distinction to be made between regarding concert attendance as a social event and recognising elements of the experience which are inherently shared. Even though many concert attenders viewed the act of listening as predominantly internal, therefore meaning that attending alone was not necessarily perceived as a hindrance, some did acknowledge that ‘the feeling of being part of a group experiencing a live performance is...an important part of the overall experience’ [A Calum I] or that ‘I often go on my own, but when I’m there I feel part of a community’ [A Angela 6m]. A sense of shared experience *during* the performance was recognised in three main ways: through ‘good’ audience behaviour (initially outlined in 7.1); through the effects of a concert hall’s size or the ability to sit close to the stage; and through a sense of shared audience response to the performance.

It was important to some concert attenders that they felt they were sharing this (mainly individual) experience with an audience of like-minded people. Given that the third most frequent response to Question 19 of the Cadogan Hall questionnaire (‘What makes the experience of attending classical concerts enjoyable?’) was ‘the programme’ or ‘the music’, being among an audience ‘who can appreciate the music’ [Q6] or ‘who had come because of the music’ [Q72] was significant. Of the attender interviewees, Isabelle placed the most emphasis on this feature, which was one of the main determinants of the concerts she chose to attend:

I would not go to something that’s very popular. [...] I would enjoy it more if there are people around me who also really, really love what they hear. And rather than [pompous voice:] ‘Oh, we’re going to the concert tonight, we’re going to put a nice jacket on’. So it’s more, really enjoying what you do. Rather than it being a society thing. [A Isabelle 6m]

She described, for example, not wanting to go to a concert of Orff's *Carmina Burana*, despite thinking the music is 'fantastic', 'because I know that it's for "everyone", and I don't want to be there, with "everyone"' [A Isabelle I]. She particularly objected to the idea that people attend classical concerts to be 'seen' or because they feel socially obligated to attend, rather than because they actually enjoy the music. She often added as a caveat on these occasions that her views are 'probably very arrogant' or 'elitist', despite the fact that underlying her hesitations about certain events is an objection to audience members who attend *other* than for their enjoyment of the music.

This idea that concert attendance should ideally be about a community of people sharing an experience they all enjoy, rather than being an aspirational part of the social calendar, was noted too by Angela, who felt that opera houses 'have still got that sense of...society in layers' [A Angela I] and therefore promote the idea that different segments of the audience might be attending for very different reasons. In contrast, her favourite concert venue (the Barbican Hall; see Figure 7.1), renounced this idea of 'society in layers' through its architectural design:

in the hall itself I feel it is...it has no boxes. And I feel that that is making a very powerful architectural statement about 'this is one community, sharing one experience'. And I have sat there with Mark Anthony Turnage in front of me, or with Mitsuko Uchida across the aisle. You know when you see the musicians- or Steve Reich just behind me- [...] But it is this, it isn't stratified, it is (using my hands, tape recorder) to try and convey the unity, the wholeness of it. [A Angela I]

Given that not all concert halls promote a similar sense of cohesiveness architecturally, the way the audience behaves during the concert was perceived as a primary indicator of whether an audience member is sharing the experience with like-minded others. In non-classical performance, active (audible or physical) responses during the performance often indicate that others are experiencing the music or performance in the same way. In classical concerts, during the performance, the reverse is true: an 'attentive', and therefore quiet, audience is the primary indicator that others are engaged in, and appreciating, the performance. 12.5% of respondents who indicated 'yes' to Question 10 ('Did you feel like "part of an audience" at this concert?') mentioned their perceptions of other audience members' attentiveness or involvement,

suggesting that the feeling of belonging to an audience and sharing in the experience is mediated by the messages of intent conveyed by an audience's 'well-trained' behaviour.



FIGURE 7.1 *Interior of the Barbican Hall (Image taken from Barbican Centre, 2010b [online])*

As Daniel noted:

if you transport yourself back to the eighteenth century, it [concert attendance] wasn't like this...it was very much a sort of part of a social interaction. So now, you know, people are actually looking very serious about music, and they want, they just want to feel that other people appreciate it too. The whole atmosphere if you like is changed. [A Daniel I]

A sense of participating in a shared experience was also engendered through the audience members' perceived proximity to the performers, or was facilitated by their perceptions of the concert hall's size. Almost a quarter (24%) of those who responded positively to Q10 ('Did you feel like "part of an audience" at this concert?') related a feeling of inclusiveness or shared experience to one of these two features. However, feeling close to the stage was also integral in facilitating a purely individual experience for a few respondents, one of whom wrote in response to Question 10: 'Not really – I find Cadogan Hall is excellent for allowing one to feel involved with the performers – as if the concert is just for me!' [Q15].

TABLE 7.7 *Sample positive responses to Question 10 ('Did you feel like "part of an audience" at this concert?') coded under proximity and size of hall*

Respondent	Sample response (21 of 88 positive responses, 24%)
Q55	I sat right at the front of the stalls and was therefore close to the music-making which helped me to feel part of the event.
Q69	Yes, the openness of the auditorium and closeness of the stage lend themselves to a feeling of intimacy.
Q90	Yes. Size of hall assists in bringing audience near to performers.

Interestingly, the notion of a shared audience experience is developed through reference to proximity to the *stage*. As the sample responses in Table 7.7 demonstrate, being 'near to the action' [Q76] is seen as enabling a greater degree of inclusion in the event as a whole, rather, perhaps, than within the audience itself: the state of being 'in audience' is defined in reference to a perceived relationship with the performers, rather than with the other audience members. This aspect was also noted by the non-attenders who, as discussed in 6.1, felt most detached from the audience in Concert 3. They partly attributed this response to sitting at the very back of the church with a limited view of the stage:

It's interesting looking at the contrast between tonight [Concert 3] and last night – we were quite close [at *The Night Shift*]. [...] there is something in terms of where you sit in comparison to the orchestra, you do feel like, I think you're sort of more included in the experience if you're down by the orchestra in a way. I mean because we were right at the sort of back, it's hard not to feel slightly that there's a distance there. [NA Dominic FG2]

Particularly from the non-attenders' perspective, but perhaps for all audience members, sitting far from the stage involves a sense of distance not only from the musical 'action', but also from those in the audience who may be perceived as more 'privileged' by sitting in the often more expensive seats closer to the stage.³⁶ Sitting nearer the back of an auditorium, especially one like St John's, Smith Square (the venue for Concert 3; see

³⁶ The non-attenders generally assumed that attending classical concerts would be an expensive pursuit, and were surprised, when told during the individual interviews how much their tickets for Concerts 1 to 3 had cost, that the price of concert tickets can be cheaper than, or similar to, those for the theatre or cinema.

Figure 7.2) in which the seats are not raked, may promote an awareness of – and sense of distance from – the mass of people in front; rather than a feeling of being enveloped by an audience who are all sharing the same experience.



FIGURE 7.2 *The interior of St John's, Smith Square during the interval of a London Chamber Orchestra concert. The photo is taken from the back of the church and replicates the composition of photos taken by non-attenders Dominic, Rachel and Stuart.*

As previously discussed in Chapter 6, being able to watch the performers in detail was important to some audience members, who preferred to sit close to the stage to enhance this aspect and to feel part of the event. Others placed greater emphasis on the quality of sound, and for this reason preferred not to sit too close to the stage in order to receive a more rounded auditory experience. For this group, then, a relatively small auditorium like the Cadogan Hall nonetheless enabled them to feel ‘close to the music’ [A Calum I] despite their choice to sit not particularly near to the stage (cf. Blesser and Salter, 2007). Cadogan Hall’s gallery was particularly noted in this respect (see Figure 3.10), as it enabled a better view of the stage than the first few rows of the stalls but still engendered a feeling of being ‘really part of it, you know, as opposed to

sort of sitting sort of hundreds of feet away and only being able to see them as a tiny dot' [A Cathy I].

Effects of the degree of concordance between individual and group response

As noted earlier, a feeling of shared experience was created not only by the audience's perceived relationship to the performers themselves, but also in feeling that others present were responding to the performance in the same way. 14% of those who responded positively to Question 10 identified a sense of shared response either *during* the performance of a work or in the applause that follows.

TABLE 7.8 *Sample responses to Question 10 ('Did you feel like "part of an audience" at this concert?') coded under shared enthusiasm/response*

Respondent	Response
Q83	Yes. There was a shared appreciation of the programme and the way in which it was performed.
Q93	Yes: there was a real 'buzz' generated by the audience response to the soloists, which we shared.
Q94	Yes – audience were very responsive – attentive and appreciative.
Q104	Yes. Emotions were the same everywhere.

As Q94's quote in Table 7.8 shows, shared response can be equally valued in its tangible, physical incarnation (as applause), as well as through an apprehension of shared concentration and involvement, characterized by 'attentiveness'. However, it was the ostensibly more active form of audience applause that was a key distinctive feature of attending live performances for some:

And similarly when [pianist] Lang Lang played at the Royal Albert Hall a few weeks ago – I've never seen anything like it. At the end of playing that Rach[maninov] Two, the whole hall just jumped up to their feet – I've never seen that. I mean it was mesmerising. Now, you don't get that by listening on the radio or a CD. You experience that. So you see these are things that are just so exciting and interesting. [A Conrad I]

In Conrad's account, the 'mesmerising' nature of the performance (or shared response in the form of 'attentiveness') is transformed at the conclusion of the work

with a spontaneous standing ovation (shared response as ‘group action’). Conrad presents the presence of these two felt states, and the sense of collective release during the succession from one state to the other, as a unique feature of the live performance situation. Similar states might be felt when a crowd erupts with positive response at a sporting event (cf. Abercrombie & Longhurst, 1998). But unlike at sporting events (where, especially in team events, there is presumably less subjectivity involved in the appraisal of a performance), in classical performance a concordance between individual and group response is perhaps highly valued not only for its evocation of a shared experience, but also it because it may act as a validation of an individual’s personal response, affirming that one’s ideas about the performance were ‘right’. Brown (2004), for example, argues that participation in standing ovations is intrinsically related to affirming the validity of audience members’ presence in the concert hall, writing of ‘the deep need to...identify with those who can tell the difference between a good performance and a great one – even when you can’t’ (p. 3).

It is also worth speculating that through sensing that a positive emotion is shared by others in the audience, the emotional response itself is elevated to a new state. When asked in Question 24 to describe the experience of attending classical concerts to a newcomer (and essentially to therefore identify what is *unique* about the experience), one respondent described ‘The ambiance and euphoria and enthusiasm of being there and sharing’ [Q49]; while an interviewee noted that ‘it can significantly add to the enjoyment of the concert if you feel like everyone around you is enjoying it’ [A Maria I]. This idea relates to Becker’s (2001: 153-4) assertion that

A musical event is not just in the minds of the participants, it is in their bodies; like a vocal accent in speaking, emotion in relation to musical listening is personally manifested, but exists supra-individually. Each person, both musicians and listeners, seems to be acting as self-contained, bounded individuals, and indeed they experience whatever they experience as deeply personal and emotional, but the event as a whole plays itself out in a supra-individual domain. (Becker, 2001: 153)

What Becker describes could be interpreted as a form of emotional contagion, as in the case of Grace’s description of the Cadogan Hall concert: ‘I just thought the performers were superb, and the whole atmosphere was positively electric with enjoyment...you know, that’s catching, isn’t it’ [A Grace I]. Relating back to the discussion of emotional contagion in Chapter 6, it seems that in some instances

performer enthusiasm or engagement is 'caught' by the audience, who are themselves engaged and enthralled. Individual audience members, during the performance of a work, have a sense of others being in the same state...

Alison Balsom had us all mesmerized with the Haydn. She and Igor Levit were electric in the Shostakovich' [Q131; response to Question 10]

...which can then elevate their own engagement or enjoyment. Patrick used the term 'sublime concentration' to describe moments where shared, unified audience response is tangible: 'at the very best events, whether they're concerts or opera or theatre, whatever, you get this sense that everybody really is focused, and you have a sense of the sublime concentration' – 'there are events where that happens, and then it can be just about the most profound and wonderful experience that life is capable of I think' [A Patrick I].

It would be simplistic to assume, however, that one audience member's belief that a particular performance had 'mesmerised' the entire audience should necessarily mean that this is the case. As noted in Chapter 4, the experiences of the non-attenders illustrated the effects of a disparity between individual and group response, where they felt alienated by the other audience members' more enthusiastic receptions to the performances. But it is not only new audience members for whom this occurs; it was noted by one attender that:

it's being played because it's a public performance of a work which a lot of people are enjoying on the stage, and you are in the audience too and you want to feel too that you're in the audience, that others are enjoying it. If they're not then it does tend to affect your own enjoyment. [A Daniel I]

Daniel reiterates the view that performer enjoyment should equate to *audience* enjoyment (through emotional contagion), but that an individual's enjoyment can be negatively affected if there is a perceived disparity between individual and group response. This was also illustrated by Angela, whose decision to attend the Cadogan Hall concert as a 'treat' to herself also involved attending alone, so that she 'didn't have to worry about what the other person was thinking' [A Angela I].

When assessing the degree to which others are enjoying the performance there is always the contextual factor of differences in how expressions of audience enthusiasm

or enjoyment are interpreted. Cathy, for example, described feeling ‘almost annoyed’ at the audience response to Alison Balsom’s performance of the Haydn trumpet concerto at the Cadogan Hall concert:

it was very sort of polite clapping, and I thought ‘God, this woman’s fantastic, you should be, everyone should be jumping up and down!’ [A Cathy I]

Here, perhaps in relation to typical audience responses at the brass band concerts she more frequently attends, Cathy interpreted the response as ‘subdued’, despite other audience members’ comments (shown above) about the enthusiastic nature of the audience, and the fact that, of the four pieces performed at the concert, the Haydn trumpet concerto received the highest average enjoyment rating from the questionnaire respondents.

As has been previously noted, there is an inherent element of risk in the decision to attend a performance, stemming from the way in which, unlike in recorded listening, the audience member has to relinquish a degree of control over the unfolding of the event. (Although, ironically, audience members attend concerts because even in home listening situations where they might have a high degree of control, they are rarely able – or willing – to engage in sustained, concentrated listening.) In terms of the effects of audience response and the more general issue of audience behaviour, the central risk is that evaluation of a performance is inherently subjective, mediated by a plethora of individual states and associations. As we have seen, the perception of *other people’s* responses can be instrumental in mediating one’s own enjoyment of the performance. Yet, importantly, our previous experiences, and the conventions of the environment in which we are present, also affect our responses.

Isabelle, here describing seeking what has been called the ‘pin-drop effect’ in her concert experiences (a term used to describe a moment at the end of a performance where the audience remains silent before beginning to applaud), illustrates this confluence of factors:

[audience behaviour] definitely varies, and it varies by country. In Munich where I also lived for a long time, people like to be like showing how appreciative they are: ‘I’m so sophisticated and that’s why I clap’. Or they are trying to start clapping before the last note is played, and I just hate that. I’d like

everyone to just hold off until the last bit of sound has kind of travelled across the room and then it's done. So I like to have that little moment, and I probably would actually applaud only after that is done, even if other people have already started. So just for me to kind of... 'ah' ...take it in. [A Isabelle I]

Judkins (1997: 44) notes that the 'framing silences' that occur at the end of a work 'delineat[e] it from the ordinary world' and 'rely more heavily [than silences *within* the work] on the interaction of the conductor, the musicians, and even the audience for their shape'. Isabelle here describes a tension between audience members who see their response as a chance to exhibit their levels of knowledge and connoisseurship (for example by clapping immediately to show that they know the work has ended) and those who want to suspend the end of the musical work before returning back to the 'everyday'. Illustrating that these features really are dependent on place and context, an audience member at Sheffield's Music in the Round chamber music festival instead noted the unwavering loyalty this audience demonstrated towards the festival's previous host ensemble: 'There was always this feeling at the end of a...concert that you tried to see how long you could make the silence last before applauding, this sort of reverential silence' (Pitts & Spencer, 2008: 234). In this case, silence at the end of a performance is presented as an orchestrated feature rather than produced by genuine response, engineered by a loyal audience who know that it is part of their ritual – and perhaps ethos – to behave in this way.

7.4 Conclusions

This chapter has shown that live classical listening plays an important and distinctive role within concert attenders' ongoing engagement with music in their daily lives. Perhaps unique to classical music performance, the relatively strict codes of audience behaviour found in the concert hall facilitated a heightened degree of attention on 'the music itself'. But they also facilitated a greater degree of focus on listeners' internal responses. Within the group of concert attenders surveyed in this study, two main types of emotional responses – either high- or low-arousal states – were prevalent in audience members' enjoyment of, and motivations for, attending classical concerts. Importantly, these types of states were not merely contingent on the properties of the exact music being heard; rather, they were more general responses to aspects of the listening context (see also Roose, 2008: 249). For example, the comparative lack of distractions within

the concert hall (as opposed to other listening situations in daily life) helped to enable a sense of relaxation or escape, even if the specific music performed, when considered in isolation, might be more readily heard as 'rousing' rather than 'relaxing'. This finding therefore adds weight to the results of Roose's (2008) large-scale survey of concert attenders in Belgium, in which the ability to induce a sense of escape from everyday life was a key means in how classical performances were appraised. Similarly, high-arousal states were facilitated by aspects of the performance, rather than purely the music played, with an 'uplifting' or 'exciting' experience created from the process of watching the musicians perform with skill and enthusiasm.

These findings therefore highlight that the audience experience at classical concerts is not just one of passive receptivity to the music performed. As Pitts (2005a: 98) found at Sheffield's Music in the Round festival, the audience members here 'are at least complicit in the relationships of the concert hall, rather than merely subjected to them' – they attend concerts not only to hear music well-performed, but also because they feel that the process of listening to that music within the specific context of the concert hall can play a distinctive role in their lives. Even low-arousal states, which might be more easily be conceived as 'passive' responses, have been shown to fulfil important roles in the self-regulation of emotion, just as has been found in research on recorded music listening (DeNora, 2000).

Importantly, this chapter has also shown that individual responses experienced within the concert hall are inevitably subject to the contingencies of a shared event: the presence and behaviour of others in the concert hall can either enhance or detract from the internal listening experience (see also O'Sullivan, 2009; Radbourne et al., 2009). Classical concerts therefore exhibit somewhat of a paradox, in that a significant degree of pre-meditated thought is involved in choosing, booking and attending a concert, especially in comparison to the many situations in everyday life in which one may be subject to hearing music outside of one's own control. But then, once within the concert hall, control over one's (highly valued) internal experience is relinquished, in part, to the actions of the performers and the other audience members. Attending live classical concerts therefore involves a trade-off between the potential for 'the ordeal factors...like you know, someone sneezing on the back of your neck' [A Calum I] involved in listening amongst others to detract from the internal experience, and the potential for

shared moments of 'sublime concentration' [A Patrick I] to elevate an individual positive emotional response, simultaneously affirming the unique nature of the live performance that has been experienced.

This inherent sense of risk makes it even more apparent that the conditions required to create positive features of the performance that unify both individual and group processes – such as 'sublime concentration' or the 'pin-drop effect' – are rare, which perhaps further adds to their status as treasured aspects of the experience that concert-goers seek. Writing about concert experience, Roose (2008: 249) states that 'an emotional response is an active process in which the listener him/herself constructs or creates the desired emotional state by means of an elaborate repertoire of strategies'. However, the present research indicates that this idea – and Gomart and Hennion's (1999: 277) concept of 'establish[ing] conditions....in order to be moved' to which it is related – does not completely adequately reflect the real-world nature of listening in the concert hall. In this context, even if a number of certain conditions have been carefully chosen by the listener (e.g. a certain performer, an unknown work, a favourite seat in the concert hall...), the ultimate effects of the performance on their internal state are by no means preordained, because these rely on the cooperation of many other individuals, who must, to some extent, be seeking similar outcomes – or who, at the least, '[facilitate] each other's experience by remaining unobtrusive' (O'Sullivan, 2009: 219). But, finally, it is important to also consider that the lack of certainty about whether a desired state will be facilitated in the concert hall might also be a 'condition' that concert-goers seek in itself, meaning that, in comparison to the certainty of recorded listening, positive emotional states may be heightened because of a degree of anticipation about whether or not they will occur.

CHAPTER 8

Conclusions

The discussion of findings in Chapters 4 to 7 has shown that the factors that affect the enjoyment of classical concert attendance are varied and complex, and that individuals choose to attend classical concerts for a number of underlying reasons. This chapter outlines the key findings of the thesis, before evaluating the methods used in the research. The implications of the findings are then considered, both in terms of the advancement of knowledge in the research area, and through identifying ways in which the findings might inform the practice of orchestras and concert organisations. Finally, ideas for future directions of research on classical music audience experience are outlined.

8.1 Key findings

In many respects, the discussion of data and findings in Chapter 7 began to identify relationships between significant aspects of the concert experience. Here, the themes and key interactions are considered more explicitly, creating a framework for understanding audience experience at classical concerts which has arisen from the results reported in the preceding chapters. One overarching finding of the research is the complexity of individual response: ultimately, each audience member attends for a unique combination of reasons (and the relative emphasis placed on particular motivations for attendance may even change on each occasion they choose to attend a concert). For example, as Chapter 6 showed, some place greater significance on the quality of the visual cues they receive than on the quality of sound, but even within those who actively seek the presence of visual stimuli there are different underlying motivations for this behaviour: wanting to observe the production of the performance to remedy a perceived deficiency in their aural skills or musical understanding, for instance, or preferring a good view of the performers because watching their skill and virtuosity creates a high-arousal state ('uplifting', 'inspiring') that is one of the features the observer has become accustomed to seeking in classical concert attendance (Chapter 7).

Therefore, the complexity of individuals' experiences – and the differences between experiences at both the intra- and inter-individual level – shows that there is more going on in the concert hall than just passive, 'contemplative' listening, with a greater degree of active choice and consideration about the event as a whole on the audience member's part (extending beyond merely choosing an appealing programme, for instance) than is commonly assumed. Given the complexity of preference, experience and response in concert attendance, attempting to map the factors that affect the enjoyment of concert attendance in a coherent model is not the clearest way of representing the findings of this research. Rather, the key themes and interactions which arose from the findings are outlined below. I focus first on features of classical concerts which act as underlying motivations for attendance. These fall into two groups: aspects of the live classical experience, and aspects of the classical concert environment. The nature of the interaction between these two groups is then considered. As well as being underlying motives for attendance, these factors are also key contributors to enjoyment: they provide an impetus to attend because they are perceived to lead to an enjoyable experience. Finally, aspects of the experience which are not clear motivations to attend but which still influence audience enjoyment are outlined, noting where relevant the ways in which these mediating factors interact with the underlying motivations for attendance.

Underlying motivations for attending classical concerts

Affordances of hearing/seeing live classical performance

There are two main features directly related to live experience which acted as underlying motivations for attendance. The first is the risk or inherent contingency of a unique event, and the associated anticipation this creates. Second is a sense of responsiveness, interaction, or communication in performance. Lying between these two main sets of features is the notion of 'performers as people', which, as explained below, unifies these two aspects into one overarching concept.

A sense of risk or contingency was identified across many different aspects of concert experience, relating to the perceived uniqueness of a live event. The latter was a highly valued feature of concert attendance for some audience members: concerts were viewed as unrepeatable entities that could only be experienced through the action of deciding to attend, and so in this capacity the unpredictable and therefore distinctive

nature of live experience was a primary attendance motivation. As noted in Chapter 6, going to a concert in itself is a risk in comparison to listening to a known recording, and involves a greater investment in time and planning than simply buying a recorded version. Unlike recordings, an exact review of a concert cannot be consulted before deciding to buy a ticket. This feature possibly engenders a heightened degree of anticipation about the event because live performance is a rare commodity, the exact nature of which can never be completely predicted in advance.

A sense of contingency within the classical performance event was an important reason for attending classical concerts for existing audience members, but was an element that the non-attenders struggled to discern within the classical performance context. However, when guided through the process of recognising how performances can alter in *The Night Shift* (notably through being exposed to a particular extract a number of times) they enjoyed apprehending a lack of certainty about how a performance would unfold; but they then struggled to tell that the music was being played anything other than 'perfectly' at Concert 3 the following evening. This finding highlights that for concert attenders, uncertainty balances with their existing knowledge and familiarity. A greater sense of contingency in performance arises from knowing roughly what to expect: both from familiarity with the genre as a whole or the specific music itself, and from cumulative experience of classical concerts which has shown that in the live situation things do not always go as planned.

Risk and levels of familiarity interacted in a number of instances. Chapter 5 noted the presence of 'confined risk' in concert attendance where background familiarity reduces the risk of going to hear completely new works. For hearing familiar works, the live performance context offers the capacity for variance, affirming the unique nature of the event. On the other hand, favourite (and therefore known) performers are used as a means of insurance against the uncertainty of a live performance because they are known to guarantee performance quality (Chapter 6). In the case of listening to repertoire that is personally new, performers can use effective musical communication (an aspect of performance quality) to act as a trusted interpreter or guide to works that may be unknown to some of the audience (Chapter 5).

Discerning a sense of responsiveness, interaction, or communication from the performance was what the non-attenders and attenders (of those who elaborated on their appraisals of the performance) most valued in performance quality. This is important to note given that, in general, the non-attenders felt that they did not possess the necessary skills or knowledge to accurately appraise a performance. Significantly, it was the increased presence of performer-audience interaction and acknowledgement of the audience from the stage that most heavily influenced the non-attenders' enjoyment of *The Night Shift*, rather than the less stringent codes of audience behaviour at this event. It therefore does not necessarily require a 'non-traditional' setting to provide new audience members with a positive experience of classical music performance: as *The Night Shift* showed, this can be cultivated within a traditional concert hall by ensuring an effective provision of accessible context and a strong sense of communication and interaction with the performers on stage.

In general, discerning commitment and communication from the performers held importance through highlighting that the performance being observed is a process, thereby affirming the concert as a unique (and therefore valued) event. Just as music has historically been treated as an inanimate text object through the concept of the musical 'work', so there may also be an idea that performance too can be a preordained, static entity (rather than an active process) which the musicians reproduce by rote. By projecting a sense of responsiveness in performance, performers implicitly acknowledge the presence of an audience to respond *to* – thereby situating the audience member as active participant in the live event. Other than the explanation provided by emotional contagion (see Chapter 6), this is a further way of understanding why audience members can gain enjoyment or engagement from watching a performance in which the musicians appear to be committed or engaged themselves. Audience perceptions of communication and responsiveness in the performance event are augmented when performers really are seen 'as people': when audience members note an individual performer's idiosyncrasies, watch the musicians interact with others on stage, or hear them speak. Additionally, being able to see performers 'as people' heightens the perceived uniqueness of the event through an implicit knowledge that people are fallible and thus inherently unpredictable, meaning that there is an element of anticipation at being able to see what the performers are capable of achieving 'in person' at a live

concert, in comparison to the more distanced relationship between performer and 'audience' found in recorded listening.

Considering the themes of risk and responsiveness in combination, it is clear that these features are distinctive to live performance, and are primary reasons why individuals choose to attend concerts rather than only engage in recorded listening. Watching musicians interact on stage (and therefore witnessing performers operating as people) reiterates that the experience is a social process. Even though while the performance is in progress the event is not explicitly social for audience members (because their outward responses are inhibited by behaviour codes, the roles of which are discussed below), what the audience witnesses on stage *is* rooted in social life. As Chapter 7 showed, a feeling of being 'in audience' was determined by audience members' relationships to the stage. Because the process of performing music is rooted in social life, the concert is 'alive' and 'unique' – and therefore valued. It is possible that seeing a work 'brought to life' in performance resituates the work as a creation that was once brought into being by *someone*: it makes sense that we enjoy seeing a work recreated in performance with visible human agency and interaction, therefore reflecting the inevitably social context of its production.

That the performance on stage is a visibly social process may also mean that audience members themselves feel valued in enabling the performance to occur. This was evident in remarks from concert attenders which noted the ways in which poor audience numbers at a concert can detract from their enjoyment. As Daniel described, 'if [the audience] doesn't fill the hall then it can feel extremely empty and sort of clinical' [A Daniel I]. Importantly, in non-classical performance the audience may be *told* by the performers that their presence is valued ('we really appreciate you coming down to the gig tonight'), but in classical performance this rarely happens explicitly. This is a further reason why it may be effective for performers to verbally address the audience: even if they do not explicitly state that they appreciate the audience attending the concert, by being addressed from the stage the audience's presence is still acknowledged.

Affordances of the classical concert environment

A key motivation for listening to classical music within the concert hall is the emphasis it places on facilitating an individual experience, especially in engineering high- and low-arousal states. Classical music's abstract and largely non-representational nature exerted different influences on the experiences of the attenders and the non-attenders. For non-attenders this feature of instrumental classical music was in some respects negative, because a lack of narrative made it more difficult for them to ground what they were hearing in a cultural or historical context without information provided from other sources (Chapter 4). But for attenders, classical music's non-representational nature was a means of facilitating low-arousal internal states such as mentally 'drifting', while also allowing (through watching performers who are not in 'character') high-arousal states such as excitement in watching a successful, virtuosic performance. By not enjoining audience members to actively follow a narrative, classical music allows individuals to create the type of listening experience they desire. And so while much of the discussion in the preceding section related to music 'through performance', and could therefore be read as a suggestion that musical works are merely a vehicle for enabling live performance, the affordances of the classical concert are to some extent reliant upon specific attributes of the genre itself (outlined further at the end of 6.4).

Beyond 'the music itself', the listening context functioned as an underlying motivation for attending live classical performances through creating a setting amenable to strong emotional listening experiences. Concerts were frequently viewed as distinct from everyday life, in facilitating a sense of escape or 'time out'. Appraisals of performance quality contributed to the facilitation of internal states: just as experiencing a performance of particularly high quality might elicit feelings of excitement, presumably a badly performed concert would hinder the enjoyment of an audience member who is seeking a sense of escape and who may therefore be distracted by their negative responses to the performance itself. The concert hall's behaviour codes were particularly important in facilitating the uninterrupted experience of an internal state and in privileging mental freedom over physical response. Although ecological theory suggests that the suppression of physical response might detract from the listening experience, it seems that some audience members see the concert hall as a sanctuary in which they are not forced to respond to an experience with physical action, especially compared to the world outside where they are constantly required to process and then

act on information. We therefore need to move away from associating the physical stance of 'contemplative' listening with negative assumptions about the seemingly passive way that music in the concert hall is received, and consider that this mode of outwardly unresponsive listening fulfils important functions for audience members which in turn act as underlying reasons for attendance. Significantly, the internal states signalled by a 'contemplative' stance are less solely related to 'the music itself' as has previously been assumed, and can also be related to the performance, to an individual's internal dialogue, or to 'switching off'.

Finally, how do these two main categories of underlying motivations for attendance (pertaining to the affordances of witnessing live classical performance, and of listening to classical music in the concert hall setting) relate? Each classical concert is a living, unique event that is constitutive of (not set aside from) social life, while an important part of the event is its role in facilitating a personal, individual experience. But the classical concert is far from asocial, because each audience member relies on others (performers and fellow attenders) to help create their individual experience. Within the audience itself, there is therefore a form of cooperation between strangers (cf. Small, 1998), reflecting the ostensibly more active collaboration seen on stage. As the title of this thesis suggests, audience enjoyment thus relies on an interaction between 'stalls' (audience), 'stage' (performers/performance) and 'score' (music). Audience enjoyment is partly created by audience members themselves: individually, in knowing how to choose and then use a performance for its desired means, engineering states from the right 'conditions'; and collectively, through transmitting a sense of shared purpose, which comprises conforming to behaviour codes (to allow uninterrupted individual responses to the music and the performance context) while also recognising that as a group they enable the performance to occur, and that a sense of shared response can heighten their individual experiences. But audience response depends on the skill and communication of the performers, who are in turn inevitably influenced by the nature of the music they perform. While this thesis has shown that there is more to listening in the concert hall than passive receptivity to a musical work, 'the music itself' still plays a crucial role, occupying the space between performer and audience. At a simplistic level it enables the action of both groups in providing something to play and something to hear, but on a finer scale it is the specific properties of the music that

creates the enthusiasm and interest of performers in playing classical music, and of listeners in hearing it.

Modifiers of audience enjoyment

In addition to the underlying motivations for attendance outlined above, there are other factors which did not act as motivations for attendance but which nonetheless could affect audience enjoyment within the concert hall.

Audience behaviour

The distracting behaviour of other concert attenders held the potential to jeopardise an audience member's concentration on the music, and therefore to detract from their individual experience. But when the audience were united in response, the presence of others held the potential to heighten an individual's own enjoyment. This therefore demonstrates the risk involved in concert attendance: as noted in Chapter 7, audience members cannot predict with certainty how the presence of other audience members will affect their experience at a given event. 'Good' audience behaviour, through projecting a shared sense of purpose, is therefore important in contributing to the overall quality of the audience's experience of the performance.

Aspects of venues

While the general consensus among the participants interviewed was that a concert venue is rarely a primary motivator in the decision to attend a concert, features of concert venues can affect audience enjoyment, for instance in the extent to which they provide comfort, good sightlines, and good acoustics. The size and perceived intimacy of a venue can affect the degree to which the audience feels part of the event (through a sense of closeness to the stage), while venues which provide social spaces in addition to an auditorium are valued by those who wish to see the concert overall as a social event. Aspects of venues can also affect audience enjoyment through the messages they project about the nature of the event: an auditorium's lack of boxes suggested to one participant that the audience was sharing an experience and had attended with a shared sense of purpose, while in the spaces they provide outside of the auditorium, venues transmit messages about who is allowed in. By providing multifaceted spaces that include sites

for socialising as well as musical experiences, concert venues can promote messages of inclusion. Even though the concert hall may be a site for experiences that are demarcated from everyday life, the wider venue in which it is housed can be viewed as an everyday, accessible, social space. This mirrors what audience members seem to believe concert attendance is for: an individual, special experience inherently located within a shared or social setting.

Knowledge and experience

The enjoyment of concert attendance was influenced by individuals' knowledge of, or experience with, classical music; as would be expected, this was particularly pertinent for the non-attender participants. Being provided with accessible context about the works (and thus a degree of knowledge) at *The Night Shift* increased the non-attenders' understanding, confidence and enjoyment. In many ways it was evident that the skills of classical concert-going do need to be acquired: without knowledge of the music and experience of listening in the concert hall setting, it is difficult to go about attending a classical concert. This is the case both in choosing a concert to attend and knowing how to 'get what you want' out of the experience: such as knowing that paying rapt attention to the music at all times need not necessarily be the *ne plus ultra* of audience experience.

Indeed, perceived knowledge was one of the two main factors which influenced whether or not the non-attenders subsequently attended a classical concert during the longitudinal stage (the other was the availability of interested people with whom to attend). Of the eight non-attender participants who took part in the longitudinal stage, two (Carla and Tara) attended a classical concert during this time. Neither participant knew the music that they were going to see, but they both chose to attend concerts at venues in which they had previous positive cultural experiences, and they both attended with others whom they knew enjoyed classical music.

The majority of the remaining participants said that participating in Study 2 had changed their attitudes towards classical music but had not necessarily changed their behaviour. They reported that they still would not know how they would go about choosing which classical concert to go to if they were to decide to attend one, indicating that the study had not helped significantly in increasing their perceived knowledge

about their own preferences in relation to particular composers and classical works. Two participants, however, said that their behaviour had changed as a result of the study, although this had not manifested itself in attending a classical concert. Rachel had started listening to classical music and described making the effort to talk to friends and colleagues who she knew listened to the genre to increase her knowledge and understanding of it. Kerry, meanwhile, noted a marked increase at the frequency at which she listened to (non-classical) music and attended live performances, and also demonstrated how the knowledge that she had gained from the study would inform her decisions should she decide to attend a classical concert:

I think I'd definitely go and see Mozart again, because I understand a bit more about his music, I feel I might appreciate that a bit more. If I saw the Open Age of the Enlightenment [*sic*], whatever that orchestra is called – sorry! [laughs] I would go and see them, because I know that I enjoyed seeing that. And I think I would go to the St John's just because I liked the atmosphere and maybe try that out once more, but I think I'd be quite careful about what I went to see. [NA Kerry I]

For some concert attenders, the concert hall was seen as a site for gaining knowledge, increasing their personal repertoire of music with which they were familiar. This relates to a perhaps unique appeal of classical music: that there is always a new combination of performer and work to hear. This aspect appealed to those who liked to 'collect' live performances, but also to audience members who seek novelty in concert experience. A tension could be read between the way in which classical audience members seek to engage with classical music on their own terms within the concert hall and this idea that classical concert attendance is in some respects driven by the acquisition of knowledge. This could relate to the sense of moral obligation that the non-attenders experienced in relation to classical concert attendance: that for concert attenders there is an equivalent type of moral imperative to know as much about the genre as possible. Alternatively, the notion of increasing personal repertoires could merely relate to a desire to discover new things, and that what these audience members seek in concert attendance is a sense of discovery.

8.2 Evaluation of methods

Limitations of the design of the studies have already been considered at relevant points in the preceding chapters, although it is useful to evaluate more broadly the methods used in the research here. Study 2 relied on data elicited from individuals who had found the English Chamber Orchestra concert at Cadogan Hall appealing enough to book tickets and then attend. Given that the programming of the concert was idiosyncratic in including two concerti, it is important to consider that this concert may have attracted an audience with preferences for watching solo performers, with the visible dynamics between soloist, conductor and orchestra which ensue, in addition to a concomitant display of virtuosity. Similarly, it is important to note that these audience members had chosen to attend a concert at the relatively small (and architecturally unconventional) Cadogan Hall. As the data showed, the hall's size enabled good sightlines and a sense of closeness to the performers, meaning that by taking place in Cadogan Hall the concert may have attracted audience members for whom visual stimuli and a sense communication with the performers is particularly pertinent. It is therefore possible that replicating the study at a larger, more conventional concert hall, with a more standard programme (of for example, overture, concerto and symphony) would alter the nature of the results.

The audience questionnaire for Study 2 would have been improved if it had asked respondents to provide ratings for their liking of each work and for the perceived quality of each performance. This would have allowed a more detailed consideration of the relationships between the effects of familiarity and liking within the context of live listening and would have enabled a deeper investigation of the importance of performance quality in audience members' enjoyment of a performance. Unlike the questionnaire studies by Thompson (2007) and Roose (2008), however, this study showed the effectiveness of eliciting free responses from questionnaire respondents, which proved instrumental in understanding their underlying motivations for attendance. Finally, a more flexible approach could have been taken when recruiting the attender interviewees: rather than only seeking to interview audience members who were also willing to participate in the longitudinal stage, these two aspects of data collection could have been separated, so that some interviewees did not take part in the longitudinal stage and vice versa. This would have increased the number of audience

members willing to be interviewed, meaning that detailed qualitative data could have been elicited from a greater proportion of the questionnaire respondents.

In Study 1, the focus group methodology employed was inevitably subject to the potential for group effects in the data; possible instances of group influence were identified in Chapter 4, particularly when considering how the participants talked about the music itself. However, a considerable strength of this study was the way in which interview data was elicited from the non-attender participants on a number of occasions, with the use of individual interviews meaning that in-depth accounts of the participants' experiences were sought away from the group context. In considering in Chapter 4 how the group interview situation may have influenced how the participants discussed their responses to the music, this research is the first among existing classical music audience studies which have used focus group methodologies (i.e. Kolb, 2000; Jacobs, 2000; O'Sullivan, 2009; Radbourne et al., 2009) to fully acknowledge and reflect on how this method may shape the study's findings. This is especially important given that, first, there is a prevailing notion that music's ineffability makes it difficult to express one's responses to it (see e.g. Hewett, 2003) and so asking individuals who are unfamiliar with classical music to discuss their listening experiences in a group environment may mean that they take some time to become confident in doing so, as was shown in Chapter 4. Second, however, as preceding chapters have noted, the behaviour codes of classical concerts limit the degree to which listeners can exhibit their responses to the experience while the performance is in progress, so being provided with a forum in which to discuss their responses may actually contribute to audience members' enjoyment of the event as a whole (cf. Gainer, 1995).

Using culturally-aware participants to gain an insight into the experience of novice classical concert attenders produced rich data, as they were able to articulate the similarities and differences between concert attendance and the experience of engaging in other cultural events. Despite the relatively high levels of cultural engagement in these participants' lives, attending three classical concerts still did not seem to provide most of them with enough perceived knowledge to view concert attendance as an accessible cultural choice. As noted in 8.1, one of the main reasons given by the participants for not subsequently attending a classical concert during the longitudinal period (despite predicting that they would) was a perceived lack of knowledge, meaning

that they were unsure of first, how to choose a concert that they would be likely to enjoy, and second, how they would go about seeking further information and booking tickets. One possible limitation of Study 1 therefore is that it could have provided the participants with more background knowledge and information about classical music before they attended the concerts. Alternatively, the participants could have been required to investigate potential concerts to attend and then to book concert tickets themselves. While this strategy would have provided a fuller experience of the overall process involved in attending a classical concert, it would have posed considerable methodological difficulties.

Finally, it should be considered that while useful, asking the participants to participate in the longitudinal stage (which recorded details of their live music attendance and listening habits over six months) may have projected the impression that the ultimate aim of Study 1 was to change their behaviour, therefore perpetuating the idea of a moral imperative to engage in classical music listening. While most participants indicated at the end of the research that the process of taking part in the longitudinal stage itself had not altered their behaviour, Emma and Carla both noted a feeling of guilt when filling in the surveys not only at their perceived lack of engagement in classical music listening, but at the nature of their more general listening habits in daily life. A limitation of the study, then, was that in seeking to contextualise the participants' experiences of Study 1 within their wider engagement with music, it also projected an implicit expectation that they *should* be engaging in music in their daily lives (see also Martin, 2006).

8.3 Implications of the research findings

Advancement of the research area

This is the first study to elicit data from a substantial proportion of audience members at an orchestral concert which allowed respondents, in their own terms, to articulate the both the factors that affect their enjoyment of a concert and their underlying motivations for attending classical performances. The questionnaire studies by Roose (2008) and Thompson (2007) relied on asking audience members to rate *a priori* statements for their importance in determining the enjoyment of concert attendance. In the case of Roose's large-scale study (which surveyed 2465 concert attenders) the extensive use of

free-response questions would clearly have been unwieldy, but there remains scope to integrate the two approaches, using categories produced by audience members themselves (in smaller-scale studies such as this one) to refine the survey instruments used in large-scale audience studies. In addition, drawing on data from both attenders and non-attenders in the present study was instrumental in producing new insights into the nature of audience experience, especially in relation to the role of knowledge and experience in mediating the enjoyment of classical concert attendance. This approach helped to produce a composite picture of the experience of concert-going from a spectrum of individuals with different levels of prior exposure, finding that in some respects seasoned concert-goers and new attenders reacted positively to the same elements of the experience, just in varying degrees.

Through the holistic approach taken, this thesis has produced an integrated view of how factors identified in other studies of classical music audiences interact. For example, the thesis builds on the work of Pitts (2005a/b) and O'Sullivan (2009) in considering the degree to which concert experience is perceived as a shared or participatory occasion, but within this framework it also considers in detail the nature of the individual listening experience. It has extended Thompson's (2006) quantitative investigation of the relationship between repertoire familiarity and enjoyment by considering the effects of prior familiarity more broadly across the concert situation as a whole, and has obtained preliminary findings from qualitative data on the degree to which concert attenders seek familiar and/or novel experiences within the concert hall. But the thesis has also shown that audience members do not consider the presence of novelty or familiarity in isolation, and that they seek to balance these features with other elements of the concert, such as the capacity for variance in a live performance of a familiar work, or by choosing to hear a new work by performers whose quality of performance they trust.

The results of this research are concordant with, but also extend, Radbourne et al.'s (2009) findings on the important role played by a sense of risk or contingency in audience experience and on the significance attributed to a sense of 'collective engagement' within the concert hall (both between audience members themselves, and in the form of interaction between performers and audience). As such, some of the key findings which emerged from the present research resemble those identified by

Radbourne et al.'s (2009) study, but while their study combined data from concert and theatre attenders, the present research has gained more detailed perspectives on the audience experience at classical concerts specifically. It has gone beyond merely corroborating Radbourne et al.'s findings with data from a much larger sample of concert attenders by providing detailed insight (outlined in 8.1) into how the factors of risk and a sense of responsiveness or communication within the concert hall interact and operate within a broader framework which encompasses other important features of the classical concert, such as the role of live experience and the facilitation of internal states.

While the fact that Study 2 only considered one particular performance in detail could be viewed as a limitation of the research (noted in 8.2), the detailed and rich data elicited from this one concert demonstrated the effectiveness of drawing on DeNora's (2003) paradigm of 'the musical event' to understand the ways in which music works in people's lives in specific instances. While there is a limit to the generalisability of the findings from the audience questionnaire, considering the data from this one, specific musical event has produced ideas about *how* music can work within the concert hall situation: that the results may not be replicable does not detract from the insight they have given into the complexity of audience response at classical concerts, and into the ways people may choose to use concert attendance as part of a repertoire of behaviours through which they engage with music more broadly. The complexity of response in itself highlights the importance of considering individual differences in live music listening, indicating that future studies should ensure that individuals' experiences of concert attendance are explored in detail, taking into account the role of concert attendance within their wider engagement with music, as well investigating broader trends in motivations for attendance (although these two approaches need not necessarily be undertaken in conjunction).

This thesis has demonstrated the effectiveness of using 'real-world' research approaches to investigate music listening, as many of the findings noted in 8.1 simply would not have emerged from a laboratory study. However, this work also points towards the benefits of a dialogue between experimental research in music psychology and real-world investigations (see also Juslin & Timmers, 2010). For example, findings in Chapter 6 on audience members' enjoyment of watching interaction between the

musicians on stage would not have emerged from laboratory studies which investigate the effects of a solo performer's body movement on listeners' responses to a performance. But now that this finding has emerged from a real-world setting, this phenomenon could be experimentally tested to replicate the finding and to identify mechanisms underlying this aspect of audience response. In turn, these findings could then be used to inform musicians' practice, improving the audience experience at their performances.

There has been debate in recent key texts in music psychology about the extent to which the discipline should view real-world applicability as a primary motivator for undertaking research. John Sloboda (2005: 412) has proposed that (music psychology) researchers should think more carefully about the degree to which their research offers applicability to real-world settings, or at best, 'social benefit'. But in response, Clarke, Dibben, and Pitts (2010) have noted concern at using real-world applicability 'as a primary criterion by which the success or legitimacy of the discipline is measured', highlighting the importance of the contribution that (often less application-driven) music psychology research can make in providing an understanding of music as a product of human culture: 'and in so doing, helping to advance the broader goal of trying to understand human beings' (p. 192). This thesis is an example of how research which aims for the development of academic understanding and knowledge can also hold applications which extend further (outlined below). But without existing theoretical research (e.g. Clarke, 2005; Small, 1998), the topic of listening within the concert hall would have proved more difficult to initially approach empirically, highlighting the importance of being receptive to both theoretical and empirical accounts of music listening. Similarly, research in the area of audience experience which takes the production of applicable findings as its primary aim runs the risk of merely 'doing arts marketing research badly', without providing a deeper understanding of human experience which academic research (and a focus on seeking the advancement of knowledge over finding immediate applications) can offer.

In the context of the present study, taking Sloboda's (2005) approach to the extreme might pose the question: 'why study *classical* music audiences?'. Given that a greater proportion of the population attends live performances of popular music (Arts Council England, 2004), emergent findings with real-world applicability from studies of

the latter would reach a larger number of people. This is especially pertinent given that classical music is the dominant genre used in music psychology research studies, despite its less privileged position, in comparison to popular genres, in everyday use (Konečni, 2009; North and Hargreaves, 2010). But there is a danger of being too reactive to classical music's historically privileged status. This thesis has shown that studying the phenomenon of the classical concert can lead to more general findings about the nature and meanings of performance and can contribute to an understanding of the ways in which people use music. An attitude of reverse snobbery towards researching classical music is most likely counterproductive and serves to perpetuate the idea that classical music listening is somehow 'different' without seeking to properly explore the potential commonalities between attitudes towards listening to classical music and to other genres. Rather than making distinctions between 'classical' and 'popular', it is better to view classical music as one of many different types of musics that individuals may choose to engage in, each with their own conventions within the live performance event (think of the possible differences between audience and performer behaviour at a performance in a small folk club and at a stadium pop gig, for example). Considering audience experience in this way would help to create a more composite understanding of what it is that people choose to attend live music for, thus situating attendance at live events within individuals' wider uses of music, while also enabling reflections on what the music itself affords in these specific instances. This thesis has shown that the classical concert hall is more than merely a site for parading the imaginary museum of musical works (Goehr, 1992) to passive audiences: the classical concert needs to be considered further as a performance event, as an inherently social and collaborative process, and as one of the many ways that individuals may choose to engage with music within their lives.

Implications for orchestras and concert organisations

There are many possible implications of the findings of this thesis for the practice of orchestras, concert venues, and concert organisations. Some have already been noted at relevant junctures in the preceding chapters, while further key points are outlined here. In Study 1, the effectiveness of the embedded information in *The Night Shift* suggests that the provision of demonstrations during classical concerts could be reassessed and employed more frequently, in addition to a consideration of how the open rehearsals that symphony orchestras often allow audience members access to could be tailored and

used as a 'bridge' for encouraging new audiences into the concert hall. Both strategies would give new audience members insights into how classical ensembles (and the works they perform) function, promoting classical performance as the result of a process of collaboration and interpretation, shaped by and reliant on the qualities of the musicians involved, rather than as a predetermined, static product. This research has demonstrated that embedded information can be effective for new attenders, but that it needs to be tailored to the audience's level of experience. Just as new audience members may be alienated by a conductor's introduction which makes use of terminology they are unable to understand, so regular attenders may oppose, or be alienated by, embedded information intended to engage those new to the concert hall (Brown, 2004). It may therefore be necessary to take a more differentiated view of concert audiences, not only in the marketing strategies used to target different audience segments (Roose, 2008), but in broadening the range of 'products' that classical ensembles offer (Kolb, 2000; Kolb, 2005; Whitaker & Philliber, 2003). By providing potential audiences with a greater degree of choice over the means by which they consume live classical music, ensembles are more likely to achieve success in encouraging interested but novice concertgoers to attend classical performances.

However, given the findings relating to a sense of moral obligation in classical listening, it is important that in seeking to attract new audience members concert organisations do not simultaneously perpetuate the idea 'that arts attendance is "good for you"' (Kotler & Scheff, 1997: 533) and that, therefore, classical music is by default 'good'. Orchestras and concert organisations therefore need to tread a fine balance between the need to rejuvenate an aging audience base (Kolb, 2001, 2005) and the risk of transmitting the message that classical music is something that one must like (rather than just being one of a range of cultural events on offer to consumers) – and thereby potentially alienating new audience members in the process of trying to recruit them. It may, for instance, be effective to introduce potential audience members to classical music by more frequently presenting it in conjunction with other art forms and/or other musical genres to increase potential audience members' exposure within a context of cultural engagement with which they are already familiar. Taking into account the difficulties that the non-attenders experienced as a result of a perceived lack of knowledge about classical music, initiatives of this kind could provide accessible literature which not only supplies background information about the composer and the

circumstances around a work's composition, but also points to where else the work can be heard in performance, suggests further sources of information about the music, and makes recommendations of similar composers or works which audience members may enjoy if they like what they have heard.

The findings of this thesis have indicated that the behaviour codes of classical concerts fulfil a number of distinct purposes and are valued by concert attenders. However, they also suggest that concerts could be made more enjoyable by enhancing the shared ethos of the performances, while retaining the demarcation from everyday life that the behaviour codes of classical concerts provide. At one level, this can be achieved by communication in performance by the musicians through conveying a sense of commitment and enjoyment to the audience. In the concerts used in this research the participants discerned this element in the performances (rather than noting its lack), although Alex Ross (2010) suggests that in orchestral performance generally, and particularly in orchestras of the United States, 'the performers, for their part, cultivate too much detachment', stressing the need for 'an audible and visible increase of passion on stage'.

Concert organisations could also help to promote a sense of shared experience by facilitating a forum for audience members to discuss their responses to the performance they have just heard. In concert series where subscribers inhabit the same seats in the auditorium both within and across seasons such discussion may occur naturally within the concert hall (cf. O'Sullivan, 2009), but to a new or less frequent audience member, this behaviour may create the impression that classical audiences are made up of a distinct group of knowledgeable individuals – 'a set that goes to them' [NA Dominic I] – rather than being a more fluid community of listeners who sometimes happen to be at the same events. Providing a more organised forum after concerts where responses to the music and performance can informally be discussed would situate the concert as a more social experience for those to whom being able to share their responses with others is important. It could also provide a site for meeting some of the musicians, further enabling the degree to the performers are viewed in a human capacity. For new audience members, being able to talk informally with other attenders and the performers themselves might provide one channel through which the knowledge

and skills relating to classical music listening in the concert hall can be informally learnt.

8.4 Directions for future research

This work could be extended by developing the audience questionnaire used in Study 2 (attending to the evaluative points raised in 8.2) and choosing a wider range of concerts at which to distribute it (e.g. spanning a recital by a solo performer, a chamber music performance and a large symphony orchestra concert). This strategy would still provide a means of eliciting responses to specific performances which have been collected close to the event itself (Sloboda et al., 2009), but would enable a consideration of whether the findings of the present research also emerge from different types of classical concert and the particular audience members they attract. As in Study 2, deeper responses could be sought through follow-up interviews with questionnaire respondents, this time ensuring that interviews are sought with a greater proportion of the audience members in attendance at each concert. These interviews could also be used as a site for exploring in more detail the phenomenological effects of familiarity and novelty in the context of live performance, prompting more comprehensive descriptions of the experience of these respective states. Additionally, further analysis will be undertaken on the longitudinal survey data gathered from the attender interviewees in the present study to gain further insight into their motivations for attending particular events over a longer period of time.

It would be interesting to repeat Study 1 while taking a different approach to providing the non-attenders with repertoire familiarity and some knowledge about classical music in advance. Rather than require that they listen to all of the music before attending the performances, they could be directed to a website containing short audio clips of memorable points in the works, accessible context about the composers, an explanation of the key terms found in the literature available at classical concerts (i.e. 'symphony', 'concerto', 'movement') and some insight into the performers and/or ensembles themselves. An alternative approach to developing the study's design might be to hold a focus group discussion in the days following a performance, using printed concert reviews of the event as a discussion point to elicit the participants' responses to the music and performance. This approach might be especially effective if two

contrasting reviews could be sought, as a means of demonstrating the variance in 'expert' appraisals of a concert. Exploring whether the features of the performance which strongly influenced the participants' enjoyment of the concert are congruent with features identified by concert critics would give further insight into the relationships between 'expert' and 'novice' descriptions of a given experience. The process would also allow consideration of whether reading concert reviews is one way through which informal learning about classical music can take place.

Further research is needed which explicitly compares live and recorded listening experiences, so that the values and meanings of both modes of listening can be more clearly articulated. Building on the findings presented here on the high- and low-arousal states that respondents sought in the concert hall, the differences in emotional response to live and recorded listening could be explored more systematically. It is possible that emotional responses to listening to a given work live may differ quantitatively or qualitatively from the emotional responses elicited when listening to a recorded performance, because of differences in the social context in which it is heard (Gabrielsson, 2001; Sloboda & O'Neill, 2001). This approach might also enable the effects of physiological arousal in the live performance context to be considered in more detail. As noted in 6.5, the effects of contemporary listening practices on the experience of listening in the concert hall also deserve further exploration, especially in relation to the memories and (visual) associations that may have become intrinsic to a listener's conception of a given work.

Finally, future work could investigate the extent to which audience members' perceptions of a performer's enjoyment are congruent with the performer's internal state. To what extent are performers aware of enthraling the audience at particular moments, and how much is this to do with qualities of the work itself and/or aspects of the performance? Further consideration might be given to the degree to which the idea of giving a 'committed' performance corresponds with the notion of exaggerating gestures or facial expressions within the concert situation to 'put on a show'. Studies of audience experience and response could thus be used to provide feedback to musicians on the effectiveness of their performances, and future research could be used to develop a system of performance evaluation for use in the training of musicians in which aspects of performances which have been shown to be of value to audiences themselves (rather

than to examiners or adjudicators) are taken into account. These directions for future research would help to create a more integrated view of 'what is really going on' in the concert hall (Small, 1998), by considering the many possible interactions between audience members, performers, and the music they perform.

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Appendix 1: Participant coding system

Participants:

- A Attender interviewee
- NA Non-attender participant
- Q Questionnaire respondent

Time of response:

- FG1 Non-attender focus group interview after Concert 1
- FG2 Non-attender focus group interview after Concert 3
- I Main individual interview
- 3m Interview at 3 months in the longitudinal stage
- 6m Interview at 6 months in the longitudinal stage
- S Longitudinal survey response [number denotes from which survey]

Never

10. Which of these London concert venues, if any, have you been to before? *(please tick all that apply)*

- Royal Festival Hall Queen Elizabeth Hall Purcell Room Barbican Hall
 Royal Albert Hall Cadogan Hall Wigmore Hall St John's Smith Square
 St Martin-in-the-Fields
 LSO St Lukes Royal Opera House London Coliseum
 I have not been to any of these

11. How many classical music concerts have you attended in the past 12 months? For any you have attended, what was the concert and where did it take place?

- None
 1 Details:
 2 Details:
 3 Details:
 4 Details:

12. Do you play any musical instruments, or have you done so in the past?

- Yes No

If yes, please give details:

Thinking about the ways in which you listen to music...

13. What types of music do you enjoy?

14. How often do you listen to recorded music (e.g. CDs, radio)?

- every day several times a week once a week several times a month
 every so often rarely never

15. How often do you listen to classical music from recordings or on the radio?

- every day several times a week once a week several times a month
 every so often rarely never

16. How often do you buy music on CD?

- once a week several times a month once a month once every two months
 three or four times a year once or twice a year rarely never

17. How often do you download music?

- once a week several times a month once a month once every two months
 three or four times a year once or twice a year rarely never

18. Do you own an mp3 player / walkman?

- Yes No

19. Do you have regular commitments on any weekday evenings? *Please give details.*

Many thanks for completing this questionnaire. I will let you know if you fit the criteria for the study as soon as possible.

Appendix 3: Study 1 information sheet

Information Sheet for Participants

Musical spaces: exploring the effects of concert venue and repertoire familiarity on the experience of classical concert attendance

This study forms part of my PhD research, which is exploring audience members' experiences of attending live music events, and in particular of attending classical music concerts. The study aims to explore why people choose to attend concerts, and what affects people's enjoyment of attending concerts. The main part of the study will take place during February 2008; there is then a six-month longitudinal stage which will last from March to September 2008.

You have been chosen for this study because you enjoy cultural activities and events, but you do not often attend classical music concerts. This study aims to explore the experience of attending classical music concerts for people who do not frequently go to them. Seven other participants will be taking part in the study.

You are free to decide whether or not to take part in this research. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep, and you will be asked to sign a consent form at the first concert. You can still withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason.

Taking part in the study will involve participating in the following:

- February: Attending three classical music concerts (free tickets provided), and attending a focus group interview after two of the concerts. Before each of the concerts you will be provided with a disposable camera to visually record your reactions to the concert and the venue. You are free to take as many or as few photographs as you like. The concerts will take place on:
 - 1) **Wednesday 13 February**, Barbican Centre, 7.30pm.
London Symphony Orchestra concert, followed by a focus group interview.
Finish time: approx. 10.30pm.
 - 2) **Tuesday 19 February**, Queen Elizabeth Hall, 10.00pm (although there will be music in the foyer from 9.00pm which you can attend if you wish).
Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment *Nightshift* one-hour concert.
Finish time: 11.00pm.
 - 3) **Wednesday 20 February**, St John's, Smith Square, 7.30pm.
London Chamber Orchestra concert, followed by a focus group interview.
Latest finish time: 11.00pm.

- **March:** An interview lasting 30 minutes to an hour, at a time and place convenient for you.
- **March-August:** Completing a short email survey issued every fortnight. This asks for brief details of any live music events you have attended and any recorded music purchases you have made in the past two weeks.
- **June:** An interview lasting c. 30 minutes, either over the telephone or at a convenient place for you.
- **September:** A final interview lasting c. 30 minutes, again either over the telephone or at a convenient place.

The group interviews and the interviews with you individually will all be recorded; if you are not willing for your interviews to be recorded, please let me know. The audio recordings of your interviews made during this research will be used only for analysis, and no one outside the project will be allowed access to the recordings.

All the data that I collect during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. The results of the research will form part of my PhD thesis, and may appear in other publications. All data collected from you will be reported anonymously in the PhD thesis and in any reports or publications arising from the study. If you would like to receive a summary of the results, please indicate this on your consent form.

This research is funded by a University of Sheffield Project Studentship, and has been ethically approved by the ethics review procedure of the Department of Music, University of Sheffield.

If you would like any further information about this study please do not hesitate to contact me on the details below.

Many thanks for reading this, and I look forward to hearing whether or not you would like to take part in the research.

Melissa Dobson

Appendix 4: Study 1 Final instructions sheet

Final details for classical concert study, February 2008

Many thanks for agreeing to take part in this study. Below are full details of the three concerts you will be attending. I will need to meet you before each concert to give you your ticket – details of where to meet for each concert are included below, but if you are running late please let me know and I can leave your ticket at the venue's box office. As much as possible, please treat these concerts like any other event you would go to. There are eight participants taking part, and we will all be seated together during the performances, but feel free to explore the venues and do anything you would normally do. If you have any questions or problems, please contact me on [phone number, email address] but otherwise I look forward to seeing you at the first concert on 13 February.

Wednesday 13 February – London Symphony Orchestra concert at Barbican Hall

Concert start time: 7.30pm (please aim to arrive by 7.20)

Venue: Barbican Hall, Barbican Centre, Silk Street, London EC2Y 8DS
(www.barbican.org.uk)

Nearest tubes: Barbican, Moorgate, Liverpool Street

Meeting place: I'll be at the Barbican from 7.00pm to meet you with tickets when you arrive. I'll be standing just inside the Silk Street entrance, to the right of the first ticket/information desk you come to when you enter the centre. (For those I haven't met before: I'm 5'9, with brown shoulder-length hair, and I'll be holding a blue folder). Phone me on [number] if you have any problems finding me.

Concert programme: London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Vasily Petrenko

Rachmaninov – Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini (Ayako Uehara – piano)
(Interval)

Shostakovich – Symphony No. 15

Free concert programmes will be available at the Barbican, or you can download one from five days before the concert at: <http://www.barbican.org.uk/music/download-programmes>

Focus group after concert: This will take place in the Level 1 foyer area (the level at which we'll leave the hall). There will be time to get drinks etc. before the interview starts.

Estimated finish time: 10.30pm

Tuesday 19 February – OAE Night Shift concert at Queen Elizabeth Hall

Concert start time: 10.00pm (although there will be live music in the foyer from 9.00pm which you can watch if you wish)

Venue: Queen Elizabeth Hall, Southbank Centre, Belvedere Road, London SE1 8XX
(www.southbankcentre.co.uk)

Nearest tubes: Waterloo, Embankment

Meeting place: I'll be sitting at a table watching the live music in the Queen Elizabeth Hall foyer from 9.00pm, so meet me there anytime between 9.00 and 10.00 to pick up your tickets.

Concert programme: Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment

Beethoven – Coriolan Overture

Mozart – Piano Concerto No. 21 (Robert Levin – piano)

A free concert programme sheet is handed out as you enter the hall. This concert is more informal – you can take drinks into the hall with you and talk/clap when you like. For more information see: <http://www.oae.co.uk/thenightshift/>

No focus group after this concert. You can head home straightaway afterwards, though there will be music in the foyer until midnight if you want to stay.

Concert finish time: 11.00pm

Wednesday 20 February – London Chamber Orchestra concert at St John's, Smith Square

Concert start time: 7.30pm

Venue: St John's, Smith Square, London SW1P 3HA
(<http://www.sjss.org.uk/index.htm>)

Nearest tubes: Westminster, St James's Park

Meeting place: I'll be on the steps outside the church (or just inside if it's raining!) from 7.00pm to meet you with tickets.

Concert programme: London Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Christopher Warren-Green

Strauss – Die Fledermaus Overture

Schumann – Piano Concerto (Ilya Rashkovskiy – piano)

(Interval)

Brahms – Symphony No. 1

Concert programmes will be on sale in the venue.

Focus group after concert: *This will take place downstairs in the Footstool Restaurant/Bar.*

Estimated finish time: 10.30-11.00pm

Photography

You will be given a disposable camera at each concert to visually record anything that you particularly like or dislike about the venue and the concert situation as a whole. This could be aspects of the venue's architecture, the facilities on offer, or anything that particularly strikes you as interesting. Feel free to take photos before each concert, in the interval, and after the concert, but do not take photos while the performance is taking place. There will be a chance to look at your photos and discuss what you took pictures of and why when I interview you individually. You can take as many or as few photos as you like, but you will have one 27-exposure camera to last for the three concerts: this averages at 9 photos per concert. Please be respectful to other audience members when you are using the cameras, and adhere to the following rules:

- No capturing of any copyright materials/artwork
- No capturing of images of commercial tenancy areas or clients (if set-up)
- No capturing of images of individual customers or staff without permission (crowd shots are allowed)
- No capturing of images of children
- No photographs of the performance

Appendix 5: Consent form for Studies 1 and 2

Participant Consent Form

Musical Spaces: exploring the factors that affect the enjoyment of classical music concert attendance

Name of researcher: Melissa Dobson

Participant Identification Number for this project:

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason. (If you wish to withdraw from the study, please contact Melissa Dobson: [phone number, email address])
3. I understand that my responses will be anonymised before analysis. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses.
4. I agree to take part in the above research project.
5. I would like to receive a summary of the study's results (*please tick*) Yes No

Name of Participant_____
Date_____
Signature_____
Lead Researcher_____
Date_____
Signature*To be signed and dated in presence of the participant*

Copies:

Appendix 6: Study 1 Listening Preparation Task sample CD card

On a scale of 1-7, how much did you enjoy listening to...

(please write a number in each box, where 1=not at all and 7=very much so)

Date:

1) _____	Strauss (track 1): <input type="checkbox"/>	Schumann (tracks 2-4): <input type="checkbox"/>	Brahms (tracks 5-8): <input type="checkbox"/>
2) _____	Strauss (track 1): <input type="checkbox"/>	Schumann (tracks 2-4): <input type="checkbox"/>	Brahms (tracks 5-8): <input type="checkbox"/>
3) _____	Strauss (track 1): <input type="checkbox"/>	Schumann (tracks 2-4): <input type="checkbox"/>	Brahms (tracks 5-8): <input type="checkbox"/>
4) _____	Strauss (track 1): <input type="checkbox"/>	Schumann (tracks 2-4): <input type="checkbox"/>	Brahms (tracks 5-8): <input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 7: Study 1 sample concert ratings sheet

London Chamber Orchestra at St John's, Smith Square, 20 February
--

1. Name: _____

2. Thinking about the music performed tonight, on a scale of 1-7 how well did you know each piece before attending this concert?

Please write a number in each box, where 1 = not at all and 7 = very well:

Strauss – *Die Fledermaus Overture*: Schumann – *Piano Concerto*:

Brahms – *Symphony No. 1*:

3. On a scale of 1-7, how much did you enjoy each piece performed tonight?

Please write a number in each box, where 1 = not at all and 7 = very much so:

Strauss – *Die Fledermaus Overture*: Schumann – *Piano Concerto*:

Brahms – *Symphony No. 1*:

4. On a scale of 1-7, how much did you enjoy the concert overall?

Please write a number in the box, where 1 = not at all and 7 = very much so:

Appendix 8: Study 1 Interview schedules for Focus Groups 1 and 2

Non-attender group interview schedule Interview 1: Barbican, 13 February

Anyone else? Does anyone think differently? Does anyone agree?
Can you explain that further? Is there anything else?

- Hand out rating sheets at the beginning.
- Collect in cameras.

Introduction: thanks for coming.

- The research is looking at what affects people's enjoyment of going to live music events, and particularly of going to classical music concerts.
- This will last about an hour.
- Being recorded – try to speak up. Introduce assistant – taking notes.
- It's a group interview, so I'd like to hear what everyone has to say.
- You've got your names in front of you – this is partly for Pete's benefit taking notes, but also for you – feel free to respond to each other and discuss things rather than always responding to me.

1. So, first of all...can we go round the group...

Can you each say who you are and tell us whether you've been to a concert at the Barbican before. If you have been here before, what did you most recently come to see?

2. Now can you think back to before you came to this concert. What were you expecting it to be like?

- How did you feel before coming? Ambivalent / excited / not sure what to expect?

3. And how did your actual experience of the concert compare with what you had expected?

- Did it meet your expectations?
- Was anything different from how you expected it to be?

4. Was there anything that you particularly enjoyed about coming to the concert tonight?

5. Was there anything in particular that you didn't enjoy about the concert?

6. Say you go home tonight after the concert – how would you describe the concert to somebody else? (what stands out in your mind about it?)

- How would you describe the music you heard to someone else?
- Was there one piece you liked / disliked the most?
- Quality of performance
- What did you think of the visual impression of the orchestra on stage?

7. Half of you have been given CDs of the music you're going to hear in the concerts to listen to beforehand. For those of you that haven't – had you heard any of the music that they played tonight before?

- No:
- Yes:

7a. NOs – So do you think that if you had heard (more of) the music beforehand it would have affected your experience of the concert at all?

- Knowing what to expect? / Recognising bits?
- Would you have enjoyed it less/more?

7b. YESs – For those of you that had listened to the music beforehand – do you think hearing the pieces previously had any effect on your experience of the concert?

8. Did any of you take a free programme sheet? What did you think of it? Was it useful?

9. TO ALL: Now I'd like to think specifically about the Barbican as a concert venue. First of all, is there anything that you particularly like about it?

- Use cameras as prompts: What did you take photos of?
- E.g. access, architecture, facilities...

10. For those of you who have been to the Barbican before – did tonight's experience differ from other times you've been?

- How?

11. And is there anything that you don't like about the Barbican as a venue?

12. Is there anything that could be improved about the experience of going to this concert overall?

- Would you change anything?
- What would have made you enjoy it more?

13. How comfortable did you feel with the overall social situation of being at a classical concert?

- Did you feel comfortable in the space? Was it welcoming?
- Did you feel comfortable with the other audience members / like you fitted in?
- Did you know how to behave – clapping, interval?
- Did you dress differently knowing you were coming tonight?

14. Did this concert differ from the types of live music events that you go to normally?

- How was it different?
- What is it about other types of concerts that you like?

15. How did going to this concert compare with a night out at the theatre or cinema?

- Does it differ from other arts events you go to?
- How?

16. Are there any reasons why you don't usually choose to go to classical concerts?

17. If some classical concerts were a bit less formal – if they said you could bring drinks in, and talk, and walk in and out – how would you react to that?

- Would it be a positive/negative thing? Why?

18. Would any of you consider coming to a concert at the Barbican again (not necessarily a classical concert – any type of music)?

19. Finally, this study is aiming to explore the experience of going to a classical concert for people who don't usually go them, and it's trying to find out what affects people's enjoyment of going to a concert. Is there anything else that you think I should have asked?

Thanks and end.

Concert 3 Focus Group Interview Schedule, St John's Smith Square

Anyone else? Can you explain that further?	Does anyone think differently? Is there anything else?	Does anyone agree?
---	---	--------------------

- **Hand out rating sheets at the beginning.**

Introduction: thanks for coming.

- As before, this will last about an hour.
- Being recorded – try to speak up. Introduce assistant – taking notes.
- I'd like firstly to talk about the concert tonight, and then...

LCO/SJSS:

1. So, first of all...

Can you introduce yourselves again and tell us whether you have been to St John's, Smith Square before. If you have been here before, what did you most recently come to see?

2. Now you've been to a couple of concerts, did you have any particular expectations about what this concert would be like, and if so was it as you expected?

- How did you feel before coming? Ambivalent / excited / not sure what to expect?
- Expect it to be different from the others? In a church?

3. Was there anything that you particularly enjoyed about coming to the concert tonight?

4. Was there anything in particular that you didn't enjoy about the concert?

5. Say you go home tonight after the concert – how would you describe this concert to somebody else?

- How would you describe the music you heard to someone else?
- Was there one piece you liked / disliked the most?
- Quality of performance
- What did you think of the visual impression of the orchestra on stage?

6. Did anyone buy a programme? Was it useful?

7. Now I'd like to think specifically about St John's, Smith Square as a concert venue. Is there anything that you particularly like about it?

- Use cameras as prompts: What did you take photos of?
- Access, architecture, facilities...

8. And is there anything that you don't like about St John's as a venue?

9. Is there anything that could be improved about the experience of going to this concert overall?

- Would you change anything?
- What would have made you enjoy it more?

10. Would any of you consider coming to a concert at St John's again (not necessarily a classical concert – any type of music)?

OAE/QEH:

Now thinking about the concert last night – the Night Shift concert at Queen Elizabeth Hall...

1. Did you have any particular expectations about this concert?

- Did knowing it was a late-night concert / a bit more informal change your expectations?

2. And was it how you expected to be?

- Did it meet your expectations?

3. Was there anything you particularly enjoyed about the Night Shift concert? / Do you have anything to add on the Night Shift?

4. And was there anything in particular you didn't enjoy about it?

5. How would you describe the Night Shift concert to somebody else? What stands out in your mind about it?

- Visual impact
- Reactions to the music
- Presentational style
- Shorter programme/no interval/late-night...Did it actually feel less formal?

6. (If not already covered): What did you think about the things that were intended to make this concert less formal?

- Effect of having a presenter / hearing the musicians talk
- Being able to take drinks in
- Live music before/after
- Did all of this make you feel more comfortable / affect enjoyment?

7. Now thinking about the QEH as a venue, was there anything you particularly liked about it?

- Use cameras as prompts: What did you take photos of?

8. Have any of you been to a concert at QEH before? If so, did yesterday's experience differ from other times you've been?

- How?

9. And was there anything that you didn't like about the QEH as a venue?

10. Is there anything that could be improved about the experience of going to the Night Shift concert overall?

- Would you change anything?
- What would have made you enjoy it more?
- Did the venue suit the type of concert? Can you imagine it being in a different venue?

22. Would any of you consider coming to a concert at the QEH again (not necessarily a classical concert – any type of music)?

23. Would you consider going to a Night Shift concert again?

General:

So thinking more generally now about the three concerts together...

24. In the last interview I asked about how comfortable you felt with the social situation of being at a concert. Have your thoughts about this changed over the three concerts?

- Did you feel comfortable in the spaces?
- Did you feel like you fitted in with the other audience members?
- Did you know how to behave – clapping, interval?
- Did these vary across the different venues / concerts? Was Night Shift different?

25. Was there one concert that you enjoyed the most?

- What did you enjoy about it?
- Role of venue / music performed...

26. And was there one venue that you liked the most?

- What did you like about it?

27. Do you think taking part in this study will have any effect on the types of concerts/gigs you go to in the future?

- If no: Why not? What would make going to classical concerts more appealing?

28. Do you think taking part in this study will have any effect on what you listen to?

29. Finally, this study has aimed to explore the experience of going to a classical concert for people who don't usually go them, and it's been trying to find out what affects people's enjoyment of going to a concert. Is there anything else you think I should have asked?

Thanks and end.

Give details for when I'll be arranging individual interviews and starting the email survey – mid-March.

Appendix 9: Study 1 individual interview schedule

Thanks again for taking part. Want to talk first of all a bit about the types of cultural things you go to generally, and then talk about the three concerts.

So can you start by telling me about the kinds of cultural events/places you generally go to?

- How often do you go to [whatever they particularly like]?
- What makes you decide to go to something? – recommendations / advertising etc.

And how often do you attend live music events?

- What kind of music do you like going to see? – types of venues/audience behaviour...

What kind of a role does attending cultural events and live music play in your life?

- What else competes for your time?
- What do you enjoy about it?

How often do you listen to recorded music?

- When do you tend to listen to music?
- Do you listen to the same kinds of music that you like to see live?

Do you ever listen to classical music?

- In what format? i.e. radio, CDs...
- In what situations?
- How did you get into it?

Before this study, had you been to any classical concerts in the past?

- Tell me about previous experiences. Did you enjoy going?
- What had made you go?

Are there any reasons why you haven't attended classical music concerts [much] in the past?

- Just not being aware
- Not knowing enough about music/performers
- Unaware of venues / 'ways in'?

Thinking now about the concerts we went to...

Had you been to any of the venues we went to before? [to clarify]

- What to see? A concert, or something else?

Had you heard of any of the orchestras before?

- Show LSO flyer and ask about role of prominent advertising – make them any more likely to attend?
- Did you try to find out any more about them before you came to the concerts, i.e. looking on websites?

Before the first concert at the Barbican, how were you feeling about taking part in the study and coming to the concerts?

- Excited, unsure... Why?

I've got the photos that you took here – can you tell me a little bit about your experience of each concert, and why you chose to take these particular photos?

- If photos didn't come out (Tom and Tory): what can you remember taking photos of, and why?
- For each concert discuss: venue (and familiarity with), audience members, music, presentational styles each concert as a whole, anything else...

We've talked about this a fair bit in the group interviews, but how comfortable did you feel with the social situation of attending the concerts?

- At ease?
- Did this change from Barbican (first) to SJSS (last)?
- Compare the three. One that was most comfortable? Why?

During the concerts, how important was the visual side of the experience for you?

- Did this affect your enjoyment of the different concerts? SJSS – couldn't see so much.

And did the extent to which you were engaged in the music/experience differ across the concerts?

- Or were there just some periods in all of them where you found the music harder than others?

For those given CDs:

Tell me about the CDs – how often did you listen to them?

- Was there one you enjoyed listening to the most/least?
- Have you listened to them since? If so, has this been a different listening experience?

Do you think having heard the pieces previously had any effect on your experience of the concerts?

- Positive / negative – why?
- Did hearing the music live differ at all from listening to the recordings?

Did you find hearing the music first useful, or would you have preferred to come to the concerts with no prior knowledge?

For those not given CDs:

You were one of the people who weren't given CDs of the music to listen to in advance – do

you think hearing the music beforehand would have had any effect on your experience of the concerts?

- Knowing what to expect?
- Were there bits that you did in fact recognise? Did this have any effect on your experience/enjoyment?
- Would you have liked to have heard it before?

For all:

Did you read a programme at any of the concerts?

- How did you find it? Useful?

How did [do you think] reading a programme compare with being spoken to by the conductor/someone in the orchestra?

- Different for different concerts, i.e. Night Shift?
- Was there one concert where you got the most out of the 'talk'? Why?

Can you imagine going to a concert where there is no speech at all?

- How would you react to that?
- Would it have any effect on your enjoyment?

Did you enjoy the music of one particular concert the most?

- Over the three concerts, was there a piece of music that was the highlight for you?
- And any you really didn't like?
- Talk about why.

We talked quite a lot in the first group interview about the difficulty of being able to appreciate different orchestras or performers without knowing much about classical music – by the end did you still find this was the case, or was there an orchestra/performer you particularly enjoyed?

- If yes – what was it about them that you liked?
- If no – discuss idea of 'levels of appreciation' – does this still make them feel like 'outsiders' as they said before?

Out of the three, is there one venue you liked the most?

- What do you think makes a good classical music venue?
- Role of being a cultural 'hub' i.e. Barbican and South Bank – what does this add to the experience?
- Role of aesthetics, i.e. SJSS.

Was there one concert that you enjoyed the most overall?

What do you think makes going to a classical concert a good experience?

- Which factors are most important for you? Music, venue, presentation...
- Is this different from what makes going to a non-classical gig a good experience?

Do you think taking part in this study will have any effect on the types of live music events you got to in the future?

- If not: Why not? What would make going to classical concerts more appealing?
- If yes: How would you choose what to go to?
- How much would you be prepared to pay for a ticket?

Do you think taking part in this study will have any effect on what you listen to?
Anything else you'd like to say?

Appendix 10: Study 2 information sheet

Information Sheet

Musical spaces: exploring the factors that affect the enjoyment of classical music concert attendance

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish, before deciding whether or not you wish to take part. Please contact me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

This study forms part of my PhD research, which is exploring audience members' experiences of attending live music events, and in particular of attending classical music concerts. The study aims to explore why people choose to attend concerts, and what affects people's enjoyment of attending concerts. By completing a questionnaire you have already taken part in the initial stage of the study; there is then a six-month longitudinal stage which will last from March to September 2008.

You have been chosen for this study because you attended a classical concert at Cadogan Hall. At least seven other participants will be taking part in this stage of the study.

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this research. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep (and be asked to sign a consent form) and you can still withdraw from the study at any time. You do not have to give a reason.

Taking part in the study will involve participating in the following:

- March: An interview lasting 30 minutes to an hour, at a time and place convenient for you.
- March-August: Completing a short email survey issued every fortnight which asks for brief details of any live music events you have attended and any recorded music purchases you have made in the past two weeks.
- June: An interview lasting 30 minutes to an hour, either over the telephone or at a convenient place for you.
- September: A final interview lasting 30 minutes to an hour, again either over the telephone or at a convenient place.

The three interviews will all be recorded; if you are not willing for your interviews to be recorded, please let me know. The audio recordings of your interviews made during this research will be used only for analysis, and no one outside the project will be allowed access to the recordings.

All the data that I collect during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. The results of the research will form part of my PhD thesis, and may appear in other publications. All data collected from you will be reported anonymously

in the PhD thesis and in any reports or publications arising from the study. If you would like to receive a summary of the results, please indicate this on your consent form.

This research is funded by a University of Sheffield Project Studentship, and has been ethically approved by the ethics review procedure of the Department of Music, University of Sheffield.

If you would like any further information about this study please do not hesitate to contact me:

Melissa Dobson, Department of Music, University of Sheffield, S10 2TN
[phone number, email address]

Appendix 11: Study 2 audience questionnaire

Audience Questionnaire

This questionnaire forms part of my PhD research, which is investigating audience members' experiences of attending classical music concerts. I would be grateful if you would complete the following questionnaire about your experience of this concert at Cadogan Hall, and your opinions on concert-going in general. Your responses will be treated as confidential and will be reported anonymously in any publications arising from the study. Many thanks for your participation.

Melissa Dobson, Department of Music, University of Sheffield, S10 2TN

Information about you...

1. Are you: 17 or under 18-25 26-35 36-45 46-55 56-65
 66-75 76+
2. Are you: male female
3. Occupation:
-

Thinking about your experiences of tonight's concert...

4. What were your main reasons for attending this concert? *(Please tick all that apply)*
- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> The programme appeals to me | <input type="checkbox"/> To hear pieces I know and like |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To hear something new | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have heard these performer(s) before | <input type="checkbox"/> To hear these performer(s) for the first time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To meet new people | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attending socially with other people | <input type="checkbox"/> To visit this venue for the first time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I like this venue | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To relax | <input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(please give details)</i> : |
-

5. Where in the auditorium were you seated (e.g. front of the stalls, centre of the gallery...)?
-

6. On a scale of 1-7, how familiar are you with Cadogan Hall as a concert venue?

Please write a number in the box, where 1 = not at all familiar and 7 = very familiar:

7. How many times in the last 12 months have you attended a concert at Cadogan Hall?

none once 2-4 times 5-7 times 8 times or more

8. What particularly appeals to you, if anything, about Cadogan Hall as a concert venue (e.g. the acoustics, the ambiance, the foyer areas...)?

9. What would you change, if anything, about Cadogan Hall as a concert venue?

10. Did you feel like 'part of an audience' at this concert? *Please explain...*

11. On a scale of 1-7, how well did you know each piece of music before attending this concert?
Please write a number in each box, where 1 = not at all and 7 = very well:

Stravinsky – *Pulcinella Suite*:

Haydn – *Symphony No. 84*:

Haydn – *Trumpet Concerto*:

Shostakovich – *Piano Concerto No. 1*:

12. Where applicable, please indicate the way(s) in which you have encountered each piece in tonight's concert before:

(Please tick all that apply)

	Stravinsky	Haydn: Concerto	Haydn: Symphony	Shostakovich
I have attended live performance(s) of this piece	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have heard it on the radio	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I own a recorded version	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have rehearsed / performed the work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. Did you prepare for coming to this concert (e.g. by listening to the works, by reading about the composers/pieces)?

Yes In what way(s)?

No

14. Did you attend tonight's pre-concert talk?

Yes No

15. On a scale of 1-7, how familiar are you with the performers of this concert?

Please write a number in each box, where 1 = not at all familiar and 7 = very familiar:

Orchestra:

Conductor:

Trumpet Soloist:

Piano Soloist:

16. Where applicable, please indicate the way(s) in which you have encountered the performers of tonight's concert before:

(Please tick all that apply)

Orchestra

Conductor

Trumpet Soloist

Piano Soloist

I have attended concert(s) performed by them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>			
I have heard performance(s) by them on the radio	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>			
I own recording(s) they have made	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>			
I am aware of them but have never heard their work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>			
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>			

17. On a scale of 1-7, how much did you enjoy each piece performed tonight?

Please write a number in each box, where 1 = not at all and 7 = very much so:

Stravinsky – <i>Pulcinella Suite</i> :	<input type="checkbox"/>	Haydn – <i>Symphony No. 84</i> :	<input type="checkbox"/>
Haydn – <i>Trumpet Concerto</i> :	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shostakovich – <i>Piano Concerto No. 1</i> :	<input type="checkbox"/>

18. On a scale of 1-7, how much did you enjoy the concert overall?

Please write a number in the box, where 1 = not at all and 7 = very much so:

18a. Please give reasons...

Now turning to your views on classical music concerts in general...

19. In your opinion, what makes the experience of attending a classical concert enjoyable?

20. How important is attending classical concerts in your life? *Please explain...*

21. Do you have a favourite concert venue? (*Please tick*)

Yes No

21a. If yes, please give details. What do you particularly like about your favourite venue?

21b. If no, what do you think makes a good concert venue?

22. What would you change, if anything, about the experience of attending classical music concerts (e.g. ticket prices, choices of programming...)?

23. How would you describe the experience of attending a concert at Cadogan Hall to someone who has never been there before?

24. Now thinking more generally, how would you describe the experience of going to a classical concert to someone who has never attended one before?

Lastly, thinking about the ways in which you listen to music...

25. What type(s) of music do you enjoy?

26. How often do you attend classical music concerts / opera productions?

once a week several times a month once a month once every two months three or four times a year once or twice a year

27. How often do you attend other types of live music events (e.g. rock/pop, jazz, world...)?

once a week several times a month once a month once every two months three or four times a year once or twice a year never

28. How does the experience of attending classical music concerts compare with your experiences of going to other live music events? (if applicable)

29. How often do you buy recorded music (e.g. CDs, records, music downloads)?

once a week several times a month once a month once every two months three or four times a year once or twice a year never

30. How often do you listen to recorded music?

every day several times a week once a week several times a month every so often rarely

31. Do you play or sing music yourself? *Please give details...*

Many thanks for your participation in this study

Please use the stamped addressed envelope attached to return the questionnaire by post. If you would like any more information about this study, please get in touch: Melissa Dobson, Department of Music, University of Sheffield, S10 2TN (melissa.dobson@sheffield.ac.uk).

If you would be interested in taking part in the follow-up stage of this research, please provide your contact details:

Name:

Telephone:

Email address:

Appendix 12: Study 2 individual interview schedule

- Sign consent form. Thank you for taking part. Last 45 mins to hour.
- Background: PhD based within field of music psychology. Interesting in finding out what affects people's enjoyment of going to classical concerts, and also what affects their decisions to go as well.
- First part of the interview is about the ECO concert at Cadogan Hall where you took a questionnaire. And I'd then talk more widely about your concert-going in general.

So can you start by telling me about how you came to be at the ECO concert at Cadogan Hall – what made you decide to attend?

- Programme
- Soloists
- Venue...

Had you seen the ECO perform live before?

- Are you a follower / friend?

From your questionnaire it seemed that you really enjoyed / didn't enjoy [whatever as appropriate] the concert. Can you tell me what you liked about it?

- Soloists
- Performers
- Programme
- Venue

And was there anything about the concert that wasn't so positive?

- Use their q. responses as prompts e.g. no ice cream/programmes/extraneous noises!

It was quite a varied programme – had you decided to go for one particular piece/performer, or did the programme as a whole appeal?

- Were you surprised by anything?

Did the concert have any particular highlights for you?

- One piece you enjoyed the most / least?

How much of the music in the programme did you know before going to the concert?

- Did knowing / not knowing music have an effect on your enjoyment?

Do you generally prefer to go to concerts of music that you know / don't know / mixture?

Can you tell me about the visual element of the performance – was watching the musicians important for you?

- Alison Balsom's dress / pianist...

You said on the questionnaire that you've been / not been to Cadogan Hall before...

- Do you go often? How did first start going?
- Do you have a favourite place to sit?
- What made you go for the first time?

What are your impressions of Cadogan Hall as a venue – do you enjoy going to concerts there?

- Q. responses as prompts – what they like / don't like.
- Did the fact that the concert was at Cadogan Hall have any effect on your decision to go to the concert? / Would you have gone if it was somewhere else?

And thinking more generally about the concerts that you go to, how does attending concerts fit in with the other things that you do in your spare time?

- Does it take priority? Or more of a 'now and again'?

How do you generally choose which classical concerts to go to?

- Performers
- programme
- familiarity
- venue...
- Advertising

What kinds of things are important in a concert in order for you to enjoy it?

- Q. responses as prompts – q.19
- How important is being familiar with the programme / performers / venue?

How important to you is attending classical concerts?

- What do you get out of it / enjoy about it?
- Is going to see live music important to you? (as opposed to listening to recordings)

You said on the questionnaire that you listen to recorded music [fairly regularly]. Can you tell me a bit about when you listen to recorded music and what kind of a role it fulfils for you?

- Situations in which they listen

Are there any ways in which your live and recorded listening interact?

- Use Q responses as prompts if appropriate
- e.g. would you listen to a piece before going to hear it live / listening after / memories of an event
- Is this usually a positive relationship, or does it have hindrances?

Thinking about classical concert venues now...

Can you tell me a bit about the classical music venues that you most frequently go to and what you think of them?

How does Cadogan Hall compare to the other concert venues you go to?

If applicable: You said on the questionnaire that [...] was your favourite concert venue. What do you particularly like about it?

- Link to q. 21. Do you have anything else to say about what you like about it?

What's important to you in a good concert venue?

Do you tend to go to concerts with other people or alone?

Is there an element to which going to classical concerts is a social activity for you?

- Do you see it as a social night out?

From the questionnaires I've had back, it seems that some people like to feel an affinity with the other audience members and feel like part of a crowd, while others like not to be aware of other audience members and to feel that the performance is just for them.

Do you identify with either of those ideas?

- Is it important to you that an audience is 'well-behaved'? Why is that important?

Is there anything about classical concerts as a whole that you would change if you could?

- Programming
- Formality
- Prices
- Venues...

Is there anything else you'd like to add? Anything I should have asked?

Thank you

Appendix 13: Longitudinal survey questions

*denotes compulsory questions.

[page 1]

Please complete the following short survey about your recent musical listening, from both live events and recordings. All questions relate to your listening during the period from Monday 14 April to Sunday 27 April 2008 only.

*1. First name

*2. Surname

*3. Have you attended any live music events (i.e. gigs, concerts, opera) during this period?

Yes [then directed to page 2]

No [then directed to page 5]

[page 2]

1. How many live music events have you attended?

[page 3]

Please provide details about the live music event(s) you have attended during this period. If you have attended more than one event, you will be given an opportunity to provide details about the other event(s) in turn.

1. What was the event? Please give brief details of who was performing and the music performed:

2. Where did the event take place?

3. How would you classify the music performed in terms of genre? (e.g. jazz, rock, classical...)

4. What were your main reasons for attending this event?

5. Was there anything you particularly liked about the venue where the event took place?

6. Is there anything you would change about the venue where the event took place?

[page 4]

1. On a scale of 1-7, how familiar were you with the venue before attending this event?

- 1 - Not at all familiar
 2
 3
 4
 5
 6
 7 - Very familiar

Please add any further comments here:

2. How many times had you been to this venue in the preceding 12 months?

- None
 Once
 2-4 times
 5-7 times
 8 times or more

3. On a scale of 1-7, how familiar were you with the performers of the gig/concert?

- 1 - Not at all familiar
 2
 3
 4
 5
 6
 7 - Very familiar

4. How much of the music performed had you heard previously?

- None of it
 Some of it
 Most of it
 All of it

Please add any further comments here:

5. If you had heard some or all of the music previously, how had you encountered it before?

(tick all that apply)

- Seeing it performed live
 Hearing it on the radio
 Listening to recorded version(s)
 Other:

6. On a scale of 1-7, how much did you enjoy the event?

- 1 - Not at all
 2
 3
 4
 5
 6
 7 - Very much so

7. Please explain the enjoyment rating you have given above – what affected your enjoyment of the event?

*8. Is there another event you have attended during this period which you would like to tell me about?

- Yes [pages 3 & 4 are then repeated up to 4 more times]
 No [proceeds to page 5]

[page 5]

*1. Have you purchased any recorded music (e.g. CDs, downloads, records) during this period?

- Yes [directed to page 6]
 No [directed to page 8]

[page 6]

*1. How many recorded music purchases have you made?

[page 7]

Please provide details about the recorded music purchase(s) you have made during this period. If you have made more than one purchase, you will be given an opportunity to provide details about the other purchase(s) in turn.

1. What was the music that you bought? Please provide details e.g. name of album/track, name(s) of artist(s), repertoire:

2. What were your main reasons for purchasing this music?
(tick all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New release | <input type="checkbox"/> Attending a live performance of this music |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing it previously | <input type="checkbox"/> Attending a live performance of this type of music |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advertising/reviews | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal recommendation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trying something new | |

Other:

3. What genre would you describe this music as? (e.g. jazz, rock, classical...)

*4. Is there another recorded music purchase you have made during this period which you would like to tell me about?

- Yes [page 7 repeats up to 4 more times]
 No [proceeds to page 8]

[page 8]

*1. Have you listened to recorded music (e.g. radio, CDs...) during this period?

- Yes [directed to page 9]
 No [directed to page 11]

[page 9]

1. How frequently have you listened to recorded music during this period?

- Every day
 Three or four times a week
 Once a week
 Once or twice a fortnight

2. In which ways have you listened to recorded music during this period? (tick all that apply)

- Listening to music you have deliberately selected (e.g. CDs)
 Listening to music on 'shuffle' mode on a computer / mp3 player
 Radio: please name the station(s) you have most frequently listened to:

3. Please indicate the means by which you have most frequently listened to music during this period:

- Listening to music you have deliberately selected (e.g. CDs)
 Listening to music on 'shuffle' mode on a computer / mp3 player
 Radio: please name the station you have most frequently listened to:

[page 10]

1. I would like to get a general impression of what you have been listening to – are there any particular types of music, performers or recordings/live broadcasts that you have especially enjoyed listening to during this period?

2. Are there any recordings/live broadcasts or particular performers that you have listened to repeatedly during this period? Please give details...

3. If you have attended any live music events recently, has this had any effect on the types of recorded music you have chosen to listen to? Please give details...

[page 11]

Many thanks for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

1. If you have any comments about the survey, or would like to provide quick details of concerts that you haven't already told me about, please use the space below. Alternatively, please contact me at: [email address]

Appendix 14: Longitudinal stage 3-month interview schedule

Thank you for completing the surveys.

The purpose of this phonecall is to get a bit more detail from you about some of the concerts you've been to recently that you've most enjoyed.

- 1) So since the surveys began in March have there been any particular highlights?
 - ...Talk about specific events
 - Why did you choose to attend the event? (role of marketing/advertising)
 - What did you enjoy about it?
 - Did you know the music? What effect did this have?
 - Did you know the performers? What effect did this have?

[Or pick a couple of concerts that sound interesting – 'can you tell me about that?']

- 2) Have there been any concerts over the past three months that you've been disappointed with / haven't met your expectations?
 - What and why?

- 3) Have your patterns of attendance at live music over the last three months been fairly typical of your usual behaviour?
 - Regularity – have you gone more/less often than usual?
 - Types of events attended

Non-attenders – did you go to the Night Shift if intending to? Why not?...

- 4) Talk about venues they've visited (both new discoveries and those they go to regularly)
 - How have certain venues affected your experience?
 - Difference between going to a venue that's known and liked and trying a new one.
 - ...is a venue we didn't talk about in the main interview – can you tell me about that?

- 5) Moving onto recorded music purchases: are there any purchases you've made in since March that you've particularly enjoyed?
 - What motivated you to buy them?

- 6) If appropriate, talk about how recorded listening and live listening relate.
 - Has your recorded listening affected what you've chosen to see live/your experience of seeing things live?

Has live listening affected what you've chosen to listen to?

- 7) Esp. non-attenders: have your listening habits over the last three months been typical of what you usually listen to?

Thinking about concerts again...

- 8) Subscription – do you subscribe to concerts? What do you get out of subscription?

- does it change how you book (how far in advance) / what you book?

9) Looking ahead to the Proms and the summer festivals season – does your attendance at concerts change over the summer?

Do you look forward to the Proms / other festivals?

What makes them different from other concerts?

That's all I have to ask – anything else you'd like to mention?

Are you finding the surveys ok?

Surveys continue to end of August, and then I'll need to give you a ring again in September.

Thank you for time.

Appendix 15: Longitudinal study 6-month interview schedule for attenders

Thank you for completing the surveys.

The purpose of this phonecall is to get a bit more detail from you about some of the concerts you've been to recently.

1) So since I last spoke to you in June, have there been any concerts that stand out as being particularly good / enjoyable?

...Talk about specific events

Why did you choose to attend the event? (role of marketing/advertising)

What did you enjoy about it?

Did you know the music? What effect did this have?

Did you know the performers? What effect did this have?

[Or pick a couple of concerts that sound interesting – ‘can you tell me about that?’]

2) Have there been any concerts over the past three months that you've been disappointed with / haven't met your expectations?

What and why?

3) Have your patterns of attendance at live music over the last three months been fairly typical of your usual behaviour?

Regularity / frequency – have you gone more/less often than usual?

Types of events attended

4) Talk about venues they've visited (both new discoveries and those they go to regularly)

How have certain venues affected your experience?

Difference between going to a venue that's known and liked and trying a new one.

...is a venue we didn't talk about in the main interview – can you tell me about that?

5) Moving onto recorded music purchases: are there any purchases you've made since I last spoke to you that you've particularly enjoyed?

What motivated you to buy them?

6) If appropriate, talk about how recorded listening and live listening relate.

Has your recorded listening affected what you've chosen to see live/your experience of seeing things live?

Has live listening affected what you've chosen to listen to?

7) Have you got any concerts booked for the future that you're particularly looking forward to?

What made you choose these particular concerts?

8) I know I've already asked this in the survey, but do you think completing the surveys for 6 months has had any effect on your behaviour, or on your attitudes towards music and concert-going?

That's all I have to ask – anything else you'd like to mention?
Thank you! Will be sending a summary of results.

Appendix 16: Longitudinal stage 6-month interview schedule for non-attenders

Thank you for completing the surveys.

The purpose of this phonecall is to get a bit more detail from you about some of the concerts you've been to recently.

1) So since I last spoke to you in June, have there been any concerts that stand out as being particularly good / enjoyable?

... Talk about specific events

Why did you choose to attend the event? (role of marketing/advertising)

What did you enjoy about it?

Did you know the music? What effect did this have?

Did you know the performers? What effect did this have?

[Or pick a couple of concerts that sound interesting – 'can you tell me about that?']

2) Have there been any concerts over the past three months that you've been disappointed with / haven't met your expectations?

What and why?

3) Have your patterns of attendance at live music over the last three months been fairly typical of your usual behaviour?

Regularity / frequency – have you gone more/less often than usual?

Types of events attended

4) If they have been to anything classical: how did you decide to go? How did the experience compare with the three concerts I took you to?

5) If they haven't been to anything classical: You said after we went to the three concerts that you'd be more open to going to some classical music concerts / would look into it. Has anything in particular prevented you from doing so?

Work pressures

Not having friends to go with

6) Now that some time has passed since the main part of the study where I took you to three concerts, do you think taking part and attending those concerts has had any effect on your attitudes towards classical music, or on your behaviour?

Is it still something you'd like to explore?

7) If yes: How would you go about it?

Look at venues / advertising / reviews?

Is there anything that you think could be done that would encourage someone like you buy a ticket for a classical concert?

8) Talk about venues they've visited (both new discoveries and those they go to regularly)

Have you attended any of the venues that we went to in the first part of the study?

How have certain venues affected your experience?

Difference between going to a venue that's known and liked and trying a new one.

...is a venue we didn't talk about in the main interview – can you tell me about that?

9) Moving onto recorded music purchases: are there any purchases you've made since I last spoke to you that you've particularly enjoyed?

What motivated you to buy them?

10) If appropriate, talk about how recorded listening and live listening relate.

Has your recorded listening affected what you've chosen to see live/your experience of seeing things live?

Has live listening affected what you've chosen to listen to?

11) Have your listening habits since I last talked to you been typical of what you usually listen to?

12) Have you got any plans to attend live music in the future that you're particularly looking forward to?

What made you choose these particular concerts?

13) I know I've already asked this in the survey, but do you think having to complete the surveys for 6 months has had any effect on your behaviour, or on your attitudes towards music and concert-going?

That's all I have to ask – anything else you'd like to mention?

Thank you! Will be sending a summary of results.