Assessing the Audience Impact of Choral Music Concerts

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Participating Choruses (listed alphabetically)

Bach Choir of Pittsburgh (PA)
Boston Children's Chorus (MA)
Cantus (MN)
Children's Festival Chorus of Pittsburgh (PA)
Choral Arts Society of Washington (DC)
Cincinnati Boychoir (OH)
Cincinnati May Festival (OH)
Gay Men's Chorus of Washington (DC)
Handel and Haydn Society (MA)
Houston Chamber Choir (TX)
Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia (PA)
Peninsula Women's Chorus (CA)
Pittsburgh Camerata (PA)
Pittsburgh Concert Chorale (PA)
The Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh (PA)
The Washington Chorus (DC)
San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus (CA)
San Francisco Girls Chorus (CA)
Seattle Pro Musica (WA)
Toronto Mendelssohn Choir (ON)
Vocal Arts Ensemble (OH)
VocalEssence (MN)
Windy City Gay Chorus and Treble Quire (IL)

VocalEssence *WITNESS-Let Freedom Ring* 2015; Photo: Bruce Silcox

About Chorus America

Chorus America is the advocacy, research, and leadership development organization that advances the choral field. It supports and serves choral conductors, administrators, board members, and singers with tools, training, peer networking, and access so that choruses are better able to contribute to their communities.

More than 5,500 choruses, individuals, businesses, and organizations are members of Chorus America and have access to a wide array of programs, publications, and personal services developed for their benefit. These services strengthen their ability to build strong organizations that foster quality choral performances.

Chorus America has advanced its mission and served the field through groundbreaking research. Since 1998, its annual Chorus Operations Survey has provided essential benchmarking data on all aspects of chorus administration. The Chorus Impact Study, first conducted in 2003 and again in 2009, documented and illustrated many of the unique and important aspects of choruses, choral singers, and their impact on communities.

Chorus America is excited to share the results of this important work on audience impact and looks forward to developing additional resources for the field to build upon these findings.

www.chorusamerica.org

About WolfBrown

WolfBrown is at the forefront of planning, research and evaluation in the cultural sector, with a long history of producing groundbreaking studies on audience development, youth engagement, and arts participation. Through its Intrinsic Impact program, WolfBrown supports the efforts of over 100 performing arts organizations across the US to collect high quality feedback and demographic data from audiences.

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Executive Summary

Choral singing continues to be the most popular form of active participation in the performing arts. According to Chorus America's 2009 study of choral singers, there are about 12,000 professional and community choruses nationwide, at least 41,000 K-12 school choruses, and 216,000 religious choirs. Millions of Americans sing in choruses, and tens of millions of Americans have past experience singing in a chorus. The 2009 study also identified the many benefits of participation in a chorus to adults and children, and to their communities.[1]

Yet, even more Americans have attended choral concerts as audience members. In fact, current and former choral singers constitute 64% of all audiences surveyed in this study, suggesting a virtuous circle of participation and attendance.

How are audiences affected by live choral music concerts? What can we conclude about the experiences they have? How do their experiences differ? Can we identify drivers of impact?

In 2013, Chorus America initiated discussions with WolfBrown to design a study to answer these questions and build a foundational understanding of the impact of attendance at choral concerts. A total of 23 choruses across North America participated in the study, including a cross section of youth and adult ensembles. Over the 2014-15 and 2015-16 seasons, 14,236 audience members at 136 different concert programs completed surveys about their experience.

To our knowledge this is the first national study of audiences for live choral music concerts, and the first attempt to systematically assess the impact of choral concerts on audiences. Results should be interpreted with caution. Although the 23 choruses that participated in the study represent a varied array of choruses and artistic work, they were not selected randomly, but through a field wide application process. Thus, results should not be understood as being representative of the whole choral field.

The study builds on a substantial body of past research conducted by WolfBrown and other researchers investigating the intrinsic impact of live arts programs (see Pages 29-30).

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[1] *The Chorus Impact Study: How Children, Adults and Communities Benefit from Choruses*, 2009, Chorus America

Personal relationships fuel the audience for choral concerts

Unlike other kinds of arts organizations like orchestras, operas, and ballet companies, many choruses generate a significant portion of their total audience by leveraging their singers' personal relationships with friends and family members. Among the four youth choruses surveyed, four in five respondents have a familial or friendship relationship with a young performer, and 54% are parents or grandparents.

Among audiences for adult choruses, 36% of respondents, on average, have any sort of relationship with a performer. The figure jumps to 56% for the three LGBTQ choruses in the cohort. Here, the predominant relationship is not familial but one of friendship. As might be expected, audiences for concerts by volunteer singers tend to be more relationship-driven (50%), while audiences for concerts by paid singers are less relationship-driven (25%). LGBTQ choruses are particularly effective at attracting singers' co-workers and colleagues (12%).

Social motivations drive first-time attendance; musical motivations lead to more impactful experiences

First-time attendees to a given chorus's programs are more likely than frequent attendees to cite social motivations, especially "because someone invited you" and "to spend quality time with family members." Here we see the importance of social invitations in driving first-time attendance. Social motivations are also paramount for holiday concerts, which is hardly surprising.

Boston Children's Chorus, 13th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Tribute Concert: Raw Truth; Photo: Gretchen Helene Photography

Programs featuring full-length classical works (e.g., oratorios, requiems, masses) are associated with program-specific motivations ("revisiting a familiar work" and "hearing the work of a specific composer"). For example, eight in 10 respondents at a concert of Mozart's *Requiem in D Minor* attended "to revisit a familiar work." The promise of hearing a treasured work is a significant motivation. It also suggests high expectations born of familiarity, especially given the number of singers in the audience.

Programs featuring new or unfamiliar music tend to attract people who want to discover something new. For example, three quarters of survey respondents for Houston Chamber Choir's *Mexicantos* program (billed as "five centuries of Mexican choral treasures") attended "to discover music you haven't heard before."

Results underscore the fundamental relationship between audiences and the artistic programs they choose to attend: the audience is a reflection of what's on stage. In curating programs, artistic directors are not just selecting repertoire but also curating their chorus's constituency.

Other analysis suggests a predictive relationship between specific motivations and specific impacts – audience members tend to achieve the outcomes they're looking for. Those who show up with social intentions tend to have less impactful experiences compared to those whose expectations are calibrated to the musical program.

Audiences are deeply affected by the artistic work

Respondents answered a series of mandatory and optional questions about the impact of their experience at the concert, including several open-ended questions. The primary constructs of impact investigated in the study are: Captivation; Emotional Resonance; Intellectual Stimulation; Aesthetic Enrichment; and Social Bridging and Bonding. Within each of these constructs several indicators were available, one of which was mandatory.

Figure 1. Orff: Carmina Burana (Cincinnati May Festival)

Using these constructs we are able to characterize the impact "footprints" of individual programs, and can see larger patterns in terms of the kinds of programs that generate different kinds of impacts. Figure 1, for example, provides a snapshot of reported impacts for a performance of Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* by the May Festival Chorus and Cincinnati Symphony. Many of the programs of full-length classical works are notable for generating high levels of Captivation and Emotional Resonance.
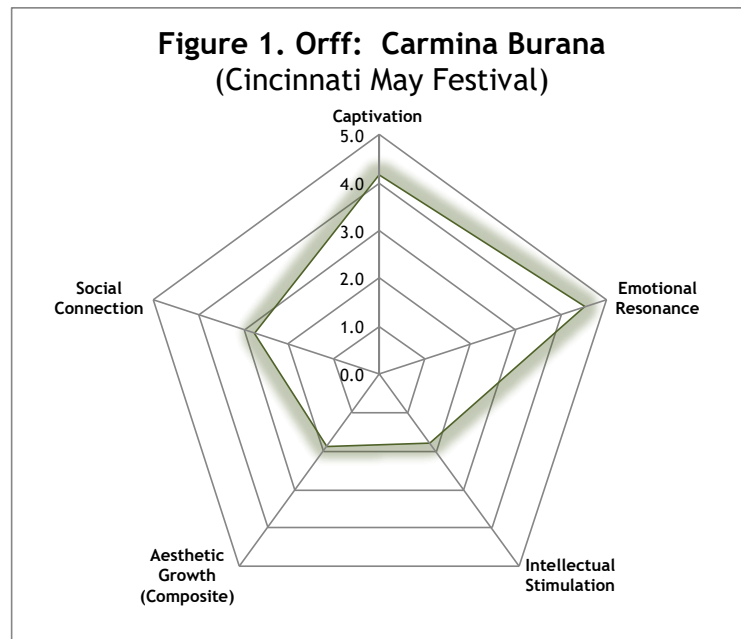
Contrast this with the impact footprint of *WITNESS: Let Freedom Ring,* a concert produced by VocalEssence saluting Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with guest artist Sounds of Blackness (Figure 2), where we see high levels of social connection and Aesthetic Enrichment.

An open-ended question asked respondents to list up to six specific words describing how they felt during or after the concert. Over 34,400 individual words were submitted, representing 3,061 unique words. Analysis of this data reveals seven underlying veins of affect[2]:

1. Amusement (happiness, joy, thrill, festivity)
2. Fulfillment and gratitude (contentedness, satisfaction, grateful, appreciative)
3. Spiritual awareness (inspired, uplifted, meditative)
4. Captivation, focus and stimulation (amazement, awe, excited, engaged)
5. Relaxation (calmness, serenity)
6. Pensiveness (reflective, thoughtful, curious)
7. Empowerment (proud)

The significant volume of data on felt emotions allows for analysis of variations in affect across specific artistic programs, types of programs, and types of choruses, which may be found in the body of the report. Subtle but important differences can be observed between programs of full-length classical works (emphasis on spirituality, serenity), thematic programs (emphasis on fulfillment, sympathy, reflection), programs by youth choruses (emphasis on feelings of pride), and holiday programs (emphasis on happiness, relaxation).
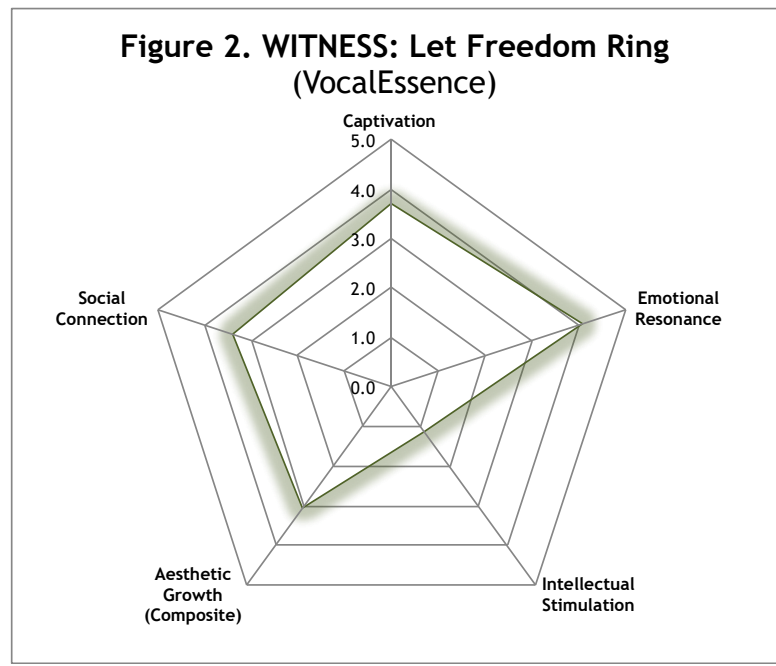
Figure 2. WITNESS: Let Freedom Ring (VocalEssence)

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[2] Using the definition of "affect" used in the field of psychiatry: "an immediately expressed and observed emotion."

Audiences seek "curatorial insight"

The primary approach to measuring Intellectual Stimulation was to ask respondents if they left the concert with unanswered questions. Across all programs surveyed, 29% indicated they left with "a few questions" and 3% indicated that they left with "a lot of questions." Current and former singers in the audience were much more likely to have questions.

Over 3,400 respondents answered an open-ended follow-up question asking, "What were one or two of your questions?" Results for a cross-section of choruses and programs were coded to facilitate analysis. The top four categories of questions were:

Category of Question	Percent
Questions about program choices and overall design	22%
Predominantly questions about the theme or selection of pieces
Questions about the singers/choir members	19%
Predominantly questions about the singers' feelings, or how they learned the pieces
Questions about the repertory/pieces on the program	18%
Predominantly questions about the history/origin of the pieces on the program
Questions about the texts/lyrics	16%
Mostly questions about singing in foreign languages, foreign texts

We have seen a similar phenomenon in other studies, especially studies of orchestra audiences. Audiences want to know the backstory on program design – why specific pieces were selected to be on the same program – what inspired the artistic director to choose a certain piece, or to interpret a piece the way s/he did. By and large, results suggest that audiences are far more interested in curatorial insight than they are in biographical information about the ensemble, composer or soloists.

When they occur, Social Bridging and Bonding outcomes are symbiotic and powerful

Feelings of social connection varied greatly across programs. Programs of sacred music were less likely to generate feelings of social connection, while programs of a participatory nature (e.g., sing-a-longs), MLK tribute programs, programs featuring guest artists drawn from the community, and programs by youth choruses were more likely to engender feelings of social connection.

Feelings of social connectedness are strongly predictive of Emotional Resonance and overall impact, but are statistically unrelated to measures of Intellectual Stimulation.

Although not mandatory, several choruses asked questions indicating Social Bridging (i.e., gaining exposure to the beliefs and customs of a group other than your own) and Social Bonding (i.e., building a network of people within your own group). Audiences at concerts by youth ensembles reported categorically higher levels of Social Bonding, which is understandable given the high incidence of familial and friendship relationships between audience members and the young performers.

Testing the theory that audiences of a specific cultural background would report higher levels of Social Bonding at concerts featuring the music of that culture, results for Social Bonding were cross-tabulated by racial/ethnic group for a cohort of six concert programs celebrating African American music and artists. African American respondents at these events reported significantly higher levels of Social Bonding. Similarly, Hispanic respondents at two concerts celebrating Mexican culture reported significantly higher levels of Social Bonding compared to non-Hispanics.

Most significantly, the two indicators of Social Bridging and Social Bonding outcomes were found to move together. Programs that trigger one tend to trigger the other. This reinforces the idea that Social Bridging and Social Bonding are, in fact, opposite sides of the same coin.

VocalEssence *¡Cantaré!* Concert, 2015; Photo: Bruce Silcox

In sum, audience members who experience Social Bridging and Social Bonding outcomes are more likely to have memorable, satisfying experiences at choral concerts. Aside from the implications for program design, this points to the pivotal role that marketing plays in drawing a diverse mix of audiences to culturally-focused programs, such that both types of social outcomes can occur in the same space, at the same time.

Different artistic programs generate different impacts on audiences

We have always known that different artistic programs have different impacts on audiences, and that the impact of artistic work is situational and inherently contextual in reference to the audience receiving it. Reflecting on the totality of impact data using factor analysis, correlations and analysis of coded qualitative data, one can see natural groupings of artistic programs based on the patterns of impact they generate (in no particular order):

- Full length classical works (oratorios, requiem, masses) and other programs of mixed sacred repertoire, which tend to generate higher impacts on the emotional/spiritual dimension, and which tend to attract more seasoned audiences;

- Culturally-focused programs, including MLK tribute programs, often with guest artists or community ensembles, which tend to generate Social Bridging and Social Bonding outcomes, but also Emotional Resonance;
- Programs of popular music and the more light-hearted holiday programs, which tend to generate feelings of happiness and social connection, and which often serve as pathways into the world of choral music;
- Thematic programs featuring works revolving around a political topic or social issue, and programs featuring the music of diverse cultural traditions, which tend to generate higher levels of Aesthetic Enrichment and Intellectual Stimulation;
- Programs of music of a more ethereal, solemn or ambient nature, which tend to generate feelings of pensiveness, serenity, and contemplation, but are generally associated with lower levels of Captivation.

Involved audience members report higher levels of impact

Audience participation is positively associated with impact. Of the four types of audience participation tested in the survey, "singing along to the music" – the most common form of audience participation (50% incidence, overall) – is least predictive of overall impact. "Clapping along to the music" (21%) is associated with social connection and overall impact. As might be expected, "talking to someone you don't know" (32%) is a strong predictor of social connection and also a predictor of other impacts.

Consider that nearly 30% of all audience members reported "dancing or moving to the music" – a self-activated form of audience participation. Much of this "moving" is done at holiday programs, but also at programs featuring music in the Gospel tradition. Also, above average percentages of audience members reported "moving" (in their seats, presumably) to pieces like Handel's *Messiah* and Mozart's *Requiem in D Minor*, especially among former singers. Perhaps their familiarity with these pieces triggers a physical reaction to the work – embodying the music, literally, by physically swaying, "conducting" with one's head or arms, or otherwise moving in one's seat. Regardless, choruses would be well advised to facilitate the conditions in which audience members are comfortable enough to "move" in their seats, given the linkage to impact. (There were numerous complaints about uncomfortable seating, particularly in churches.)

In situations and contexts where it makes sense, the research finds that different approaches to audience participation can amplify different kinds of impact, particularly social connection.

The language of impact allows for conversation about programming and mission fulfillment

As a postscript, we acknowledge that the research entirely sidesteps the matter of "artistic quality," which generally refers to perceptions of musicianship, technical

proficiency and quality of interpretation. In other studies, we've found that audience adjudications of artistic quality are so subjective as to be unhelpful, and, in any case, that notions of artistic quality are encompassed in the indicators of Captivation and Emotional Resonance.

The study's focus on impact, as opposed to satisfaction, is intended to shift conversation away from whether audiences "liked" or "disliked" a program, and instead explore how they were affected by it. This recognizes and values the artistic vision of music directors as the primary force behind programming decisions, while still allowing for meaningful conversation about audiences.

In addition to the research findings discussed in this report, the study served a dual purpose of building the capacity of participating choruses and the choral field more generally to design and conduct surveys. A great deal was learned about data collection methods and response rates. The tools developed for this study, including the survey design template and data collection guidelines, are available to the entire membership of Chorus America.

The hard work of countless board and staff members made this study possible, and, ultimately, the audience members who invested time and energy by completing a survey. We hope this research spawns continued discourse and critical reflection on how audiences construct meaning and memory from concerts of choral music, and how choruses can curate impacts through thoughtful program design.

Methodology

Choruses self-selected into the study based largely on the availability of foundation funding. The geographical purview of the study, with concentrations of choruses in Cincinnati, Boston, Pittsburgh, Washington, D.C., and the San Francisco Bay Area is a byproduct of the regional focus of the study's funders. Several choruses located outside of these cities opted in to the study at their own expense. Significant efforts were made to identify and include a diversity of choruses (e.g., youth choruses, LGBTQ choruses, ensembles with and without paid singers).

In interpreting the results, bear in mind that the cohort of 23 choruses that participated in the study is not intended to be a representative sample of Chorus America's member choruses. Results, in aggregate, should be considered exploratory in nature and should not be interpreted as being representative of any larger group of choruses. Despite these limitations, the concert programs offered by the 23 choruses provide a rich cross-section of musical programs to analyze, spanning diverse music traditions and genres.

Overview of Data Collection Methods

Most of the 23 participating choruses surveyed audiences at three to five concert programs each year, for two years. In many cases surveys were collected at multiple performances of the same program. In total, surveys were fielded at a total of 269 performances of 136 different concert programs.

WolfBrown staff negotiated an optimal mix of data collection methods with each chorus, based on their unique situation. An objective of the study was to evaluate response rates for different approaches to data collection. With this in mind, choruses employed a mix of data collection approaches including:

1. Pre-Concert In-Venue Paper Surveys. Surveys are pre-set on seats or distributed by survey workers to patrons as they enter the venue. Patrons return their completed surveys to a survey worker before the start of the concert, or hand them in at intermission. Since patrons fill out this survey before the program, it is not possible to ask questions about impact or satisfaction.
2. Mail-Back Paper Surveys. Survey packets are taped to seat backs or handed out to patrons as they exit the venue; each packet consists of the survey itself tucked inside a postage-paid Business Reply Mail envelope addressed to WolfBrown's data entry contractor. This method allows for feedback from both ticket buyers and those who come with them, but also carries the costs associated with survey printing and manual data entry.
3. Online Only. Email messages requesting cooperation with the survey were emailed to ticket buyers (only). Respondents completed the survey online.

4. Mixed Methods Approach. Some choruses used a combination of paper surveying and online surveying (emails sent to ticket buyers). Recipients were given a choice as to how they'd prefer to respond.

Participating choruses accessed their survey results through WolfBrown's proprietary online dashboard software. In situations where online surveying was undertaken, results were available to participating choruses in real time. Data from paper surveys was hand-keyed by a professional data entry contractor and manually uploaded to the dashboards, generally within two to four weeks of the concert.

All data collected as of May 1, 2016, was included in the statistical analysis presented in this report. Some choruses continued surveying after this deadline. To accomplish the analysis, data was downloaded from the dashboard software into IBM's SPSS Statistics software, and cleaned and coded. The SPSS data file, available through Chorus America, is available to other researchers who'd like to delve into the data file for their own research purposes.

Response Rates

Overall, the data set used for this report includes 14,236 individual survey responses. Response rates varied greatly by method, and by chorus within each method.

Method	Avg. Response Rate	Low	High
Pre-concert in-venue paper surveys (8 programs)	51%	15%	71%
Mail-back paper surveys (26 programs)	28%	18%	59%
Online only (40 programs)	21%	8%	50%
Mixed methods approach – total (14 programs)	24%		
Mixed methods approach – paper (combined)	17%	3%	50%
Mixed methods approach – online (combined)	12%	8%	45%

Results point to some important lessons on data collection approaches for audience surveying:

- Surveying audiences before performances using paper surveys yields superior response rates (51%, on average). When gaining an accurate demographic profile of the audience is a high priority, this approach to data collection produces the best results.
- For gathering post-performance feedback, mail-back paper surveys yield the best result (28%, on average). While online surveying has the low-cost advantage, it yields significantly fewer surveys (21%, on average), and only from ticket buyers for whom email addresses are known. The mail-back paper method has the advantage of covering both ticket buyers and non-buyers. With strong recruitment efforts, the mail-back paper survey method can yield response rates in the range of 35% to 45% or higher.
- While the mixed methods approach yielded more than the online-only approach (24% vs. 21%, respectively), it did not yield as much as the mail-

back paper survey approach (28%). Results suggest that organizations going to the trouble of administering paper surveys may not need to supplement the effort with an online approach, although there will be exceptions.

- Given the wide variations in response rates across choruses, we conclude that efforts to enhance response rates matter a great deal, including:
  - Announcements from the stage requesting cooperation with the survey (including an explanation of the purpose of the research)
  - Adequate staff/volunteer support of paper-based surveys
  - Verbal requests for survey cooperation from ushers
  - Lobby signage requesting cooperation with the survey
  - Notices about the survey in printed programs, or program stuffers (including survey hyperlinks for online surveys)
  - Timely distribution of emails requesting survey cooperation, for online surveys (ideally the night of the concert, so that surveys are available to patrons when they get home); late emails lead to lower response rates)

Weighting

Responses were weighted to adjust for two known sources of bias: 1) an initial weight was calculated to adjust for the unequal probabilities that audience members at different concerts received a survey; and 2) a second weight was calculated to adjust for variations in sampling productivity across programs, so that responses at concerts with higher response rates wouldn't count disproportionately compared to responses at concerts with lower response rates. These two weights were multiplied together to achieve the final, compound weight.

In general, the effects of weighting were minimal on aggregated statistics for variables such as gender and age. Weighted and unweighted results for indicators of impact differ minimally (i.e., by no more than one percentage point).

Questionnaire Design and Mandatory Questions

In designing their questionnaires, participating choruses worked from a common survey design template (Appendix 1). Some survey questions were mandatory, allowing for cohort-wide analysis, while other questions were optional, allowing the choruses a degree of customization based on their unique needs and priorities.

Mandatory questions included:

- Annual frequency of attendance at this chorus's programs
  - *"In a typical year, approximately how many times do you attend [Name of Chorus] productions?"*
- Relationship(s) with performers

- "What relationship(s) do you have with people who performed in the chorus (or with the chorus)?"
- Past experience as a singer
  - "Have you had any experience with singing in a chorus?"
- Captivation
  - "At any point during the concert did you lose track of time and get fully absorbed?"
- Emotional Resonance
  - "Overall, how strong was your emotional response to the concert?"
  - "What words best describe how the concert made you feel? Please answer using single words, one per line, up to six words."
- Intellectual Stimulation
  - "Did the concert raise questions in your mind that you would like to ask the performers or creators of the work?"
  - "If yes, what were one or two of your questions?"
- Aesthetic Enrichment
  - "Were you already familiar with the artistic work of [name of chorus]?" [mandatory in Year 1 only]
  - "Were you exposed to a type or style of [music/choral music] that you had not heard before?"
  - "Were you exposed to the work of a [composer or songwriter] whose work you'd not known before?"
  - "Were you exposed to at least one unfamiliar [musical work], even if you were previously familiar with the composer?"
  - "Were you exposed to a different interpretation of a [musical work] you had previously heard?" [mandatory in Year 1 only]
- Social Connection
  - "Did you feel a sense of connection with others in the audience?"
- Engagement
  - "At any point during the concert, did you do any of the following things?" [answer items: clap-along with the music (not applaud); sing-along with the music; talk to someone you didn't know; dance or move to the music; none of the above]
- Summative Impact
  - "When you look back on this concert a year from now, how much of an impression do you think will be left?"
- Demographics
  - Gender
  - Age
  - Home ZIP code

Most of the analyses in this report draw on results from the mandatory questions, in order to take advantage of the large volume of data. On occasion, results from optional questions are included when there is sufficient data and interesting variations to report.

Approach to Data Analysis

In cohort studies of this nature, there is a natural tendency to want to compare and contrast audience data across choruses. In fact, nearly all of the 23 choruses agreed to share their data with each other through WolfBrown's online dashboard reporting interface. There is a risk, however, in going too far with direct comparisons across individual choruses. Who has the oldest audience? The youngest? Which program generated the strongest emotional impact? The weakest? In reporting results, we refrain from making direct comparisons between choruses in order to avoid implying that there are "winners" and "losers" with respect to the impact of artistic programs.

For the purposes of analysis, a number of administrative variables were created to characterize the attributes of the choruses and their concert programs. These included:

- Day of performance (day of the week)
- Time of performance (matinee vs. evening)
- Year of performance
- Adult or youth chorus
- Volunteer, partially paid, or paid singers
- LGBTQ chorus (Yes/No)
- Holiday program (Yes/No)
- Sacred music only, mostly sacred, blend, mostly secular, secular only
- Dominant style of singing (classical, pop, other)
- Era of music (separate variables for Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Modern)
- Type of venue (church, concert hall, other)
- Number of pieces on the program
- Number of singers performing on the program
- Guest choir (Yes/No)
- Guest vocalist (Yes/No)
- Guest instrumentalist (Yes/No)
- Guest conductor (Yes/No)
- Other guest performer (Yes/No)
- Performed with orchestra (Yes/No)
- Performed with accompaniment (Yes/No)
- Was the chorus the primary organization responsible for producing the concert? (Yes/No)
- Program was part of a festival (Yes/No)
- Program included commissioned piece(s) Yes/No

Limitations of the Data

Several forms of self-selection bias are present in nearly all audience survey data sets, including this one. This includes: 1) loyalty bias – bias resulting from the tendency of the most loyal and most frequently attending patrons to complete surveys (i.e., subscribers typically respond to surveys at twice the rate of single ticket buyers); 2) bias from online survey administration – to the extent that some patrons do not have access to email, or are not facile enough with browser software, or mistrust email and don't open email; this form of bias tends to favor younger respondents; 3) bias from paper survey administration – to the extent that some patrons strongly prefer online surveying and won't take a paper survey because it is "clunky" or they don't want to carry it home; this form of bias tends to favor older respondents. In fact, the average age of respondents to online surveys was two and a half years younger than the average age of respondents to paper surveys – a statistically significant difference.

Ultimately, the extent of these biases is unknown. In our experience, loyalty bias is the most pervasive form of bias in audience survey results. Readers should bear in mind that results most likely reflect the views of the more loyal and frequent attenders. In other situations we would weight for subscriber status (to offset loyalty bias), but many of the choruses participating in this study do not sell tickets on subscription.

Who attended the 23 participating choruses' concerts?

Choruses were given a large amount of discretion over demographic questioning. Given the opt-in nature of the study, and given the study's focus on impact, less importance was attached to demographic profiling. Age and gender were the only mandatory questions, and are the focus of this section. Among the optional demographic questions, 15 of the 23 choruses asked a question about race/ethnicity, which is also reported here.

Additionally, 11 choruses asked a question about household income, and four choruses asked about educational attainment. Based on this limited data, the overall picture is one of a relatively affluent and well-educated audience.

Across the 11 choruses for which income figures are available, 58% earn over $100,000 annually, and 32% earn over $150,000. But there is significant variation within the cohort. Some choruses are better able to serve lower to moderate-income households (e.g., 58% with income under $75,000), while others are more challenged in serving these households (e.g., 31% with income under $75,000). A variety of factors may influence income levels reported by audience members, including ticket prices, regional variations in the cost of living, and the art itself.

Across the four choruses asking about educational attainment, 87% of respondents reported having earned a college degree or higher degree.

In interpreting these results, recall that the 23 participating choruses do not represent a random sample of all choruses. Results, therefore, are not representative of the entire choral field, but only of the 23 participating choruses.

Gender

Across the entire data set, 63% of respondents identified as female, 37% identified as male, and 0.3% identified as "transgender or other." This is typical of surveys of arts audiences, with the exception of jazz audiences, which tend to skew male. The female skew was even higher among audiences for youth choruses, at 74%.

Respondents at concerts by the three LGBTQ choruses in the sample were much more likely than audiences at concerts by other adult choruses to identify as male (58% vs. 36%, respectively).

We know from other research that women are more likely than men to take surveys. In one study, women were found to be over-represented in the survey sample by about three percentage points. (A random sample of audience members at these performances was visually tallied as male or female, with results compared against

self-reported gender identity from surveys.[3]) While the overall difference was relatively small, the degree of female over-representation varied significantly across organizations, from -3% to +15%.

It is impossible to adjust for gender bias in the dataset on choral audiences. Nonetheless, readers should bear in mind that results almost certainly over-represent female respondents. In a later section we'll see that women tend to report slightly higher levels of Emotional Resonance and other impacts compared to men.

Age

Across the entire sample, the average age is 60 years, while the median age (half above, half below) is 63 years, pointing to a skew on the high end of the age spectrum. Across the participating choruses, average age ranged from a low of 50 (a youth chorus) to a high of 66 (an adult choir).

Figure 3. Age Distribution, by Type of Chorus
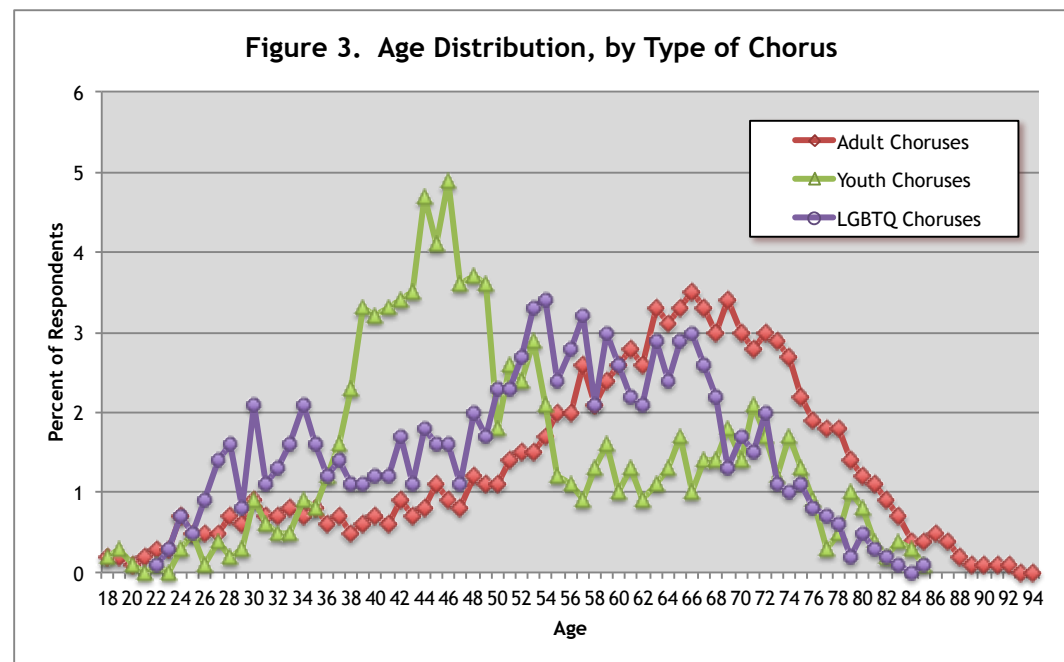
Audiences at concerts by youth choruses are nine years younger, on average, than audiences for concerts by adult choruses (51 vs. 60, respectively), which is intuitive, since more than half of them are parents or grandparents of the young singers (Figure 3). Also, LGBTQ choruses tend to draw audiences that are younger than audiences for other kinds of adult choruses (53 vs. 60, respectively).

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[3] Pilot study of audiences at programs offered by 19 performing arts organizations funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, 2011

Looking at audiences for adult choruses only, audiences for concerts by unpaid choruses are younger by five years compared to audiences for concerts by partially paid and fully paid choruses (57 vs. 63 and 64, respectively). In part, this appears to be a function of the higher incidence of "knowing someone in the chorus" among audiences at concerts by unpaid choruses. Audience members who have a familial or friendship relationship with one or more singers in the chorus are five years younger, on average, than those who don't.

On average, audiences for sacred music programs are five years older than audiences for secular music programs (59 vs. 64, respectively). Concerts that take place in churches attract audiences nearly two years older than audiences that take place at concert halls. Both of these factors predict age, independent of each other.

Audiences for concerts of classical music are five years older than audiences for concerts of popular music (60 vs. 55, respectively). And, as might be expected, the audience for holiday concerts is three years younger than the audience for non-holiday concerts (58 vs. 61, respectively). No significant age differences were observed in regards to the period of music represented on the program (i.e., Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Modern) with the exception that audiences at concerts featuring Modern music are two years younger, on average, than audiences at concerts featuring music from other periods.

Race/Ethnicity

Within the cohort of eight adult choruses that queried race/ethnicity, 86% of surveyed audience members identified as "White or Caucasian" (Figure 4). A similar pattern is observed for the three LGBTQ choruses, although racial/ethnic diversity is somewhat greater for four youth choruses (81% White or Caucasian).

Results vary by chorus. For example, the percentage of respondents identifying as Asian or Pacific Islander is much higher for choruses based in the San Francisco Bay Area (between 9% and 11%), where 23% of the population is Asian or Pacific Islander.

Regrettably, the vibrant field of Gospel music choruses is not visible in this picture, nor are other choruses that specifically serve urban youth or other diverse populations.

One would hypothesize a relationship between the racial diversity of a chorus and the racial diversity of its audience, especially given the high prevalence of familial and friendship relationships between audience members and performers. Unfortunately, such an analysis is beyond the purview of this study. However, several of the participating choruses produced concerts of a multi-cultural nature, providing useful illustrations.

Figure 4. Race/Ethnicity, by Type of Chorus

■ Youth Choruses (4)   ■ Adults Choruses (8)   ■ LGBTQ Choruses (3)

Race/Ethnicity	Youth Choruses (4)	Adults Choruses (8)	LGBTQ Choruses (3)
Asian or Pacific Islander	6%	3%	6%
Black or African American	4%	3%	3%
Hispanic or Latino	3%	2%	4%
Middle Eastern	0%	0%	0%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1%	0%	0%
White or Caucasian	81%	86%	84%
Other race, two or more races	3%	3%	3%
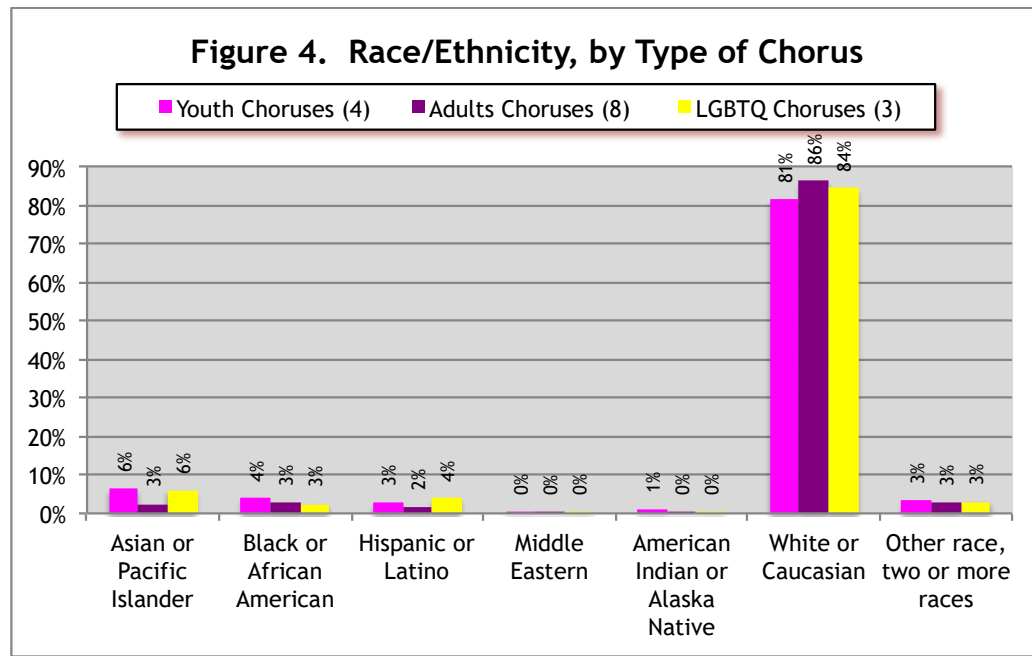
In February 2016, the Choral Arts Chorus and the Washington Performing Arts Gospel Choirs co-presented a concert entitled, "*Living the Dream… Singing the Dream*," a choral tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., at the Kennedy Center. Twenty-three percent of survey respondents at this event identified as "Black or African American" and 70% identified as "White or Caucasian."

VocalEssence produces a public concert each year as part of its WITNESS program, celebrating the contributions of African Americans to American culture and heritage. In surveys completed after a February 2016 program with the Morehouse College Glee Club, 13% of audience members identified as African American, compared to 1% for other VocalEssence presentations. Another VocalEssence program, ¡Cantaré! Community Concert, a bilingual community program featuring numerous school choruses and the VocalEssence Ensemble Singers performing works by Mexican composers, attracted a diverse audience including 12% of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity.

The data, while anecdotal, illustrates the effectiveness of culturally-specific and thematic programs in drawing more diverse audiences.

Audience/Performer Relationships

> *"What relationship(s) do you have with people who performed in the chorus (or with the chorus)?"*

Participating choruses were required to ask a question about audience members' relationship(s) to one or more performers in order to assess the prevalence of audience/performer relationships and to test hypotheses about the effect of audience/performer relationships on impact. As illustrated in Table 1, audience/performer relationships vary substantially for youth choruses and adult choruses, and, among adult choruses, between LGBTQ choruses and others.

Table 1. Audience/Performer Relationships, by Type of Chorus

Relationship	Youth	Adult (not LGBTQ)	LGBTQ
No Relationship	21%	64%	44%
Spouse or partner	0%	4%	6%
Parent or grandparent	54%	5%	5%
Other family relationship	11%	4%	5%
Friend of singer	12%	24%	53%
Colleague of singer	1%	6%	12%

Fully 79% of audiences at concerts by youth choruses have relationships with the young performers. Across the four participating youth choruses, the figure ranges from a low of 69% to a high of 92%. Friendship relationships are twice as high amongst audience members at concerts by LGBTQ choruses compared to non-LGBTQ choruses (53% vs. 24%, respectively). Still, it is notable that a quarter of audience members at concerts by adult choruses (not LGBTQ) are friends of choristers. Among the individual choruses, the figure ranges from a low of 6% (Handel and Haydn Society) to a high of 52% (Peninsula Women's Chorus).

Further analysis within the cohort of non-LGBTQ adult choruses illustrates a pattern of higher levels of audience/performer relationships (especially friendships) among unpaid choruses and lower levels of audience/performer relationships among paid and partially paid choruses (Table 2). These findings confirm the important role that adult choristers play in driving audiences to choral concerts, as well as the challenges that professional ensembles face in not having this marketing resource.

Table 2. Audience/Performer Relationships, by Paid/Unpaid Status (adults choruses only)

Relationship	Unpaid	Partially Paid	Paid
No Relationship	50%	66%	75%
Spouse or partner	6%	4%	1%
Parent or grandparent	5%	6%	2%
Other family relationship	6%	5%	2%
Friend of singer	33%	21%	20%
Colleague of singer	7%	6%	7%

Past Experience as a Choral Singer

"Have you had any experience with singing in a chorus?"

Audiences at choral concerts are likely to have experience singing in choruses. Two-thirds of audiences at concerts by adult choruses (non-LGBTQ) have experience with choral music, either 'earlier in life' (47%) or 'currently' (20%). One in four audience members for concerts by paid choruses are currently involved in choral singing, which seems high. Similar figures were observed for youth choruses, with

63% reporting past experience with choral singing, although current singers are much less prevalent among youth chorus audiences because so many of them are busy rearing children.

Past experience with choral singing is a bit lower for audiences at concerts by LGBTQ choruses, with 44% having no prior experience.

Singers in the audience are a valuable resource to choruses for a variety of reasons. They instinctively work to expose others to the joys of choral music, they seek out unfamiliar artistic work and also return to see works that they know and love.

The headline here is clear. People with experience singing in choruses – at any point in their lives – attend choral concerts both to support friends and family members in their singing and to keep the musical flame inside of them alive. If anything, this points to the symbiotic relationship between music education and the long-term health of the choral sector outside of education.

Who attends matinees? Weeknights vs. weekend nights?

On average, audiences for concerts by adult choruses on weekday nights (Monday through Friday) are older by approximately two years compared to audiences for concerts on Saturday nights (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Average Age, by Day of Week, Youth vs. Adult Choruses
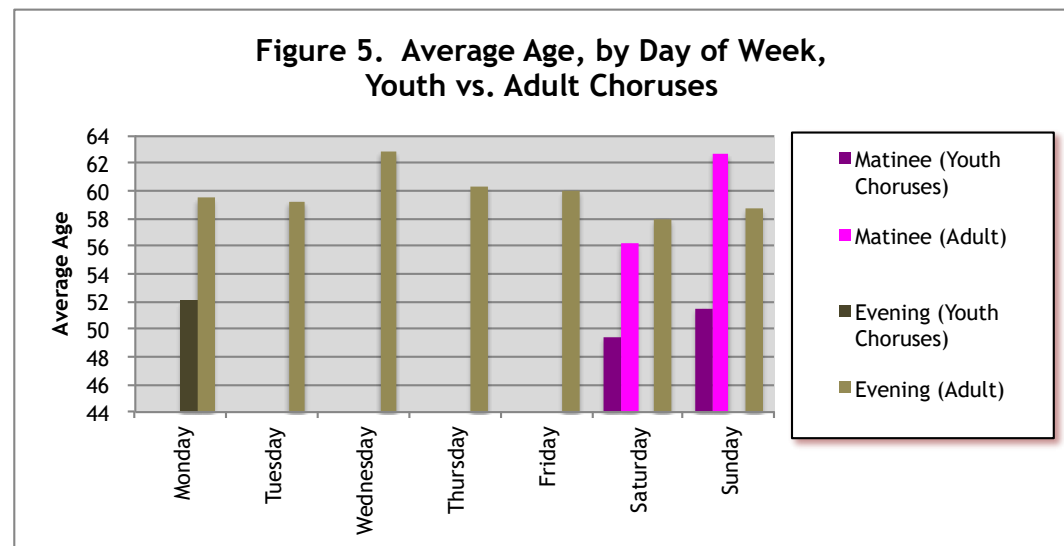
Saturday matinee audiences are another two years younger, on average. Sunday night audiences are not older than Saturday night audiences, on average, although Sunday matinee audiences are older by nearly five years. These differences are statistically significant. As noted earlier, audiences for concerts offered by youth choruses are younger, on average, compared to audiences for adult choruses. Similar to the pattern observed for adult choruses, youth chorus audiences are youngest at Saturday matinees.

Why do audiences attend choral music concerts?

Select the <u>three most important reasons</u> why you attended the performance. (select three)

Because someone invited you
To hear the work of a specific [composer/song-writer]
To spend quality time with family members
To spend quality time with friends
To be emotionally moved or inspired
To relax or escape
To discover music you haven't heard before
For work or educational purposes
To expose others to the artistic experience
To see someone I know perform on stage
To learn about or celebrate the LGBTQ culture or community [LGBTQ choruses only]
To learn about or celebrate your cultural heritage [only applicable for some programs]
To revisit a familiar work, or to hear music that you know and love

Motivations for Attending

Many things affect an individual's motivations for attending a choral concert, such as:

- Whether or not the impetus to attend was self-initiated or prompted by an invitation from another person (an invitation from a friend can circumvent a host of obstacles);
- Whether or not the individual is "required" to attend by virtue of a real or perceived familial obligation (e.g., a caregiver who brings a young singer to a concert; a spouse who feels obligated to attend her partner's concert);
- The social proposition (i.e., if attending will allow for social interaction with valued friends or family members);
- The individual's overall level of familiarity with the chorus's work, and the level of trust that the program will be worthwhile, apart from the details of the program;
- The elements of the program itself (i.e., to the extent that people are making decisions based on repertoire, guest artists, or theme), and the individual's familiarity with the details of the program.

Of course, the actual or "real" reasons why people attend arts events are often complex, nuanced and subconscious, and are difficult for some people to articulate at all. In surveys of this nature, the best we can do is provide a pre-coded list of motivations, and ask respondents to identify the ones most reflective of their own experience. This is a flawed but necessary step in understanding something that is

inherently qualitative and deeply subjective, yet so important to the future health of the field.

At the highest level, motivations vary substantially by type of chorus (Figure 6). The dominant motivation for audiences at concerts by adult choruses (not LGBTQ) is "to be emotionally moved or inspired" (62%). Audiences at concerts by youth choruses and LGBTQ choruses are less interested in the emotional ride, and more interested in the social dimensions of the experience (i.e., supporting a performer, spending quality time with family or friends).

Figure 6. Motivations for Attending, by Chorus Type (multiple responses allowed)
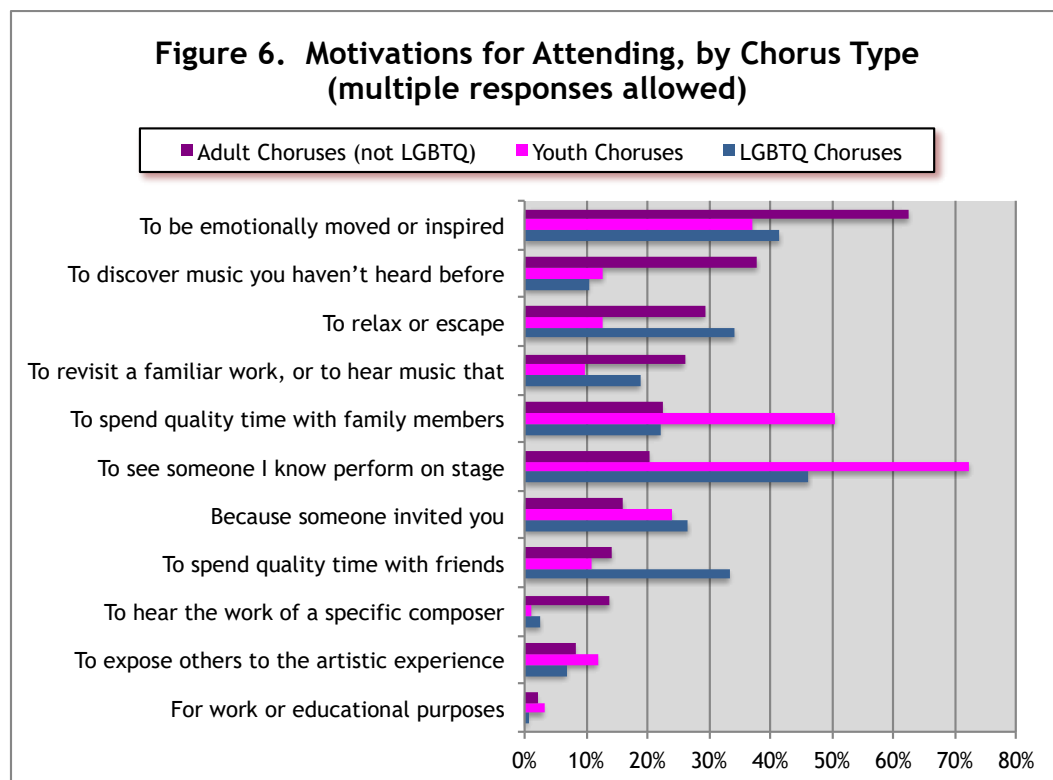
Audiences at concerts by adult choruses are, generally, more motivated by the music – discovering new music, revisiting familiar works, etc. While the promise of being able "to relax or escape" is a strong motivation for audiences at concerts by adult choruses (29%), audiences at youth concerts, quite predictably, are less likely to be looking for a relaxing experience (13%).

<u>Variations across Individual Programs</u>

Programs featuring full-length classical works (e.g., oratorios, requiems, masses) are associated with musical motivations ("revisiting a familiar work" and "hearing the work of a specific composer") while mixed repertory programs tended to be associated with social motivations. For example, eight in 10 respondents at a concert of Mozart's *Requiem in D Minor* attended "to revisit a familiar work." For the major canonical pieces, the promise of hearing a treasured work is a significant motivation. It also suggests high expectations born of familiarity.

Social motivations (i.e., spending quality time with family and friends) are paramount for holiday concerts.

Concerts featuring the works of specific composers tend to draw audiences with an interest in the composer's work. For example, audiences at Toronto Mendelssohn Choir's concert of Arvo Part's *Passio* reported the highest incidence of the motivation "to hear the work of a specific composer" (59%). They came to hear Part's work.

Programs featuring new or unfamiliar music tend to attract people who want to discover something new. For example, three quarters of survey respondents for Houston Chamber Choir's *Mexicantos* program (billed as "five centuries of Mexican choral treasures") indicated that they attended "to discover music you haven't heard before."

All of this is intuitive and validates of one of the central tenets of decades of audience research – that the audience is a reflection of what's on stage. Artistic directors curate programs, and, in doing so, curate audiences. It also suggests that audiences are capable of calibrating their expectations based on the artistic intent of the program.

Variations by Demographic Characteristics

Patterns can be observed with respect to demographic characteristics and motivations for attending. For example, multiple regression analysis indicates that different motivations are associated with younger and older ages.

Motivations associated with older ages (in order of influence):
- To discover music you haven't heard before
- To revisit a familiar work, or to hear music that you know and love
- To be emotionally moved or inspired

Motivations associated with younger ages (in order of influence):
- For work or educational purposes (e.g., students)
- To see someone I know perform on stage
- Because someone invited you
- To expose others to the artistic experience
- To spend quality time with family members
- To relax or escape
- To spend quality time with friends

Men are more likely to be motivated by "revisiting a familiar work" and "spending quality time with family members" while women are more likely to be motivated by the promise of "spending quality time with friends" and "to expose others to the artistic experience."

Variations by Frequency of Attendance

As might be expected newcomers to a given chorus's programs report a different array of motivations compared to repeat attenders. As seen in Figure 7, first-time attendees are more likely than frequent attendees to cite social motivations, especially "because someone invited you" and "to spend quality time with family members." In contrast, frequent attendees tend to report motivations related to the musical program on offer.

Figure 7. Incidence of Citing Motivations, by Frequency of Attendance at Chorus's Programs
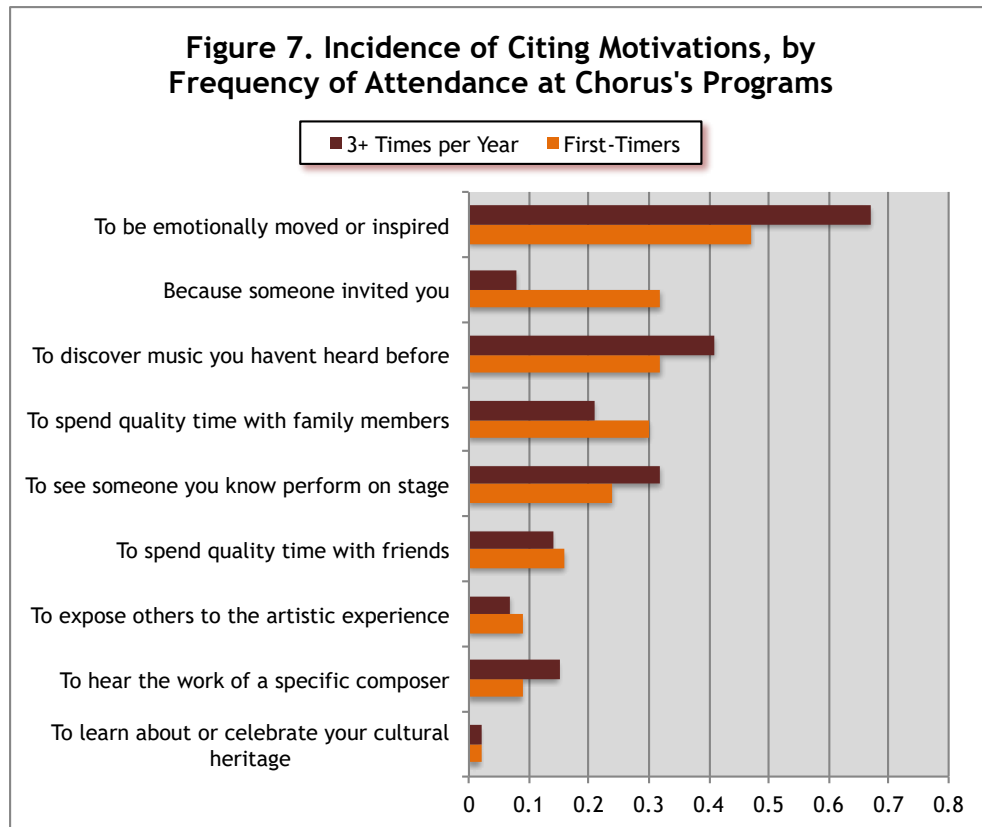
These findings underscore the importance of socially fulfilling programmatic points of entry for newcomers.

How are audiences affected by choral music concerts?

The core purpose of this study is to gain a clearer understanding of the experiences that audiences have at choral music concerts. This section delves deeply into the intrinsic impact of choral music concerts, using a framework for impact assessment developed by WolfBrown over the past 10 years.

Audiences are affected by arts programs in myriad ways. The impact of a live performance is deeply personal, highly situational, and, some argue, impossible to measure. Yet, these impacts are observable, as when an audience laughs together, or applauds enthusiastically. In interviews, audience members speak passionately about how a performance made them feel.

The nature of the art itself drives impact, of course, as well as many other factors – the quality of performance, the acoustics, the physical attributes of the performance space, etc. Some programs are plainly more engaging than others. Different musical works can evoke a wide range of emotions, and the way musical programs are curated – the selection and sequencing of pieces, the artists, the staging, lighting, etc. – can heavily influence an audience member's experience.

Through its [Intrinsic Impact](#) program, WolfBrown supports the efforts of over 100 performing arts organizations across the US to collect high quality feedback and demographic data from audiences. Undergirding this work is a significant body of research examining how individuals are affected by performing arts experiences emotionally, intellectually, aesthetically and socially. This study builds on a number of other studies examining the impact of performing arts programs, including:

- *[Assessing the Intrinsic Impacts of a Live Performance](#)*, by Alan S. Brown and Jennifer L. Novak, commissioned by 14 university presenters, 2007
- *Understanding the Intrinsic Impact of Live Theatre*, by Alan S. Brown and Rebecca Ratzkin, 2011, in *[Counting New Beans: Intrinsic Impact and the Value of Art](#)*, edited by Clayton Lord, Theatre Bay Area, a summary of the impact of 58 theatre productions.
- *[Measuring the Intrinsic Impacts of Arts Attendance](#)*, by Alan S. Brown and Jennifer L. Novak-Leonard, *Cultural Trends*, 2013, an overview of six years of research on audience impact.
- *[Understanding the Value and Impact of Cultural Experiences](#)*, by John Carnwath and Alan S. Brown, a 2014 literature review on "intrinsic cultural value" commissioned by Arts Council England examining the characteristics of artistically vibrant organizations, and taking stock of the scholarly research literature on participant experiences at arts programs.

These and other publications develop a theoretical framework for the impact of performances on individual participants. The core constructs of intrinsic impact are defined as follows:

Captivation – A participant's sense of awe, wonder, rapture; being absorbed in the moment and achieving a state of "flow." The psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, author of *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*, (1990, p. 71) argues that achieving a state of heightened focus and immersion in activities such as art, play, and work is the root of happiness, and an outcome in and of itself.

Emotional Resonance – The intensity of emotional response, regardless of the nature of the emotion, and the degree of empathy with the performers and therapeutic value in an emotional sense.

Intellectual Stimulation – The personal and social dimensions of cognitive engagement; the acquisition and consideration of new information about an issue, idea, or culture; the acquisition and consideration of new information about the content, message, or meaning of the art; a heighted cognitive state resulting from being provoked or challenged by the art itself or by an idea or message transmitted through the art.

Aesthetic Enrichment – Speaks to outcomes associated with exposure to new or unfamiliar art, artists, or styles of art. Over his or her lifetime, every individual has a unique arc of aesthetic development. Each time an individual is exposed to a new or unfamiliar work of art, context is gained and a progression occurs, regardless of whether the individual likes the art. This construct asserts the inherent value of aesthetic exposure, including the outcomes associated with revisiting familiar art.

Social Bridging and Bonding – Encompasses the sense of connectedness that can result from arts experiences, both with respect to self-understanding and identity construction, as well as a sense of belonging with, or pride in, one's community, defined by geography or people. This construct encompasses the social outcomes associated with learning about art, ideas, and people outside of one's own life experience.

Captivation

> *At any point during the concert did you lose track of time and get fully absorbed? (select one)*
> *0 = No, Not at All*
> *1 = Yes, a Little; 2 (unlabeled); 3 = Yes, Somewhat; 4 (unlabeled); 5 = Yes, Completely*

Most audiences at choral music programs report high levels of Captivation (Figure 8). Across the 23 choruses, the average figure was 3.8 on a scale of 0 (not at all) to 5 (completely). There is little point in considering variations in Captivation (or any other impact) by chorus, given the wide variation in programming offered by most choruses. The only trend worth mentioning is that Captivation levels tend to be lower for youth choruses (3.5) compared to adult choruses (3.9).

Figure 8. Average Captivation Scores for 104 Choral Programs
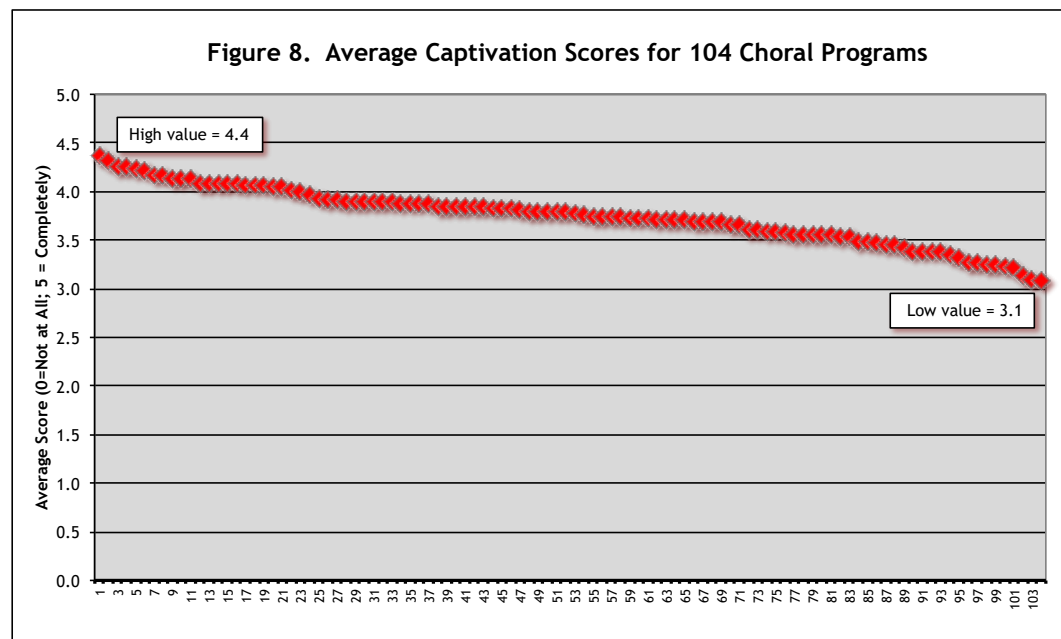
Variations by Program

Audiences at programs of sacred music tended to report higher Captivation levels than audiences at secular programs (4.0 vs. 3.8, respectively). In fact, the very highest average score for Captivation was reported by audience members at a performance of Handel's *Messiah* (4.4). Other very high Captivation scores were reported by audiences at full-length oratorios and other classical programs such as Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Mozart's *Requiem in D Minor*, Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, and Vaughan Williams' *A Sea Symphony*.

On average, holiday programs were no more or less captivating than non-holiday programs. Aside from performances of *Messiah*, "Candlelight Christmas"-like programs tended to generate higher captivation levels. Most of the more light-

hearted holiday programs generated lower Captivation levels, but, in some cases, higher levels of social connectedness.

<u>Variations by Demographic Characteristics</u>

Females reported slightly higher Captivation levels than males, on average (3.9 vs. 3.7, respectively), and older audiences tended to report higher Captivation levels. Respondents with higher frequency of attendance, and those with past experience as a singer, also tended to report higher Captivation levels. While these relationships are statistically significant, their explanatory power over Captivation is relatively weak.

Parents or grandparents of adult singers tend to be more captivated by their performances, unlike spouses or partners of singers, who are much less captivated than other audience members. At youth concerts, nearly everyone has a relationship to a singer, and Captivation levels do not vary by relationship.

Why are some artistic programs less captivating than others? Isolating responses from patrons who reported very low Captivation levels, one can observe a range of contributing factors, including:

- Uncomfortable seating
- Excessive sound from amplified artists
- Inaudible volume from balcony seats
- Dissatisfaction with the selection of music (especially when expecting something different)
- Program too long, or too short
- Inability to understand music sung in foreign languages; poor diction
- Dissatisfaction with visual elements or announcements from the stage
- Disagreement with selections of religious music, or implied religious "message"
- Lack of emotion conveyed by singers; looking for more eye contact with singers
- Depressing or disturbing subject matter

Overall, the data suggest that Captivation levels relate to a confluence of personal background factors, social contexts, situational factors, and program elements. While the factors driving Captivation may be difficult to pin down, Captivation levels, overall, are central to the calculus of impact. In a simple regression analysis, Captivation levels explain 26% of the variance in overall impact.

Sense of Connection to the Performers

> *Were the singers responsive to, and engaged with, the audience?*
> *0 = No, Not at All*
> *1 = Yes, a Little; 2 (unlabeled); 3 = Yes, Somewhat; 4 (unlabeled); 5 = Yes, Completely*

Some choruses asked an optional question exploring another aspect of Captivation – the audience's sense of connection with the performers. Results are available for 40 different artistic programs offered by seven choruses.

It is difficult to pin down what factors might lead an audience member to report a strong sense of connection with the performers. Factors might include: intimacy/proximity of the audience to the performers; good acoustics; lighting that illuminates the faces of the singers; the facial expressions of the singers; the audience's familiarity with the pieces on the program, efforts to engage the audience through participatory activities, etc.

Several performances were notable for high scores on this indicator, including three programs by Cantus: *Anthem; Covers: A Pop Concert*, an annual concert which promises to have audiences "singing and dancing in the aisles"; and *The Four Loves*. Also high on this indicator is Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia's holiday program *A Feast of Carols*, an annual tradition during which the singers, at one point, encircle the audience.

On the lower end of the scale for this indicator are programs of a more contemplative, abstract, or ethereal nature – programs that invite audience members to withdraw into the private worlds of their imagination.

Emotional Resonance

"Overall, how strong was your emotional response to the concert?" (select one)
0 = No Emotional Response
1 = Weak; 2 (unlabeled); 3 = Moderate; 4 (unlabeled); 5 = Strong

Reported levels of Captivation and Emotional Resonance tend to move in the same direction, quite naturally. Respondents who reported higher levels of Emotional Resonance also reported higher levels of Captivation (Pearson correlation coefficient = .60 on a scale of -1.0 to +1.0, which is high but not extremely high). In a simple regression analysis, the two variables explore 37% of the variance in the other variable. However, we cannot conclude anything about causality – that higher Captivation leads to more intense feelings of emotion, or *vice versa*).

Average figures for Emotional Resonance were higher than average figures for Captivation (4.2 vs. 3.8, respectively). Across the programs surveyed, average figures for Emotional Resonance ranged from a high of 4.7 (for a production of *Messiah*) to a low of 3.5 (for a community concert featuring several youth choirs). There were several instances of programs for which audiences reported relatively high levels of Emotional Resonance but comparatively low levels of Captivation. These tended to be concerts by youth choruses, but also adult programs of a more serious nature (e.g., thematic concerts dealing with topics like oppression).

As with Captivation, sacred music programs tended to elicit higher levels of Emotional Resonance compared to secular programs, and women tended to report higher levels of Emotional Resonance compared to men, especially at concerts by youth choruses.

In general, audience members of color had stronger emotional reactions to thematic programs focusing on their political history or cultural traditions. For example, African American respondents at concerts celebrating African American music or culture (e.g., MLK tribute programs) reported higher levels of Emotional Resonance compared to others (4.6 vs. 4.2, respectively).

Exploring the Varied Emotional Footprints of Choral Concerts

> *What words best describe how the concert made you feel? Please answer using single words, one per line, up to six words.*

All respondents were asked to list up to six words that best describe how the concert made them feel. Over 34,400 individual words were submitted, representing 3,061 unique words. The significance of this data lies in the fact that these are the unfiltered words of audience members. The top 15 "felt emotions" appear in Figure 9, along with their respective frequencies. Similar words were combined for this analysis.

Figure 9. Top 15 Felt Emotions (entire sample)
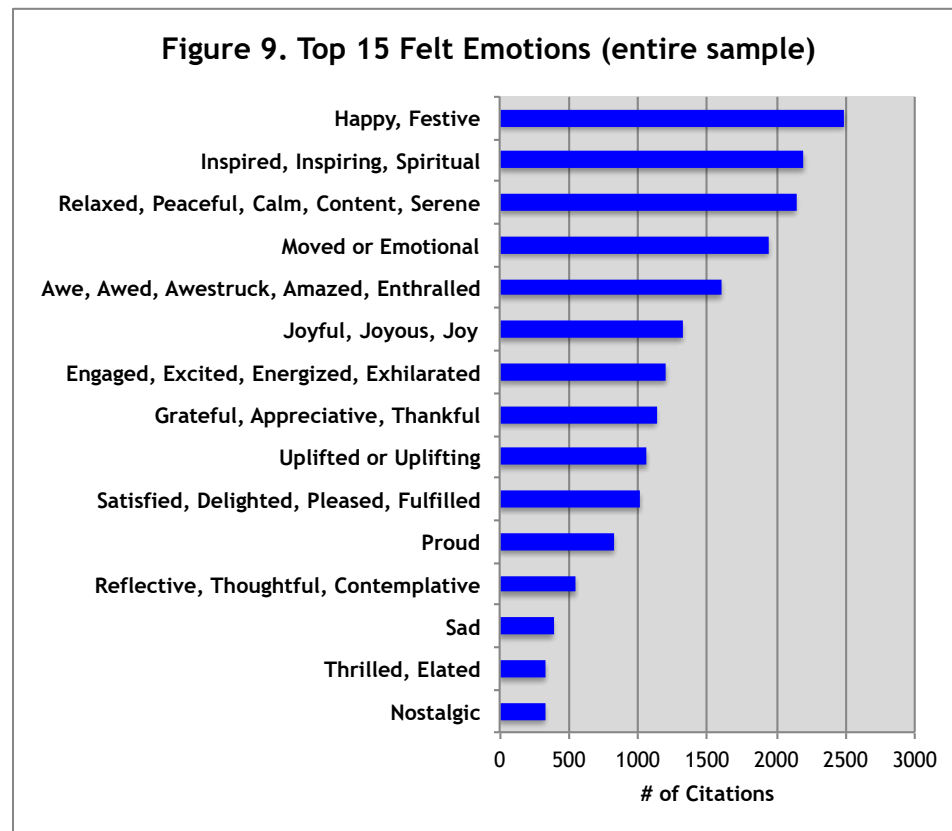
Overwhelmingly, respondents reported having "affective" experiences[4] – mostly feelings stemming from the "peaceful" and "joyful" roots on Willcox's "The Feeling Wheel," a framework for categorizing emotions. The predominant veins of affect include:

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[4] Using the definition of "affect" used in the field of psychiatry: "an immediately expressed and observed emotion."

1. Amusement (happiness, joy, thrill, festivity)
2. Fulfillment and gratitude (contentedness, satisfaction, grateful, appreciative)
3. Spiritual awareness (inspired, uplifted, meditative)
4. Captivation, focus and stimulation (amazement, awe, excited, engaged)
5. Relaxation (calmness, serenity)
6. Pensiveness (reflective, thoughtful, curious)
7. Empowerment (proud)

The significant volume of data on emotional stimulation allows for analysis of variations in affect across specific artistic programs, types of programs, and types of choruses. For these analyses, word cloud software was employed to illustrate variations in emphasis.

Figure 10. Emotions Word Cloud: Oratorios and Full-length Classical Works (an aggregation of results from 20 programs)

Figure 10 illustrates the emotions reported for full-length oratorios and classical works such as Bach's *Mass in B minor*, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, Handel's *Messiah* and *Saul,* Haydn's *The Creation*, Mozart's *Requiem in D Minor*, and Duruflé's *The Requiem*. Note the prominence of spiritualistic terms (inspired, uplifted) and raw emotion (moved, emotional).

Figure 11. Emotions Word Cloud: Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* (The Choral Arts Society of Washington, and Cincinnati May Festival, combined)

The emotional footprint of Orff's *Carmina Burana* is slightly different in that respondents tended to report emotions associated with captivation and awe (excited, thrilled, amazed, enthralled, exhilarated), no doubt a reflection of the unique nature of the work itself.

Figure 12. Emotions Word Cloud: Arvo Pärt's *Passio* (Toronto Mendelssohn Choir)

This contrasts with the emotional footprint of Toronto Mendelssohn Choir's performance of [Arvo Pärt's *Passio*](), composed in 1989 (Figure 12). Here we see a somewhat different and more complex emotional palette, notably more feelings of pensiveness (contemplative, meditative, reflective, mesmerized, transfixed). Note especially how "happy" recedes into the background. Here we see evidence that a small number of patrons were challenged by this work (bored, dispirited,

disappointed), which, in fact, may be interpreted as evidence of aesthetic growth (i.e., exposure to unfamiliar work that stretches one's aesthetic sensibilities).

Figure 13. Emotions Word Cloud: Duruflé's *The Requiem* ([Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh](#))

Duruflé's *The Requiem* generated a distinct emotional footprint characterized by feelings of serenity (peaceful, calm, prayerful).

Figure 14. Emotions Word Cloud: *Would You Harbor Me?* (Cantus)

In a thematic concert entitled *[Would You Harbor Me?](#)*, Cantus, the nine-voice male vocal ensemble based in Minneapolis, aimed to "…give voice to personal stories of crisis, homelessness, resilience, isolation, belonging and community in a program that delivers a universal message of hope and inspiration through music." The program involved a collaboration with the Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC) Vocal Ensemble. The complex emotional footprint of this concert (Figure 14) is notable for the feelings of hopefulness and gratitude, but also concern and even anger arising from the personal stories conveyed to the audience.

Across the cohort of participating choruses, results are available for three separate performances of Handel's *Messiah*. Slight variations can be discerned (Figures 15-17).

Figure 15. Emotions Word Cloud: Handel's *Messiah* (Handel and Haydn Society, Boston)

Figure 16. Emotions Word Cloud: Handel's *Messiah* (Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh)

Figure 17. Emotions Word Cloud: Handel's *Messiah* (Cincinnati May Festival)

Figure 18. Emotions Word Cloud: Youth Choruses (all responses from Boston Children's Chorus, Cincinnati Boychoir, Pittsburgh Youth Chorus, and San Francisco Girls Chorus)

Audience members at concerts by youth choruses reported a substantially different mix of emotions, dominated by feelings of pride (Figure 18). Here we see strong evidence of emotional fulfillment and empowerment amongst family members of young performers.

Figure 19. Emotions Word Cloud: Christmas programs (an aggregation of results from 15 programs)

Numerous choruses surveyed audiences at holiday programs. Analyzed together (Figure 19), these programs left an emotional footprint that is decidedly more lighthearted (happy, joyful, relaxed, festive).

Intellectual Stimulation

> *"Did the concert raise questions in your mind that you would like to ask the performers or creators of the work?"*
> *"If 'Yes', what were one or two of your questions?"*

Just as arts programs trigger feelings, they also stimulate thought. Our primary approach to measuring Intellectual Stimulation was to ask respondents if they left the concert with unanswered questions. Across all programs surveyed, 68% of respondents said they had no questions, while 29% indicated they left with "a few questions" and 3% indicated that they left with "a lot of questions." This is quite similar to a large study of theatre audiences conducted in 2010[5], which found that 35% of respondents, on average, left with unanswered questions.

As in the theatre study, younger members of the audience at choral concerts tend to have more questions. This can be explained, in part, by the fact that younger audience members are more likely than older audience members to be singers. And singers, both current and past, are much more likely to have questions.

Over 3,400 respondents answered the open-ended follow-up question, often with a detailed accounting of their questions (and typically phrased as questions). Results for a cross-section of choruses and programs were coded in order to facilitate analysis and reporting. Overall results are as follows:

Table 3: Categories of Unanswered Questions (from coded qualitative data; multiple responses allowed)

Category of Question	Percent
Questions about program choices and overall design	22%
Predominantly questions about the theme or selection of pieces	
Questions about the singers/choir members	19%
Predominantly questions about the singers' feelings, or how they learned the pieces	
Questions about the repertory/pieces on the program	18%
Predominantly questions about the history/origin of the pieces on the program	
Questions about the texts/lyrics	16%
Mostly questions about singing in foreign languages, foreign texts	
Question about the ensemble/company	8%
Predominantly questions about how singers are selected; how collaborations happen	
Questions about the rehearsal process	6%
Seeking insight into the process of preparing	
Questions about a composer	3%
Predominantly questions about the composer's life and feelings	

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[5] "Understanding the Intrinsic Impact of Live Theatre: Patterns of Audience Feedback across 18 Theatres and 58 Productions," in *Counting New Beans*, published by Theatre Bay Area, 2012.

Questions about technical production elements...3%
Mostly questions about choreography, staging, lighting
Questions about a conductor..2%
All other types of questions...2%

We have seen this pattern in other studies, especially studies of orchestra audiences. Audiences want to know the backstory on program design – why specific pieces were selected to be on the same program – what inspired the artistic director to choose a certain piece, or to interpret a piece the way s/he did. When audiences gain this "curatorial insight," they feel more involved and invested in the concert program.[6] The data suggests that audiences are far more interested in curatorial insight than they are in biographical information about the ensemble, composer or soloists.

<u>Variations by Program</u>

As might be expected, holiday concerts were significantly less likely to raise questions in audience members' minds, compared to non-holiday concerts. But variations in the incidence of unanswered questions are primarily program-driven. The following eight programs generated the most unanswered questions:

1. *TURBINE*, Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia – a site-specific work, "…*TURBINE* was conceived with Seattle based composer Byron Au Yong with the Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia collaborating with the Leah Stein Dance Company at the Fairmount Water Works on the Schuylkill River… exploring the interplay of machinery and nature."
2. *The Singing Revolution*, Cantus (Minneapolis) - "*The Singing Revolution* uses harmony to help tell the story of how music might have been the key tool for the people of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia as they kept their culture alive after being annexed by the oppressive Soviet Union…"
3. *13th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Tribute Concert*, Boston Children's Chorus - Raw Truth featuring Roomful of Teeth
4. *Would You Harbor Me?*, Cantus (Minneapolis), a program designed to "give voice to personal stories of crisis, homelessness, resilience, isolation, belonging and community" and "deliver a universal message of hope and inspiration through music."
5. *American Classic*, Vocal Arts Ensemble (Cincinnati) – "…a concert shaped by America: songs of love and remembrance, folk songs, spirituals, and a few surprises designed to delight. William Billings to Stephen Paulus."
6. *Anthem*, Cantus (Minneapolis) – "…a concert exploring how various cultures join together in song" (recorded live and subsequently released as a recording)

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[6] For additional context on audience engagement and "curatorial insight," see *Making Sense of Audience Engagement*, by Alan S. Brown and Rebecca Ratzkin (2011, p. 16)

7. *A Sea Change: Music of the Baltic Nations*, Houston Chamber Choir – similar to *The Singing Revolution*, this concert told the story of the Baltic peoples' struggle for freedom over Soviet domination.
8. *The Heart of Darkness*, Pittsburgh Camerata – "…a program of Renaissance and contemporary music that illuminates the human response to bondage that longs for freedom and relief from sorrow."

For the most part, these are all thematic programs – programs curated around a story or idea. In several cases the underlying story or idea carries a good deal of emotional weight (e.g., political strife, homelessness, servitude). In thematic programs, audiences not only respond to selections of music but are also challenged to make sense of a theme or idea, the resonance of which clearly follows them home in the form of unanswered questions. Emblematic of these questions are:

"How did the composer and choreographer put it all together?" (TURBINE)

"[It] made me curious about the historic aspect of the subject of the concert and how they came to create this concert around that subject." (The Singing Revolution)

"Is there more to the Kalief Browder story? How can I be more involved in social justice outside of work?" (13th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Tribute Concert)

"How were the performance pieces chosen? How were the homeless interviewees chosen?" (Would You Harbor Me?)

"How is it that a composer can read a poem of someone else's thoughts and be so inspired to set to music?" (American Classic)

"How did you select the music? How were decisions made as to pieces selected for the program, and how particular arrangements were selected?" (Anthem)

"Describe the experience of learning this music and performing it." (A Sea Change: Music of the Baltic Nations)

Other kinds of programs (e.g., classical works, or Christmas programs) also stimulate questions, but not to the same degree, and different kinds of questions.

In general, leaving a concert with unanswered questions is seen as a positive indicator of impact, although not having an opportunity to discuss these questions is a missed opportunity. This argues for increased efforts to engage audiences in critical reflection after concerts, especially concerts of a thematic nature that are bound to raise more questions.

Aesthetic Enrichment

"Were you already familiar with the artistic work of [name of chorus]?" [mandatory in Year 1 only]
"Were you exposed to a type or style of [music/choral music] that you had not heard before?"
"Were you exposed to the work of a [composer or songwriter] whose work you'd not known before?"
"Were you exposed to at least one unfamiliar [musical work], even if you were previously familiar with the composer?"
"Were you exposed to a different interpretation of a [musical work] you had previously heard?" [mandatory in Year 1 only]

Aesthetic growth occurs when audiences are exposed to ensembles, genres, composers, pieces, or interpretations they haven't heard before. These indicators are agnostic to the degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the program; aesthetic growth outcomes can be especially strong when audience members are challenged by a work of art, or an alternative interpretation of a familiar work. Thus, it is essential that any taxonomy of impact recognize the role that unfamiliar (and even unsettling) art plays in shaping one's aesthetic journey through an art form.

Aesthetic growth outcomes are complemented by aesthetic validation outcomes – the enrichment that comes from revisiting familiar work. Although not a focus of this study, the aesthetic enrichment that results from hearing familiar works is clearly a key component of the value system around live choral music, as evidenced by the high impacts reported by audience members at concerts of great works in the core repertory.

Table 4: Overall Results for Aesthetic Enrichment

Five Elements of Aesthetic Enrichment	Percent
Exposed to a new ensemble/chorus (Year 1 only)	16%
*Exposed to a new type or style of music	34%
*Exposed to the work of a composer you'd not heard before	68%
*Exposed to at least one unfamiliar musical work	85%
Exposed to a different interpretation of a familiar work (Year 1 only)	72%

core element

Table 4 reports overall results for the five indicators of Aesthetic Enrichment. For surveys in which all five elements were queried (Year 1 data), 95% of all respondents experienced at least one form of Aesthetic Enrichment, and 86% experienced two or more types of Aesthetic Enrichment. For surveys in which only the three core elements were queried (data from Years 1 and 2) – in other words, a stricter test of Aesthetic Enrichment – 85% of all audience members experienced at least one form of Aesthetic Enrichment, and 68% experienced two or three types of Aesthetic Enrichment.

Of course, indicators of Aesthetic Enrichment will vary greatly across programs. The following sections explore specific aspects of Aesthetic Enrichment.

Exposure to New Composers

As would be expected, programs of major canonical works by well-known composers such as Mozart, Handel, Brahms, Bach, and Haydn were unlikely to expose audience members to *"…the work of a composer whose work you'd not known before."* On the other end of the scale, an interesting array of programs generated very high levels of exposure to new composers. The 10 highest observations for this indicator were:

- *Northern Lights: Music of the Baltics and Scandinavia* (Seattle Pro Musica)
- *Caritas: Sacred Music by Women* (Seattle Pro Musica)
- *Anthem*, a program exploring the traditions and customs of singing throughout the world (Cantus)
- *Peace: Music of Three Faiths*, (Seattle Pro Musica)
- *A Sea Change: Music of the Baltic Nations*, a concert of music by Arvo Pärt and his fellow composers from Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania (Houston Chamber Choir)
- *Healing River*, a mixed program of American and Latin American music (Peninsula Women's Chorus)
- *American Classic*, "songs of love and remembrance, folk songs, spirituals, and a few surprises, from William Billings to Stephen Paulus" (Vocal Arts Ensemble, Cincinnati)
- *Prism: Part & MacMillan* (Seattle Pro Musica)
- *The Heart of Darkness* (Pittsburgh Camerata)
- *New Music for Treble Voices* (Peninsula Women's Chorus)

Generally, those who attend a chorus's programs more frequently reported higher levels of exposure to new composers, while those with lower frequency (including first-timers) reported lower levels of exposure, which makes sense. A deeper look at first-timers suggests that the most common "gateway programs" (i.e., entry points for newcomers) are the warhorses (*Messiah*, *Carmina Burana*, *St. Matthew Passion*), but also the light-hearted holiday programs, community programs featuring student choruses and other guest ensembles, and, in one case, a site-specific work (*TURBINE*, Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia).

The programs at which respondents were most likely to hear the work of unfamiliar composers were the same programs at which respondents were most likely to report hearing *"…one or more unfamiliar musical works,"* as would be expected.

It also stands to reason that audience members who reported being exposed to new composers tended to leave with more unanswered questions compared to those who were not exposed to new composers. This, as well as other findings, argues for

contextualization efforts, especially for programs featuring work that is likely to be unfamiliar to audiences.

Exposure to a New Type or Style of Music

Compared to exposure to new composers, fewer respondents indicated that they were exposed to *"… a new type or style of music."* By definition, these programs broadened the musical horizons of respondents. Bear in mind that this kind of aesthetic exposure is relative to the audience member. Someone who's never been to a choral concert before might answer this question affirmatively (i.e., they are hearing choral music for the first time) after a performance of *Messiah*. In other words, exposure to new types or styles of music is partly a function of the experience level of the audience member, and partly a function of adventurousness of the artistic program.

By and large, programs featuring the music of diverse world cultures generated the highest levels of exposure to new types or styles of music. These included *Anthem* (Cantus), *A Sea Change* (Houston Chamber Choir), and *Northern Lights: Music of the Baltics and Scandinavia* (Seattle Pro Musica), and *The Sealed Angel*, a program of Russian music (Vocal Arts Ensemble, Cincinnati).

Reflections on Risk-Taking

A new variable was calculated based on the count of five indicators of Aesthetic Enrichment, with values ranging from 0 to 5. The resulting variable provides a rough indicator of risk-taking – the degree to which an audience member ventured into unfamiliar territory (mean value = 2.9). This allows for exploratory analysis of predictive power – what demographic and other factors are associated with risk-taking?

A series of simple regression analyses uncovers several variables with significant explanatory power over risk-taking:

1. The number of pieces on a program. The more pieces on the program, the more risk-taking is reported (17% of the variance in one variable is explained by the other). Since programs with only one piece on the program are generally oratorios, requiems, and other full-length classical pieces, the variable for "number of pieces on the program" incorporates information about the program itself.
2. Commissioned works. As would be expected, programs with newly commissioned works are more likely to be associated with risk-taking (explains 8% of the variance).
3. Holiday vs. non-holiday programs. As would be expected, holiday programs are less likely to be associated with risk-taking (explains 7% of the variance).
4. Frequency of attendance. Audience members who attend a chorus's programs more frequently are less likely to report risk-taking behaviors (i.e.,

they are more familiar with the repertory, and therefore less likely to be exposed to new or unfamiliar art) (explains 6% of the variance).

In a multiple regression analysis, these four variables explain 26% of the variance in risk-taking, and all contribute meaningful explanatory power. Among the demographic variables, men are slightly less risk-seeking than women, on average, but age is not a factor.

While it may seem obvious, mixed repertory programs, especially those featuring the music of diverse cultures, as well as those featuring commissioned works, play a critical role in the ecology of audience impact in that they stimulate aesthetic growth outcomes and awaken audiences to new musical vistas.

While the aesthetic growth indicators associated with risk-taking are understood as impacts, they can also be considered as drivers of other types of impact. Analysis reveals, however, that risk-taking is not a driver of Captivation, Emotional Resonance, or summative impact.

Creative Activation

> *Did you leave the performance with an impulse or idea for being more creative in your own life or work? [Yes/No]*
> *If "Yes", how did the concert inspire you to be more creative?*

Creative activation is an outcome associated with arts attendance – the extent to which audience members are motivated or sparked in some way to be more creative, or to cultivate their own creativity. In our impact rubric, creative activation falls under the umbrella of Aesthetic Enrichment, but it could also be seen as an aspect of Intellectual Stimulation. This optional question was asked by just three choruses (May Festival and Vocal Arts Ensemble in Cincinnati, and SF Gay Men's Chorus), yielding 1,059 valid responses.

Forty-six percent of respondents to this question answered "Yes." The two Cincinnati choruses asked the open-ended follow-up question. Table 6 reports the six most frequent types of responses (i.e., coded results from roughly 200 open-ended responses), and the corresponding percentage of responses:

Table 6: Creative Activation: Types of Open-Ended Responses

Re-dedicated or inspired to practice music or improve music skills* 40%
  the breakdown of "music skills" includes choral singing (41%), playing an instrument (36%), composing or arranging music (8%), and unspecified (11%).
Sparked an interest in attending more concerts/listening to more music/learning more about music/being a better appreciator 21%
General creative activation/increased awareness of beauty 13%
Re-dedicated or inspired to make art (not music) 9%
Inspired/dedicated to pursue excellence or creativity in my life's work (not the arts) 4%

Emboldened to be more daring or innovative/think outside the box 4%

While this is a very limited data set, it begins to suggest that attendance at choral concerts motivates musicians (not just singers) to re-dedicate themselves to their music practice, and also stimulates a desire to delve more deeply into music appreciation. In turn, this raises interesting questions about what opportunities for these types of engagement are available to audience members who get inspired to hone their musical skills or deepen their appreciation of music.

Social Bridging and Bonding

A sense of belonging – feelings of connectedness – can arise from ritualized gatherings of all kinds. This is not unique to the arts, but also sports and commercial entertainment. The importance of a sense of belonging to mental health and subjective well-being is widely accepted.[7]

Audiences experience social outcomes by virtue of attending arts programs and other types of public events. Although they can be difficult to describe and problematic to measure, the social benefits of arts attendance are very real. In fact, the social aspects of intrinsic impact are the ones that cannot be replicated by watching or listening to digital recordings at home. For this study, the primary indicator of social benefit was a question about feelings of connectedness with others in the audience.

> *"Did you feel a sense of connection with others in the audience?"*
> *0 = No, Not at All*
> *1 = Yes, a Little; 2 (unlabeled); 3 = Yes, Somewhat; 4 (unlabeled); 5 = Yes, a Lot*

Feelings of Connectedness with Others in the Audience

Across all participating choruses, the mean score for *"Did you feel a sense of connection with others in the audience?"* was 2.8 on a scale of 0 to 5. Across the individual concert programs, average figures ranged from a low of 2.1 to a high of 3.9. It is difficult to discern a pattern amongst programs at the low end of the scale, except that they tend to be sacred programs and those featuring music of a solemn nature. At the high end of the scale, a clearer pattern is evident in programs of a participatory nature (e.g., sing-a-longs), MLK tribute programs, programs featuring guest artists drawn from the community, and programs by youth choruses in general. The 10 programs with the highest reported levels of social connectedness are:

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[7] *Social Connectedness: Evaluating the Healthy People 2020 Framework*, Minnesota Department of Public Health, 2010

1. *12th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Tribute Concert* (Boston Children's Chorus)
2. *Living the Dream* (The Choral Arts Society of Washington)
3. *Winter Sky* (Boston Children's Chorus)
4. *Elton: The Sing-Along* (San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus)
5. *Don We Now…* (Windy City Performing Arts), a benefit concert for Vital Bridges, an agency serving Chicagoans impacted by HIV/AIDS
6. *WITNESS: Let Freedom Ring* (VocalEssence)
7. *30 Seasons of Singing* (Pittsburgh Concert Chorale)
8. *WITNESS: Morehouse College Glee Club* (VocalEssence)
9. *When You Wish* (Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, D.C.), "a salute to music from the world of animation," including a sing-a-long component
10. *Born This Way* (Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, D.C.), "a collection of songs and stories from Civil and Equal Rights movements," with guest artists including a local LGBT youth chorus

Based on the patterns evident in the data, it is apparent that choruses can 'curate' feelings of connectedness through program design.

In regards to other impacts, feelings of connectedness are strongly predictive of Emotional Resonance (explains 19% of the variance) and summative impact (explains 14% of the variance), but are unrelated to Intellectual Stimulation.

Social Bridging and Bonding

There are other important social benefits associated with arts participation. Robert Putnam and others refer to "bridging social capital" as the cross-cutting ties that occur when members of one group connect with members of other groups, and "bonding social capital" as the strengthening of networks within one's group.[8] Bridging and bonding outcomes can occur simultaneously at arts programs, depending on the nature of the art and who's in the audience.

Questions indicating Social Bonding and Social Bridging outcomes were included in the survey design template provided to choruses, but were not mandatory:

> *Did the concert explore or celebrate your own cultural background or identity?* [indicator of Social Bonding]
> *Did you gain a new appreciation for people who are different from you, or for a culture other than your own?* [indicator of Social Bridging]

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[8] "Bonding and Bridging: Understanding the Relationship between Social Capital and Civic Action", L. Larson et al., *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 24:64-77, 2004

Six choruses asked the bonding question, and five choruses asked the bridging question (31 concert programs each). Three asked both questions, allowing for comparisons within the same set of programs.

The top five programs in terms of high scores for Social Bonding all belong to youth choruses, including *The Polar Express*, *Ignite: Patriotism*, and *Ignite: Spark* ([Cincinnati Boychoir](#)), *Holiday Blessings* ([Pittsburgh Youth Chorus](#)), and *Winter Sky* ([Boston Children's Chorus](#)). The high incidence of familial and friendship relationships between audience members and the young performers helps to explain the high levels of Social Bonding at these concerts. Respondents with no relationship to a performer (amongst youth choruses) reported significantly lower scores for Social Bonding compared to those with a relationship (2.9 vs. 2.4, respectively).

One might hypothesize that audiences of a specific cultural background would report higher levels of Social Bonding at concerts featuring the music of that culture. To test this hypothesis, a cohort of six culturally-focused concert programs was analyzed, including:

- *12th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Tribute Concert* and *13th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Tribute Concert* (Boston Children's Chorus)
- *WITNESS: Let Freedom Ring* (VocalEssence)
- *WITNESS: Morehouse College Glee Club* (VocalEssence)
- *Living the Dream* (The Choral Arts Society of Washington)
- *The Heart of Darkness* (Pittsburgh Camerata)

Respondents at these events who identified as Black or African American reported levels of Social Bonding at three and a half times the rate of respondents who are not Black or African American (average scores of 4.5 vs. 1.4, respectively – a highly significant relationship).

Similarly, Hispanic respondents at the two events celebrating Mexican culture (Houston Chamber Choir's *Mexicantos* program and VocalEssence's ¡Cantaré! Community Concert) reported much higher levels of Social Bonding compared to non-Hispanic respondents (4.4 vs. 1.6, respectively – also highly significant). Along these lines, it would've been helpful to assess Social Bonding figures at the several concerts featuring Baltic music, for audience members with family ties to any of the Baltic States. Unfortunately, the data to support such an analysis does not exist. Nevertheless, there is sufficient data to conclude that high levels of Social Bonding can occur in situations where artistic programs align with personal background.

On average, reported levels of Social Bridging were somewhat higher than levels of Social Bonding (3.0 vs. 2.5, respectively). Bear in mind that figures for Social Bridging and Bonding are only available for a limited number of choruses, and that the choruses who elected these questions tended to offer programs that were likely to trigger these outcomes (i.e., more multi-cultural and thematic programs). Across the 31 programs for which Social Bridging figures are available, average scores range from a low of 1.6 to a high of 3.9. On the low end of the scale are programs of

popular and holiday music, where Social Bridging is less likely to occur. On the high end, as might be expected, are programs featuring world music and music in the African American tradition. Within the cohort of six culturally-focused concert programs, for example, respondents who identified as White or Caucasian were significantly more likely than respondents of color to report Social Bridging outcomes (3.6 vs. 3.2, respectively).

When analyzed together, indicators of Social Bridging and Social Bonding outcomes are observed to have a positive and statistically significant relationship. In a simple regression analysis, one variable explains 4% of the variance in the other. This reinforces the idea that Social Bridging and Social Bonding are, in fact, opposite sides of the same coin. Programs that trigger one tend to trigger the other. If anything, this points to the pivotal role that marketing plays in drawing an optimal mix of audiences to culturally-focused programs, such that both outcomes can occur in the same space, at the same time.

Why is this important?

In a multiple regression analysis, Social Bridging and Social Bonding both have a positive and highly predictive relationship with summative impact – explaining 17% of the variance. In other words, audience members who experience Social Bridging and Social Bonding outcomes are more likely to have memorable, satisfying experiences at choral concerts.

What drives overall impact?

> *"When you look back on this concert a year from now, how much of an impression do you think will be left?"*
> *Scaled Response: 1=No Impression; 5 = Big Impression*

Researchers have struggled for years trying to identify the optimal question indicating the overall impact of an arts experience. Questions framed in terms of satisfaction are problematic in that audience members can have unsatisfying but impactful experiences, especially in the case of art that takes one outside of one's comfort zone. Our practice is to frame the question about summative impact in terms of memorability – the likelihood that one will remember the experience after the initial affect wears off. This sidesteps the satisfaction issue and privileges the artistic triggers and situational conditions that create memorable experiences.

Research in the field of cognitive psychology underscores the role of emotion in creating memory. "When the emotions are aroused, the brain takes note. It stores as much detail as possible about the emotion-filled event, wiring it for quick recall. That emotion-charged memory can be summoned at a moment's notice, even after a long time has passed."[9] When arts experiences are memorable, we can recall them consciously and relive the same feelings we felt at the original event. In rare situations, the impact of an arts program can resonate in the conscious mind for a lifetime. It's amazing how people can recall arts programs they attended decades earlier with startling clarity.

Not all arts experiences are particularly memorable, however. When arts experiences fade from memory the residual impact of the event may still resonate, but only in the subconscious mind. We should not be so naïve as to think that forgotten arts experiences have no lasting impact. Surely they do. Every arts program we attend recalibrates our aesthetic compass in some fashion, propelling us along a lifelong journey of constant negotiation with art.

Of the total sample of audience members surveyed, most reported high levels of Summative Impact (average score of 4.2 on a scale of 1=No Impression to 5=Big Impression). Nearly half indicate that the program will have left a "big impression" when they think back on it a year from now (i.e., a score of 5).

There is little point in considering variations in Summative Impact across choruses, given the diversity of programming, except to say that youth choruses are no more

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[9] Miranda Hitti, WebMD Health News, 2005, accessed at http://www.webmd.com/balance/news/20050131/emotions-make-memory-last; see also the excellent Wikipedia page on emotion and memory at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emotion_and_memory

or less likely to generate Summative Impact than adult choruses, and paid choruses are no more or less likely to generate Summative Impact than volunteer choruses. Programs of sacred music are slightly more likely to generate higher levels of Summative Impact, but the strength of the relationship is not impressive.

Looking across the individual concert programs, average scores for Summative Impact range from a low of 3.4 to a high of 4.7. Clearly some programs are more memorable than others. The very highest score was reported for a MLK tribute concert, but the preponderance of highly memorable programs are full-length classical works.

Demographic factors do not predict Summative Impact, nor does frequency of attendance, nor does past experience singing in choruses, nor does having a relationship with one of the performers. The one variable that holds significant predictive power over Summative Impact is the extent to which a respondent felt "welcome and comfortable at the venue" (explains 5% of the variance – only four choruses asked this question).

In sum, there are meaningful variations in Summative Impact across individual programs, but the data do not reveal patterns in terms of program characteristics or demographic factors that would help to explain these variations. It may be that what makes choral concerts memorable is too complex – too personal, too situational, or too qualitative – to tease out from our data set.

Motivations and Summative Impact

Motivational data sheds a bit more light on Summative Impact. In a multiple regression analysis examining the predictive power of 12 motivations on Summative Impact, certain motivations were found to have positive predictive power, while others have negative predictive power:

Motivations with Significant Positive Predictive Power over Summative Impact: (with regression coefficients)

To be emotionally moved or inspired (.25)
To learn about or celebrate your cultural heritage (.19)
To hear the work of a specific composer (.15)
To expose others to the artistic program (.07)
To revisit a familiar work I already know and love (.06)

Motivations with Significant Negative Predictive Power over Summative Impact: (with regression coefficients):

To spend quality time with friends (-.16)
For work or educational purposes (-.13)
Because someone invited you (-.10)
To relax or escape (-.08)

Motivations with No Predictive Power over Summative Impact:

To see someone you know perform on stage
To spend quality time with friends or family

Overall, the 12 motivations explain 4% of the variance in Summative Impact. Here we see an interesting, intuitive relationship between intentionality and impact: people who show up with program-specific expectations tend to report having more memorable experiences.

Contrariwise, people who are driven by social motivations (or a social invitation) tend to report having less memorable experiences. This should not be interpreted as diminishing the importance of social motivations. In fact, social motivations tend to drive first-time attendance. But it does suggest that efforts to shift motivational focus towards the musical program will, over time, yield stronger impact.

To put a finer point on this, one can see direct relationships between specific motivations and specific impacts. For example, people who are motivated "to be emotionally moved or inspired" experience significantly higher levels of Emotional Resonance than those who do not cite this motivation (4.4 vs. 4.0 average scores, respectively). Similarly, people who are motivated "to learn about or celebrate your cultural heritage" are more likely than those who aren't to cite Social Bonding outcomes (3.4 vs. 2.5 average scores, respectively).

Influence of Key Impacts on Summative Impact

Using Summative Impact as a dependent variable, we can assess the predictive power of key impacts. Which individual impacts are most closely associated with Summative Impact?

Overall, the four key indicators of intrinsic impact explain 45% of the variance in Summative Impact, in a multiple regression analysis. Emotional resonance exerts the most influence, by far, which is consistent with what we know from scientific research on emotion and memory:

Explanatory Power of Key Impacts over Summative Impact: (with regression coefficients)

Emotional Resonance (.44)
Captivation (.12)
Intellectual Stimulation (.08)
Social Connection (.05)

What was most memorable? Most satisfying or unsatisfying?

As a follow-up to the question about Summative Impact, many choruses included one of two open-ended questions:

> *What was most memorable to you about the concert?*
> *Was there anything that made your experience at the concert particularly satisfying or unsatisfying? If so, please share:*

What was Most Memorable?

Over 4,500 respondents wrote individual answers to this question. A sample of approximately 1,000 of these answers was coded to gain a better understanding of the range of responses, with the following results:

What was most memorable?	% of Cases
Other production elements	29%
Comments about videos, on-stage interviews, narration, staging, audience participation, lighting, amplification, etc.	
The performers/artists	21%
Vocal qualities, singing abilities, good diction	
General comments about the music, the sound	16%
Overall energy and power of the music, blending, volume	
The repertoire	13%
A particular piece, hearing something familiar or unfamiliar	
Overall experience	10%
General comments about the experience as a whole, the quality of the music	
Audience-centered impacts	5%
Spiritual/religious connection, family bonding, supporting someone on stage	
The venue	2%
Other qualities of the program	2%

Ninety-eight percent of these open-ended comments were positive. Overall, results suggest that investments in production elements make a difference, as well as the quality of the singing, the guest artists, etc.

What was Most Satisfying or Unsatisfying?

Over 4,000 respondents wrote individual answers to this question, which was neutral in inviting either positive or negative comments. A sample of approximately 350 of these answers was coded to gain a better understanding of the range of responses, with the following results:

<u>What was most satisfying or unsatisfying?</u>   <u>% of Cases</u>
Comments about the repertoire or overall performance 31%
"The theme and the musical selections were incredibly thoughtful and relevant."
"I was moved particularly by the strong theme of social justice and the participation of the new youth choral group."

Comments about the performers individually or as a unit 30%
"Loved hearing male voices. It was a very big sound."
"The sound of the organ with the orchestra and chorus-when I closed my eyes I was back in the Lutheran Church of my childhood."

Comments about the venue/setting 12%
"The seats were especially uncomfortable and it was very difficult to see over people's heads. Your choice of venue was poor."
"Too hot in the balcony."

Comments about the audience 10%
"Loved joining hands and singing We Shall Overcome"
"There are always a couple of parents who think that their 2 year-olds belong at a concert."

Comments about operations or logistics...6%
"The lack of parking on site made it more complicated to get to the concert hall."

Comments about contextualization efforts..5%
"The awards part of the program was too long. Awkward and long winded."
"Pre-curtain speech was mercifully short (please consider omitting them entirely)"

Comments about the conductor..4%
"The love between the directors. They obviously loved collaborating."

The primary value of this wealth of qualitative data lies in its use by the participating choruses to reflect on what worked and what did not. When asked, audiences are generous with answers to open-ended questions like this.

The Role of Audience Participation in Shaping Impact

"At any point during the concert, did you do any of the following things?" [answer items: clap-along with the music (not applaud); sing-along with the music; talk to someone you didn't know; dance or move to the music; none of the above]

In the second year of the study, participating choruses were asked to include a question about audience participation. The goal was to ascertain the prevalence of audience participation overall, and to examine potential relationships between audience participation and impact. Across 53 concert programs in Year 2, survey respondents indicated that they did the following participatory activities with the following frequencies:

Sing along with the music 50%

> Top 5 programs for this activity: *A Candlelight Christmas* (The Washington Chorus); *A Choral Arts Christmas* (The Choral Arts Society of Washington, D.C.); *The Polar Express* (Cincinnati Boychoir); *Winter Sky* (Boston Children's Chorus); *An American Christmas* (San Francisco Girls Chorus)

Talk to someone you didn't know 32%

> Top 5 programs for this activity: *Winter Sky* (Boston Children's Chorus); *13th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Tribute Concert* (Boston Children's Chorus); *WITNESS: Morehouse College Glee Club* (VocalEssence); *A Candlelight Christmas* (The Washington Chorus); *Listeners' Choice LIVE* (VocalEssence)

Dance or move to the music 29%

> Top 5 programs for this activity: *A Winter Prelude* (Peninsula Women's Chorus); *Rewrapped* (Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, D.C.); *Winter Sky* (Boston Children's Chorus); *WITNESS: Morehouse College Glee Club* (VocalEssence); *A Choral Arts Christmas* (The Choral Arts Society of Washington, D.C.)

Clap along with the music (not applaud) 21%

> Top 5 programs for this activity: *The World We Travel* (Cincinnati Boychoir); *WITNESS: Morehouse College Glee Club* (VocalEssence); *13th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Tribute Concert* (Boston Children's Chorus); *Rewrapped* (Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, D.C.); *A Choral Arts Christmas* (The Choral Arts Society of Washington, D.C.)

In presenting these results, we do not mean to imply that "more audience participation is better." Some artistic programs clearly involve audience participation by design, while others do not. In general, audiences at programs offered by LGBTQ choruses tended to report higher levels of audience participation, as well as audiences at some of the Christmas programs offered by other choruses, which, presumably, lend themselves to singing along.

It's provocative to consider that nearly 30% of all audience members report "dancing or moving to the music" – a self-activated form of audience participation. Most of the "moving" is done at holiday programs, but also at programs featuring music in the Gospel tradition (e.g., *WITNESS*). It is doubly provocative to understand that above average percentages of audience members are "moving" (in their seats, presumably) to pieces like Handel's *Messiah* and Mozart's *Requiem in D Minor*. Perhaps their familiarity with these pieces triggers a physical reaction to the work, emoting to the music by physically swaying, "conducting," or otherwise moving in one's seat – but this is just a hypothesis. Former singers are, in fact, significantly more likely to sing along and "move" to the music, but the explanatory power is weak.

Does Audience Participation Affect Impact?

Multiple regression analyses were used to test the predictive power of the four types of audience participation over four indicators of impact, as well as Summative Impact, with the following results:

Table 7: Predictive Power of Audience Participation over Different Impacts

Predictive Power of Audience Participation over Different Impacts	Captivation	Emotional Resonance	Intellectual Stimulation	Social Connection	Summative Impact
Clap along with the music	Not Predictive	Weakly Predictive	Negatively Predictive	Predictive	**Predictive**
Sing along with the music	Not Predictive	Not Predictive	Negatively Predictive	Predictive	**Not Predictive**
Talk to someone you didn't know	Predictive	Predictive	Predictive	Strongly Predictive	**Predictive**
Dance or move to the music	Strongly Predictive	Predictive	Predictive	Predictive	**Predictive**
Adjusted R Square*	0.03	0.04	0.02	0.11	0.04

*Amount of variance explained in a multiple regression analysis

Strong relationships are observed between all four forms of audience participation and "social connection" (i.e., *Did you feel a sense of connection with others in the audience?*). Together, the four forms of audience participation explain 11% of the variance in "social connection" – a strong relationship by any standard. As might be expected, "talking to someone you don't know" is the single best predictor of social connection by a wide margin. This verifies what choruses have known for a long time – that there are benefits associated with socially activating the audience in situations and contexts where it makes sense.

Most notable is the strength of the relationship between "moving" to the music and all types of impact, and Summative Impact. Audience members who report "moving" to the music report stronger impacts. We cannot conclude anything about causality, however. "Moving" to the music may not be a cause of high impact, but rather may be a result of it.

Appendix 1: Protocol Design Template
Assessing the Audience Impact of Choral Music Concerts

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Overview of the Survey Design Process

This survey template was commissioned by Chorus America as a resource for participating choruses and is intended as a tool for discussing what information you would like to know about your patrons and their experiences with your artistic programs. A handful of questions are mandatory so that results can be analyzed across the participating choruses. To allow for this comparison, we have identified a core module of questions, marked with a **[M]**. Use the template to choose the optional survey questions that best align with your artistic objectives and information needs. For each proposed question, you might ask, "What actions might we take, if we had this information?" You will have an opportunity to discuss the protocol in detail at the induction meeting.

The template provides choruses with a pre-tested set of survey questions that incorporate best practice in audience impact assessment. If at all possible, **we recommended that you use the same questionnaire for all concerts**, so that you may compare results across concerts.

Following is a quick breakdown of some recommended processes for selecting your questions:

1. Identify a Project Leader within your organization who will take primary responsibility for coordinating input from staff.

2. Make a list of the individuals within your organization who will be asked to provide input on the survey questions you want to include. The list of individuals should include artistic/programming decision-makers, senior administrative staff, and marketing staff.

3. Provide copies of this survey template document to each individual on the list, and ask them to:
   - First, please read the survey template in its entirety; and
   - Second, work through the question sets and circle the questions or "indicators" they feel are most appropriate for your organization. Mark items that you feel are a top priority with a "1." Mark items that you feel are a secondary priority with a "2." Do not make any markings next to items that you feel are unnecessary or inappropriate.
   - **Be judicious with the number of questions you select** – we can only expect audiences to answer around 25 questions.

4. The Project Leader will then collect responses and produce a consolidated document that indicates everyone's priorities (e.g., adding up a cumulative score for each item, count one point for every "first priority" mark, and half a point for every "second priority" mark).

5. Hold a meeting of all the individuals who were asked for input, to review and discuss the consolidated feedback. Everyone should be given a chance to argue for the questions they feel are most important to include in the protocol.

6. **Please be prepared to discuss your priorities with WolfBrown, and the rationale behind them.**

Overview of the Survey Template

1. Administrative Questions
   a. Performance attended

2. Buyer Behavior Characteristics
   a. Frequency of attendance/first-timer status
   b. Respondent's role in the purchase decision
   c. Ticket type (series ticket vs. single ticket); this will identify subscribers
   d. Social context surrounding attendance
   e. Motivations for attending

3. Summative Impact
   a. Satisfaction with elements of the artistic experience
   b. Overall extent to which the performance met expectations
   c. Expected future impression

4. Readiness to Receive Indicators (asked retrospectively in a post-performance context)
   a. Context (i.e., knowledge level, past experience, preparation)
   b. Relevance (i.e., the extent to which the respondent normally does this sort of activity)
   c. Anticipation level

5. Intrinsic Impact (five constructs)
   a. Captivation and Personal Involvement
   b. Emotional Resonance
   c. Intellectual Stimulation
   d. Aesthetic Enrichment
   e. Social Bridging and Bonding

6. Post-Performance Engagement
   a. Discussion with others who attended
   b. Participation in various post-performance activities
   c. Desire for further engagement
   d. Impact resonance and meaning

7. Demographics
   a. Gender, age, ethnicity, race, income, educational attainment, work status, type of household, etc.

☑ Administrative Questions

1.   **The questions in this survey are about your experience at a recent [Name of Organization] concert. Please indicate which concert you attended.**

  ❑ [Name Title, Date and Time]   ❑ [Name Title, Date and Time]
  ❑ [Name Title, Date and Time]   ❑ [Name Title, Date and Time]

[Note: List all concerts to be surveyed. This question is highly recommended for productions with multiple performances. Otherwise, you will not be able to review results by performance.]

☑ Buyer Behavior and Contextual Questions

2.   **[M] In a typical year, approximately how many times do you attend [Name of Organization]'s concerts?** *(select one)*

  ❑ None - this was my first time at a [Name of Organization] concert
  ❑ Less than once a year
  ❑ 1 or 2 times a year
  ❑ 3 to 5 times a year
  ❑ 6 or more times a year

[Note: This question provides respondents an opportunity to self-report their annual frequency of attendance at the sponsoring organization's programs. It is primarily intended to identify first-timers, so that their results can be examined alongside responses from more frequent attendees. If there are fewer than six productions in a season, it is possible to modify this question so that the last item reads "3 or more times."]

3.   **Who purchased your ticket?** *(select one)*

  ❑ I did   ❑ Someone else did   ❑ No ticket or fee was required (skip to question X)

[Note: This question is used to distinguish ticket buyers from others who attended.]

4.   **If you had a ticket, what type of ticket did you hold?** *(select one)*

  ❑ Subscription or series ticket   ❑ Complimentary ticket   ❑ Student discount ticket
  ❑ Individual ticket   ❑ Special group ticket   ❑ Special priced ticket (e.g., Goldstar, promotional code)

[Note: This question allows results to be compared according to ticket type.]

5.   **When was your ticket for this concert purchased?** *(select one)*

  ❑ The day of the concert   ❑ 1 to 2 weeks ago   ❑ 1 to 2 months ago   ❑ I don't know
  ❑ Within the past week   ❑ 2 to 4 weeks ago   ❑ 2 to 4 months ago

6. **[M] What relationship(s) do you have with people who performed in the chorus (or with the chorus)?** *(select all that apply)*

    ❑ No relationship with anyone who performed
    ❑ Spouse or partner of chorister/choir member
    ❑ Parent or Grandparent of chorister/choir member
    ❑ Other family relationship
    ❑ Friend of chorister/choir member
    ❑ Colleague of chorister/choir member

7. **With whom did you attend the concert?** *(select all that apply)*

    ❑ My spouse or partner   ❑ My parents   ❑ Friend(s)   ❑ I attended alone
    ❑ My children or grandchildren ❑ Other family   ❑ Co-workers or classmates

[Note: This question allows for the tracking of the social context surrounding attendance, and for comparison of results between, say, those who attend with a spouse/partner and those who attend with friends.]

8. **How did you learn about <u>this concert</u>?** *(select all that apply)*

    ❑ Season brochure   ❑ Word-of-Mouth (family or friend <u>not</u> in the chorus)
    ❑ Advertising in a newspaper or magazine ❑ Postcard or special mailing
    ❑ [Name of Organization] website   ❑ Facebook, Twitter, and/or Google+
    ❑ Article or review   ❑ Event listing online
    ❑ Email from [Name of Organization]   ❑ Other: _____
    ❑ Invitation or notice from a member of the chorus

[Note: This question asks respondents for their sources of information for a particular performance. Answer items will be customized depending on organization's interest.]

9. **Select the <u>three most important reasons</u> why you attended the performance.** *(select three)*

    ❑ Because someone invited you   ❑ To hear the work of a specific [composer/song-writer]
    ❑ To spend quality time with family members ❑ To be emotionally moved or inspired
    ❑ To spend quality time with friends   ❑ To relax or escape
    ❑ To discover music you haven't heard before ❑ For work or educational purposes
    ❑ To expose others to the artistic experience
    ❑ To see someone I know perform on stage
    ❑ To learn about or celebrate the LGBT culture or community [GALA chorus only]
    ❑ To learn about or celebrate your cultural heritage [only applicable to certain concerts]
    ❑ To revisit a familiar work, or to hear music that you know and love

[Note: The goal of this question is to allow for the analysis of motivations, and the analysis of relationships between motivations for attending and impacts derived from the experience. Some of these motivations relate directly to impacts, while others do not. For example, "to discover something new" maps to intellectual stimulation impacts.]

10.   In your own words, what was the main reason why you attended this concert?

_____

_____

[Note: This optional open-ended question allows respondents to express the main reason why they attended. In general, we recommend it as an alternative to the previous question, when greater nuance is desired.]

☑ Summative Impact

11.   Overall, at what level were your expectations fulfilled for this concert? *(circle a number)*

Below Expectations	Met Expectations	Above Expectations

1 ----------------2---------------- 3---------------- 4 ----------------5

[Note: Generally, people's expectation levels are met or exceeded. Use this question or the following one for a general indicator of summative impact.]

12.   How much did the experience of this concert influence your feelings about attending [Name of Organization] concerts in the future? *(circle a number)*

Negative Influence	No Change	Positive Influence

1 ----------------2---------------- 3---------------- 4 ----------------5

13.   [M] When you look back on this concert a year from now, how much of an impression do you think will be left? *(circle a number)*

No Impression   Big Impression

1 ----------------2---------------- 3---------------- 4 ----------------5

[Note: The ability to remember things is often associated with emotional impact (as suggested by cognitive science literature). Here, we ask respondents to speculate on the degree to which they will remember the performance a year from now, as an overall indicator of impact. This question (i.e., "future impression") provides a robust indicator of summative impact, based on an analysis of past survey data. It does not necessarily depend on the respondent 'liking' the art; people often remember things that challenge or provoke them.]

14.   What was most memorable to you about the concert?

_____

_____

[Note: This provides a general purpose open-ended question about what impressed people the most about the artistic work.]

15.   **Rate your satisfaction with each of the following aspects of the concert.** *(circle a number for each)*

		Unsatisfied				Satisfied
A.	*Quality of the chorus' singing*	1	2	3	4	5
B.	*The conductor's performance*	1	2	3	4	5
C.	*The selection of pieces on the program*	1	2	3	4	5
D.	*Length of the program*	1	2	3	4	5
E.	*[Name of Guest Artist]'s performance*	1	2	3	4	5
F.	*[customize based on programming]*	1	2	3	4	5

[Note: This question may be customized for each chorus (e.g., video enhancements, choreography, guest artists), although the items will need to be standardized across programs as much as possible, to allow for comparative reporting.]

16.   **With respect to acoustics, how does the [Name of Venue] compare to other venues where you've attended concerts in the [city/location] area?** *(circle a number)*

Worse than Other Venues	About the Same	Better than Other Venues
1 -----------------2---------------- 3---------------- 4 -----------------5		

17.   **How much did each of the following aspects of the [Name of Venue] enhance or detract from your experience?** *(circle a number for each)*

		Detracted		No Opinion		Enhanced
A.	*Acoustics*	1	2	3	4	5
B.	*Comfort of the seating*	1	2	3	4	5
C.	*Overall ambiance*	1	2	3	4	5
D.	*Food and beverage options*	1	2	3	4	5
E.	*Availability of parking*	1	2	3	4	5

[Note: This question may be customized for each chorus, although the items will need to be standardized across programs, to allow for comparative reporting.]

18.   **Was there anything that made your experience at the concert particularly satisfying or unsatisfying? If so, please share:**

_____

_____

[Note: This open-ended question is framed in terms of the "total experience" not solely in terms of the artistic program. Thus, you may get a wide range of responses to this question (e.g., "Parking was terrible," "It was my daughter's 15th birthday.")]

☑ Readiness Questions (Context, Relevance, Anticipation)

[Note: This module of questions investigates the respondent's level of knowledge, context, and anticipation prior to the concert. In situations where the protocol must be cut back, this module may be omitted entirely, although we encourage arts groups to monitor audience preparedness, especially when audience engagement efforts are being evaluated.]

19.   **How knowledgeable are you about choral music?** *(select one)*

        ❑ Not very knowledgeable   ❑ Somewhat knowledgeable   ❑ Very knowledgeable

20.   **[M] Have you had any experience with singing in a chorus?** *(select one)*

        ❑ No   ❑ Yes – earlier in my life   ❑ Yes – this is a current activity for me

[Note: Another aspect of context is the extent to which the respondent has personal experience with the art form. This question also allows for the tracking of the organization's service to artists in the community, regardless of skill level.]

21.   **Which of the following activities, if any, did you do to learn more about the concert program prior to arriving?** *(select all that apply)*

        ❑ Explored the [Name of Organization] website
        ❑ Looked at other online sources (e.g. Wikipedia)
        ❑ Read [Name of Organization] pre-performance email
        ❑ Read a preview (i.e., an article about the upcoming concert)
        ❑ Talk with people familiar with the program/concert and/or [Name of Organization]
        ❑ Accessed information about the concert through social media (e.g., on Facebook or Twitter)
        ❑ Other: _____

[Note: This question provides a qualitative sense of what, specifically, people are doing to prepare.]

22.   **At any point during the concert, did you participate in some fashion (i.e., clap your hands, sing-along)?** *(select one)*

        ❑ No   ❑ Yes   ❑ I don't know

23.

How much do you agree with the following statements? *(circle a number)*	Strongly Disagree	→→→→→→			Strongly Agree	Priority
A. Apart from this concert I am likely to attend live choral concerts	1	2	3	4	5	
B. I felt comfortable and welcome at [Name of Venue].	1	2	3	4	5	

[Note: The first indicator pertains to the relevance of the activity to the respondent. Primarily, it is used to identify respondents who are "fish out of water" (i.e., respondents who do not normally attend programs

like this). Some organizations may consider this to be a key marketing performance indicator (i.e., attracting people who do not normally attend) – just getting them in the theatre is a "win." The second item is designed to identify those who felt unwelcome or uneasy in the hall, as some arts groups work hard to make patrons feel welcome, and would benefit from an indicator of this type.]

24.   What, if anything, would have made you feel more comfortable or more welcome at the venue?

_____

_____

25.   Besides [Name of Organization]'s concerts, where else do you hear choral music?

_____

_____

[Note: This module is only for 'mixed' artistic programs with two to five works on the programs for situations in which respondents will have different reactions to specific pieces.]

☑ Reflecting on Your Experience

Intrinsic Impacts – Initial Module of Questions for Concerts with Multiple Artistic Works

[Note: This module should be used for programs with multiple artistic works on the program (e.g., a choral concert with three pieces on the program). If the concert you wish to survey features only one work, or has many works (i.e., more than five), skip to the next section and begin selecting your key impact indicators. When this module is used, do not repeat these items in the general questions that follow.]

26.   **How much did you like the work itself, apart from the way it was performed?** *(select one)*

	Not at All	A Little		Somewhat		A Lot
Piece #1	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Piece #2	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Piece #3	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

27.   **Overall, how strong was your emotional response to each work?** *(select one)*

	Not at All	Weak		Moderate		Strong
Piece #1	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Piece #2	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Piece #3	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

[Note: Continue designing your survey, using questions drawn from the section that follows. Respondents will be instructed to answer the remaining questions in reference to the totality of the artistic program.]

[Note: Start here for programs that feature one artistic work, or many artistic works (where it is not practical to ask about all individual works).]

☑ Reflecting on Your Experience (Intrinsic Impacts):

Intrinsic Impacts – Captivation and Personal Involvement

[Note: Captivation and Personal Involvement is the first domain of intrinsic impact. Generally, you'll want to choose just one of the following indicators.]

28. **[M] At any point during the concert did you lose track of time and get fully absorbed?** *(select one)*

NO, Not at All	YES					Not Applicable
	A Little		Somewhat		Completely	
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

29. **Overall, did the skill and artistry of the chorus impress you?** *[wonder, awe] (select one)*

NO, Not at All	YES					Not Applicable
	A Little		Somewhat		Completely	
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

30. **Were the singers responsive to, and engaged with, the audience?** *[sense of connection] (select one)*

NO, Not at All	YES					Not Applicable
	A Little		Somewhat		Completely	
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Intrinsic Impacts – Emotional Resonance

[Note: Emotional Resonance is the second domain of intrinsic impact. Here we are careful not to make value judgments about the specific emotions felt by respondents. We recommend you select not more than two indicators per construct.]

31. **[M] Overall, how strong was your emotional response to the concert?** *(select one)*

NO, Emotional Response	Weak		Moderate		Strong	Not Applicable
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

32. **Did you feel a bond or connection with the [singers]?** *[empathy] (select one)*

NO, Not at All	YES					Not Applicable
	A Little		Somewhat		Completely	
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

33. **Did the concert inspire you?** *[spiritual value] (select one)*

NO, Not at All	YES					Not Applicable
	A Little		Somewhat		Completely	
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

34. **[M] What words best describe how the concert made you feel? Please answer using single words, one per line, up to six words.**

1. _____ 4. _____

2. _____ 5. _____

3. _____ 6. _____

Intrinsic Impacts – Intellectual Stimulation

[Note: Intellectual Stimulation is the third domain of intrinsic impact. These indicators explore the extent to which the performance caused people to think. The various indicators provide progressively more stringent tests of "cognitive traction."]

35. **Did the concert cause you to think about an issue or topic?** *(select one)*

NO, Not at All	YES					Not Applicable
	A Little		Somewhat		Completely	
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

[Note: This question provides an indicator of critical reflection. It speaks to the ability of the arts to increase awareness of an issue and to precipitate thoughtful reflection. It is most germane to arts programs that are topical or thematic in nature.]

36. **To what extent did you gain new insight or learning?** *(select one)*

NO, Not at All	YES					Not Applicable
	A Little		Somewhat		Completely	
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

[Note: This is a baseline indicator of intellectual stimulation in the sense of learning.]

37. **Did you think about the structure of the music, or life of the composer?** *[thinking about form and historical context] (select one)*

NO, Not at All	YES						Not Applicable
	A Little		Somewhat		Completely		
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑		❑

[Note: This question aims to capture intellectual stimulation in the sense of thinking about the history or structure of the artistic work.]

38. **[M] Did the concert raise questions in your mind that you would like to ask the performers or creators of the work?** *(select one)*

❑ No   ❑ Yes – a few questions   ❑ Yes – a lot of questions

[Note: This question has grown to become one of the key indicators of intellectual stimulation. It must be asked in combination with the follow-up open-ended question, and typically yields a great deal of insightful comments about what was on the minds of audience members as they left the program.]

38.1 **[M] If "Yes", what were one or two of your questions?**

_____

_____

Intrinsic Impacts – Aesthetic Enrichment

[Note: Aesthetic Enrichment is the fourth domain of intrinsic impact. Aesthetic Enrichment encompasses both aesthetic growth (being stretched) and aesthetic validation (reinforcement of pre-existing tastes and preferences). We are careful not to prize one over the other.]

39. Select an answer for each question.	No	Yes	Not Sure or Not Applicable
A. **Were you already familiar with the artistic work of [Name of Organization]? [Mandatory in Year 1 only]**	❑	❑	❑
B. **[M] Were you exposed to a type or style of [music/choral music] that you had not heard before?**	❑	❑	❑
C. **[M] Were you exposed to the work of a [composer or songwriter] whose work you'd not known before?**	❑	❑	❑
D. **[M] Were you exposed to at least one unfamiliar [musical work], even if you were previously familiar with the composer?**	❑	❑	❑
E. **Were you exposed to a different interpretation of a [musical work] you had previously heard? [Mandatory in Year 1 only]**	❑	❑	❑

[Note: This question yields five indicators of the extent to which the respondent was introduced to a new aesthetic. This question assumes the inherent value to an individual of being exposed to unfamiliar art/artists/genres, regardless of the individual's knowledge level. We refer to this impact as "aesthetic growth."]

40.   **Did the performance serve to remind you how much you love one or more particular works on the program?** *[aesthetic validation] (select one)*

NO, Not at All	YES					Not Applicable
	A Little		Somewhat		Completely	
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

41.   **As a result of attending this concert, do you feel better equipped to appreciate choral music in the future?** *[aesthetic development] (select one)*

NO, Not at All	YES					Not Applicable
	A Little		Somewhat		Completely	
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

42.   **As a result of this experience, are you better able to explain to other people what types of choral music you like or don't like?** *(select one)*

❑ No change   ❑ Yes, somewhat   ❑ Yes, a lot

[Note: This question attempts to address the concept of critical capacity, and the ability of an individual to express his or her own preferences. One could argue that it is an inherent impact of all arts experiences, and difficult to self-report.]

43.   **As a result of attending this event, how interested are you in attending concerts featuring similar artistic work(s)?** *(select one)*

❑ Much less interested   ❑ No change   ❑ More interested
❑ Less interested   ❑ Much more interested

[Note: This question attempts to address the aesthetic outcomes of an arts experience and the affect is has on an individual's tastes, including the consequent ability of the individual to appreciate and enjoy different forms of aesthetic expression (i.e., to know one's own tastes)]

44.   **Did you leave the concert with an impulse or idea for being more creative in your own life or work?** *(select one)*

❑ No   ❑ Yes   ❑ Not Applicable

45.   **If "Yes", how did the concert inspire you to be more creative?**

_____

_____

[Note: This question is meant to indicate creative activation and attempts to make a connection between the arts event and creativity in life and work. It is well known that many people who are artists themselves attend arts events in order to inspire and enrich their creative work, and to fertilize their creativity in general. But of course you don't have to be an artist to gain this benefit.]

Intrinsic Impacts – Social Bridging and Bonding

[Note: Social Bridging and Bonding is the fifth domain of intrinsic impact. This domain addresses the social value that is intrinsic to the artistic experience, but tries to avoid measuring the social value that is extrinsic to the art (e.g., going out to dinner beforehand). Bonding refers to building closer ties with one's own people or culture. Bridging refers to engaging with cultures outside of one's own life experience. Both are important impacts, but neither of them may be intended outcomes of a given performance.]

46.   **[Mandatory in Year 1 only] Did you feel a sense of connection with others in the audience?**
[social connection] (select one)

NO, Not at All	YES					Not Applicable
	A Little		Somewhat		Completely	
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

[Note: This questions aims to measure the respondent's overall sense of connection with others in the audience – the communal experience.]

47.   **Did the concert explore or celebrate your own cultural background or identity?** *[social bonding] (select one)*

NO, Not at All	YES					Not Applicable
	A Little		Somewhat		Completely	
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

[Note: This question and the next one will be especially useful in reference to culturally-specific programs, or programs that speak to different social groups or communities.]

48.   **Did you gain a new appreciation for people who are different from you, or for a culture other than your own?** *[social bridging] (select one)*

NO, Not at All	YES					Not Applicable
	A Little		Somewhat		Completely	
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

[Note: This question provides an indicator of social bridging, and addresses the "tolerance" outcome sometimes associated with arts participation.]

49. **Did attending this concert give you a sense of pride in the community where you live?** *(select one)*

NO, Not at All	YES					Not Applicable
	A Little		Somewhat		Completely	
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

[Note: This is question that aims to measure the extent to which respondents feel an enhanced "sense of place" as a result of attending an arts program.]

50. **Did attending this concert help you see things you have in common with other people who live or work in your community?** *(select one)*

NO, Not at All	YES					Not Applicable
	A Little		Somewhat		Completely	
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

[Note: This question aims to measure social integration with one's community, which is identified as an aspect of social well-being in the literature. It is very similar, however, to the question on social bonding, and therefore should not be used together.]

51. **[Mandatory in Year 2 only] At any point during the concert, did you do any of the following things?** *(select all that apply)*

❑ Clap along with the music (not applaud)
❑ Sing along with the music
❑ Talk to someone you didn't know
❑ Dance or move to the music
❑ None of the above

☑ Post-Performance Engagement

[Note: This section investigates the extent to which the respondent engaged in post-performance "meaning-making" activities that would extend or magnify impact, whether social or solitary, facilitated or not.]

52. **Afterwards, did you discuss the concert with others who attended?** *(select one)*

❑ No   ❑ Yes – casually   ❑ Yes – intensely

53. <u>After</u> **the concert, did you (or will you) do any of the following activities?** *(select all that apply)*

❑ Attend a post-performance discussion
❑ Read the program more closely
❑ Search for more information online
❑ React to the concert online or through social media
❑ Email or spoke with a friend about the concert after you got home
❑ Reflect privately about the meaning of the work, without discussing with others

[Note: This question indicates the extent to which a respondent engaged with the program afterwards, which will be compared to the other indicators of "thinking and learning." Research on audience engagement suggests that the impact of arts programs can be magnified and prolonged when audience members engage in a process of meaning-making, whether private or public, facilitated or self-directed.

The answer items may be customized for each chorus, based on what activities are offered. No more than six items should be used. The list need not be comprehensive, but rather should capture the most important meaning-making activities. Bear in mind that the survey might be taken immediately afterwards, or a full day afterwards, so the elapsed time will vary from respondent to respondent, and sufficient time may not have elapsed for some of these activities to occur. Results may provide an indication of how people are processing the work.]

54. **Do you wish you would have been able to talk more about your reactions to the concert?** *(select one)*

❑ No   ❑ Yes

[Note: This question provides an indicator of hunger for deeper post-performance engagement.]

55.

	Not At All	→→→→→→→			Very Much
Afterwards, as a result of thinking or talking about the concert, did you gain any additional perspective (apart from taking this survey)? [critical expression]	1	2	3	4	5

[Note: This question aims to measure the efficacy of post-performance engagement.]

☑ Demographic Characteristics

A.   **[M]** **What is your gender?**   ❑ Female   ❑ Male   ❑ Transgender   ❑ Other

B.   **[M]** **In what year were you born?** _____

C.   **Which of the following best describes your ethnicity?** *(select all that apply)*

❑ Asian or Pacific Islander   ❑ American Indian or Alaska Native
❑ Black or African American   ❑ White or Caucasian
❑ Hispanic or Latino   ❑ Two or more races
❑ Middle Eastern   ❑ Other race

D.   **What is your household income?** *(select one)*

❑ Less than $25,000   ❑ $50,000 to $99,999   ❑ $150,000 or more
❑ $25,000 to $49,999   ❑ $100,000 to $149,999

E.   **What is your highest level of educational attainment?** *(select one)*

❑ Less than 9th grade   ❑ Associate's degree
❑ 9th to 12th grade, no diploma   ❑ Bachelor's Degree
❑ High School Graduate or G.E.D.   ❑ Graduate or professional degree
❑ Some college, no degree

F.   **Which cultural or ethnic groups do you identify with the most?** [open-ended]

G.   **[M]** **What is your home Zip Code?** _____

H.   **What is your occupation?** _____

I.   **Do you consider yourself part of a disability community?**   ❑ No   ❑ Yes

J.   **Do you earn a portion of your living from performing or creating art?**   ❑ No ❑ Yes

K.   **What is your sexual orientation?** *(select one)*

❑ Lesbian   ❑ Gay   ❑ Bisexual   ❑ Queer   ❑ Heterosexual

L.   **What is your relationship status?** *(select one)*

❑ In a relationship   ❑ Not in a relationship

M.   **Are you the parent or caregiver of any children who regularly live with you?**

❑ Yes ❑ No ➔ *Skip the next question*

N.   **If Yes, how old are these children?** *(select all that apply)*

❑ Under age 6   ❑ Ages 6 to 12   ❑ Ages 13 to 17