



Conference

AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT
WITHIN CLASSICAL MUSIC

BRINGING CLASSICAL CONCERT
BACK INTO THE SPOTLIGHT

2021

ONLINE CONFERENCE

Audience Development Within Classical Music: Bringing Classical Concert Back Into the Spotlight 2021

Domain:

Classical music, audience development

When:

May 21-22 2021

Place:

Cultural Centre of Belgrade, Zoom application

Language:

English

Partners:

Orpheus Culture Project Agency, Multikultivator

Culture service, Cultural Centre of Belgrade

Target group:

Musicians, music students, students of arts, culture managers,

PR agents, activists and cultural workers, journalists

Sponsors:

Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic
of Serbia, Swedish Embassy in Belgrade

Conference programme

Friday 21-5-2021

10:00-10:30

Registration in the hall,
Login, admission to the panel

10:30-11:00

Welcome speech

Zorana Đaković Minniti, Assistant Director for Programmes, Cultural Centre of Belgrade, Serbia
Milica Lundin, Orfeus Culture Project Agency, Sweden

11:00-12:30

Panel 1: Cases of successful performances, audience recruitment/ animation during Covid-19

Cyber concert and “cyber classical hall”; Live streaming versus event recordings from empty halls; How did the lockdown affect the popularity of classical music? Are there particular art forms that were more sought online?

Moderator:

Milica Lundin, cultural manager, Orfeus, Sweden

Panelists:

Jan Ford, Mrs, Senior Creative Produces at Orchestras Live, UK
Francisca Ritter, scenographer, and **Christian Siegmund**, cultural mediator, managers of the 1:1CONCERTS©, Germany
Ljubica Solunac, Cultural Centre of Belgrade, Serbia

12:30-13:00

Discussion

13:00-13:45

Lunch

13:45-14:00

Registration in the hall,
Login, admission to the panel

14:00-15:30

Panel 2: New and old audiences: the lockdown results

Statistics on participations regarding live streaming and free-of-charge broadcasts during the lockdown; Did we gain a younger audience in cyberspace? How did the regular elderly audience perceive the necessity of digital tools?

Moderator:

Milica Lundin, cultural manager, Orfeus, Sweden

Panelists:

Branka Kostić-Marković, musicologists, publicists, TV host, North Macedonia

Ivana Vujić Kominac, director of the National Theater in Belgrade, Serbia

15:30-16:00

Discussion



Saturday 22-05-2021

09:00-11:00

Workshop: Create an Unortodox Classical Concert

Recommending methods when making an unortodox classical concert; Specifics of recital and orchestra audience animation; What is a Guerrilla Concert? Practise before you speak to the audience; What is a 1:1 concert? Can you earn money through playing online?

Preliminary registration required

(registrations: damjana.njegic@kcb.org.rs)

Coach:

Miloš Jovanović, manager of the Muzikon orchestra, Serbia

Boban Bjelić, accordionist, conductor, professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Belgrade, Serbia

10:30-11:00

Registration in the hall

Login, admission to the panel

11:00-12:30

Panel 3: Financing classical music pre- and post-Covid-19: challenger and benefits

Funding classical music: which strategies should we use when applying for funding? Who are the typical sponsors from the private sector? What are the benefits of funding classical music? How is it different from giving funds to other art forms? Financing in the time of Covid-19.

Moderator:

Vladimir Đorđević, cultural manager, Multikultivator, Serbia

Panelists:

Daniel Lesković, Public Fund for Cultural Activities, Slovenia

Žaklina Kušić, founder of Children's Philharmonic, Serbia

Jasna Dimitrijević, managing director of Ilija M. Kolarac Endowment, Serbia

Boris Vujičić, director of the Dobar Glas Foundation for young talents, Serbia

12:30-13:00

Discussion

13:00-13:30

Conference conclusions and recommendations

Prior to the conference:

An all-day concert marathon: Demonstration of the **1:1 CONCERTS©** (“One to One”) international concert platform - private surprise performances

Performers:

4 musicians newly registered in the 1:1 CONCERTS© platform family

Audience:

Randomly chosen



Welcome to the conference Audience Development within Classical Music, edition 2021

Milica Lundin, cultural manager, Orfeus, Sweden

Dear participants, guests, listeners in the hall and all of you who are following us online, welcome. This is our third edition of The Conference on Audience Development within Classical Music.

How good it is to be back and finally see some faces in the hall!

My name is Milica Lundin and by my side is my partner in this project Vladimir Đorđević, manager of the Multikultivator cultural agency. In the name of Multikultivator and Orfeus, I wish to thank the Cultural Centre of Belgrade and Mrs Zorana Đaković Minniti for their hospitality and support.

Those of you who are following us regularly know that we chose this particular field of audience development because of a lack of forums of this kind. We are constantly trying to open new channels of communication between different actors in the field of music, art and especially classical music. Practice needs the support of research and theory and on the other hand theory and research cannot be of use if they do not observe the practice. In other words, through this forum we wish to contribute with unified, solidary efforts in the popularization of classical music and to connect young artists - potential classical musicians with fellow researchers and activists in the field.

The conclusions of our previous conferences have taught us that it is much easier to get people to listen to music than to get them to enter the concert hall. It does not mean that we are excluding the concert hall from this campaign. On the contrary: by exposing alternative ways of listening, we wish to tempt the audiences to get engaged and to make them become steady concert goers. At the same time we must keep our steady audience alert and content; we must challenge them and make them want for more and better musical experiences.

Audiences are of different kinds: some are advanced fans and professionals, some sporadic followers, some engaged in other musical genres, but without the knowledge of classics. In some cultures preferences for certain genres are deeply connected with social status, in others with availability. The previous one-year period has had an enormous impact on all the cultural work in the world and the consequences are yet to be explored and analysed. We do not have enough research to cover all the aspects, but we will speak a lot about the new artistic forms and solutions that emerged in the time of crisis. The subject was only opened last year at our online conference when we set a goal for ourselves to delve more deeply into this topic. We will see now what has happened in the meantime, how it has influenced our steady audience, and if we have gained some unexpected new audiences thanks to these new circumstances.



Panel

1

PANELISTS:

Jan Ford, Senior Creative Producer, Orchestras Live
Orchestras Live, UK: The Show Must Go On.

Christian Siegmund and **Franziska Ritter**, Germany
1:1 CONCERTS©

Milica Lundin, Orfeus
1:1CONCERT Belgrade edition

Ljubica Solunac, Cultural Centre of Belgrade, Serbia
*Concert practice during the COVID-19 pandemic
in the Cultural Centre of Belgrade*

Orchestras Live, UK: The Show Must Go On.

How pivoting from live presentation has created new models of engagement with orchestral music and sustained and reached new audiences during the Covid pandemic in England.

Jan Ford, Senior Creative Producer, Orchestras Live

Jan is Senior Creative Producer with Orchestras Live, a non-profit organisation and charity based in Leeds, England, producing creative music projects and events with professional orchestras and a wide range of partners and communities across England. Its mission is to engage people of all ages and backgrounds, and particularly those in historically under-invested, non-metropolitan communities in England, in creating work that harnesses the transformative power of orchestral music to inspire, bring joy and support wellbeing.

Introduction

When lockdown in the UK began in March 2020, we at Orchestras Live had more than 15 orchestral education and community projects running across England including several large-scale participatory orchestral projects involving children and young people, creative projects with older people, and commissions and culmination events such as the premiere of a new piece by young people and composer Laura Bowler with Manchester Camerata, to celebrate the anniversary of the birth of William Wordsworth.

We work outside the major cities, in rural and culturally underserved areas of England, so those communities are disadvantaged already. Take away the human contact that music brings, and they become even more isolated. This concerned us greatly.

We decided we had to take swift action and pivot – taking as many live projects as we could online. As we were not dependent on box office income – we don't promote any concerts, but work with a range of partners to do so – we didn't need to furlough – lay off – staff. With a full staff compliment we were able to rapidly assess the situation as it unfolded and consider alternative delivery methods including digital, with all our partners.

Our partners are numerous. Professional orchestras, yes, but also venues, music education, local authorities, health and social care providers and voluntary groups.

Our network venue partners had many orchestral concerts programmed so they were postponed initially and then cancelled as the lockdown extended. You will all know the calamitous situation that many venues find themselves in. Government support here has helped, but they are facing a massive struggle to rebuild audiences. Some were able to pivot to streaming, but not many were actual live events. They relied on archive material which was not that attractive to audiences. As the pandemic developed, many venues went dark, but some reacted more creatively, such as one of our partners in an arts centre in rural Wiltshire who, using some of their financial reserves, installed a digital studio so that they could live stream music and education events as soon as they could have artists back in the building.

Our partners in music education were no longer able to work with young people face to face. Music tuition went on Zoom and all ensembles were cancelled. Responding to this we created a large-scale virtual ensembles programme – Share Sound – which is helping over 400 young people to compose new music with three orchestras – the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestras and Chineke!, the UK's first majority Black, Asian and ethnically diverse orchestra, a composer and five associate composers. It's run digitally and the film made for the digital finale will premiere 6 new works created and performed by young people alongside all three orchestras.

The pandemic pause has given our partners space to think about their orchestral offer and what this could be. Many of our partners, particularly in our conversations with emerging partners based in the north of England, are keen to explore consultation work with their communities, focusing on 'what can an orchestra do for us'. The results of these creative consultations will shape the programme that we develop. Working with this community focus is challenging our orchestral partners to think and make music differently.

What kind of projects have you been producing during Covid? How different are they to what you've done before?

Before the pandemic everything was live. We're called Orchestras Live. We have over 40 partnerships ranging from traditional concert venues to small community organisations to music education providers. Some of our projects are long-term – relationships with partners range from 15 years to months! So when the lockdown

happened, we had to move fast and luckily we could as we're not dependent on box office income having funding from a variety of state and private sources. We're a small team, but very creative and experienced, and so are our partners, so we looked to digital technology to deliver projects that were in progress and to create new ones. We did in fact squeeze one live project culmination concert in less than 5 days before the first lockdown! After that everything had to be put on hold.

Our philosophy about equality of access to live orchestral music hasn't changed, just the way we work, just the way we've had to deliver it. We don't work in cities or urban areas, or those areas where orchestras are based or have an established residency. We work in rural and isolated and culturally underserved areas in England. A typical project we co-produce could be in a rural area with a partner wanting to engage a particular community. We consult with that community to find out what they might like and then match their needs with an orchestra we know has the skills and experience to deliver that kind of project.

It might be the people are really keen on creating and presenting their own original music so we'll look for an orchestra that has good links with composers, and musicians who work well with communities.

The Withernsea Voices virtual choir is a good example where we worked with Manchester Camerata and composer Richard Taylor, who is very used to working with choirs and voices, having worked in opera and choral music for many years. We helped a choir group in the town to write their own music to express how they were feeling during lockdown and helped them produce a film of the music. Weekly Zoom sessions leading to final production.

EXAMPLES OF OUR WORK

Withernsea Voices

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nEln3UG7JCo>

<https://www.orchestraslive.org.uk/projects/classically-yours>

Share Sound

<https://www.orchestraslive.org.uk/news/share-sound-new-creations-underway>

Encountering Wordsworth

<https://www.orchestraslive.org.uk/projects/encountering-wordsworth>

<https://www.youtube.com/ea0f8cd5-6e19-4b81-a0e5-760ebc60a0ae>

Hear and Now: The Collection

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_RnIWBUqQgE

<https://www.orchestraslive.org.uk/news/hear-and-now-collection-reflections>

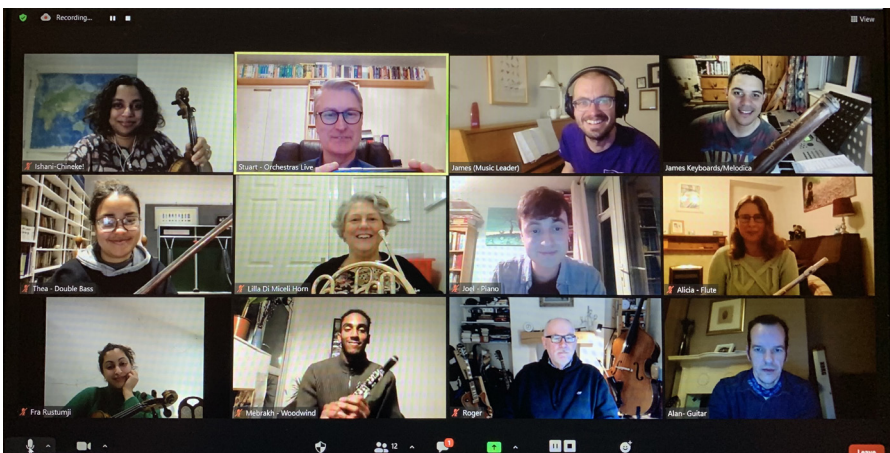


School of BaRock

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=230997835363581>

<https://www.orchestraslive.org.uk/news/the-importance-of-being-relevant>

www.orchestraslive.org.uk



How prepared do you think orchestras were for delivering their offer in different ways such as online?

Our first reaction was to support our promoter and orchestral partners who ceased performing live.

Some were more prepared than others. Many had back catalogues they could present online, but people soon tired of these old performances and there was no way of monetizing them except by asking for donations, and the level of donations was very low for all. Some were equipped with pay walls, but these weren't that effective either. The more interesting work emerged when orchestras started making original content – made for digital – as we call it. Most of these were coming from the chamber, not the symphony orchestras. Chamber orchestras are more fleet of foot – smaller organisations, could move quicker, less constrained by contracts. Remember, many of the symphony orchestras in the UK contract musicians as employees, not as freelancers, so those who 'employed' musicians, took the furlough route, laying off all their musicians. This left the freelancers, who work with most of the chamber orchestras, really exposed, so there was a financial, as well as artistic imperative to create new work for digital audiences. Some remixed existing work, but the most interesting came for new work. Funded by Art Council England Cultural Recovery Funds and other charities, they started working with filmmakers and other genres to create new work. Good examples are Manchester Camerata, Scottish Ensemble and Manchester Collective.

Do you think the move to digital has attracted new audiences to orchestral music? Do you think they will naturally move from digital back to the live setting or use both formats?

Possibly. Maybe a younger audience is more familiar with digital and how to access it. Not a 'young' audience art form – according to the latest ACE data, 70% of audiences for music are over 55 in the UK! People like the collective experience that live offers, so digital needs to be different and be used to supplement live concerts – behind the scenes, interviews, interaction. Things that add value to the experience. Of course there are people who are unable to access live because they can't get out, are old, infirm, disabled, living in rural areas with poor or no public transport, or they are just poor. That's why Arts Council England CE going forward focusing on place-based activities with communities and funded organisations in England are going to have to refocus their work completely. Equality, diversity and inclusion are

at the forefront of the new funding policies and some are better placed than others to meet this challenge. OL's been working with orchestras with culturally underserved communities for many years. We are well placed in the new world to meet these conditions.

Orchestras are going to have to adapt and change what they do or they will lose public funding. There will be fewer large-scale concerts. People need to be able to experience and enjoy live orchestral music where they live. Much more flexible orchestras are needed to respond to communities and what they want. Move away from funding organisations in London. Digital will be vital in keeping connected with the communities orchestras form partnerships with. As will collaborating with other art forms. It's all very exciting.

But there is lots of digital poverty, so our work will be bespoke depending on the needs and situation of our partners. Digital poverty – not having tech – laptops, tablets, phones, Smart TVs or poor broadband, or the money to pay for it – is prevalent in low-income, rural areas and not just for older people, young people and families are affected too. A few schemes like Art by Post – London's South Bank and our Creative Journey's project where musicians play over the phone to older people living in sheltered housing settings – have been able to happen, but are really difficult and have excluded many from things like Zoom choirs or accessing live streams

What research has been undertaken in the UK to understand the audience response to the digital and other non-live cultural offers?

Indigo and The Audience Agency's research

<https://www.indigo-ltd.com/covid-19-after-the-interval-national-audience-survey>

After the Interval Surveys – audience UK NI and ROI and Italy

On 16 April 2020, Indigo-Ltd and 192 cultural organisations distributed a COVID-19 audience survey in the UK, capturing over 86k responses. In partnership with Indigo-Ltd, Culture Counts ran statistical analysis on the big data captured to offer a breakdown of organisations that can use this data. We hope that this analysis will complement the initial analysis and other research happening in the sector.

Two surveys - Act 1 and Act 2

Now Culture ReStart – resources and tracking - ongoing surveys like Reassurances Audiences need to go back to live and reopening

<https://www.indigo-ltd.com/blog/the-5-reassurances-audiences-need-for-re-opening>

*Centre for Cultural Value at Leeds University are doing some important research too
Impact of Covid 19 on cultural sector*

<https://www.culturalvalue.org.uk/the-team/covid-19-research-project/>

Covid 19 Cultural Participation Monitor

<https://www.culturehive.co.uk/CVIresources/covid-19-cultural-participation-monitor-december-2020/>

Indigo's nationwide survey into cultural participation December 2020 findings show that:

Younger people are much more confident about returning to venues

27% of under 24s have booked or organised something over the next couple of months versus 8% of over 45s.

19% of under 24s said: "I am happy to attend right now if there was something I wanted to see or do", versus 6% of over 65s.

There is a significant difference in people's "readiness to return" between regions and nations

Around 70% of Londoners were confident about booking ahead, compared to just over 50% in Wales at the other extreme.

People want to know they can get a refund

A clear refund policy and information about safety measures before booking were the two most important factors to encourage the decision to reattend.

Different types of audience had strongly different reactions to the whole range of measures, however: urban/metropolitan, highly-engaged and contemporary groups were less concerned across the board; older, rural and traditional groups were more concerned.

Cultural engagement differs across race and ethnicities

People identifying as Black or Asian are engaging with online culture relatively more than at physical venues – and in similar or larger proportions than those identifying as white.

While 16% of white interviewees had watched a streamed play, 21% of Asian and 20% of Black respondents had done so.

Online cultural consumption has increased in people identifying as having a limiting disability or condition.

People identifying as having a limiting disability or condition – 19% had watched a streamed play, compared to 16% of those who do not.

A slightly higher proportion of non-disabled persons had been to some form of arts/heritage venue (35%) compared to those with a disability (32%)

Do you think orchestras are going to adopt and integrate digital presentation as part of their overall offer going forward?

Yes, they have to. Climate change, lack of touring – EU exit, etc. Increasing the overall offer to audiences and venues. We are developing a virtual touring network in the next year so that we can get more orchestral music out to communities and different places like libraries and community centres, even pubs.

For education and music learning, many more orchestras will be able to have a presence because our music education hub are embracing digital and running ensembles online and live. This helps keep costs of travel down but means they can have many more relationships with professional musicians digitally – masterclasses, composition classes, sectionals, training for music teachers, schools' performances live streamed. A really exciting prospect. Lots of new networks will emerge, people linking up locally with national and international orchestras and musicians.

The live experience will still be there, but more so I think. More people are going to have access to high quality orchestral music, but in familiar places, not in a concert hall which alienates many people. Not just the place itself, but the type of people who attend concerts. If they don't see people who look like them, then they feel uncomfortable and think it's not for the likes of them.

Orchestras have to change or risk becoming irrelevant. Relevance is a word we use a lot. We can't go on providing concerts for a very small proportion of the population who are 'in the know' or can afford it.



Jan Ford, Senior Creative Producer at Orchestras Live, UK

Jan has a 22-year-long work experience with Orchestras Live, where she has been a partnership manager and producer. She was previously a consultant at the Art Consultancy Services, a lecturer at Demontfort University and a resource development officer at East Midlands Arts and a director of Jazz Central in Birmingham. She is the winner of the Royal Philharmonic Society Music Award 2018 - Audiences and Engagement, Classically Yours. Jan is knowledgeable in the fields of non-profit arts, education, audience development and fundraising. She has experience in policy making, planning, marketing, promoting, programming, research, lecturing, training, writing, and even performing.

More about Jan Ford:

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/jan-ford-0036a922/?originalSubdomain=uk>

1:1 CONCERTS©

The smallest yet powerful concert format. A musical rendezvous at eye level.

Christian Siegmund and Franziska Ritter, Germany

Milica Lundin: *Franziska and Christian, welcome. Would you like to present yourselves and your project, 1:1 CONCERTS?*

Christian Siegmund: Franziska and I are two of the three initiators and artistic directors of 1:1 CONCERTS, together with Stephanie Winker. We three represent the different elements that are crucial for our concert format: music, space and people. As a flutist, Stephanie represents music, Franziska as a scenographer takes care of the spatial elements, and I as a cultural mediator represent human interaction and emotions. We are based in Berlin and Stuttgart but our format is now active all over the world.

Franziska Ritter: So what is a 1:1 CONCERT? A 1:1 CONCERT aims to redefine the classical concert ritual. One musician meets one listener for a ten-minute musical “blind date”. Silent eye contact is the impulse for a very personal concert at eye-level - an intense shared experience for both the listener and the musician. To sum it up: proximity at a distance. 1:1 CONCERTS already originated in 2019. It is very important to point out that 1:1 CONCERTS is not a pandemic format, even though it looks like it. It originated at our German summer festival “Sommerkonzerte Volkenroda” in rural Thuringia, in the middle of nowhere. In 2019 the festival motto was “simplicity” and this is how 1:1 CONCERTS came about: it was the simplest concert format we could imagine, not only musically but also spatially. Our team consists of architects, scenographers, cultural mediators and musicians - so the concept is the result of an interdisciplinary approach to the topic. Then in 2020, during the first major pandemic lockdown, almost all concerts were cancelled. Musicians - like everyone else - were stuck at home and big financial problems ensued, especially for all freelance artists. They were the first to be out of work and the last to be back. So we came up with the idea of turning our 1:1 format into a real movement, enabling everybody to play 1:1 CONCERTS. Consequently, we started facilitating the implementation of the 1:1 idea by formulating guidelines and flowcharts and by producing all sorts of helpful material.



Villa Massimo Rom © Sabina Harm

We organised lots of briefings and motivational calls with our colleagues - often our friends - and contact partners from well-known orchestras. Luckily, orchestra musicians were still paid and now had plenty of spare time to play. And they offered their music in an act of solidarity. The listeners' donations were directed towards the freelance musicians who had lost their income. The solidarity between paid and unpaid freelance musicians was our response to the Corona crisis.





1:1 CONCERTS ©

In Germany, many different orchestras joined our movement: first the Stuttgart State Opera and the SWR Symphony Orchestra, then the Dresden Philharmonic and then many, many other orchestras and freelancers. Subsequently, the 1:1 CONCERTS format spread all over the world. It was indeed a very positive and energetic response to the challenges of the Coronavirus. Initially, friends and colleagues brought the concept to other countries. First to Australia, then to Japan, etcetera. Some weeks ago, we launched 1:1 CONCERTS in Washington, D.C., with the Washington National Opera. Only recently, New York started to play 1:1 CONCERTS with the Brooklyn Academy of Music - to name but a few. In fact, we are working with renowned international orchestras. By now, over eight thousand 1:1 CONCERTS have been played around the globe. And in total, if you count all the participants, musicians, hosts, organizers, it adds up to more than 2,500 people participating in 1:1 CONCERTS. The aim of our format is to raise donations to support freelance musicians. In Germany alone we collected more than 200,000€. Initially, the German concerts collected donations for the German Orchestra Foundation, who spent the money by supporting freelance artists and musicians. In other countries, different charity funds were used for freelance musicians or other people facing hardship in these challenging times.

Milica: *That is quite impressive. Why do you think the concept of 1:1 CONCERTS is so “contagious”?*

Christian: I think this is owing to the fact that 1:1 CONCERTS is not just a musical concept or format, but a very particular performance. Actually, the whole experience doesn't start with music but with the initial one minute of mutual gaze. So a listener will encounter a viola player, for instance, looking at him or her for about a minute. After that intense visual encounter, the musician will translate this experience into a musical answer; he or she mirrors this tête-a-tête exchange and creates a situation that is indeed unique. So every encounter is a real blind date between two strangers and the result is an intimate concert. By the choice of the piece or pieces, the musician mirrors the unique encounter with the one-member-audience. There is no one else around to listen to that music, no one beside these two. 1:1 CONCERTS can be held anywhere, but every concert will always be an intimate rendez-vous, even if it is played on a big concert stage or an empty airport terminal. Stuttgart airport, for example, was shut down during the first lockdown. So we played our concerts in this big wide-open terminal building. Quite a particular blind date, let's put it that way.

Beside the listener and the musician, we created a third character in the choreography, the host. This character is both a door opener and a companion. Every listener is individually welcomed and guided by the host, who also takes care of the musician and the concert venue. The host symbolically represents the concert venue.

A 1:1 CONCERT starts with a personal greeting, a personal welcome. That can be at a cocktail bar where the host is the barkeeper. At a church, a priest or monk may welcome the listener, explaining a small set of rules that come with every 1:1 CONCERT. The host reminds the listener of the silence, i.e. that there is no talking, no applause. The main task of the host is to prepare the listener in a way that they enter without expectations, without bias. The host tries to free the listener of restlessness, nervousness, or all kinds of thoughts that might be on the listener's mind. Once the door opens, there is hopefully a very relaxed and focused listener entering the stage. Please note the reverse approach: it is not the musician who enters the stage, it is the listener. When he or she sits down, the intimate moment of mutual gaze begins.



© Louisa Marie Summer

Franziska: Something else we would like to point out is the design of the concert venue, which is mainly my part in the project. The idea is to create an artistic empowerment of diverse spaces all around the world. We found a very simple method

to frame the concert stage based on the belief that any space can be a concert stage. At 1:1 CONCERTS, the host is also the scenographer, they prepare and set up the stage. We place two chairs at a two-metre distance facing each other. Then we add the framing which is different for every space. It characterises both the space and the host. Framing is really important for the atmosphere of the concert and also for the energy: it opens up the space for resonance. There are many examples where you see how the hosts individually design and set up their own 1:1 CONCERT venues. With dedication and attention to detail, they turn their spaces into a very special, yet always personal, and often completely surprising setting.

1:1 CONCERTS are also meant to be an instrument of community building. Documentation with pictures, photos or videos is really important as we want both the space and the scenography to be the link and common topic of all the 1:1 CONCERTS around the world - whether in a fitness studio or a hotel pool, all of these are crazy spaces where you would normally never attend a concert. In Dresden, for example, one of the stages was an “immaterial” frame made of light. A typical Italian orange garden or citrus orchard can turn into a concert venue, as you can see from Christian’s work in Rome: he organised 1:1 CONCERTS at Villa Massimo and in the Giardino degli Aranci. At our Thuringian festival, we even played in a goat stable with secret animal listeners - very much like the concerts in a Tokyo park where the koi fish are seemingly listening to the music. Outdoor venues are also amazing. Sally Walker, our 1:1 organizer in Australia, played at a beach, a wonderful spot. One time, 1:1 CONCERTS were played in a place that goes far beyond imagination: a violinist playing on his surfboard offshore on the waves of the Atlantic ocean in Brittany, France. This must have been one of the craziest moments of 1:1.

Milica: *So who are your listeners? I presume it takes quite a bit of courage to attend. And how do people react to this very particular concert format?*
Franziska: *Audience development is very important to us. Our objective is easy and direct access to culture for people of all ages and from all backgrounds. The format attracts young people who have never seen or heard a bassoon, or those who simply cannot afford a concert. It sees Techno fans going into raptures about their first encounter with Telemann or Takemitsu. The novel and surprising nature of the format demands an openness from all, both listeners and musicians are part of this immersive experience.*

Christian: The reactions we get from the participants are mind-blowing. Let's put it this way: ours is not a “normal concert”, where the musicians are on stage and the audience sits detached in the stalls, socially connected yet disconnected. The intimacy of the 1:1 CONCERT situation elicits many different reactions.



© Ettore Altomare

Often, all sorts of emotions arise and a lot of listeners are crying. In a 1:1 situation, something happens that actually never happens: you look into a complete stranger's eyes for about a minute and then you receive a very personal musical answer to this mutual gaze. It's not like the musician thinks: "Ok, I've prepared this piece of Bach or Beethoven and I am just going to play this to everyone". On the contrary: a 1:1 CONCERT is intrinsically so personal and intimate that listeners will of course be crying or laughing sometimes, or they remain completely speechless after the

encounter. A 1:1 CONCERT is also very short - ten to fifteen minutes only - but at the same time it is very intense. Even hours after the concert, emotions that you wouldn't have imagined before will still impress you.

Franziska: We wanted silence to prevail where there is no music. After the standard concert, we usually engage in chit-chat, small talk: "The violin was nice, the bassoon was out of tune, do you know this special recording from so and so". At a 1:1 CONCERT, there is a different form of resonance. Every listener receives an information letter where the musician leaves the name, instrument and the pieces played. This information also conveys an appeal to make a donation to a solidarity fund. In exchange, the listeners can leave what we call a "1:1 love letter", writing down what was impossible to convey during the mutual gaze. So every listener has the opportunity to leave written feedback for the musician. It is often very touching, very moving and sometimes, listeners leave little drawings, little figures, they write poems, etc. It is very interesting to see how the concert resonates on an individual basis with the listeners - it evolves into an exchange on multiple levels.



1:1 CONCERT

Milica: *What kind of instruments can I expect to hear at a 1:1 CONCERT?*

Christian: The diversity of instruments is very important to us. We love the big surprise effects. Often, classical orchestra musicians are playing for us, so you expect a clarinet, a piano or a viola. However, the variety of instruments is an important

surprise element and we are trying to keep the variety of the musicians as wide as possible. To many listeners, unusual instruments can be an epiphany: for example the kora, a lute-harp from Western Africa, was played by a Senegalese storyteller and surprised many listeners at the Roman 1:1 CONCERTS. In Australia, the carillon and the oud were played and some Brooklyn listeners discovered the Chinese erhu only a couple of weeks ago, in a Brooklyn backyard.



New York Brooklyn Navy Yards, Silkroad Ensemble Shaw Pong Liu © Ed Lefkowicz

Milica: *So what are your plans for the future? How will you develop your project?*

Franziska: So far, 1:1 CONCERTS has evolved so rapidly and beautifully and other cities, other countries are asking to join the 1:1 community. Spreading the format is what we are doing on a constant daily basis. We are also taking 1:1 to other disciplines like dance and literature and it works surprisingly well, as we saw in Frankfurt or Stuttgart for example.

Christian: In 2021, we founded the non-profit organisation 1:1 CONCERTS e.V., offering concert possibilities for freelance musicians and working on new projects for a sustainable future support for freelance performing artists. We strive to make a substantial contribution to the preservation of our cultural landscape.



Franziska Ritter, 1:1CONCERTS, Germany

Franziska Ritter is a scenographer, a graduate of architecture at TU Berlin and the University of North London. She is a research associate of the Department of Stage Design & Scenic Space at TU Berlin and works as a lecturer for exhibition design and theatre construction at different universities. At the moment she is in a leading position in the project of Digitality and New Technologies of the Deutsche Theater technische Gesellschaft. She is also an active musician, flutist for Ensemble Opus 45.

More about Franziska Ritter: <http://www.tu-buehnenbild.de/en/person/franziska-ritter/>

See also: <https://1to1concerts.de/en/11-concerts-english/>



Christian Siegmund, Cultural Mediator

Christian is a cultural mediator for the German platform of 1:1 CONCERTS©. Besides that, Christian is a manager of a private art and music salon "Salon S" in Berlin, an experimental space for interdisciplinary artistic encounters. He has played the piano and cello since an early age. Originally, he studied linguistics and literature, as well as literary translation in Vienna, Florence and Munich. He works as a translator for several languages, and also as a purser for Lufthansa German Airlines. In March 2019 he was involved in the "Listening Differently" project at Frankfurt's Alte Oper as a facilitator for Marina Abramović. See also: <https://1to1concerts.de/en/11-concerts-english/>

1:1CONCERT Belgrade edition

Milica Lundin, Orfeus

Our cooperation with the German team of 1:1CONCERT started in the spring of 2021, when we received their confirmation for participation at our conference. I came to the conclusion that the best way of presenting their concept would be to demonstrate it for the Belgrade audience. I decided to organize a series of concerts at unorthodox spots and venues. I chose 4 spots, two on the premises of the Culture Center of Belgrade, the host of the conference. The staff was very much intrigued by the idea. The third venue would be my own home, the residence of the Ambassador of Sweden, and the fourth on “neutral ground”. After some search, that last spot turned out to be the office of the Nova Iskra Creative Hub, where they provide workspace for creative nomads. We agreed that hosts of these concerts would be curators of the venues themselves and I will help hosting where there were two concerts at the same time in different spaces. Together we managed to host 3 concerts in each place, in total 12 unique artistic experiences.

On the photos we can see all those premises: the rooftop at the Culture Center of Belgrade, the foyer of the theatre for historical cinema, the attic in my home and the workspace of Nova Iskra. Being new to 1:1CONCERT while making these pictures, I was not sure if it was allowed to photograph people. So what you see is mostly empty space.



The rooftop at the Culture Center of Belgrade



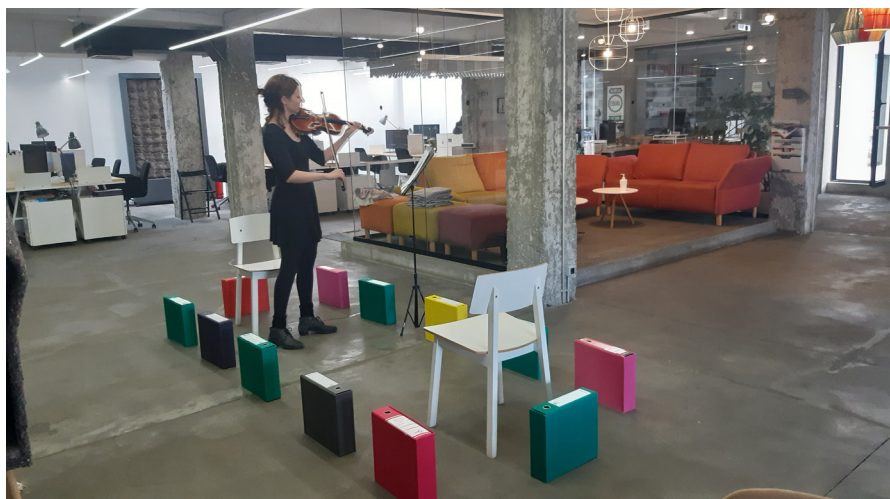
The foyer of the theatre for historical cinema

The first stage, a roof, was surrounded by office windows of the adjacent buildings upon which pigeons would gather and listen to the music motionlessly. The preparation of the first stage presented some trouble: there was not enough material to mark the border of the desired 2 m² for the performance. The material had to be in tune with the space, to illustrate its atmosphere. What we found on the roof were old cables tied in bunts, and they were very hard to straighten out. We had just managed to resolve that, when we realized that the platform we prepared was too high to climb, especially for potential listeners in skirts. So we had to move it down, one level lower. After we had done that, the time for preparation of the second stage was reduced to ten minutes. Luckily, this space offered wonderful potential. There was a cinema theatre in the same building and there were a lot of old cinema posters lying around, which we folded printed -side-out, to make the pictures visible, and arranged on the floor around the piano. The room was somewhat circular and there was an exhibition of old movie posters on the walls. The only place for the chair for the listener was at the top of the stairs. That was actually level with the enormous piano and its score stand. Should the listener have to sit at the same level as the player, they would have difficulty seeing each other and this mutual gaze wouldn't be as intense as we wanted it to be. This way they could gaze at each other without any impediment in between.



The attic, the residence of the Ambassador of Sweden

The following day, the vast attic of the house where I lived seemed quite dark and stuffy in the beginning. But the player (it was an accordionist) assured me that it was just fine. The space is used mainly as a storage space for a large number of spare chairs and other furniture. The chairs are covered with nylons which are documented on our pictures lying on the floor. We used these nylons to make a border line for the stage. There was a large round window on the side wall. It provided us with a specific kind of light. The acoustics were perfect: the space was large and yet all the wood filtered the sound and prevented it from traveling too far. The visitor had to climb up three floors through what I call backstage stairs constructed supposedly for the residence staff. After all the elegant rooms through which listeners had to pass on their way to the old staircase and attic, they were really wondering: where is this woman taking me?



The workspace of Nova Iskra

The fourth space in Nova Iskra, as I said, is the office for digital nomads and it is a famous space among culture workers of Belgrade and foreign working travelers alike. It was already colorful and not too difficult to make very attractive for playing. The working units are divided with glass walls and there are enough colorful folders that we felt free to use for bordering the stage. So it was neat and nice. Our collaborator Bjanka, a curator of Nova Iskra, found it very enjoyable to enroll as a 1:1CONCERT host.

Every venue had to be marked with a poster in Serbian, with the 1:1CONCERT logo and standard text. Our poster in Serbian said “we are a concert stage today”. We also printed a 1:1 questionnaire for the listeners (a “love letter” to the performer) and an information sheet that the performer had to give to the listener, both in Serbian. The procedure required that one of us should wait for the visitor somewhere near the venue and start to prepare him/her for what was to happen. The silence was introduced there and then. We gave each of them some five minutes to relax, to have a glass of water, and enter the space focused. The surprise moment was always the most special to watch. Some of them would react to the instrument, others to the space or to the fact that they were alone with a performer. The performance was easy to hear on the other side of the door or wall, and we could feel the vibes behind the doors. After the final moment of silence, we would bring the listener back to the station with water and give them the questionnaire to fill in. Some of them had difficulty settling their thoughts and writing about their impressions. They were told to send us their feedback in an email when they felt ready to write.

The reactions were, just as Franziska and Christian said, numerous and different. We had a little film made afterwards when we assumed this overwhelming feeling had settled. The first listener from our video, Vanda, said that she would like this to be more of a customary event. Also that she was so overwhelmed that she could hardly collect her thoughts. And then something that I had on my mind as well, since we as hosts shared their experiences, although “behind the curtain”. She talked about the feeling of exposure of the listener. When a musician is playing at the concert hall, he is exposed and alone under the spotlight, so to say. But the situation where you are the one and only listener puts you in the same position with the musician. So, the two of you are equals in this event. Another lady, Vjera, was pretty poetical. She talked about flying birds, horizons opening, and uplifting moments.

Ljubica, who was the host on behalf of the Culture Center of Belgrade, had similar impressions. “Here, you are equally affected by the person who is coming to listen and by the musician who plays. Obviously they really manage to reach this state of mind where they are lifted to a new level, a higher level of communication. You are somehow infected with this intensity. When you speak to them you see on their faces that they managed to have a special experience, that they had some special moment full of this creative energy and these emotions. And that somehow affected me as well, so I was also really excited after every performance. I was a host for three performances. Each time I was behind the door, this feeling swept over me”.

The players reacted differently as well. The first violinist, Aleksandra, said that she had not really been sure what to expect, but she liked it so much that she would be very pleased to do it again. The second violinist, Mina, was moved after her first play so much that it actually took her a minute or two to stop crying. But afterwards it went really, really nice. She started improvising between the pieces. It ended up with her giving to each listener one complete musical event made of prepared pieces connected with her own improvisations. The pianist, Dina, said that she had first been contemplating ahead what to play to each person. But when she confronted each one of the listeners through that gaze, she changed her mind, and played something completely different. So the gaze, she said, really worked despite her being skeptical about it. Boban, the accordionist, played only the prepared pieces in the beginning, but slowly came to improvise freely. He wouldn't be able to repeat it again. From time to time he played whatever that person in front of him inspired him to play. And he said: in the future, if he is called again, he would do only that, he wouldn't play anything practiced or rehearsed. He enjoyed this spontaneity and being submerged in the eyes of another person. He thought it would be impossible to endure a whole minute of looking someone in the face. But the eyes are not the same as the face, he said.

As a contributor, organizer and coordinator, I can add that the main problem for us was to persuade people that silence is really crucial. It has to do with Serbian culture and temperament. Some of them took it as an imposed novelty, and even if they cooperated in the beginning, they couldn't stay silent all the way through. Some had a need to comment when asked to stop talking, as if this was some sort of oppression. But once they found themselves on the chair in front of their performer, the overwhelming position made them realize why it was important. So even the most skeptical ones came to me afterwards and told me that this really was something. "I never expected it to be this fantastic. I was doubtful, but in the end I was mesmerized".



Milica Lundin, pianist, cultural manger, agency Orfeus, Sweden

Milica Lundin is a Swedish professional pianist, piano teacher and culture project manager, who grew up in Belgrade. She got her musical education in Belgrade, Moscow and Vilnius. She expanded her education in art history and cultural policy and management at Stockholm University and in a joint Master's program of the Belgrade University of Arts and the French University of Lumière Lyon 2. Her husband's diplomatic career has so far taken her to Lithuania, Russia, Germany and Serbia, although Stockholm remains her place of permanent residence.

Milica is experienced in solo performing, chamber music, accompanying vocalists, choirs and piano teaching. In the field of culture project management she was involved in projects concerning audience development, gender rights and marginalized groups. She has also experience with mediating between cultural workers and in cultural diplomacy. Milica was a board member of SAK, activists' association of spouses of the employees of the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a president of the International Women's Club in Belgrade. She is a member of Swedish section of EPTA, the piano teachers' association.

She founded her culture project agency Orfeus in 2010. Orfeus's partnership with Serbian musical institution Ilija M. Kolarac Endowment, agency Multikultivator and EU Info Center 2019/2020 resulted in two editions of a conference on audience development for classical music.

More about Milica Lundin: www.orfeuspiano.se

Concert practice during the COVID-19 pandemic in the Cultural Centre of Belgrade

Ljubica Solunac, Cultural Centre of Belgrade, Serbia

I will start with a few words about the Centre's music program

Since the beginning (1986), the music program has been focused on supporting young musicians at the beginning of their careers, providing them with decent conditions for performances, as well as promotion. Another important task of the Centre has been to continuously provide the Belgrade audience with free selected music content; to gain the trust of the audience and make them feel comfortable in the space of this Artget Gallery, or some other venue we usually use for concerts. The entrance to all programs is free because the Cultural Centre is financed from the budget of the City of Belgrade - our founder, which means from the money of the taxpayers, the same ones that attend the concerts we organize.

After the lockdown in March, we postponed, or cancelled all the concerts until the end of the season. However, tuning in to the needs of both the musicians and the audience, we decided not to wait for a complete normalization of the situation, but to start working and organize concerts as soon as the most basic conditions for that are met. The opening of our galleries to the public, and of the cinema with a third of the venue capacity was that sign that we were waiting for, so we started the new season with a hybrid format concert of pianist Nebojša Maksimović, on September 7, 2020, and have continuously held concerts until today, as maybe the only venue in Belgrade.

By that time (September 2020), we had feedback on how complicated it was for musicians to perform in an empty hall, only for the camera, or for some virtual people whose reactions the performer cannot see or feel, and we knew how deficient it is to listen to concerts in front of a computer – where you are actually getting information about the concert, but you are not able to experience it, and it cannot replace real experience.

So we did as follows: In order to follow all the instructions and recommended measures and keep those coming to the KCB safe, we first limited the number of the audience in the Gallery to 25. Entrance to the concerts is still free, so in order

not to reject people at the entrance and to avoid making a crowd in front of the venue (what was later the case with similar halls where tickets are not sold), the audience had to book their seats by phone or e-mail. As a kind of consolation prize for those who didn't have the chance to come, we recorded the concert and published it on our YouTube channel. We chose one part of the concert recording, up to half an hour, adjusting the format of the concert for YouTube. The idea was to keep the video recording on our YouTube channel for at least a week, but all videos are still available, as musicians were satisfied enough with the results.

About the quality of the recording: The decision was not to go for livestreaming because of the sound quality. Our technical equipment does not allow the simultaneous streaming of two separate signal sources, and the sound the camera records is not of sufficient quality due to the automatic compression that this basic type of camera has. So we record the sound and the image separately, the next day we process the recordings, we merge them and post the result on our official channel. The video is basic, only one static camera, one frame, so that it doesn't need an operator, an extra person to hire.

Impressions - at first it was very strange to see an almost empty hall with sporadically furnished chairs, but after only a couple of concerts we all got used to it. We have held 30 concerts in this gallery, the Festival Days of the Organ in the Cathedral of the Blessed Virgin Mary with 100 seats in the audience and the Festival Ars Vivendi Clavicembalum in the City Hall with 50 seats (this was the venue for 2 or 3 other concerts).



The audience began to point out that they like this distance between seats and that they feel privileged, as the rare ones who have the opportunity to listen to a live concert. They leave the hall visibly excited, as if the event they attended gave them some new hope in the apocalyptic atmosphere that otherwise surrounds them. My impression is also that the audience is disciplined, they are never late, they follow the rules about the distance and wear masks all the time, they register on time and if they are prevented from coming, they call so that we can give their seats to someone else. In this way, they show respect for all participants in the event. It was especially interesting to observe how well our regular older audience deals with the situation, how they feel safe to come and stay with us, considering that they are the most sensitive group in this pandemic situation.



In some cases, a musician performs at our venue for the first time after the lockdown. They point out how much they are professionally constrained by the lack of performances and the inability to perform. They are thankful because the audience is present even in such small numbers. They also notice that the audience are more focused and listen very carefully. And all of them were happy with the recording.

About forty concerts on our YouTube channel have from 150 to 1300 views. However, about ten percent of people watched the whole concert. So, most viewers

get information about the event itself, like some preview of the concert, but do not take the time for more. There is another benefit of the recording, and that is the promotion of the musicians.

This spring, when security measures were tightened, it turned out that only 10 people could be admitted to our gallery. That was the situation when we decided to repeat concerts, day after day. We resorted to the same solution when organizing the jubilee concert on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the *Odabrani za odabrane* concert cycle. This experience was also useful for us and reminded us of a conversation with the harpsichordist Frederic Hass during his stay in Belgrade. He mentioned that sometimes it is easier and better for him to perform the same program twice for a smaller number of people, than to perform in front of a crowded hall.

The conclusion - the future could be elitism. Maybe we have to emphasize the uniqueness of the event; that the classical concert is something unique and that more direct communication between the performer and the audience is necessary.

The digital format, or concerts in front of the computer, is a necessity, not a form that can replace personal experience – which is confirmed by the smaller number of views of the concert we posted in May – when all Belgrade concert venues are active again.





Ljubica Solunac, music program editor, Cultural Centre of Belgrade, Serbia

Ljubica Solunac has been working at the Cultural Centre of Belgrade since 2003, first as an expert associate for music programs and since 2011 as music program editor. After her graduation from the Belgrade Faculty of Music, the Department of Ethnomusicology, Ljubica has been involved in the organization of several music festivals in Belgrade: Guitar Art Festival, Days of Organ, December Plays Jazz, Harpsichord, Living Art, as well as concert cycles and programs dedicated to anniversaries of classical composers. She has been an editor of the Days of Organ CD publication. Ljubica's experiences as a program editor for CCB come from organizing over 100 music programs and events yearly, which include concerts, festivals, master classes, promotions of CDs and other music publications.

See more about Ljubica Solunac:

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/ljubica-solunac-0056b82b/?originalSubdomain=rs>

Discussion and Conclusions of Panel 1

Milica Lundin, moderator

In our first panel of this year's conference we were updating our followers on possible ways of bridging the limitations that Covid-19 brought to the sphere of public life, in particular of classical music.

THE MAIN QUESTIONS OF OUR DISCUSSION

Will the new models and solutions stay after the crisis resolves, or are we to go back strictly to the old traditional stage approach?

Classical music has managed to emerge in cyberspace with some new, unexpectedly interesting solutions. It has been said in the forums for culture and classical music that this is the beginning of a new era, one that gives birth to new art forms. On our panel we agreed that this doesn't mean that the traditional concert is a thing of the past or that future listeners would rather listen to classical music online. On the other hand we cannot compare the classical hall to online live performances, live streaming and interactive Zoom concerts that we have witnessed to boost people's spirit so well in the time of crisis. The cases presented in our Panel 1 have shown involvement of the concert audience in a completely new way.

Together we concluded that concerts with a limited number of listeners and online face-to-face concerts possess a certain type of exclusiveness which, being accepted by the audience as something positive, should endure in the future. The audience took it as a "positive elitism", a reward for the effort that they were willing to make when others were not disciplined or brave enough to come to the hall for a musical treat.

Participatory concerts are also popular among elderly listeners and among younger and new audiences. They allow a neglect of formalities and verbal interaction with performers.

The 1:1CONCERT platform will certainly stay after the Covid-19 crisis. It had in fact been conceived before the crisis and supposed to be a platform for specific music events that promotes positive energy combined with simplicity of a modest space/program, exclusivity in terms of privacy and intimacy, verbal resonance instead of the usual applause and most importantly - solidarity among musicians, all of which is

innovative and desirable in the sphere of alternative music events. Furthermore, the platform will be expanded with 1:1DRAMA and 1:1 children's programs.

Is there a critical need for applause?

How honest and rewarding is the replacement of applause by some alternative reactions of listeners? How does the absence of applause affect the performers?

The main concert hall of the city of Belgrade has suffered immensely from the absence of a live audience. Musicians are craving this form of recognition – they do not feel well without it. The classical concert's return into the hall with the presence of an audience was embraced by the performers and the management of the hall alike. It had a therapeutic effect on all of them. On the other hand, according to our panelists, other demonstrations of appreciation like vocal and written communication, as well as feet-stamping seems to result in just about the same effect.

In the case of intimate, silent, minimal events like 1:1CONCERT, maintaining the silence is crucial. The famous “love letter”, a written comment that the listener writes after the event, is more than satisfactory for the performer - it is actually overwhelming.

All of these forms of appreciation are rituals and they should be treated with respect. One does not exclude the other. They are all welcome in the right context. There is a special relationship being formed between the performer and the audience on every given occasion.

Is the pre-recorded concert in an empty hall attractive to the online audience at all?

Is an online concert better if executed in a completely new format? The example of the Culture Centre of Belgrade tells us that the audience is not patient enough online as it is in the hall. An online concert has to be shortened, edited and presented as a preview to the “real thing” that happened in the hall. Voting for preferred repertoire before the concert, commenting and discussing what was just heard are also popular as modes of interaction. Social media gives more chance for feedback, which is exciting and useful for the performers. We must keep reminding them how important it is to tune in to these comments and dialogues, since musicians tend to not keep track of all the innovations that the new media provides. Technical progress is so rapid, that it is easy to lose track of it and give up on technicalities on the whole. In such cases players, deeply emerged in their process of performing, may end up switching off the audiences altogether.

COMMENTS AND REFLECTIONS OF OUR ONLINE FOLLOWERS ON PANEL 1

We should not forget that the audience is a catalyst of every kind of concert.

Even if communication between the two sides is reduced to a minimum, it is crucial. Applause in the hall is every performer's basic need. Contact between the concert participants, alias performers and their audience, gets the more important the more social and physical distancing is applied.

Classical music is also a therapy.

For those who are deprived of it or people with special needs, music might be an immensely important means of communication. One of our listeners at the panel added that it might be because classical music is played on acoustic instruments. They produce vibrations and frequencies that some people with special needs or abilities are particularly sensitive to, and to which they can emotionally respond better than to some other sensations. There are specially tailored programs in the UK for the elderly who do not have access to concerts of any kind, who are isolated in their nursing homes and feel even more detached during the Covid-19 crisis than the rest of us. For that reason equipment was provided, and it will stay with them for further use in the future. Sometimes equipment had to be of an old type, because there was no suitable connection or technology usually provided for this purpose, so outdated CDs and DVDs were put in use again. In Serbia, many deprived families got different portals and screens for free in order to allow children to follow the online school lessons. This equipment might in the future contribute to the promotion of understanding of participative concerts too.

The stiffness of classical music is one of the reasons why it is not easily presentable online.

Still, if we observe classical music from a historical aspect, we will be reassured about this. In the time of its creation every classical piece was a hit of the day. Salon performing included as much spontaneity as we can see in today's rock concerts. It is the way we present this music today that is stiff. Audiences are nowadays getting used to hearing classics in a lot of places that used to be unusual before. Podcasts and digital space are one of them.

CONCLUSIONS OF PANEL 1

The presentations gave us an insight into the reactions of the audiences: whether they were symphonic or solo performances, the audiences were glad that the music had found its way to them. Even online concerts with imperfect technical presentation were sought, on account of their participatory character. Live performances are still more popular, even in a modest form, with a radically reduced number of listeners. Response also depended on the place, price and possibility of refund in case of a sudden change of Covid rules. In the UK there were two obstacles to orchestra touring: Covid-19 and Brexit. Opposite to that, in Germany, the conditions for an exclusive Covid-friendly concept were favorable. The Covid rules were respected and there were numerous interesting unconventional venues temporarily deserted and available for the 1:1CONCERTs.

The crisis of Covid-19 illustrates how classical music can be listened to in many different places, even where music did not usually appear at all. Or where classical repertoire was never included: like on podcasts and digital space. Statistics cannot show how much classical music was listened to online during the lockdown, but it surely was sought as much as any other art form. The question is now: will this listening impact on the number and the social and demographic profile of concert hall visitors in the future?

One conclusion continuously emerges from discussions in all the three years of existence of this conference: we must nourish young listeners in order to turn them into adult concert goers.



Panel **2**

PANELISTS:

Branka Kostić-Marković, North Macedonia
Media content in the pandemic

Ivana Vujić Kominac, Serbia
National Theatre of Belgrade in the Time of Pandemic

Media content in the pandemic

Cases of Stay Home in Astroroom and Mini Astro Concerts

Branka Kostić-Marković, North Macedonia

Introduction: Conditions after the Covid outbreak

Given the current global outbreak of Coronavirus, which has literally put the world population in some kind of isolation, the only (real) contact with the outside world is the television content, as well as various internet platforms. Fortunately, in such a time of pandemic and recommendations for minimal physical contact, modern technologies allow for the creation of quality TV programming without direct contact between participants and creators of TV content.

It is difficult to give a general assessment of the situation in Macedonia, so it might be better to talk about my own case, since I host practically the most popular (and watched) TV show about culture in the Macedonian media space. At the very beginning of the pandemic, as part of the general prevention of contacts, the show itself was blocked in a way - nothing new could be made (recorded). Basically, it's a talk show, a host with guests, so at the time it was impossible to produce new material. Fortunately, there were a few shows recorded in advance, so they could be broadcast for a while longer. However, we had a very short time to sort the things out and to come up with the solution to the problem. The idea was actually very simple – we would have our guests present in the virtual studio. This was followed by the **Stay Home in Astroroom** project and one additional sister project **Mini Astro Concerts**. The whole studio is made virtually, to make it look like everything is going as before.

Stay Home in Astroroom

It might be interesting to briefly present the development of the entire series.

Me, as the author, the Ars Lamina publishing house and Moonlight Production as producers, right away, at the start of the pandemic, offered to the Delegation of the EU in Macedonia multimedia content available for broadcasting on TV, along with all online services and social networks. We entitled this special series of talk shows (based on my previous tête-à-tête TV talk show Astroroom), Stay Home in Astroroom! The basis of the show is a chat room where internationally successful

individuals talk about literature, art and culture. These gatherings are originally held at “Literatura.mk”, an exclusive bookstore located in the most well-known street in Skopje (till now, in this period of time since 2016, Ars Lamina has set up a chain of 7 bookstores under the title Literatura.mk. as in the case of Laguna/Delfi in Serbia). Astroroom, literally translated, is a kind of a chat room with stars, celebrities.



In that period (the very beginning of the pandemic, the end of March 2020), when all cultural life was put on hold and artists and consumers of such content stopped in their activities, we thought that such shows could fulfill all the needs met by quality TV broadcast (educational, entertaining, informative ...). In safe conditions, the show had the option of going live, as well as, of course, being delayed. The technical capabilities of the platform (Vmix) allowed us to include participants from different locations on the globe, including the moderator. Participating guests could connect live via their laptops, tablets, mobile phones, in a very simple way and without delay, with excellent image and tone quality.

All technical preparations and tests were successfully completed by Moonlight Production. We contacted our famous artists abroad, as pianist Hajdi Elzeser in Germany, tenor Blagoj Nacoski in Italy, pianist Maja Kastratovic in Slovenia, guitarist Vlatko Stefanovski in Macedonia, flautist Elena Stojcevska in France, violinist Kostadin Bogdanovski in Spain, conductor Oliver Balaburski in Canada, etc.

The purpose and the idea came from years of our experience and market analysis. Thus, the current situation only accelerated the process to create such a multimedia concept of creative expression. So, thankfully, the EU Delegation recognized our project, and supported its realization. STAY HOME in Astroroom is still on the air, broadcasting once a week, on TV and on YouTube.

Mini ASTRO Concerts

We'll add a few words about the sister project. MINI ASTRO CONCERTS is a serial of tiny/mini live concerts.

Having achieved excellent viewership statistics, ratings and comments from the public on social media with STAY HOME IN ASTROROOM, we continued to believe that there is plenty of room to engage in fostering cultural growth and awareness, instilling the European values and benefits in the entire context of culture in the pandemic.

After the inspiring conversations with eminent people who were our guests in Astroroom, the new edition was produced in a form of serial of live-streamed tiny music concerts with a variety of styles, from chamber, to pop, rock, jazz, world and classical music, performed by national musicians. These cute tiny concerts are 20 to 30 minutes long.

Мини Астро Концерти / Tiny Astro Concerts

Проектот е поддржан од Делегацијата на Европската Унија во соработка со Кафе Литература

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Around that time another Literatura.mk bookstore just opened, on 20th of May, at the Skopje City Mall, the biggest mall in Skopje. This superstore, furnished with sophistication, on 550 square meters, comprises many interesting and cozy corners for booklovers. The space itself offers an excellent opportunity to welcome people and engage jointly with them in literature-music events.

Again, together with Moonlight Production, Ars Lamina and the European Union, we made an interesting concept for Internet and TV broadcasting, and social media sharing. So, that's how these live-streamed mini concerts were born.

We were confident that this concept would be attractive to the general audience (no age restrictions) and feasible to pursue, in both restricted and normal circumstances. And we were right. We produced six concerts, from solo to quartet, in different genres. We had on our stage vibraphonist Antonie Veskovski, Marija Dimitrijevic and Gordan Spasovski jazz duo, Dorijan Milovanovic/DobriIa Graseska chalgia world duo, Kosturski/Grujovski/Kapsarova bossa nova trio, Trinity Strings, an all-female string trio with pop-rock material on classical instruments and Ljubojna – a famous World Music band (this time as a quartet).

We organized everything by the pandemic book of rules. The audience (of course in limited numbers) could be present on the set, and Internet audience enjoyed at home by the computers, and everybody could see the concerts afterwards on TV. All the six concerts are still available on all the three YouTube channels - Literatura.mk, Moonlight Production and Delegation of EU in Skopje.

The situation with the Coronavirus is still ongoing and affecting our entire way of life. In those times, when the majority of resources are invested in the health sector and economic recovery, still most affected and vulnerable are the people and organizations dealing with culture – artists and creative industries. Furthermore, it has become obvious that both the audience and cultural workers are eager for content that would enrich their daily lives, help them surpass the difficulties they encounter, and also provide financial assistance. So, I really hope that funds such as EU funds will have the sense to help the sector and continue with their support of cultural products such as Astroroom and Mini Astro Concerts.

The pandemic and new ways of approaching the audience

Actually, those ways were as much interesting as surprising. We always follow the show's rating lists, and somewhere at the beginning of the broadcast of "virtual" shows, nothing much changed. After some time, the ratings were even better, which means that on the one hand we maintained the established standards, and on the other - we realized that the audience, due to the pandemic, is more attached to the screens, so we had to constantly improve the visual elements and content, again partially thanks to new technologies. Also, we tried to apply some new concepts, in order to offer the audience, which quickly becomes weary of relatively repetitive content, something original and, at least in the Macedonian context, unseen. That's how Mini Astroroom Concerts happened as an entirely new sequel. That, completely new, edition is realized in a form of serial of live-streamed tiny music concerts with a variety of styles, performed by most prominent national musicians. Having achieved excellent viewership statistics, we continue to believe that there is plenty of room to engage in fostering cultural growth and awareness.



only today, it is impossible to achieve a certain influence or impact. The processes of digitalization in all social spheres are evident, and our example is only a confirmation of how important and good the application of modern technologies is, either during the pandemic or after it. In other words - yes, it is obvious that “pandemic” solutions can be used, and successfully so, in the time to come. The most positive thing coming out of the pandemic is that we not only expanded our audience, but the list of our guests as well, because they may be present in Macedonia, although they are, in essence, very far away geographically. At the moment, because the pandemic is still ongoing, I don't have the final statistics, but the show in general has about 20-25% more audience than before all of this happened. We should, of course, make some proper analysis when things return to normal, but the first indicators are, without any doubt, positive.

More about the above-mentioned project can be found at:

[https://blog.literatura.mk/
category/%d0%b0%d1%81%d1%82%d1%80%d0%be%d1%80%d1%83%d0%bc/](https://blog.literatura.mk/category/%d0%b0%d1%81%d1%82%d1%80%d0%be%d1%80%d1%83%d0%bc/)

[https://www.youtube.com/
watch?v=MCUDMOUeUhU&list=PL018yUtS6WeSiD21M4jxP9p4dsbfv2HZO](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MCUDMOUeUhU&list=PL018yUtS6WeSiD21M4jxP9p4dsbfv2HZO)



Branka Kostić Marković, musicologist, publicist, TV host, North Macedonia

For eighteen years Branka has been a host of her own TV show named MUZIKA, with more than 400 screen appearances, a unique and exclusive coverage of the national and international stage for classical music and more than 1000 interviews with world-renowned celebrities like Carreras, Mehta, Melnikov, Garrett, Abou-Khalil, Salonen and others. For the last four years she has been hosting the ASTROROOM TV show with the ARS LAMINA publishing house, with more than 100 editions so far. From 2019 she has also held the position of an artistic manager of the TANEC National ensemble.

Her other employment was as editor-in-chief of a music programme on Telma TV (1997 - 2015), famous for its weekly reports on the latest news from the world of classical music. She was one of the three presidential members of the Forum for Classical Music, founded on the initiative of the British Council in Macedonia, a media coordinator for the ALEA and CONTEMPORA Music Ensembles, and the Composers' Association of Macedonia (SOCOM) Board member. She was also the Head of the Board of Macedonian Philharmonics (2017 - 2018), and is a current member of the UNESCO National Commission.

Branka also has experience in creating and implementing EU projects ("European Contemporary Composers", "Stay Home in Astroroom", "Mini Astro Concerts").

More about Branka Kostić- Marković: <https://tinyurl.com/w3wtyyy4> and <https://tinyurl.com/me7rندر5>

National Theatre of Belgrade in the Time of Pandemic

Ivana Vujić Kominac, Serbia

First of all, I wish to thank Milica because she organized such an interesting conference. I think that this is a very good way to develop our thoughts, our ideas and our practice altogether. I am extremely honored to be here together with all these panelists. We may be different, since we represent institutions of different sizes and from different countries, but it is important that we are together here today.

When pandemic came to Serbia in early March 2020, the National Theatre couldn't be put on hold. We are a house with 650 employees plus 150 freelancers, which makes a total of 800 people. Only the opera ensemble consists of 250 people together with the orchestra, soloists and our chorus (choir). When something like Covid-19 strikes, you do not let 800 people stop with their work, just like you cannot put out a fire in a fireplace. That fire must continue to burn, therefore our main task was to find the way to continue.

By the time the first lockdown came, we had started with streaming practice. The streaming practice brought us a lot of new audience, although, I am not saying that the streaming material is the same as a live performance. Thanks to the digital broadcasting technique, we got a lot of new audience who wrote to us from Cape Town, Africa, as well as Asia, South America, North America. These were not the followers from our eastern European region and former Yugoslavia, or Serbs from Croatia as one might think, but new followers from, for example, Ireland, who watched our opera and wrote to us. We responded by contacting them and exploring new digital ways of connecting to them. We may say that our relationship with these audiences, regardless of them being physically very far away, is now turning into a close friendship.

We also started communicating with our old audience through social networks, asking them about performances they had enjoyed in the past, which they might like us to broadcast again. We got enthusiastic responses. I may as well say that the audience was with us all through the crisis. We had 20 000 followers, 5-7 thousand people on average per single broadcast, which by the way, would be impossible to receive in the theatre in the case of a real performance. This was a new field of

work, and a new feeling. We didn't stop there: we continued our discussions with the audience through Instagram, Twitter and Facebook in the form of direct talk or some questionnaires about our cultural policy and the material they have seen.

At the peak of the lockdown we held online matinees for children, which was something wonderful, because parents responded by sending us photographs, for example, of their children watching the Nutcracker, Sleeping Beauty, or another ballet, or holding a Nutcracker doll. We chose the best ballet and opera material for children. It was streamed simultaneously with our main program. We showed altogether close to 120 productions and replays of the audience's favorites.

Our second campaign was launched on 28th of April, at the time when our museum, the Museum of the National Theatre, started to work. Those were the first days of the crisis. We had to close for a while, but we revived some of our activities again in May. Luckily, the weather was very nice. Our main idea was to get out of the premises where the risk of contagion was high for both us and the audience. Then we realized the great potential of possible ambient performances, outdoor events. This is how the concept called Opera at Your Corner was created. It was something quite different. We chose either very small, unpopular streets or parts of the city, or very popular ones, where we could have performances done by one, two or three musicians and two or three opera singers at best. It was supposed to give the spectators a chance to move. In my speech at the opening of the season, on August 29, I gave the season the title *The View of the Spectator Changes the Scenery*.

The gala opening consisted of short outdoor performances where we combined different genres and disciplines: jazz, ballet, classical ballet, opera, etc. One part of the show was on the ground floor, and other parts on all the balconies up to the highest one on the Theatre roof. They asked me if I wanted the traffic to be stopped for this occasion, but I said no. As part of the whole idea, I wanted to see if the rules of street movements in front of the Theatre would be changed, if the traffic would be affected by artistic action. So, what happened was this: you had a crowd of listeners standing in front of the theatre and as usual, buses and trolley buses passing by. There is a traffic light in front of the Theatre and buses must stop for the red light. As soon as the drivers saw that there was something happening, they decided to give the passengers a chance to see it. And nobody directed them; there were no rules established, no policeman or traffic police. What they did was their own spontaneous idea: they would stop the vehicle further away from the theatre in order to not interfere. After the light changed to green, they would slowly start the vehicle as if they wished everyone to absorb as much of the performance as possible,

and in front of the entrance to the Theatre they would accelerate, so the big double cars wouldn't block the view for too long. The passengers got a chance for some 2-3 minutes, while the bus was waiting for the green light and during this slow ride, to hear at least one song or something more. Seeing their respect for the opera, I was moved in a way. They respected what we were doing and decided to, in their own way, help us by driving first slowly and then far away from the crowd as fast as possible. Here we saw how one cultural event affects average people such as bus drivers: if there is something unusual happening, they become interested and very polite, very considerate. In our video recording you can see what it looked like, as if the buses and trolley buses were performing some kind of dance, like they were interacting with us in this event. Later, I wrote a letter to them and thanked them because they were really fantastic. I was so inspired by them that I felt I needed to conduct a research about them and about this kind of spontaneous cooperation.



The National Theatre, Belgrade



We witnessed a similar reaction during this Opera at Your Corner that I mentioned earlier, on Palmotićeve Street, Stevana Sremca and this very small street under the Atelje 212 Theatre. While we performed, neighbors kept coming out to their windows, terraces and balconies and cheering. They also felt free to ask questions, to discuss, to talk to us. So if we placed a performance on the second floor, they would ask questions freely from the floors downstairs. The spirit of the moment was somehow felt by everyone, and people were thinking, commenting and expressing opinions. It means that with these projects we really managed to steer, to move people, and we made some obvious change.

That is why we insist on these ambient programs a lot. We have held a large number of interesting concerts like ambient concerts and other sorts of concerts during Covid-19. We have done a lot at the Belgrade waterfront as well. This was interesting because there were many people with animals there. Animals like music very much, dogs especially do. They were very, very good audience.

We included learning in these programs as well. One of the performers was an actor who spoke about the history of the National Theatre building, of how it had been made and changed through time. So it was not just entertainment. If you stayed, you could learn a lot. Myself, I learned that trolley buses are driven by very artistic people for sure. Yes, they are fantastic.



This Covid-19 adaptation made me think about the definition of art. Here at the heart of the city, if everything could go the same way as these opera performances, what do we call high art in that case? Is high art understanding everything about outdoor performance while driving “creatively” a trolley bus and “dancing” with it on some spontaneous choreography? This is either really high art, or maybe art actually is everything and everywhere around us waiting to be noticed.

As I said, we wanted to launch a special kind of program with a limited number of people who can be on the stage with the actors, and we wanted to find a way to move them around somehow. Our plan was to make the opera *Carmen* with five people and an orchestra of eight. It is possible. As we know, Peter Brook in the 1980s (1983-84) did the opera *Carmen* that way in Bouffes du Nord (Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord). This was simpler for him because his Bouffes du Nord had a moderately small stage and the theatre was in a suburb. We did this in our workshop space located in Old Dorćol and it was also very, very interesting. It was an outdoor *Carmen* and it worked very, very well with the audience and with singers too. Another new project consisted of selected parts from different operas, for instance from *La Traviata*, and performing them as scenes, with a very small orchestra or with a piano. The ambient performance is still my favorite concept.

The pandemic opened our eyes to the perspective of other people and their perception of us. These days we all have these masks on our faces. I have to ask you and myself this: don't you think that even before the pandemic our faces were already some sort of masks? Now the masks have just become real. Maybe with these masks on our faces, we can take off the masks we usually wear. Maybe now we will have more empathy and better capability to understand other people. So this is something that we can speak about: ecology of the art, system ecology. Ecology is not just getting rid of plastic products. Ecology is also the environment of human relationships, how we treat each other. These actions have to come out of our holistic situation and then from there they can spread to all small things, including the garbage around us. To put it simply, we can say that we too are pieces of garbage out of which beautiful creations could emerge, just like Michelangelo was able to free the most beautiful forms and statues from the marble where, as he said, they were lying hidden.

Speaking of recruitment of new audiences, I can say this: now that we have a center for new technologies, we are establishing a digital center which will process and improve our digital material. It is a fine department. The staff there had been working incredibly long working hours even before the lockdown, and when the Covid-19 hit, they were active 24 hours a day. Thanks to them we have statistics about the new audiences. There are now 2 thousand National Theatre followers, which is unlike ever before. Furthermore, all the programs with the slightest digital potential are done that way. For example, on 22th of November, the day of our Theatre, although the number of sick people was very high, our National Theatre Gala was seen by 5 thousand people. It was a complex program with all kinds of contents and another chance to learn a lot. The same principle works with our exhibition at the Theatre. It is very informative and available to everyone, regardless of whether they are able to visit it personally or not. There is a possibility of booking a tour digitally.

Digital technology is working even in the case of professional cooperation. For example two days ago we had Wolfgang Scheidt, a conductor from Vienna, as our guest and we were streaming that for the whole world. It was also shown at the Austrian culture forum and documented on their link and I think it was extremely interesting. I am not saying that this is a digital theatre. You cannot compare these two things because they are two different genres and totally different art forms. But for us it was a chance to get a better view of the audience around the world, which was done here never before. Now we can stay well connected with them and offer them different programs.



I wish to mention other programs, like this program called Platform, which gathers together children of different ages and from different schools from all over Serbia. It is a forum, which is working very well. We have 45 participants, from 7th grade of primary to 4th grade of high school and they are connected online. They switch in and out sporadically, but the idea is for them to discuss music, genre and other interesting subjects, not just theatre. On our part we bring to the forum different guests from around the world who are involved in different genres. Very soon we shall have an interesting program involving famous theatre stars from opposite sides of the globe like Cathy Mitchel from the west and Mironov from Moscow. We will have a digital panel in the National Theatre where we will discuss ecology and theatre, things that I've just mentioned. I think that will be around 29th of June. The negotiations are still in progress, I am still waiting for their final word.

To answer your question about the identification of the Belgrade audience with the National Theatre: there is no simple answer to this question, since the position of the National Theatre, its place in cultural life and tradition, has changed through history, especially through 20th century. Some world theatre buildings date from 17th century and they were established by the state, like in France. Theatre traditions are different for different states like France or Germany or England or Serbia. As regards the spot: the Theatre was built on a mass grave. The location where it stands is the spot where the Turks executed people. Many people do not know that, but they ought to. When you don't know things like this, you cannot improve your thinking, change your perspective. The Theatre administration did ask for a better place, actually they wished to build at the spot where the National Museum stands now, but back then the city government didn't take the whole matter of the National Theatre seriously. Instead they decided that the spot was good enough. Actually, if we were in another place, our stage would be wider. Unfortunately, over all these years we have been dealing with a stage which is very long, but I have to say, a little bit narrow for such a big theatre. In this city, ours is the only house with a big opera, with a big orchestra and a big chorus. As I said, we are positioned exactly over the notorious Stambol Kapija, a city gate where the worst executions of our ancestors took place. So we are promoting culture, so to speak, on the bones of our forefathers. Then the building: ours is one of the only two real palaces of that time.

The first one was the Kapetan Mišino Zdanje. Architecturally, these two buildings were something totally unparalleled at the time, totally different from the rest of the city architecture. The novelties inside were gas lighting, which was not known back then in Serbia, special furniture brought from Paris, beautiful flowers and green plants and palms, and a completely European interior design. Rumors started



The National Theatre, Belgrade

spreading about vast sums spent on this new attraction, since Belgrade has always been a city of gossip. But when the first visitors entered the premises and witnessed the first performances, another sort of rumor spread around, about the beauty of the furniture, interior, architecture, new illumination. Art was changing people's way of thinking again, and I personally think that this was all forgotten after the WWII. I understand why it had to be forgotten: because this was a National Theatre of the old regime and the new regime wanted a new theatre, the Yugoslav Theatre. In the early days, the name of the square was not The Republic Square alias Trg Republike, as it is known nowadays. It was called the Theatre Square, like Teatralnaya Ploshchad in Moscow, or Theatre Square in London. In the new Yugoslavia, national symbols were somehow pushed aside. A lot of actors had to retire too, because they felt their time had passed and the new regime didn't need them.

So now we understand why there are three contexts in which we must observe the National Theatre, linked to the three communities of the National Theatre, or its three positions. The first is the position of the National Theatre as the main theatre of the city of Belgrade, the second – its position of the National Theatre of Serbia, and the third position – of one of the world's National Theatres.

This is also the only house in the city with a big ballet ensemble, numbering 120 people. We are now working on an extensive promotion of modern dance. We have a whole platform for young choreographers and this year they have presented three very good plays: one is Puk by Sanja Ninković, another is Seven Sins by Pastor, and yesterday night we had Michelangelo by Radačkovski, our guest from Slovakia. They are done with dancers who also do classical ballet.

Our main mission is, of course, the promotion of the national heritage. Beside 40-42 operas by world-famous names like Verdi, Puccini, Rossini, Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev and others that we have on our repertoire, we keep staging Serbian national opera. That is not simple. For example, the opera *Koštana* was waiting for 60 years to appear on stage again after her premiere. I have to say we are the champions in waiting, for sure. The very first Serbian national opera *Na uranku*, or *Early Service* was also a hit. Its libretto was written by Branislav Nušić, our great comedy writer, and it has quite a unique story line. The story involves the Turks and the local Serbian population. There is a love-lust triangle between a young Serbian couple of lovers and a Turkish authority character who claims the girl for himself. The young Serbian lover is ready to kill him, but his mother steps in and sacrifices her life in defense of the Turk, in order to prevent the killing of an innocent man. Her words “don’t kill the one who speaks the truth” echoes through the finale promoting new ethics in the time of still fresh animosity towards the Ottoman Empire. So the son accidentally killed the mother, not the Turk. The opera is staged with a modern approach by excellent young director Ana Gligorović. And we wish to produce a new national piece each year.



A scene from the opera *Koštana*, narodnopozeriste.rs

This year it will be one by Isidora Žebeljan, who is a wonderful author. I think the audience likes this a lot, they are very proud of us, if I may say so. We are interested in young conductors, as well as young opera authors, young composers and other contributors.



Vela Nigrinova, property of The Museum of Theatrical Arts of Serbia

As you can see, in this context the National Theatre acts as a promoter of national repertoire and a custodian of Serbian cultural heritage. It also promotes knowledge, as the first theatre school was opened in the National Theatre one year after the house was established. In the time of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, this was also an important place for the promotion of actors from all around the world. Back then we had Vela Nigrinova, a big star from Slovenia, coming here. She was known for wearing special outfits in special roles, just like Sarah Bernard did in her time. In these times the costumes and jewelry were as important on stage as acting, singing and dancing. Late Aleksandar Joksimović, our famous designer, whose days of glory were in 1970s, designed one of his famous fashion lines inspired by theatre outfits of Nigrinova and other great actresses of the National Theatre. We now have an excellent exhibition about Nigrinova, Aleksandar Joksimović and their designs at our Theatre Museum. So, you see, it is not only stage art that we are influential in on the national and local level, but costume design and fashion as well.



Ivana Vujić Kominac, Director and General Manager of the National Theatre in Belgrade

Ivana Vujić Kominac is the Theatre Director and General Manager of the National Theatre in Belgrade, and is also a professor at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade. She has directed over 120 plays on stages in Serbia, Slovenia, Germany, and Italy. Her plays have been performed in festivals all around the world: New York, Paris, London, Edinburgh, Amsterdam, Thessaloniki, Sibiu, Adani, Berlin, Sarajevo, Skopje, Banja Luka, Kotor, Umag. She is also an editor of literary editions of the University of Arts in Belgrade dedicated to performing arts. She has organized numerous artistic and scientific conventions and conferences, workshops, forums in the field of performing arts. The last meaningful project of the sort was organizing the IFTR (The International Federation for Theatre Research) congress in Belgrade, in July 2018. Ivana is also a member of the executive board of this organization, as well as other formal and informal professional-artistic councils and networks. She has founded 5 new theatre stages in Belgrade, and she has numerous awards and acknowledgments that she has been presented with throughout her career.

Read more about Ivana Ivana Vujić Kominac on <https://www.narodnopoistoriste.rs/en/artists/ivana-vujic-kominac>

Discussion and Conclusions of Panel 2

Milica Lundin, moderator

Panel 2 addressed two significant workers active in regional classical music culture: one is currently the general manager of the National Theatre of Belgrade and the other a musicologist and TV host from North Macedonia. They shared their experiences of working with classical music during the lockdown and their thoughts about reactions of the audiences that followed the crisis. We might say that this panel was a sequel of the previous one and that the topics intertwined and correlated. Both groups of panelists couldn't help touching on the subject of the other panel.

The main questions of our discussion

Do we have any data/statistics on any rise or drop in audience numbers during Covid-19?

In general it is early to illustrate it with numbers. Right now we know much more about the financials and the musicians' state of mind and it does not look good at all. However, there is some new data in the case of the National Theatre of Belgrade, which has opened a new digital centre for different purposes.

Did we gain a new audience?

Yes. Some institutions have managed to keep track of online followers who are in a steady or sporadic contact with them. Their number is now known, but the hours of the online transmissions they follow are not known. Outdoor performances have brought us a new unexpected audience who joined spontaneously and had a taste of what they wouldn't otherwise choose to listen. High culture appeared on the streets in the time of severe lockdown and it was eagerly consumed because of almost non-existent public cultural life in this particular period. These "street high culture" encounters have managed to create a new dialogue with a spontaneous audience.

How important is the local cultural program for the local communities?

Being one of the main cultural institutions in the city and the state means being a landmark of patriotism. You have to continuously present important historical narratives about the creation of the national artistic stage, its building and the history of its erection because in many cases, like in the case of the National Theatre in Belgrade, those were acts of peacemaking with the cruel past and a step into a

new cultural era of one nation. When we talk about the local radio, the local TV, or the local cultural stages, we must agree that they are the cultural core of every local community and as such a necessity for every urban area, regardless of the level of quality or the size of the budget they rely on.

Will the online solutions and projects be in use even after the Covid-19 crisis passes?

They might, but they need much technical improvement and good funding. Online events of good quality, classical music especially, are hard to maintain because of their costs. The good technical quality of musical broadcasts online requires perfect equipment, highly professional technical staff, a huge budget and whatnot. On the other hand, there is the crucial need for live concerts. We are spoiled with the perfect audio quality of the live concert which the internet cannot provide. Outdoor concerts should stay, since they reveal how receptive the audience really is. They offer to the performers an experience with new sorts of interaction and bring them closer to non-conventional listeners.

How much damage has been done with digital distribution of free of charge pre-recorded and livestream concerts?

In the latest surveys a surprisingly large number of classical musicians have reflected on their position during the first wave of the lockdown by saying that this will be the end of their careers, since they have been deprived of income for such a long time. Freelancers have found themselves in the worst position. Moral damage is equal to the financial. Musicians have felt detached from their lifestyle.



Their job is tactile and they desperately need to be on stage. Technically, we got robbed of the best audio experience: digital technology gives somewhat distorted audio results.

Good effects have been noted too. Solidarity has emerged as a kind of empathy with colleagues who have been hit the most. Musicians have also learned how to be flexible and work in many different ways. They have realized the benefits of a steady job. Commercial live streaming has emerged in the UK and USA (Harrison Parrot, Sessions from California) where musicians can earn a great deal if they are skillful in interacting with the audience and ready to play for a forum of listeners online.

Is classical music more or less adjustable to online broadcasting because of its static stage concept?

We did not all agree on this. There was an opinion that classical concerts are visually enchanting and not static at all. Others said that the digital approach is spoiling the sound. Internet broadcasting can take away that perfect sound that we are used to. It seems that radio is nowadays better than the internet in spite of the fact that it does not allow interaction.

COMMENTS AND REFLECTIONS OF OUR ONLINE FOLLOWERS TO PANEL 2

New solutions are going to present themselves eventually; we just need to tune in.

Art is not something we chose to do, but something that emerges out of our creativity. To survive this crisis we have had to endure what befell us without much complaint. One opinion was that the circumstances should be seen as a break really - an opportunity to rethink and see what emerges out of this. Classical music is actually screaming for new solutions. It would be wise not simply to go back to the old ways once the circumstances improve.

Some of the so-called new art forms existed even before Covid-19 and back then they could not survive for long.

Live streaming is no new occurrence (example: Concert Window), only it was not commercial before Covid-19. People did play concerts for forums of listeners online and their audience did stay tuned in until the end of the performance. It was bound to disappear because they were constantly losing money. The new circumstances in the time of Covid-19 changed everything and payment emerged as a sign of solidarity.

CONCLUSIONS OF PANEL 2

Keeping the musicians/employees occupied and productive during the Covid-19 crisis was crucial.

The larger crew/production team you have – the harder it is to keep everyone occupied in the time of crisis. You have to come up with tasks and projects to keep the morale up. The spirit of the house depends on the high morale of each member. The spirit of a big stage house or famous cultural platform inevitably impacts on the local community.

Online projects have given us a new audience, both demographically and geographically.

Online broadcasting is a global action, no doubt. It is beneficial for big stage houses and will hopefully result in some long-term effects like cultural tourism or touring invitations. Simultaneously, some video gaming emerged (Virtuo Studios from Boston: Gamified Music Tech by Shirley Spikes) with the subject of classical music, which provides highly popular methods for recruiting teenage audiences and introducing them to symphonic music, the art of conducting and knowledge of symphonic repertoire. There are also popular internet classical music chat rooms (Club House, Talk Classic, etc.), where experienced musicians, activists and music lovers can chat on different knowledge levels about classical music. They are expanding in the number and diversity of profiles every day and they connect people from different continents in their discussions and updates on the latest musical events. These platforms are particularly popular among the younger generation.

Outdoor concerts have opened up new possibilities and taught us more about our audience.

They have also given us new stages, new possibilities and innovative solutions. The examples of outdoor performances we have seen at this panel proved how little we knew about the sincere respect that classical music enjoys in the eyes of the common public.

Picture is overrated; people are craving sound more and more.

Let us not underestimate the power of live classical music. Film and movement are not everyone's ideal component of a good cultural event.

The damage made by the collapse of public cultural life can be repaired by creation of new art forms.

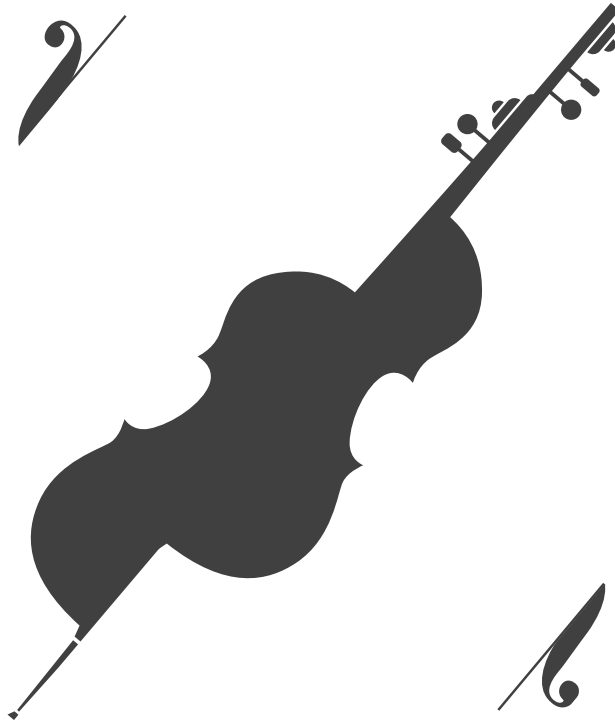
Let us not go back to where we stopped before the Covid crisis. Here is a chance to come up with new solutions: a transdisciplinary mixing of art forms and cultural activities (a concert connected to architecture or archeology), alternative stages, outdoor concerts. “Something for everybody” is also a good concept: concerts should be different for different audiences.

Online events will continue to develop technically and creatively.

Whether as a complement to concert hall events, or even as a completely independent new model for the consumption of classical music, many of them will stay as a new art form. Of course, the online concert is still young as an art form and it will certainly keep developing technically. Since our public work with music has in the time of the pandemic been restricted almost exclusively to cyberspace, the urge for new ideas and solutions has emerged regarding sound quality, synchronization between co-players, improvement of technical equipment, communication with the audience, and many other issues that we have faced during online music making. We might get surprised by the wide technical possibilities within this line of musical communication in the future. There are also other challenges to be met within legal regulations regarding copyrights, taxation, performers' fees and other legal issues.

Local community needs a local cultural stage.

Whether it is a theatre, TV station, radio station, or a concert hall, a local cultural stage is crucial for the local community. Global events of the highest quality are available nowadays across different portals, but they do not provide the feelings of belonging, togetherness and security. We all like a local cultural event, we support a local artist and we all engage in some kind of local artistic creativity. Local culture activity inspires musical amateurism which is crucial for good cultural participation of any kind.



Panel

3

PANELISTS:

Daniel Leskovic, Head of the Instrumental Music Department
Republic of Slovenia Public Fund for Cultural Activities (JSKD)

Žaklina Kušić, strategic and creative director
The Children's Philharmonic Orchestra:
Audience Development and Philanthropy

Jasna Dimitrijević, director of Ilija M. Kolarac Endowment
Ilija M. Kolarac Endowment: Financing in the Time of Covid-19

Boris Vujičić, founder, the head of the "Dobar glas" Foundation
Dobar glas Foundation: Financing and support in the time of Covid-19

Republic of Slovenia Public Fund for Cultural Activities (JSKD)

Daniel Leskovic, Head of the Instrumental Music Department

Republic of Slovenia Public Fund for Cultural Activities was established to support amateur cultural societies and their associations (in all art fields – choirs, orchestras, theatre and puppets, folklore dance, dance, literature, film). We organize festivals, seminars, and every year we also fund projects of amateur arts societies – on the national and local levels. Today, the Republic of Slovenia Public Fund for Cultural Activities is one of the most effective cultural networks in the country, enabling omnidirectional communication between more than 5,000 cultural societies with nearly 110,000 members, local communities, 59 regional branch offices, the central professional service and state institutions. Together, we create over 25,000 events per year, which are viewed by nearly 4 million people.

Funding classical music in Slovenia

JSKD also supports classical music associations through a system of funding, but in Slovenia the funding systems in non-professional and professional art are different. Non-professional art receives money from us, as well as from local municipalities and local companies for advertising, or even to get some extra concerts for the companies in question. Meanwhile we in Slovenia are still very lucky, because all the established national cultural organizations – the professional ones (such as the Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra, the Slovenian National Opera, and the Ballet Theatre of Maribor) are getting the most of the annual budget (for salaries and yearly programs) from the Slovenian Ministry of Culture. The Ministry gives around 90% of all the money on an annual basis, and so the ticket income and income from patrons and donations are below 10% of the annual budget.

Before the end of every year, each professional public cultural organization should send to the Slovenian Ministry of Culture the plan for the next season, based on which a commission in the Ministry make an evaluation of this program, setting the annual budget for every professional cultural organization. But the culture budget also depends on the projected annual national budget, and the numbers in the national budget are dropping down.





Republic of Slovenia Public Fund for Cultural Activities

The pros and cons of national funding

For depending on just 1 source:

- + This is enough for normal work (let's say 8 opera performances - 4 premieres, 6 ballet performances – 3 premieres)
- + stability of employment
- + low ticket price

- limited ability to create bigger and more powerful performances
- lack of connection with the audience
- smaller number of international productions

If we in Slovenia want to be more productive and comparable with other EU classical organizations, we need to look a little bit beyond this point. I am hoping that the Slovenian Ministry of Culture will give the same amounts in the future as it does to all the organizations today (but the information on our future national culture plan is not so positive). And I hope that the government will also find some better solution to connect economy with culture. Today we do not have a tax system which would enable different kinds of companies to invest in culture, and thus reduce their taxes, but the government is talking about that.

We have one solution for all non-profit associations (culture, sport, humanitarian), where every person in Slovenia who must fill a tax return at the end of the year, could give to a selected non-profit association 1% of his/her tax payment to the state. From this address the associations are getting up to 200,000.00 € per year. In 2019 there were almost 500,000 donations, with 5,555 associations donating the amount of 5,500,000.00 €.

But classical music should be more engaged in selling itself to the donors.

What is necessary for all organizations to get patrons (in economy or families)?

Term Artistic Planning
Institutional Marketing
Programmatic Marketing
Family and Boards
Fundraising

Each organization should have a 3-5-year rolling programming plan, with its team learning strategies in advance and applying them. Meanwhile there should be two marketing plans. Institutional marketing is expected to aggressively compete for audience attention and loyalty. Programmatic marketing is the second marketing perspective that can be defined as the tactics used to identify and target potential audiences for each attraction, create awareness and demand, and drive a sale. For marketing the organization should have help from the “family” and boards. The family is an energized, enthusiastic group of ticket-buyers, board members, donors, trustees, and volunteers that anchors an organization's financial health through its commitment of time. And all family members are also very important for fundraising. Fundraising consists of a strategy for sustainable growth that joins together long-term artistic goals, and an energized family, and logical options for investment to build organizational resources donor by donor, week by week, month by month.

More about Republic of Slovenia Public Fund for Cultural Activities on: <https://www.jskd.si/>



Daniel Leskovic, Public Fund for Cultural Activities, Slovenia

Daniel is the head of the instrumental music department at the Public Fund for Cultural Activities of Slovenia. He is a graduate of the University of Maryland in Management of Successful Arts and Cultural Organizations. He also studied band conducting with Jan Cober and Teaching music through performance and band major leading with Michel Smeets and Charles van Zanten. He previously worked at the Mladinska knjiga publishing house as an expert writer and as a clarinet and recorder teacher at the Franc Šturm music school. He is an organizer of special music events, competitions, workshops, and music weeks on the national level (the summer music festival in Bohinj). His skills range from research and article writing to marketing, organizing, cultural managing, initiating different projects for students and youth, and international cultural exchange with EU organizations and festivals. He is also an active musician, member of the executive board, vice president and the deputy conductor of the Paper Mill Vevče Wind Orchestra, one of the world's best nonprofessional wind orchestras.

Find out about Daniel Leskovic on:

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/daniel-leskovic-54b663140/>

<https://czk.si/en/community-czk/daniel-leskovic/?vrsta=mentor>

The Children's Philharmonic Orchestra: Audience Development and Philanthropy

Žaklina Kušić, strategic and creative director

The Children's Philharmonic Orchestra (together with the Kids for Kids Foundation) is a unique cultural project in Serbia and the ex-Yu region. It is a recognizable cultural brand that attracts the youngest classical music audience and promotes the importance of musical education among kids, as well as young musical talents.

The Children's Philharmonic Orchestra was established 14 years ago as part of an initiative to rejuvenate the concert audience of the Belgrade Philharmonic and attract young generations to become regular concertgoers. From the very start, it was a success. It attracted massive media attention, not just because of amazing young talents and virtuosos who played either within the orchestra or as soloists, but also due to unique and engaging concert programs, which have always consisted of the right mix of classical music pieces, popular music tracks from cartoons and movies, and well-known pop, rock and folk songs. In addition, the organization of concerts in atypical places (out of concert halls), holding free public concerts in city squares, parks and shopping malls, and having summer tours in smaller cities, contributed to the high popularity and visibility of the Children's Philharmonic Orchestra.

Cooperation with renowned musicians, opera singers, actors, ballet dancers and other artists, as well as inclusion of YouTube stars, minority groups, street musicians, children with autism and cancer to perform together with the Children's Philharmonic Orchestra, created a unique alchemy and bond with the audience, which altogether resulted in long-lasting audience loyalty. The overall concert experience - from the selection of songs and music pieces, to special guest stars, stage decoration, relaxed atmosphere and audience engagement – is what greatly distinguishes the Children's Philharmonic Orchestra from all other cultural projects and what attracts sponsors, donors and volunteers to contribute.

Unlike similar children's orchestras in the world that mostly rely on government funding and full-time employees, the Children's Philharmonic Orchestra is entirely run by the Kids for Kids Foundation that gathers together philanthropists and experts from various fields (artistic directors, organizers, scenographers, stage decorators, costume designers and make-up artists, public relations specialists and marketing

experts) who donate their time and expertise to the organization of the Orchestra's concerts. Parents and teachers of the children who are Orchestra members are also involved, as well as music schools which provide new talents each year and halls for the Orchestra's rehearsals. Therefore, expensive concert preparation and organization is enabled by the community of music lovers, built during the previous 14 years, without which the whole initiative would not be viable. In a way, it is a small-scale "moonshot" example, since it manages to inspire the wider community to gather around an important cultural cause in a society that has been lacking funds for such kind of activities for almost three decades.



Regarding the finances, the main source of funding has been the corporate sector, i.e. companies that invest in children's development as part of their corporate social responsibility. Banks appeared to be the most generous, providing funds not just for organization of the concerts, but also giving donations for scholarships and music instruments for the most talented kids.

Another source of funding are fast-moving consumer goods companies, which are often interested in promoting their brands and in the opportunity to be in direct contact with their target audience - kids and their families. Very often, a special

branded area is provided for them in a foyer, so that they can directly engage with the audience through creative activities, product sampling and entertainment. Also, there were occasions when special customized concerts were created in cooperation with companies. One of the most successful and prominent ones was a summer concert tour around Serbia organized in cooperation with, and sponsored by The Coca Cola Company. The aim of that tour was to raise awareness among children and their families of the importance of recycling plastics, so instead of buying tickets, they were supposed to bring empty plastic bottles.

The third source of funding is ticket sales. This source is becoming more significant from one year to the next as the Orchestra's popularity increases. Starting from small concert halls with 200 seats, the Children's Philharmonic Orchestra now manages to fill the biggest concert venues with 2,500 people. There are also VIP tickets sold to individual donors, for whom special networking cocktails after the concerts are organized, so that they have the opportunity to meet young musicians and get to know them better.

Lastly, a good relationship with embassies, such as the embassy of Japan, USA and Austria, has been established over the years. Although the embassies' contributions represent the smallest part of the budget, they play an important part when it comes





to the concerts' quality, general visibility and overall recognition. Also, together with the Novak Djokovic Foundation, which deals with preschool kids' development and education, the Kids for Kids Foundation has developed several programs for kindergartens to introduce children to music instruments through specially designed and engaging workshops. There have also been several "open days", organized for children to see different instruments, try to play them and meet music teachers, so that they could be motivated to start playing music.

A traditional New Year's Gala Concert is the most well-known event of the Children's Philharmonic Orchestra. It attracts the greatest attention of both the audience and sponsors, due to its attractive program, festive atmosphere, lavishly decorated stage with flowers and Christmas trees inspired by the Vienna Philharmonic New Year's Concert.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all activities of the Children's Philharmonic Orchestra and Kids for Kids Foundation have been suspended for the last 18 months, just like the majority of other cultural projects and organizations. What differentiates the Children's Philharmonic Orchestra and Kids for Kids Foundation from other orchestras and concert organizers is that they have not experienced the

crisis on such a scale, as they have no employees on a salary that they were supposed to pay during that period, but rather volunteers and music enthusiasts who are engaged only when concerts and events are organized.

However, now when the concerts are organized again, what is becoming an issue when it comes to financing is the fact that the ability to raise funds is dramatically limited. Firstly, companies' CSR budgets for culture and art (upon which we have relied the most so far) are being significantly cut due to the crisis caused by the pandemic, the uncertainty about the future and the new priorities, i.e. transferring the CSR funds to health care and people in need. Secondly, the funds from ticket sales are limited due to limitations on the size of audience allowed in concert halls (i.e., the number of tickets that can be sold is halved due to physical distancing measures).

In order to "stay alive and keep going", the Children's Philharmonic Orchestra is starting to collaborate with concert hall providers and organize concerts in partnership with them, thus lowering the risks for both parties and sharing expenses and risk. This way, it will be able to continue organizing the concerts and providing talented children from music schools with the possibility to play in an orchestra, perform together at the biggest concert halls and stay in touch, also keeping the popularity of the Orchestra and the loyalty of its audience.



Žaklina Nikolić Kušić, entrepreneur, strategic and creative director, philanthropist, Serbia

Žaklina is a multifaceted entrepreneur: founder of the LPT (Let's Play Together) marketing agency and partner of Publicis Skopje; founder of Kids4Kids Foundation and Children Philharmonic Orchestra; founder and program/strategy designer of AFA – All for All, Women's Leadership Summit, Innovation Week, More Girls in STEAM, PopUp Concert Hall, etc.

She has more than twenty years of experience in marketing and communication, as well as in the publishing business. The firms, agencies and partnerships that she has worked with are numerous: Saatchi & Saatchi, Publicis and Zenith Optimedia in Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia, Publicis Belgrade, Publicis Groupe WW, the Coca Cola Company, Microsoft, HP, T-Mobile, Vip Mobile, Toyota, British Airways, L'Oréal, P&G, Banca Intesa, BMW, including the magazines: Yellow Cab, RLN magazine, MS Marketing Serbia, White magazine, and so on.

Žaklina has been awarded for creativity, innovation and efficiency in the world of business.

She is also a lecturer in the field of leadership and a member of the following boards: Belgrade Philharmonic, October Salon and National Committee for Cooperation with UNESCO.

As a philanthropist, she is a great supporter of art and culture: Skopje Jazz Festival, Belgrade Museum of Contemporary Art, French Cultural Centre, Belgrade Design Week, Exit Festival, Belgrade Dance Festival, Creative Mornings. She has promoted and managed many cultural projects: Skopje's community project, Night of Music, a Tašmajdan Stadium Summer Concert in Belgrade. She is passionate about audience development and popularisation of classical music.

More about Žaklina Kušić:

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/zaklinank/?originalSubdomain=rs>

Ilija M. Kolarac Endowment: Financing in the Time of Covid-19

Jasna Dimitrijević, director of Ilija M. Kolarac Endowment

It is a pleasure to get together and exchange our experiences of working with classical music, especially in these troublesome days.

I am a theatre producer and my professional links and experiences come from different public cultural institutions of Belgrade, like the Cultural Centre of Belgrade and the Belgrade Centre for Tourism. For the last ten years I have been heading the Ilija Milovanović Kolarac Endowment.

I wish to start with the purpose of this panel. We can agree in general that the Coronavirus which caused the pandemic has been a challenge to everyone in different public sectors, culture especially. The Covid crisis has affected all levels of society: economically, culturally, publicly, and privately. I suppose that we can agree that three remaining questions we in public institutions have been asking ourselves in these new working conditions are:

1) How to keep our programs running, our ensembles active, and sustain our programs through digital media?

2) How to keep our audience and maintain contacts with them during the Covid-19 crisis and in the future?

3) How to ensure the financing stability of our institutions bearing in mind their status and importance for the community?

Knowing our cultural policy, we can divide public institutions into two groups: governmental institutions, which have full support from the state for every aspect of their existence: programs, wages, infrastructure, maintenance of their premises and whatnot. On the other side there is the NGO sector, non-governmental institutions, and they apply for their own programs, expenses, wages and everything else through fundraising. Kolarac is an example of a non-governmental institution.

Covid-19 has been a challenge for the culture sector. Kolarac suffered in particular due to the specific financing situation it had already had before. The main crisis lasted until the end of 2020. I presume that many of you here already know

some details about our problems of that time. I have to explain it briefly for those panelists and guests who do not know how it was. Traditionally, our mission was to organize concerts of classical music. Everyone has heard of Kolarac - it has the reputation of a leading concert venue in the state of Serbia. It offers more than 200 concerts per year, of which 65% is arranged in cooperation with different partners, and the rest through its own music centre. It might not be widely known that we also organize more than 250 lectures a year in all fields of natural and social sciences, based on the traditional concept of lifelong learning. We provide foreign language classes, promote fine arts and culture, science, and host various activities for all kinds of audiences. Still, our focus is primarily on concerts. We organize them in our main concert venue, which is the Great Hall with 883 seats, and in a small music hall called the Musical Gallery. But we also have a few other different working spaces: classrooms, small spaces of different capacities for master classes, lecture halls for different educational programs, art galleries, the club and the book store.



The financial concept of the Kolarac before the Covid-19 crisis looked like this:

70% of our finances was our own income from ticket sales, or from rent (rents from our concert space or other spaces and the hosting of conferences/educational programs), 10% were the income from the sponsors and we managed to get 20% from

different project funds, when we applied with our projects in Belgrade, Serbia, or abroad - EU projects. Kolarac therefore has the status of a self-financing institution.

What was the effect of the Covid-19 crisis and the lockdown on Kolarac? 168 concerts and more than 120 other programs were cancelled. Some programs had to be changed or postponed. We had 30 million dinars less revenue in our budget than what we had planned for 2020. The city competitions for cultural programs were cancelled. That was the start of the trouble.

We asked ourselves how to ensure further survival and the existence of the institution. What should we do about it and how do we find help?

We tried to find help from our loyal, as well as newly found audiences through private donations. We started sending messages with this information to all the season ticket buyers, individuals mainly. It was very interesting how after only one month of campaigning, the ones that normally paid for the season in advance decided to give donations on a weekly basis, usually the same amount that they would set aside for concerts in normal circumstances. It was between 5 and 20 €, which is the regular price of all our concert events. It was very interesting for us to follow the reactions of these people who sat in isolation at their homes and could set aside from their budget 5 to 20 € each week to give to Kolarac.

The second factor was that others, our followers too, helped by sending, every day, three times per day, emails and letters to the Government, to the City government, the Ministry of Culture and others, with appeals about us. And that continued until December, for whole 8 months. Our own campaign was extended too: We established new contacts with different companies and cultural funds, potential sponsors (new and old ones) and tried to find a way of cooperation during the lockdown and afterwards. Our goal was to draw the media attention and that was very important because we needed everyone to hear our “mayday call”. We were making a media campaign through social networks, electronic media, public media, daily news, everywhere, because we lived in constant fear that if we didn’t get help soon we wouldn’t be able to sustain our programs and regular activities and that would mean that we would be forced to close down. So, through the Slušate Kolarac - You are listening to Kolarac YouTube channel, using old lectures and concert programs from our archives, we managed to stay active and alive. And after two weeks we had more than one thousand online visitors per week.

To summarize the outcome: We were saved by donations from old partners and new companies, individuals, the loyal audience, by great support of artists, ensembles

from the country and abroad and finally, financial help from the Ministry of Culture out of the newly established Covid-19 Fund. At the end of the year 2020 when Covid finally loosened the grip, we could relax and slowly prepare for the next season and the next year. When I look back now, I think that the most important thing in all this was what my fellow panelist Boris Vujačić have just said about Kolarac: why did people, our audience, individuals, companies, and subsequently the media, as well as the Ministry of Culture help us? Because Kolarac is a brand in classical music. Our tradition, historical importance and the highest level of classical music performances are something we are well known for. Our capability to create the best, our uniqueness, the profile of our steady concert audience, the diversity of users of our other services, our mission and vision, our values and spirit that we spread through our programs are something that give us constant, fresh energy. After all, and this is very important to mention: we have lasted for 82-85 years. That is very important for an institution of any kind: to have easily recognizable activities, a vision, a high-standard program and all these prerogatives of a good brand.

Now, how to cope with the new times after all these irregular conditions? I would say that our final conclusion is that we have to respect our audience. We do that by constant direct contact with each one of them wherever they are. Not only in the concert hall, but on social networks and through texting as well. Treat them as personal friends; maybe some of them would appreciate receiving New Year's cards and similar tokens. Secondly, we need to make long-term development strategies. This is very important because our focus has so far been on our past and our tradition, not on the future. We should use our vision as the basis of the future campaign. Third: we need to rethink our strategy by creating new branding that includes new initiatives in the program sector.

And finally: we need to keep the attention of the sponsors and donors, to make them alert. You have to share the same values with them. That is the tricky part. I think that the sponsors know exactly what they want from you. At the start I didn't know how that works, but step by step I understood it. Sometimes it does not happen the first day or with the first contact, or at the first meeting. Sometimes it happens two years later. But I know now that they are watching us and it is something that I realize now: visibility, appreciation, belonging to a particular group that shares the same values. And that is something that sponsors know. Learning that was hard work, but I am proud to say that we finally have some results.

Now that we have a new strategy, a new process, the growing of Kolarac can be seen. It means that we must bear in mind that we have to hold different conversations

at different levels, that we have the same obligation to everyone everywhere, and have to believe in each other and share the same values. It sounds easy in theory, but it is much harder to be consistent with these principles when you have a concrete goal ahead of you and you must finalize your utterly problematic season and find financial support for your employees and coworkers. I think that our way of thinking has altered the most: when we are to create a new season, we concentrate mostly on our audience.

If we compare statistically the concert seasons before Covid-19 with what we have now it looks like this: we used to have 600 people per concert in the concert hall. Since two months ago, when we reopened the hall, with let's call it a regular concert season, with the security measures in place (distances between the seats), the numbers have dropped to 90 people per concert. That is the highest number allowed to us in these circumstances. I think that people are still cautious because of the pandemic. They are still not open to communication in the concert hall.



The audience before the pandemic



The audience during the pandemic

Be that as it may, there is no recipe for adjustment to the crisis. Our team will, in order to develop an active community experiment, have to exchange experiences with others from the field in order to learn how to apply new instruments and techniques. Using strategic thinking and a creative approach always helps in getting closer to our audience at a time like this. It is something we are determined to do right away and this conference is one of the ways because it is on platforms like this we learn about the familiar problems and solutions applied by others.



Jasna Dimitrijević, general director of Ilija M. Kolarac Endowment, Serbia

Jasna has been in the position of director of Belgrade's main concert hall for classical music since 2010. Prior to that she held a similar position at the Tourist Organisation of Belgrade and from 1989 at the Sava Cultural and Congress Centre. She is also a former programme editor and director of the Belgrade Youth Centre and a former producer for the Avala Film studio.

Jasna is a member of numerous cultural and artistic boards in Belgrade and Serbia: Students' Cultural Centre, Bitef Drama Festival, Knjazevac Youth Festival, Atelje 212 Theatre, and the National Theatre in Belgrade. Her special skills include cultural management, theatre production, multidisciplinary project management, and strategic planning within the cultural institution sector.

More about Jasna Dimitrijević on:

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/jasna-dimitrijevic-99886728/>

Dobar glas Foundation: Financing and support in the time of Covid-19

Boris Vujičić, founder, the head of the “Dobar glas” Foundation

About the “Dobar glas” Foundation

The “Dobar glas” Foundation was founded in 2009 with the aim to collect resources for helping the education and career development of young and talented artists. The founders and members belong to a group of friends and philanthropists, from various professions, but with the same interests. Their mutual wish is to support young musicians from Serbia and provide further education, professional career development and their talent and work promotion all around the world.

For 12 years now, the Foundation has been financially supporting the education, concert organization, international tours and competitions of more than 100 talented musicians. Serbia is a country of numerous and big talents; therefore, we have been trying to help all those to whom the help was necessary on the way to fulfilling topnotch results.



DOBAR GLAS

NAJBOLJE OD ČOVEKA

BEFORE COVID-19: FINANCING PROJECTS

The collaboration of the “Dobar glas” Foundation with the School for Music Talents

In 2012, the Foundation signed a strategic collaboration contract with the School for Music Talents from Čuprija, which has the status of a school of special national importance. During the collaboration so far, the Foundation has supported all the School’s concerts in the big concert hall of the Kolarac Foundation, provided the resources for the strings purchase and supported its participation in international competitions in Serbia and abroad. In 2013, as a result of the collaboration of the “Dobar glas” Foundation and the “Les Messagers du Rêve” Foundation from Monaco, the students of the School for Music Talents visited Monaco. During the visit, they held a concert in the annual celebration of the work of all the charity foundations in Monaco, where H.R.H. Prince Albert II was present. During that visit, the students visited the Opera, The Philharmonic Orchestra of Monaco, and met its director, maestro Gianluigi Gelmetti.



With the help of its friends from the USA, the Foundation organized the concerts of the School for Music Talents' quartet in Chicago in 2016, at the Saint Sava Academy. The quartet also performed in the United States Capitol in Washington in August 2018, at the official celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the Serbian flag flying in front of the White House.

Gala concerts of the “Dobar Glas” Foundation

In organizing the gala concerts, the “Dobar glas” Foundation is offering young talents a chance to perform in the big hall of the Kolarac Foundation and to share the stage with the current musical stars. Gala concerts are charity events and they are held annually, and the Foundation directs all the money collected from the sold tickets to support and finance young talents.

The Competition of the “Dobar glas” Foundation

Since 2018, the “Dobar glas” Foundation has an annual competition for three scholarships in the amount of 1000 euros each, for the professional development and further education of artists up to the age of 25. The scholarships are aimed for competition financing, instrument purchase, or education in master courses.

COVID-19

The past two years have brought unprecedented events and changes to modern society. Every single person on this planet has been affected in some way by the SARS-CoV-2 virus pandemic, which is already reshaping the way we live, function and even think. There has not been a sphere of society or economy not struck by these events or not having suffered great pressure. As a result, everyone is witnessing “once in a century” tectonic changes in the way we function and organize literally everything in our lives.

There are several factors that have contributed to the severity of the situation that we find ourselves in at the moment. Covid-19 is a respiratory disease caused by a virus which can be transmitted via breathing, talking, shouting, singing or playing an instrument like the flute for example. This makes the virus very capable of spreading easily and us significantly susceptible to it. In the past two years, global society has experienced lockdowns, isolation, travel restrictions, people being separated from families and friends, economic constraints, the shutting down of events and institutions. After the initial shock and first waves of the epidemic, the

world started to learn how to live with the virus as best we could and therefore masks and distancing have become the new normal. As humans are probably among the most social beings and as everybody relies on each other all the time, it is extremely difficult to reshape the world in this manner. People like to interact, to meet, to see each other and be close to each other. It is the essence of our being. With it comes art. It is one of the needs inseparable from human nature, especially in terms of live performances. The magic of live performance offers an extraordinary experience to people, and it is a great misfortune that art has been one of the spheres that have suffered the most. It seems that it is not considered essential even though many would argue differently.

Worldwide, music artists experience a large and sad array of constraints and misfortunes both economically and spiritually. 2020 saw an almost absolute cancellation of all events. Due to the pandemic, it was not possible to organize events with a large number of people, which basically meant that all the concerts were canceled or executed online via some type of live stream. Also, other activities such as promotions, tours, or competitions were also canceled or postponed, which meant that every aspect of professional music effort was deeply impacted. This impact is existential in every sense of the word - economically, musicians do not have the opportunity to earn money by performing; and psychologically, their wellbeing and artistry suffer because of the lack of performances and live contact with audiences. Simultaneously, together with performers, the entire industry suffered as well. All the people whose careers include any classical music activities were restrained from doing their jobs. The audience was also the victim because they were left with canceled repertoires and locked concert halls, or left with live streams which do not provide this magic of the moment of the real events. Classical music is much more than something that you read in art classes, it is alive and present.

The belief that music is not only an art form, but a value that guides and enriches society and individuals, has always been part of the "Dobar glas" Foundation. Music has the ability to heal, to criticize, to inspire and move. And throughout history, we can notice various noble people and organizations which recognized this power of music and invested their time and means into it. People like Ilija Milosavljevic Kolarac and Djordje Vajfert (Georg Weifert) created foundations which had the aim to not only provide something beautiful to society, but also improve the society and make it a better place. One very important thought is awareness of what is being done in the present, in the moment, but also what will be left behind. What values we will hand down to future generations.

Master Camp with Nemanja Radulović

The master camp of the “Dobar glas” Foundation with the violinist Nemanja Radulović was created in 2021 with the idea to support young talented artists at the beginning of their professional career. The aim of the camp is for the participants to gain the necessary knowledge, needed for artistic career development, mainly relating to interpretation, but also relating to other professional skills, not only through individual lessons with Nemanja Radulović, but with other experts from the field as well. One of the aims is the upgrading of performing and educational platforms for young music artists, i.e. their further affirmation development.



At the moment when everything stopped because of the Covid-19 situation (concerts and competitions were canceled and it wasn't possible to travel for professional development), it was necessary to find and provide the right way of support. Organizing the Master Camp and giving young talents the opportunity to work with top artists and an artistic manager for seven days was the right way for us. We were lucky to be joined by Nemanja Radulović, a great artist and a wonderful man, who wanted to contribute with his knowledge and experience. Thanks to

cooperation with him, we have expanded the list of associates and friends, including the pianist Stephanie Fontanarosa, the violinists Ksenija and Tijana Milošević and Elena Kostova, an artist manager from IMG artists. The quality and importance of our Master Camp was also recognized by The Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Serbia, which gave us financial support for the project.



Concerts in the LAG gallery

The most important segment in the education and development of every young artist are concert performances. They are a great motivation for the work and practice of every musician, especially those still studying. This is the main reason for our activation in the field of regular organization of concerts and providing opportunities for talents to present their work. In cooperation with the LAG gallery and the Piano Land company, the “Dobar glas” Foundation has been organizing regular monthly concerts of young talents since June 2021. Good ideas with goals important for society connect and motivate people who have the same values. That exactly is the reason why we received a helping hand from friends and partners on our path of supporting young talents. The LAG Gallery provided the space free of

charge, while Piano Land provided a piano for our concerts with no costs. Together, at minimal cost, we have created a platform for the promotion and support of young talents.

Numerous scholars of our foundation, as well as students of the Faculty of Music Arts and students of the School of Musical Talents have performed at our concerts in the LAG gallery and got motivated for future work.

CONCLUSION

The Covid-19 virus confronted us with the fact that everything can stop, but that it is necessary to do our best at that moment to find the best solution to stay on the path of support when it is most needed. Although the crisis has equally affected all areas of life and work, from our perspective, young artists have needed help the most. In addition to the necessary great talent, successful artists have hours and hours of practice behind them to hone their talent. When there are no concerts, competitions and festivals, the motivation to exercise can decrease. This is exactly the space that we have recognized as important for action.

Before Covid-19, we provided passive support for talents, financing their trips for competitions and master classes. In those conditions, it was the most effective support solution. However, the cancellation of competitions, concerts and master classes forced us to find the right way of active support. Collaboration with our most successful violinist Nemanja Radulović helped us to focus on more active content creation. On the other hand, our visibility has increased and the quality of our work has been recognized, so for that reason we have been joined by numerous friends and donors willing to help.

By regularly organizing concerts of young talents in the LAG gallery, we have created a support platform at the moment when it is most needed and we are truly proud of the effects of those concerts, both for the musicians and the audience.

Through joint work and commitment, despite the difficult conditions caused by Covid-19, we managed to motivate young artists, spread philanthropy and encourage new associates, donors and sponsors to join us on our path of support.



Boris Vujičić, consultant, investor, philanthropist, Serbia

Boris is a consultant and investor, with over 25 years of experience in working across international markets. After studying Mathematics and Computer Science at Belgrade University, Boris graduated in Accounting and Auditing at the Malta Institute of Accountants, and holds an MBA degree from Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh.

Boris is the founder and Managing Partner of Black Pine Executive Consulting (blackpine.com), a management consulting and data analytics company with offices in Moscow, Belgrade and Singapore, helping banks, telecoms and logistics companies with efficiency improvements. Boris is also a co-founder of Trizma (trizma.com), a member of M Plus Group, (mplusgrupa.com), the leading Business Process and Technology Outsourcing (BPTO) provider in South East Europe. Prior to this, he served as Chief Operating Officer and Board Member of Home Credit and Finance Bank in Russia and Region Head for First Data International in Central Eastern Europe.

He is a co-founder and President of Dobar Glas, a Charity Foundation which helps young talented Serbian classical musicians.

Find out more about Boris Vujačić on:

https://www.linkedin.com/in/boris-vuji%C4%8Di%C4%87-03058612/?trk=people-guest_profile-result-card_result-card_full-click&originalSubdomain=rs

Discussion and conclusions of panel 3

Vladimir Đorđević, moderator

This is the first time since the conference was launched three years ago that we are tackling the subject of finances and fundraising in all its complexity. Most of the topics we covered in previous years dealt, in one way or another, with finance. But we considered the topic too delicate to dedicate the whole panel to it. What are the possible sources of funding for high culture (including classical music), given the slippery terrain on which the process of shaping national cultural policy has to manoeuvre? Does private financing stand a chance, and to what extent should it be allowed to influence the forming of tastes and values of a society?

THE MAIN QUESTIONS OF OUR DISCUSSION

How does philanthropy work in the field of classical music?

Philanthropy is a concept accepted in practice as ethical and useful for cultural workers. It should adjust and apply models of good business practice, but not seek financial benefits from them. Classical music is a unique field. It is difficult to apply the general philanthropic actions present in the overall philanthropic culture to the field of classical music because of the very specific challenges and issues present in that field.

Where do we find platforms for our work with the promotion of classical music?

In this campaign, journalism should be our ally. Unfortunately, in our estimation, the level of professionalism is very low in the culture journalism of today. In this populist era, journalists do not recognize a high profile musician as a celebrity. Media is turning its attention towards heroes of mass culture and entertainment – often those with questionable artistic standards. Very often, artists are recognized by a wider audience in their environment only after they have achieved international success. Local cultural heroes stay neglected.

Are there incentives for funding within high culture in our region?

They do not exist in Serbia and Slovenia.

COMMENTS AND THOUGHTS OF OUR ONLINE FOLLOWERS

Future conferences should address the problems of musical education

There are many enthusiasts at our disposal in music schools: dedicated school principals, instrument teachers and extremely smart and dedicated students of all ages. We also have an entire army of NGOs dealing with music and cultural education issues. We need their voice in this discussion.

Suggestion: We should work harder to nurture young listeners to grow into concert goers

This goal comes up every so often at our conference. Our audience spontaneously confirmed that this particular objective of audience development within our field of work is the priority. The question is only how the listeners and followers of our conference contribute to the realisation and whether they can inspire others with their work. We are constantly encouraging, and promoting those who already have good results in working with young audiences and we are ready to give suggestions for new promising techniques and actions.

PANEL 3 CONCLUSIONS

Philanthropy versus investment

We are a region of states in transition, where the traces of the welfare state are deeply rooted in popular mentality and understanding of cultural policy, and where the difference between investment and philanthropy is not quite clear. Philanthropy is supposed to give funds without reimbursement of any kind: financial or practical. It is supposed to recognise potentials (young talents, good initiatives) as well as hidden values. Investment, on the other hand, is often directed towards already recognised value with a certain guarantee of success (stage institutions/festivals of high professionalism and top quality). Some quid pro quo is usual in this kind of cooperation between cultural and financial actors. We often see examples of investment in high culture and mass culture/entertainment disguised as or mistaken for philanthropy.

Small associations/foundations/businesses should continue to provide funding for cultural projects according to their capabilities and without the expectation of profit. In this regard, the state should provide laws on incentives to finance culture.

It is necessary to unite all stakeholders around several common goals, and then coordinate and synchronize activities so that individual activities and projects are in the service of a higher, common goal.

Sponsorship / Patronage in the form of ticket sales

It would be good to appeal to concert goers to accept a concert ticket not as a fee, but as a form of patronage. Let us try to educate the audience, saying that the concert ticket price is an indicator of quality, not of the value of the cultural offer. It would also help to redefine and tell apart the terms “culture” and “entertainment” - two different life needs. Classical music should be fun, but above all, it is a source of personal growth and spirituality.

We are in a position to lobby together

It is necessary to promote each other's work. We all fight for the same goal, each in our own domain. Each of us possesses powerful resources and knowledge which, if exchanged, united and coordinated, could be used in lobbying and promoting true values. The first important step in that direction should be the creation of a network, with a focus on how each of the actors can act in the service of the network, and thus in the service of a common goal.

Believe it or not, people can influence MPs and lobby for new laws. The introduction of incentives for contribution with finances for high culture is one of them. Some definitions and restrictions are required in drafting this law, and it will not be easy. Lobbying can affect both a government and public opinion, create trends and result in new values and ethics.



Vladimir Đorđević, cultural manager, chairman of the Multikultivator agency, Serbia

Vladimir Đorđević is a passionate music lover and enthusiastic professional culture manager. He is a founder and Chairman of the Multikultivator organization based in Belgrade, Serbia.

His brainchild, a platform for informal permanent music education simply called Multiversity, is designed to deliver extraordinary international and intercultural education and concert experience to music students and audiences in Serbia and the Balkans.

Striving to promote contemporary music and discover young talents, Vladimir was music programmer at the Belgrade Youth Cultural Centre (Dom omladine Beograda), the “Mikser House” Cultural Centre, and a music selector for the Mikser Festival. Vladimir was artistic and production director of numerous concerts and festivals including “Umbria Jazz Balkanic Windows” (in collaboration with Umbria Jazz), „EuroMed Music Festival“ (part of the UNESCO International Year of Rapprochement of Cultures 2010 program series), Adriatico Mediterraneo Festival, to name just a few.

Vladimir Đorđević was the author and host of renowned contemporary music radio programs on several nationwide and local radio stations. He remains a dreamer and an activist.

See more on: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/vldjordjevic/?originalSubdomain=rs>

Workshop: Create an Unorthodox Classical Concert

Milica Lundin, Orfeus, Sweden

COUCHES:

Boban Bjelić, accordionist, music teacher and academy professor, performer at the Belgrade edition of 1:1CONCERT

Miloš Jovanović, manager of the Muzikon orchestra, project manager, musician

7 PARTICIPANTS:

high school/academic students

young musicians from Muzikon

youngest employees of the Cultural Center of Belgrade culture activists

Mediator: Milica Lundin, project manager, pianist, conference coordinator

Place: lobby of the Cultural Centre of Belgrade cinema hall, where we exchanged our knowledge in a relaxed manner and watched together on the monitor materials from the demonstrative concerts and other relevant demonstrations.



TOPIC ONE: *1:1CONCERT format. Impressions of the participants*

Boban Bjelić spoke about his impressions of 1:1CONCERTS, how he prepared himself for the event, the unexpected and the unusual of this format. He elaborated on the subject of personal and direct contact with the listener, which in this case is quite unique, and on all the benefits for the player in this extraordinary situation. The participants had some questions, but no one responded to the challenge of the one-minute gaze, which we thought would be an excellent exercise for proving our point of the story about 1:1CONCERT.

TOPIC TWO: *Guerilla concerts*

Miloš Jovanović told us about the history, specifics and pros and cons of guerrilla concerts in Belgrade with the Muzikon orchestra. Some of the participants, members of the Muzikon orchestra contributed to the story.

TOPIC THREE: *Different examples of successful unorthodox concerts and stage performances with classical music incorporated in the program. Audience animation in digital form*

Milica Lundin showed on the screen the website of the Session's online streamed concerts and explained about the format, participation, financial side, who can enlist and how to apply. She talked about a video game of Virtuo Studios from Boston: Gamified Music Tech by Shirley Spikes, where gamers can not only listen to classical music, but also learn to understand its structure in a "cool" and exciting way by pretending to conduct a virtual orchestra. She also mentioned popular internet classical music chat rooms (Club House, Talk Classic, etc.) and provided links for them.

Discussion: After these three topics a live discussion was opened and some of the participants told their stories about the projects they were involved in. Especially interesting were insights into a fusion of classical and other genres in our participants' stage and gig performances. The three of us learned something new and we are ready to include it in our future conference programs should the opportunity present itself.



Miloš Jovanović, manager of the orchestra Muzikon, Serbia

Miloš Jovanović studied musical theory and pedagogy at Academy of music in Belgrade. He holds a master degree in Musical science from the same school with accent on teaching methodics. He works now as a menager of the chamber orchestra Muzikon, renowned for its non-conventional approach to performing, playing outdoors and in public spaces. Miloš is a funder of the Muzikon and president of the association with the same name managing at the same time the festivals and workshops created within the Muzikon. Miloš is also an employe of the music school Stanković in Belgrade, where he conducts the school orchestra, choir and the bend. He proved himself as a composer and until reacently he worked as a conductor and orchestrator at the projects Queen tribute Symhony and Metallica tribute Symphony (still active). Musical production projects in which he was included as a coloborator, producer or performer are numerus: Kolarac Take over project (Creative Europe), Puls Savamala (Goethe Guerilla), X Factor Adria, Festival „Front“ (as a director of the festival), Madrigals Choir of Faculty of Music in Belgrade, Singing Association „Stanković“.

Miloš is experienced as a freelance composer and musical producer, performer, member of the boards of those organizations he helped create and manage. He works with all musical genres and he possesses an undeniable flexibility in his work with music.

Considering Muzikon's famous praxis with “guerila concerts”, Miloš is a right person to talk at the workshop about shaping these concerts and also about musical activism of young professionals.

More about Miloš Jovanović and Muzikon: <https://muzikon.co.rs/>



Boban Bjelić, professor at the Faculty for Fine Arts, Serbia

Boban Bjelić holds a bachelor's and master's degrees in the accordion and a degree in opera/symphonic conducting from the Gnesin Academy in Moscow, classes of Prof. Friedrich Lips and Prof. Pavel Lando. He is a professor for accordion at the Academy of Fine Arts in Belgrade, Music Academy in Cetinje (Montenegro), and at the Music high school Stanković in Belgrade. While a student, Boban was awarded a scholarship for young musicians by the Ivo Pogorelich Foundation. In 1987 he won the International Accordion Competition award (Grand Prix de L'Accordéon) in France.

As an accordion soloist Boban performed in many cities in Russia, Lithuania, Ukraine, Italy and Latin America, as well as throughout the former Yugoslavia. He was a guest conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra of Peru at the festival Temporada Internacional in 1997. As a member of various bands and chamber ensembles – Tango Nova, BGV Trio, Palinxx (The Netherlands), Vlada Divljan's Die Tonerzentrale, Art Contact, Interzone – he has performed at various international festivals, including Ring Ring and Belef (Belgrade), the Sarajevo Winter Festival (Bosnia and Herzegovina), NOMUS (Novi Sad), Lent (Slovenia), the Budva Summer Festival (Montenegro), the Ohrid Summer Festival (Macedonia) and the Moscow Spring Festival (Rusija). He also performed with Luciano Pavarotti at his concert in Belgrade in 2005.

Attractive, transdisciplinary and innovative performances are nothing new to Boban. In our workshop, he will present and practice some approaches and techniques of interaction with the audience and introduce the 1:1CONCERT approach.

More about Boban Bjelić: https://musiccompetition.eu/biographyFiles/d1e9758b-dadc-47d2-8b78-6bc3a74140d3_BBjelic.pdf

Final Conclusions of the Conference

The main question of this year's conference was undoubtedly whether the new forms and models for distribution of classical music and classical concert will stay in use after the COVID-19 crisis.

Some of us think that there will be a variety of choices for listening to classical music in the future. We have different opinions on whether all of our audiences are willing to accept the old and the new ways with equal enthusiasm.

During the 2019-21 crisis, we undoubtedly gained a new, young and modern audience. This is an unconventional audience who do not see the classical concert as a social event. They do not crave to be present in a concert hall to experience live contact with the performers. Their first priority is flexibility: to be able to listen whenever they want, however they want and as much as they think it's needed. They listen with interruptions and during some multitasking process. Also, livestream concerts are cheaper and available throughout the day. This audience will probably stay faithful to online/livestream listening. Some of them might even listen exclusively online.

Our standard, steady audience is deeply dependent on live performances. Concert halls are their social habitat, applause is their way of communicating with the performers and at the same time live music is their spiritual need. They are eager for the restrictions to end so they can come back to the concert hall. It doesn't mean that they do not appreciate the alternative solutions we have recently come up with, only that they see these solutions as transitional options in the time of crisis. Besides, musicians cannot exist without live concerts. Without live concerts their lives are not equally meaningful and productive. Stage is a place for exchange, in other words - for human communication through art.

There is the opinion that the best sound will always be achieved in the concert hall, regardless of how advanced technical equipment we manage to provide for the livestream performances.

The truth is that livestream concerts are far from technically perfect. We must admit that in that area we have a long way to go if we wish to achieve perfect conditions for simultaneous playing and good sound quality. Further on, we expect to see lots of disputes about legally acceptable forms that can provide profit for the players, make patronage simple and at the same time create a sustainable relationship between digital platforms and performers.

Financial and moral damage of the COVID crisis are enormous.

Numerous forums and firsthand research show that classical productions and management have suffered financially so much that in many cases it might be beyond repair. In particular, classical musicians have been going through a devastating period of unemployment. Many of them have given up hope of recovery of their finances and careers. Moral damage is also significant, since the faith in the social system, in standards of values and in solidarity within the local community is shattered.

There is not enough lobbying for classical music.

There is nothing wrong with being loud about what one traditional art form requires from the state and cultural policy. We are all activists and should be involved in public debates and the media. We should explain our agenda publicly and defend our and our colleagues' work. Laws and public opinion can be changed through petitioning, lobbying and activism.

Philanthropy within classical music is very specific.

People do not understand the high culture funding and financing mechanisms. They think that the laws of financing can be applied here too and funds can be given away as presents. We need to educate the public about this. Also, philanthropy has different forms in different spheres of culture.

Recommendations

Playing in concert halls and online performing are different art forms and should not be compared to each other.

They can exist in parallel and complement each other. Even if they do not do that, there is no reason for one to exclude the other.

We should not underestimate the power of digital art forms.

Especially now when we cannot estimate the duration of this crisis, we must support the development of alternative concert forms. We are at the doorstep of a new era. Pre-recorded concert in an empty hall is not what the audience desires. Tuning in to their wishes has so far successfully resulted in the creation of some new art forms and they continue to evolve as we speak.

We should always remind the musical establishment of the problems that it has had to face during this crisis.

There are important lessons that we learned during the COVID-19 crisis. Managements all over the world have learned how fragile the performers are and how easy it is to lose them to digitisation. Performers have learned how hard it is to endure without a live audience and how important it is to communicate with the listeners. Reactions are the most important part of stage life. Many performers learned how to communicate verbally with the listeners and were surprised by how much they liked it. Playing music for yourself only is not an option.

Financing and philanthropy need backing up by all available forums and groups and vice versa.

We must form platforms for constant cooperation in order to influence the formation of new policies, to lobby for new values, new laws. We can improve the public understanding of the funding of culture, the understanding of philanthropy and the necessity of activism. It should be done not only through public work, but through internal counseling, exchange of information, meetings and promotion of every actor's work within the same domain. We should establish our common goals and make programs to achieve them.

Local culture and local communities are now of vital importance.

Musicians need support from their local cultural stakeholders and culture consumers if they are to recover. It is important to provide a feeling of trust and patronage as much as possible. Even small initiatives like intimate concerts in the style of 1:1CONCERT are helping to restore trust in the benefits of classical music and high culture in general. People will make more use of spiritual feedback than of simple entertainment in the post-COVID time. Local community is at the same time the best supporter and the best patron of musicians, groups and associations. If stimulated by their local audience, musicians will much more easily regain trust in their role as guardians of cultural heritage.

At the same time we have learned from the examples of our two panelists who represented major classical music venues in Belgrade that the COVID crisis has opened the door to a new attitude towards the audience. There is a need for dedication, establishment of a more intimate relationship with every member of the audience, openness and dialogue. We hope that this model will spread further and help remedy the damage of liberalization of culture through the "cultural market".

Suggested subjects for the next conference:

Music education

Instruments of cultural policy for improvement of the status of classical music

Young musicians' platforms and activities connected to classical music

How to improve the services of supply of materials to classical musicians: a market for scores and written materials, strings, instrument parts, repair services and similar?

Orfeus

Agency for the promotion of classical music. It was founded in 2011, initially as a service offering piano lessons to primary schools and families, but also as a mediator for organizing performances with classical repertoire. Since 2017 Orfeus has engaged in a series of actions dedicated to audience development, of which the conference "Bringing Classical Concert Back under the Spotlight" is the most significant one.

Multikultivator

Founded in 2003 as a non-profit action tank, Multikultivator connects with institutions and individuals from around the globe to produce concerts, festivals, educational music programs, clinics and conferences and create a unique network of networks. For a lasting impact, Multikultivator is actively involved in shaping new generations of musicians.

WHAT NEXT

We hope to continue with a new conference next year. There are always new topics we can discuss and new ideas we can promote. If you wish to give us a hand, please join in. As every year, all our materials are downloaded in the form of a digital booklet and edited videos. You can find them on our website www.orpheuspiano.se, Facebook walls

(<https://www.facebook.com/multikultivator.org/>
<https://www.facebook.com/orfeuspiano.se>)

and in our Facebook network group Audience Developers for Classical Music. Join us and help promote audience development for classical music!

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