

## **Univores, Omnivores, and Dinosaurs**

Sustainability and relevancy of the college band program

*Along with most institutions devoted to the “classical” arts, black-and-white linear thinking has long guided our definitions of great art, our narrow classifications of music into numerous genres, our limited conceptualization of “audience participation,” and our curricula. Meanwhile, the global community, at least within developed countries, has acquired an omnivorous cultural appetite—in the US, a vast majority of the population now seeks “arts and entertainment” from a wide spectrum along the ever-expanding continuum of available options. While a focus on the training of musicians to serve society’s “high-brow” univores, via the study of the Western art music canon, is laudable on many levels, a singular focus on such a narrow musical strand perpetuates the linear thinking found in the largely parochial societies of the past. Instead, we should be engaging students, faculty, and community in the additive, continuum-based thinking now driving the globalization of economies and cultures. Moreover, simply preparing our students for a highly-specialized career performing or teaching music that is exclusively embraced and mostly supported by just 3.5% of the population is out of line with even the most liberal definitions of “access,” “impact,” and “sustainability.”<sup>1</sup>*

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Eloquent words to say that we, the leaders of the nation’s educational cultural institutions are dinosaurs and are in grave danger of extinction because we continue to be univores in an omnivore<sup>2</sup> world. As employer expectations of our graduates have changed over the past thirty years, and audience desires have developed, our college band programs have continued to deliver essentially the same product. Our students are now expected upon graduation to be omnivore performers and teachers in order to attain positions. And, most of them come to us as cultural omnivores, but our curricula change them into univores. Our audiences also are much more omnivorous than thirty years ago, and they are much more interested in taking an active role in events they attend.

Gary wrote those words to my successor as Director of the ASU School of Music, Kimberly Marshall<sup>3</sup>, as an introduction to the new wind band curriculum established at Arizona State University. A curriculum that has now spread across our school encompassing bands, orchestras, choirs, opera, musical theatre, jazz, ethnic ensembles, and chamber music. The new curriculum attempts to address two issues concerning college band programs; relevancy to our students in terms of training for future employment, and sustainability in terms of meeting our audiences’ cultural and entertainment needs. Many of the ideas of this paper and the basis of our new curriculum were inspired by or drawn from the writings collected in “Engaging Art, The Next Great Transformation of America’s Cultural Life” edited by Steven Tepper and Bill Ivey and published in 2008 by Routledge.

### **The Problem**

As we began to discuss how to avoid becoming dinosaurs and how to move from a univorous to an omnivorous cultural appetite we asked ourselves two central questions:

1. How do traditional college band programs prepare students for today's work world?
2. How do traditional college band programs meet the needs of today's audiences in live concerts?

Unfortunately, we concluded that they don't do either. This conclusion set us about curricular change and audience research.

### **Curricular Change**

For the most part wind band programs are very similar across the nation. We place our students in like-ability ensembles for a semester or a school year. We rehearse regularly, and after about a dozen rehearsals we give a formal concert in a concert hall. We typically dress in concert blacks and don't do much talking to our audience, though we do acknowledge their applause. Once the concert is over we turn in the music, pass out new music and do it all over again—usually five or six times during a school year. The students, especially the younger ones who need the most work, often sit in the same order in the ensemble, surrounded by the same two or three musicians throughout their band experience. Other than the literature played at the concert there is little difference in a student's experience between the concert he plays in fall term of his freshman year and the last one he plays in spring of his senior year. In most of our programs our students repeat this concert experience 20-25 times in their college career.

What does all this preparing, dressing up, and giving of the same event over and over again do for our students? For us? For our institutions?

For our students we claim, when asked by administrators, that it teaches them to play in tune with other musicians; match articulations, style, and dynamics. They learn band literature that they will then teach to their students in schools and universities. They might even learn by example how to conduct, or how to run an ensemble. All of those things are of value, but do our students need 25 almost identical experiences to accomplish these goals? And, aren't our students working on these same skills in their lessons and other ensemble playing? Perhaps more importantly in terms of sustainability, what is unique about the experience that we provide in college bands that prepares them to be professional performers, teachers, writers about music, and therefore justifies the existence of our program? For most of our programs that is a very difficult question to answer honestly, and without a good answer to that question sustainability of our programs is at risk.

For us in this room (this paper was delivered at the biennial conference of the College Band Directors' National Association in Austin, Texas on March 26, 2009), and our institutions, a traditional curriculum creates reputations; both good and bad. If I asked

each of you to name the three best college band programs in America, you would do so based upon their performance reputation, or the conducting reputation of their directors. You would not do so based upon the quality of the curriculum offered their students or what their students learn in the program and can do upon graduation. Because of this I came to believe that we all do what we do each year for two reasons; first, tradition, and secondly, because we use our students' abilities to further our own reputations and the stature of our institutions. A very harsh evaluation--but one that appears mostly accurate.

As we examined our own curriculum we also began research into what audiences need from a live concert today. Like most concert band programs we expected our audiences to come to our concert hall, sit quietly and accept whatever music we prepared for them. Their job was to appreciate our band's performing ability and the quality of the music we were presenting, and then acknowledge that through their applause. They were not to take part in the music making or the thinking about music in a community sense. For generations of audiences that was sufficient. But we all began to see changes in our audiences and in the size of our audience as early as the 1970's. It is no coincidence that this was also the beginning of the technological explosion that began with entertainment being delivered at home by three-network television and now includes cable, Internet, gaming, and global access to all kinds of entertainment. The audience no longer simply accepts whatever is offered to them, they choose their entertainment and culture down to the specific style and piece of music and how and where it is delivered to them. And, due in part to access, the musical taste of today's audience is much more eclectic and global than in the past. It is a rare person who listens to only one type of music. To prove this to yourself ask to see the playlists of your students' iPods. They will range from pop techno styles through world musics to jazz and classical. For us to continue offering only a passive cultural experience to our audiences makes us univorous dinosaurs in today's age of technologically astute cultural omnivores. We must find ways to offer an active audience environment at our concerts.

## **Solutions**

As everyone from Mark Twain to Aerosmith<sup>4</sup> has said "If you do what you've always done, you'll get what you've always got." Some of what we've always got is still worth getting. But we appear to no longer be meeting the educational needs of our students or the cultural and entertainment demands of our audiences. The omnivorous tastes of the public requires that we stop creating univore students and encourage how they come to us—as omnivores with tastes and experiences in all types of music and art. Our old band curriculum at ASU tended to narrow the musical taste of our students to a specific set of works written for band in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, most specifically the last 25 years. The new curriculum attempts to do the opposite- to build on the natural omnivorous tendencies of our students and lead them to many different types of musical experiences in many different ensemble settings.

Our old curriculum was structured to fit a model that is now out of date. In the past, high status job-holders created high status arts organizations like professional opera, ballet, and symphonies that they could attend and associate with. Today, it appears that

even high status art consumers no longer focus their interest and attention on one type of art. Instead they pride themselves on being able to discuss popular and classical culture with their peers and subordinates. The mobility of the American public also contributes to this omnivorous cultural appetite to a degree. As we move more from one region of the country or internationally we naturally become more omnivorous in our tastes.

In order to change our curriculum we asked ourselves: What are our students' and audience's needs, and then how can we restructure to meet them? Our conclusion was that we must become more student-centered in our curriculum if we are to remain relevant to our students and our audiences. This would demand the creation of a new band curricular model-one that is structured to meet the needs of the individual, not force the individual to meet the demands of the curriculum.

### Curriculum; creating student-centered ensembles

Such a curriculum driven by today's student needs might include experiences playing a diverse style of repertoire of varying idioms and ensembles. It might include experiences in improvisation. Experiences as both a leader and follower would be important. The ability to talk about and teach the music being studied would be essential, as would the necessity to both be and have a mentor musician. The ability to publicize, market, contract, and promote in an entrepreneurial manner would be important outcomes of a curriculum driven by student needs. Experiences in recording and use of technology would also be essential to prepare students for the working world.

Student outcomes of such a new curriculum might include:

1. Performance experience, including literature knowledge acquisition, in large ensembles appropriate to professional experience in military bands and professional bands.
2. Performance experience appropriate to professional experience in chamber ensembles including, where instrumentally appropriate; brass ensemble, brass band, Harmonie ensemble, mixed chamber ensembles, electro-acoustic ensembles.
3. Participatory experiences ranging from performer to mentor to leader.
4. Literature and style acquaintance with world and "popular" musics, as well as Western European art music.
5. Experiences in composing and creating music extemporaneously in a variety of styles and genres.
6. Presentation skills appropriate to leading discussions with amateur musicians concerning programmed music.
7. The development of entrepreneurial skills necessary to a career in music.
8. Experiences that foster innovative approaches to the performance, teaching, and distribution of musical and musically-based products.

These appear to be the skills required of today's musician entering the job market. Such a set of skills requires a new ensemble model, one that is flexible in instrumentation and does not always require a performance as the culminating experience.

## **Structure**

To create the flexibility needed for such a curriculum we have altered the structure of our ensembles. Rather than continue with fixed large ensembles that meet the entire term, we have created what writer and now ASU professor James Paul Gee<sup>5</sup> calls "affinity spaces". Affinity spaces are creative and learning communities that allow for participation in activities within an open environment. One characteristic of affinity spaces that is important in our new curriculum is that they consist of musicians who are at very different stages of development. Creating affinity spaces meant to us that there would no longer be set instrumentation bands at ASU-- no Wind Ensemble, no Wind Symphony, no Concert Band, etc. No band that lasts the entire semester or school year exists with set personnel. Instead, students audition to be ranked in a large pool of players from which ensembles are created as needed for projects. At any given time there are numerous small ensembles and/or large bands functioning. I know that the idea of a large pool of players is not a new one. What is done with that pool is where innovation can take place.

The presentation of five or six concerts is no longer the culminating experience of the bands. Instead the semester and year are divided into a number of three-week long projects. Projects can last longer when required. Some of these projects culminate in a performance and some don't. All of the projects include student personnel who perform, organize, teach, market, and present. In some cases a student's effort on a project might not be playing at all- that student might be the concert promoter or the designer and organizer of the event, or even the musical teacher/conductor/coach. Ensembles are created per the needs of the project and students are assigned to the different chamber and large ensembles based upon their audition placement. However, we now only rarely put all the best players in one group and all the less experienced in another. Instead, we usually mix the very best players with inexperienced players to create a student-mentor relationship. The flexibility of the design allows us to create large bands and wind ensembles as well as mixed chamber ensembles. It even allows us to create ensembles for which repertoire does not exist and has to be composed or arranged, offering our students composition, arranging, and improvisation opportunities within an ensemble setting.

For example, during the academic year a student might participate in learning units that focus on: traditional large band performance; a chamber ensemble of mixed instruments combined into a non-traditional ensemble playing music specifically written for it; a project in which electronic instruments are combined with acoustic instruments; small or large ensembles in which the goal is not public performance but experience in world musics or the extemporaneous composition of music or pedagogical skills; and trans-disciplinary projects, encompassing evolving art forms. This delivery system of

project-based learning units provides every student with many more different experiences than the traditional fixed ensemble system.

Faculty, likewise do not work with the same set of students in this ensemble system. They move from project to project based on their interest and expertise serving sometimes as organizers, sometimes conductors, sometimes coaches, mentors, or observers ensuring the project goals are met. This also allows for more faculty to be involved in the projects than just the ensemble conductors. The types of projects considered for inclusion in this year's ensemble program at ASU included historical traditions, transmedia projects, pedagogy projects, composer interactive projects, recordings, chamber ensembles, and gaming.

For the 2008-09 school year the following are all projects included in the curriculum.

- Large symphonic band
- Mixed chamber ensembles
- Structured Improvisation ensemble
- Brass Band
- Staging of a major wind ensemble work
- Free improvisation ensemble
- Gaming project
- Wind ensemble
- Recording ensemble
- Pedagogy project ensemble
- Brass choir
- Harmonie band
- Oboe band
- Wind orchestra
- Studio orchestra

The students receive a project brochure in early August outlining the projects for the year. At the beginning of the school year when they audition, students complete a project interest form indicating their project preference. The conductors consult with the studio teachers to consider the needs of the individual players and then fill in the personnel needed for each of the projects from the pool. At the completion of each project the students move to a new ensemble with new experiences and focus.

The first project period at the beginning of the school year lasted three weeks, or for us six rehearsals, including the dress rehearsal. The primary idea of the project was to create a concert with many different styles of music addressing and promoting the omnivorous appetite of our audience. Students from the pool were divided into three project rosters; a symphonic band of approximately 100 players, two mixed chamber ensembles, and a structured improvisation ensemble all of whom would perform together on the first concert. ASU has not had a true Symphonic Band for over a decade and most of our students have never performed in a band of this size except at Allstates in high school. The project provided them with the experience of performing literature

chosen from standard symphonic band repertoire, including William Schuman's *George Washington Bridge* and Norman Dello Joio's *Variants on a Mediaeval Tune*. This project was designed to foster the aural skills demanded in large ensemble settings and to study and perform masterworks for wind band in an historical performance setting. Project leaders were Professors Gary Hill and Wayne Bailey

At the same concert as the symphonic band performance two mixed chamber ensembles performed. Literature was chosen from contemporary mixed chamber ensemble repertory specifically to provide a significant contrast in style to the symphonic band works. The pieces performed included Shafer Mahoney's *Dance Machine* and Frank Zappa's *Dog Breath Variations* both of which require strings. The intent of this project was to promote independent musicianship, explore present-day chamber music, and contribute to the variety of the concert. Project leaders: Professors Gary Hill and Wayne Bailey

The Structured-Improvisation Ensemble of the concert focused on music post-1970, drawing on musical styles from medieval hocket technique to Stravinskian neo-classicism to hard rock and world music. For this project the ensemble could be of very flexible instrumentation and size. Music selected for performance in this unit was notated in a non-traditional style that caused a creative interaction between the composer and performer. The performance work chosen that was also performed alongside the symphonic band was Andriessen's *Workers' Union*. Other works studied included Frederic Rzewski's *Coming Together*, described as "one of the great pieces of political art in the new-music repertoire", and Claude Vivier's *Plau Dewata* inspired by Balinese Gamelan. Project leaders were Professors Jana Starling and Roshanne Etezady, a studio faculty member and composer, respectively-but, notably not members of the ensemble or conducting faculty. The project also involved students working on publicity for the event involving Facebook and other electronic media.

The second and third project periods of the fall term over-lapped into a six-week period in which three concerts were given and a recording was made. The finest 65 wind and percussion players of the pool were put together into a Recording Ensemble. The group quickly prepared and recorded works from the standard repertory for Naxos. There was not a public performance. The students were led in three rehearsals and two recording sessions by project leaders Gary Hill and Sam Pilafian (another studio faculty member at ASU)

At the same time other students were formed into a British style Brass Band, a set instrumentation ensemble. This project was designed to be an introduction to the distinctive sound and repertoire of the brass band. Participants studied the unique performance techniques of the brass band, were introduced to various types of repertory and major composers, and performed a short concert on ASU's Old Main lawn during the university's Family Weekend on a Saturday in October. The players used authentic instruments for the brass band. Project leaders were Wayne Bailey, John Ericson (yet another studio faculty member at ASU, and Sam Pilafian

Concurrently with the recording ensemble and the brass band we formed four Mixed Chamber Ensembles varying from 8-20 players. Literature for these ensembles was chosen from both contemporary mixed chamber ensemble repertory and standard chamber winds repertoire. These ensembles performed a concert off campus and studied works by Gordon Jacob, Robert Kurka, Renaldo Hahn, and Charles Gounod. Project leaders were graduate teaching assistants in the DMA program in wind conducting. In some sections for this project we paired an advanced player with younger players to create mentor/student relationships between graduate student players and younger undergraduates.

At the same time that all this was going on, the School of Music at ASU in conjunction with the band program presented a two-day festival called “Beyond Messiaen” For this event we created ensembles specific to the instrumentation of the works to be performed at the festival. The works included Messiaen’s *Colors of the Celestial City*, compositions and arrangements by guest artist and Pulitzer-winning composer William Bolcom, the Dukas “Fanfare for La Peri”, and other works. The festival featured Professor Bolcom, soprano Joan Morris, film maker Paul Festa, and Alex Ross, music critic for the *New Yorker* magazine and author of the acclaimed book concerning 20<sup>th</sup>-century music, *The Rest is Noise*. Gary Hill served as the project leader and several members of the ASU faculty were involved as performers and presenters. This provided us with another opportunity to create mentor relationships by mixing studio faculty performers with our student players from the pool for the performance.

Finally, during this project period a Wind Ensemble of approximately 60 players performed a traditional concert in October with the ASU Symphonic Chorale. The intent of the project was to provide mid-level players with a one-on-a-part playing experience and to experience working and performing with a chorus and a choir director. Project leaders were Wayne Bailey and Gregory Gentry, Director of Choral Activities at ASU.

The final project of the semester involved nearly the entire pool of players. (approximately 150 players/ performers) This project was a multi-media performance of David Maslanka’s *A Child’s Garden of Dreams*. The project used a student design committee working with an interdepartmental faculty design team to create lighting and movement design for the work.

Spring semester began with a Trans-media Ensemble of approximately 10 players who collaborated with ASU dance faculty and students to create a work for an All-College of the Arts festival prior to the beginning of the start of spring term classes. This musical collective worked initially with guest artist, Stephen Nachmanovitch, author of *Free Play*<sup>6</sup>, to explore techniques that foster successful free improvisations.

Originally on our project schedule was a Gaming Project. Project participants were to work with student engineers in the School of Computing and Infomatics. Using various game systems and musical styles, this project was to explore methods that apply gaming techniques to music pedagogy. Unfortunately, the project had to be re-scheduled for next year due to scheduling and Arizona budget issues.

During the first project time period of Spring term a Brass Choir of approximately 20 brass players performed an off campus concert of repertoire comprised of contemporary brass ensemble literature in the vein of the Summit Brass or the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble. Project leaders were Wayne Bailey and Sam Pilafian. Concurrently we formed Mixed Chamber Ensembles and an Oboe Band. Literature was chosen from contemporary mixed chamber ensemble repertoire, the standard wind chamber repertoire, and from Renaissance Oboe Band literature. And, finally in project 1 of the spring term a Wind ensemble of approximately 60 players performed contemporary wind ensemble literature in a lecture-recital led by a DMA student in conducting.

The second project period of the spring divided the pool into a Recording ensemble of approximately 50 players to record John Mackey's saxophone concerto with Tim McAllister for Summit Records and perform and record a new clarinet concerto with Robert Spring. Both of these soloists are on our studio faculty. At the same time period a Pedagogy ensemble of all music education majors and other interested players combined to form an ensemble for reading and performance of traditional literature for band. Student conductors were chosen to analyze and rehearse the works. Four of the works studied were presented in concert along with the Recording Ensemble.

Our current project includes the creation of two Wind Orchestras –each approximately 45 players and a Studio Orchestra of flexible instrumentation, including strings. The Studio Orchestra is an experiential group that studies the styles and performance techniques of studio musicians. Literature studied ranges from the books of the Nelson Riddle Orchestra, the Stan Kenton Orchestra, and Frank Sinatra, to music by contemporary film composers. Project leaders are Director of Jazz Studies Mike Kocour and Sam Pilafian.

The two wind orchestras are focused on different groups of composers for winds. One ensemble of less experienced students is focused on studying the popular excellent wind band composers Frank Ticheli, John Mackey, Steven Byrant, Eric Whitacre, and Jonathan Newman. The other ensemble of more advanced players is studying works by Schwanter and Chin-Ye.

The final project of the year culminates in a performance at Disney Hall in Los Angeles in June. Project leaders are Gary Hill and Wayne Bailey.

These projects provide a diverse range of experiences for our students and still include opportunities to perform in traditional wind ensembles and large bands. At the same time the students gain valuable experience in chamber music and work with a variety of student musicians and professors. Because of the range of the projects we are able to encourage our students to continue being musical omnivores. We believe that this curricular structure is more relevant to our students' educational needs.

In addition to creating a student centered curriculum we also set about to create audience- listener-centered concerts.

### **Audience centered events**

The public concert is not much more than three hundred years old. Throughout thousands of years of mankind's history music has been associated with some other activity; ritual and religion, dance, war, or storytelling. Movement accompanied much of this music. And, music making was common to all, not just those most skilled in its performance arts. Thousands of years of expressing music in this way runs contrary to sitting still and listening to music in a concert hall. Passive listening is therefore abnormal, active participation is normal human behavior.

In the past, concerts were social occasions which spawned societies and clubs that discussed, argued and fought about the music and its meaning. Concerts in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century were often rowdy affairs where the audience very verbally expressed their approval and disapproval of performers and works, often hooting some performers off the stage while demanding encores of others. There were seats onstage and the box seats were places where all sorts of transactions took place during the event. As Lynne Connor rightly points out in her paper "In and Out of the Dark"<sup>7</sup> the addition of electric lighting changed concerts. The audience was placed in the dark and the lights on stage focused all attention there. Concerts changed from assemblies where art was discussed to events where art was watched. Audiences learned to be quiet and by the 20<sup>th</sup> century the concert hall had become a quiet and sacred place.

Even the way children learned about art changed. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century music education programs throughout America focused as much on music appreciation as on actively performing or creating music. Our students, from early ages are divided into two classes; those who can create and re-create art and those who can only appreciate art. The second has created second-class arts citizens of most of the population who have been told that they cannot be creative; their role in the arts is that of the observer. The technological developments of the 20<sup>th</sup> century including the radio, the phonograph, the television, movies, LP records have all contributed to this arts observer culture. Not until the invention of the synthesizer and computer was it truly possible for the amateur to once again take an active role in the arts. As NY Times critic Michael Kimmelman<sup>8</sup> notes about the 19<sup>th</sup> century, "Amateurism was once a virtue...". The developments of the past twenty years in technology have made our most recent time a new era of the amateur artist. But, the history of art in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was one of professionalizing art. As Bill Ivey states in "The Question of Participation"<sup>9</sup>, "we now measure attendance, not art making. That is what has become important to us."

Today, many members of our audience, especially the younger ones, want to be more than passive listeners when they attend live performance events. Due in part to the fact that they have grown up with interactive toys and technological devices this makes them a new type of audience—one that we should adjust to if we wish to continue to have an audience. Some facts that might impact our decisions on how to do this:

- A baby boomer turns 60 every 7-8 seconds.<sup>10</sup>
- 12% of our population is foreign born.<sup>11</sup>
- 8% of our population does not speak English well.<sup>12</sup>
- Both the Hispanic and Asian populations are increasing.
- Between 1992 and 2005 giving to the arts in general dropped from 8.4% of all philanthropic gifts to 5.2%. (According to Americans for the Arts)
- At the same time the population has become more educated than ever before attendance at classical music events has dropped 12% (1982-2002 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts, NEA)  
At the same time, and according to the same study, art making has actually increased! Attendance is down, but creation of art is up.
- In a study by the Urban Institute funded by the Wallace Foundation in 04-05 it was found that only 29% of music event attendees attended to learn something, 60% were there to socialize.<sup>13</sup>
- There are 20 times as many congregations in America as there are performing arts organizations. (not including school programs)<sup>14</sup>
- Multi-tasking is now the norm, especially for young adults.

These might be important because:

Retiring baby boomers have more money, are in better health, and will live longer than any retiring generation in our history. In our attempts to engage younger audiences we cannot ignore those who are now retiring, with time and money.

With 12% of our population being foreign born we must consider world musics when we program. Though not the same statistic, the fact that Hispanic and Asian populations are significantly rising in America indicates that musics of other cultures are important to our audiences.

The drop in giving to arts organizations is due in part to the fact that art and culture are readily available cheaply from various media. Though not live events, the general public can very cheaply find the arts on their cable television today. The fact that creation of art is up when attendance is down indicates that amateurism is on the rise. And, it is most healthy on the Internet. A study by Pew Internet and American Life Project<sup>15</sup> showed that 57% of teenagers who use the Internet are “media creators”. Their distribution is different than in the past, and it comes with immediate feedback of praise and criticism on places like YouTube and Facebook.

Why people attend live events must become part of our concern. People no longer need to leave their home in order to experience great art. So, why should they? If 60% of attendees rate socializing as the number one reason for attending a live musical event perhaps we should take that into consideration in building our programs and our audiences. As I will suggest later there are many ways to quietly socialize at an arts event that are not disruptive to other attendees.

The venues where we perform wind music might need changing. Congregations at religious institutions are already a select society of people who share an interest and regularly debate important issues, as well as socialize. Statistics might lead us to believe that our art form would be better appreciated in a religious venue than in a concert hall.

The continuous multi-tasking of our students annoys many of us of my generation and older. There is even a medical name for it now; continuous partial attention. We see this at our athletic events where we can watch the game live or a part of it on the jumbotron. Surtitles and supertitles are an example of multi-tasking. At some piano recitals the hall management projects video of the pianist's hands for the audience to see, or the conductor from the point of view of the orchestra. These are all additional examples of the desire of audience members to do more than simply sit and watch quietly.

Stephen Tepper in "Engaging Art, The Next Great Transformation of America's Cultural Life"<sup>16</sup> states that we need to think more about citizen involvement and less about bringing great art to people.

In 2008 the ASU bands began a research project the aim of which was to discover listening patterns during live events and increase audience participation in a meaningful manner. As part of the research we experimented with a number of new ways of listening to and interacting with live music within the concert hall setting. Our concerts are usually given in a large hall which seats 3000. This allowed us to experiment with pods of listeners. In each pod we grouped listeners who wished to experience the concert in a particular way. For example, we grouped a number of audience members who wished to discuss the music as they heard it. We provided a knowledgeable graduate music student to lead the discussion. Another pod of listeners brought laptop computers (our hall is a wireless space) and participated in a live chat room led by a doctoral conducting student. A group of listeners heard a "play by play" commentary via infrared transmission. They were given listening devices usually used by the hearing impaired and heard a description of the music and the concert while it happened. And, of course there were many audience members who wished to just experience the concert in the traditional manner.

In the previous year we experimented with so-called juke-box concerts where audience members actually chose the works to be performed. During the first half of the concert audience members considered a menu of works that could be presented in the second half of the concert. They filled out their preference forms that were collected and tabulated during intermission. The band then performed the three works on the second half of the concert that got the most audience votes.

We found each of these to be very successful. At first it was difficult for all of us older performers to get over the fact that people would be engaged in another activity while listening to the concert. But, as we thought about this and became accustomed to the idea we realized that this activity would actually deepen their understanding and appreciation of our music.

We intend to expand these activities wherever we can in the future to offer more opportunities for active listening.

The faculty at ASU have also considered the question of who can be our audience if a live event is also offered remotely. Several schools now offer podcasts of their concerts, webcasts, and some band concerts are broadcast on local public radio and television networks. These remote offerings offer fewer opportunities for interactivity with audience members, but they also provide for a much larger audience than is typical at live concerts.

Our work shows that we must continue to experiment with and find ways for our audiences to change from passive observers to active listeners. Short of letting the audience create or perform the music we can provide them with activities that allow them to think about and discuss the music while they hear it. This creates the atmosphere of listener-centered concerts rather than performer-centered events.

## **Conclusion**

The combination of new presentation venues, optional experiences at events in addition to listening and watching, and the expansion of our curricula beyond our own culture and hard-walled ensembles addresses both relevancy and sustainability. As Vanessa Bertozzi says in “How and Why Young People Create”<sup>17</sup>, “Art institutions need to rethink their traditional roles as curators of the arts and embrace a new and potentially unfamiliar role as facilitators of participatory culture.”

To continue the curricula of the 1960’s seems futile in today’s world of technological culture. Recognizing the shifts in student and audience needs is essential. Authors Bill Tepper and Steven Ivey in their book “Engaging Art, the Next Great Transformation of America’s Cultural Life”<sup>18</sup> write that “The new art and art making are participatory: Much can be produced and consumed in the home. Amateur art making is taking place in the shadow of giant media; there is an explosion of cultural choice made possible by new technologies and a renewed mingling of high and popular art. Art in our culture is part of everyday life, not a treasured thing that is brought out for special occasions.”

We must do whatever we can do to change our univore band curricula to produce omnivorous students, and audiences with appetites of dinosaurs for our programs.

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<sup>1</sup> Gary W. Hill is Director of Bands at Arizona State University in Tempe, AZ.

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<sup>2</sup> The idea of highbrow univore and omnivore cultural consumes is discussed in-depth in chapter 13, “Changing Arts Audiences Capitalizing on Omnivorousness” by Richard Peterson and Gabriel Rossman of *Engaging Art, The Next Great Transformation of America’s Cultural Life*, Routledge, 2008, New York, NY.

<sup>3</sup> Kimberly Marshall is the Director of the School of Music at Arizona State University in Tempe, AZ.

<sup>4</sup> from the 1993 album “Get a Grip”, single of the same name, Aerosmith.

<sup>5</sup> Gee, James Paul. *Situated Language and Learning: a Critique of Traditional Schooling*. Routledge, 2004, New York, NY.

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<sup>10</sup> *New York Times*, November 7, 2006

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2004.

<sup>12</sup> *New York Times*, November 7, 2006

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