

LUCY ABRAMS-HUSSO

The institutionalisation of “Uptown”: Contemporary orchestral music practices in New York City 1960–1975

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to investigate how contemporary music composition aesthetics and performance practices in orchestral music came to be defined and institutionalised in New York City through the 1960s and 1970s. The geographic distinctions commonly referred to as Uptown and Downtown identify separate networks of American contemporary music that sprouted in New York City already in the 1950s and developed across the United States in the second half of the twentieth century. Previous research on the topic has focused predominantly on individual composers, networks of composers, and academic institutions. This article investigates the topic as it relates to orchestral culture in New York’s two largest performance institutions: the New York Philharmonic and Carnegie Hall. I propose that the division of contemporary music practices and the ultimate institutionalisation of Uptown is inextricably linked to changing orchestral practices in New York City in the late 1960s and 1970s.

Using the digital programme archives from the New York Philharmonic and Carnegie Hall, I analysed contemporary programming in orchestral and large ensemble concerts from 1960 to 1975. From this data, one observes that orchestral contemporary music programming in New York City decreased in this period, that the performance of contemporary music became less stylistically diverse, and that “contemporary music”, as a genre, came to be increasingly defined as European and modernist. I therefore conclude that changing orchestral practice was a major contributing factor in the division and institutionalisation of contemporary musical practices in New York City.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN ORCHESTRAL PRACTICE: A BRIEF HISTORY

Why focus on orchestral practice? Because by the mid-twentieth century, classical music culture in the United States had become synonymous with the orchestra. It

was the orchestra, like the opera house in much of Europe, that “was the central institution pursuant to a musical high culture” (Horowitz 2007, 187–188). However, when the first orchestras were founded in the United States at the end of the nineteenth century, wind bands were considered the “most popular and ubiquitous instrumental organization in nineteenth century America” (Levine 1990, 104). Orchestras and winds bands also had an interchangeable repertoire, with bands performing a large amount of classical orchestral European repertoire.

The first American orchestras were the Philharmonic Society of New York founded in 1842 (known today as the New York Philharmonic), the Boston Symphony founded in 1881 and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra founded by 1891. There existed a commonality amongst the first American orchestras in that they focused on Germanic repertoire and consisted predominantly of German and Austro-Hungarian conductors and musicians. In contrast to the American military and wind band traditions, the orchestra was “a mutant transplant [...] deep roots were not importable, nor in the main were they newly cultivated” (Horowitz 2005, xiii). Despite their foreign origin, new orchestras developed across the United States and gradually displaced wind bands as the dominant institution of classical music.

Unlike their European counterparts, American orchestras are funded primarily through private sponsorship. Rather than being supported by a government body, with the musicians being employed by the state, wealthy individuals bankrolled America’s first orchestras. That gave those persons the power to shape the roster and repertoire of the ensembles. The stockbroker Henry Lee Higginson, who funded the Boston Symphony from 1881 until 1919, referred to the orchestra as “his yacht, his racing stable, his library and his art gallery” (Levine 1990, 123). Higginson maintained a “strong preference for the work of classic Austro-German composers”, even fearing he would have to hire a French-born conductor during World War I (Levine 1990, 126).

German-born Theodore Thomas, who was the concertmaster and conductor of the Philharmonic Society of New York before going on to start the Chicago Symphony, considered “the pantheon” of composition to already have been established through the music of Bach, Handel, Mozart and Beethoven. Thomas disagreed with the notion that modern composers would represent the music of the future (Levine 1990, 118). The common performance practice established at the end of the nineteenth century was one of a limited repertoire that focused on compositions by well-known German and Austro-Hungarian composers.

As more orchestras were founded, distinct regional practices developed in cities like Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Minneapolis, and orchestral repertoire expanded into the twentieth century. The early twentieth century saw the development of a rich American compositional tradition that was experimentalist and aesthetically non-European in the works of composers like Henry Cowell (1897–1965), Carl Ruggles (1876–1971), George Antheil (1900–1959), and Ruth Crawford Seeger

(1901–1953). The World Wars, however, brought a great influx of European composers, conductors and performers to the New World, many of whom established careers in the United States by canonising the European master composers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Across the United States, different orchestral performance and programming practices developed amongst the large orchestras, depending often on the Music Director (chief conductor) of the orchestra. As was the case when the first American orchestras were founded, European conductors continued to lead American orchestras through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

There were some European conductors, like Leopold Stokowski (1882–1977), Dmitri Mitropoulos (1896–1960), Otto Klemperer (1885–1973) and Serge Koussevitzky (1874–1951), who regularly programmed works by American composers and believed strongly in playing works by living composers in addition to the older classical and romantic masterworks. As director of the Philadelphia Orchestra, Stokowski “led more premieres than any other conductor of his time” (Horowitz 2008, 180), while in Boston, Koussevitzky “tireless promoted”, for example, Samuel Barber (1910–1981), Howard Hanson (1896–1981), Roy Harris (1898–1979), Walter Piston (1894–1976), and William Schuman (1910–1992) (Horowitz 2008, 191). These conductors were admittedly less interested in “ultra-modern” composers like Edgar Varèse (1883–1965), Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971), and Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951), but they performed a significantly wider repertoire than Arturo Toscanini (1867–1957) who led the New York Philharmonic from 1928 until 1936. Toscanini shrank the Philharmonic’s repertoire, focusing exclusively on nineteenth century masterworks and perpetuating a strong culture of performance.¹ As Horowitz writes in *Artists in Exile*, “at a time when other American orchestras were more than doubling their quota of contemporary works, [Toscanini] was more than ever linked to Beethoven” (Horowitz 2008, 206).

While Toscanini continued to be an overwhelming presence in New York City cultural life until the NBC Orchestra disbanded in 1954, the pendulum of conservatism in the Philharmonic began to swing in the other direction. Stokowski and Mitropoulos were appointed co-principal conductors of the New York Philharmonic in 1949, and Mitropoulos was appointed Music Director in 1951. By the time American conductor and composer Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990) took over as music director in 1958 (until 1969), the New York Philharmonic was performing over fifty contemporary works a season and including contemporary repertoire in over fifty percent of all their concerts.

One additional factor that has historically affected programming practices in

¹ Joseph Horowitz has described “culture of performance” to mean a practice of classical music whereby performance is an end in itself. The idea refers to a focus on repeated, standardised performances of a core canon of repertoire (Horowitz 2007). It is related to Lydia Goehr’s notion of the “work concept” and the value of some perceived fidelity to the score (*Werktreue*) (Goehr 2007, 100).

American orchestras has been the aesthetic division of so-called popular and serious music. At the end of the nineteenth century, wind bands made little distinction between popular and serious music in their concerts. The founding orchestras, however, made distinct efforts to separate the styles, declaring orchestras a place for serious, “high” art. For example, the Boston Pops were established in 1885 so that the classical orchestra (the Boston Symphony) could focus only on “serious” music (Levine 1990, 121). As late as 1935, Virgil Thomson reacted to George Gershwin (at the time, the most popular American composer), by saying: “I don’t mind his being a light composer, and I don’t mind his trying to be a serious one. But I do mind his falling between the two stools” (Thomson 1981, 25). The programmatic separation of serious and popular diversity is related in many ways to the separation of contemporary styles in the second half of the twentieth century.

UPTOWN, [MIDTOWN], AND DOWNTOWN IN NEW YORK CITY

New York City has the highest concentration of classical musicians and institutions in the United States, serving a large and accessible population in a geographically defined area with high population density. According to the census bureau, the population of New York City in 1960 was 7,781,984, which made it the most populous city in America by far (Chicago, the second largest city, reported a population of 3,550,404) (“Population of Cities” 1960, 1). So while New York City is only one of many large American cities, it serves as both an important case study and a potential indicator of national trends.

Historically, the geographic separation between Uptown and Downtown Manhattan has been characterised by economic difference. Through the nineteenth and most of the twentieth centuries, upper Manhattan was more upper class with higher income levels, home to the Rockefeller, Morgan, Vanderbilt, and other wealthy American families. Downtown was home to poorer residents, who often lived in tenement housing. At the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, music heard in Uptown would have included European classical instrumental music and opera at venues like Carnegie Hall (opened in 1891), The Academy of Music (established in 1854), the Metropolitan Opera (founded in 1883), while music produced in Downtown was often Yiddish songs, various ethnic music, and other popular music (Ferris 1993).

The boundaries between neighbourhoods in Manhattan are not, nor have ever been, official, but Uptown typically refers to north of 59th Street (the southern end of Central Park) while Downtown refers to Manhattan below approximately 23rd Street. The area in between is called Midtown. In reference to American contemporary music of the second half of the twentieth century, Downtown music was a term adopted to refer to the New Music movement that began around 1960 when

Yoko Ono sponsored and organised a music series alongside La Monte Young and Richard Maxfield (Gann 2006, xiii). The term Downtown was adopted to refer to composers and performance artists of various styles including minimalism, conceptualism, performance rock and improvisation, whose performances took place outside of the dominant classical music institutions like Columbia University, the Juilliard School, the New York Philharmonic and Carnegie Hall. Uptown composers, by contrast, wrote “complicated music in European genres” (Gann 2006, xiii).

In New York City, Tom Johnson, the music critic of the *Village Voice* from 1971 to 1982, is credited as the first to give substantial coverage to Downtown music (Gann 2006, xv). Following Johnson, Kyle Gann wrote for the *Village Voice* from 1986 to 1991, and in 2006, published one of the leading texts on the subject, *Music Downtown*. Gann argues that Uptown, Midtown and Downtown can be considered as the three compositional approaches outlined by Theodor Adorno in his 1953 article “On the Contemporary Relationship of Philosophy and Music”:

Composers have the agonizing choice. They can play deaf and soldier on as if music were still music [Midtown]. Or they can pursue the leveling on their own account, turn music into a normal condition and in the process hold out for quality when possible [Downtown]. Or they can ultimately oppose the tendency by a turn to the extreme, with the prospect of...becoming desiccated as a specialty [Uptown]. (Adorno 2002, 136.)

Uptown music refers to the musical culture of academia, which was modernist, pro-serialist and European in style. Downtown music, on the other hand, was postmodern, anti-serialist, and in many ways, anti-European in aesthetic. Midtown has become an added stylistic distinction to refer to composers like John Corigliano, Joan Tower, John Harbison, Ellen Taaffe Zwilich and Joseph Schwantner “who [wrote] orchestral and chamber music in intuitive, nonsystematic idioms comparable in form and feelings, if not always in musical materials or style, to European works of the 19th century” (Gann 2006, 2). As more Uptown composers became relegated to the academic institutions of Columbia University and similar from the 1970s, Midtown was used to refer to composers who retained links to Lincoln Center (home of the New York Philharmonic) and the Juilliard School.

USING ORCHESTRAL PROGRAMMING DATA

Previous studies examining the development and prominence of contemporary music aesthetics, particularly of serialism in the United States after World War II, have focused on individual composers and ties between serial aesthetics and the cultural environment of the Cold War (Brody 1993, Shreffler 2005, Ansari 2014). These studies highlight the importance of understanding American serialism and

American post-war musical modernism more generally as an “intentionally oppositional stance” to both Communism and a strong belief in cultural diversity to combat the perceived dangers of mass culture (Shreffler 2005, 238). They also argue that serialism’s intellectual cultural status “helped precipitate the revival of musical modernism, an increasing respect for scientific approaches to composition, and a corresponding loss of prestige for neoclassicism and other nonserial approaches” (Ansari 2014, 361).

In his 1990 study “The Myth of Serial ‘Tyranny’”, Joseph Straus aimed to use empirical data from academic positions, grants and awards, music publishing, published reviews, and released recordings to argue against the claim that serialism “dominated the musical scene” in post-war American contemporary musical life (Straus 1990, 302). In response, Anne Shreffler argued that Straus’ conclusion minimised the important ideological shift that took place in musical thinking after 1945 and that “statistics cannot deal with pieces of music and their reception or the ideological associations of styles” (Shreffler 2000, 32). Programming, however, can help provide this missing ideological context and highlight with greater specificity trends in performance practice. It is an important empirical data source that can contribute to better understanding of post-war contemporary music practices in the United States.

While comprehensive studies of orchestral programming are rare, they are an important reference for understanding trends in musical aesthetics, regional practices, as well as diversity in conductors, soloists and composers.² For this study, I focus specifically on programming data from the two largest public performance institutions in New York City: the New York Philharmonic and Carnegie Hall. The goal is not to assess the supremacy of any given style or ideology, but rather to provide data that is overlooked when the discussion is limited to individual composers, personal networks, or contemporary music as it relates to American academic institutions.

THE NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC 1960-1975

The Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives of the New York Philharmonic contain programmes of all concerts performed since December 7, 1842. Using the archive, I examined and catalogued all New York Philharmonic Orchestra concert programmes from January 1, 1960 until December 31, 1975. Unlike in today’s modern symphony orchestras, which perform usually from September until May or June, the New York Philharmonic during this period performed year-round.

My focus was on the performance of what would have been considered contem-

² William Weber’s *The Great Transformation of Musical Taste* (2008) was one of the first comprehensive programming studies, focusing internationally on the period 1750–1875. Current studies include Ricky O’Bannon’s “By the Numbers” series for the Baltimore Symphony (<https://www.bsomusic.org/stories/by-the-numbers-conductors/>) and my own contemporary programming reports (<https://www.lucyabrams.net/news>)

porary music *at that time*, a historical version of the studies I currently undertake yearly of contemporary music programming in large American and Northern European orchestras. I defined new music, in this historical frame, as compositions written around 1925 or afterwards. This parallels the window of about forty years that I use to define contemporary music in my current orchestral studies. Using the digital records, I noted all contemporary compositions performed by the New York Philharmonic between 1960 and 1975 including composer, title, conductor, type of concert (subscription, gala, summer, tour, etc.), and whether it was a premiere performance.

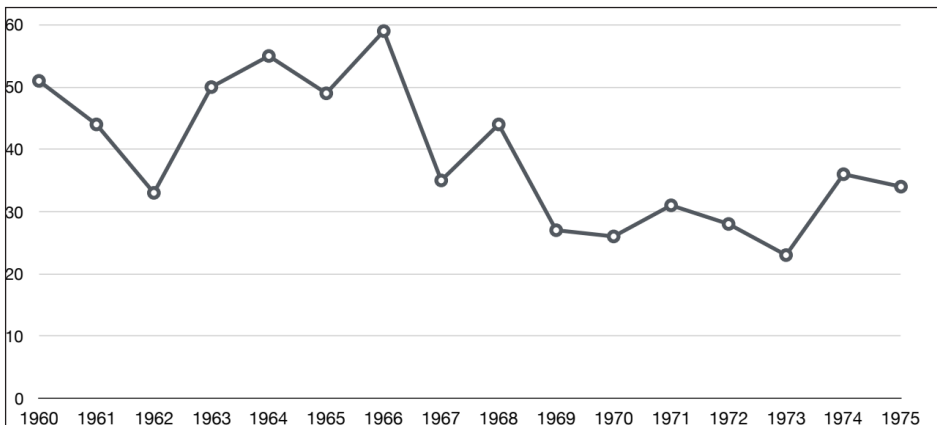
The period of 1960–1975 was important for the New York Philharmonic for many reasons. First, they opened their own concert hall at the Lincoln Center in 1962, having previously performed at Carnegie Hall. The opening of Lincoln Center was a huge cultural milestone for the city of New York, as well as a nationally recognised event. Second, the 1967–1968 season celebrated the 125th anniversary of the New York Philharmonic. This was marked by several special programmes and the commissioning of nineteen new works for the orchestra, more commissions than in any of other year of this study. Finally, this period had two different music directors who significantly shaped the performance practices of the orchestra. American conductor, composer and educator Leonard Bernstein served as music director from 1958 until 1969 and from 1971 until 1977, the orchestra was led by French composer and conductor Pierre Boulez (1925–2016). In the interim year, 1969–1970, George Szell (1897–1970) served as musical advisor to the orchestra, though both Bernstein and Boulez performed with the orchestra that season.

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC PROGRAMMING DATA 1960-1975

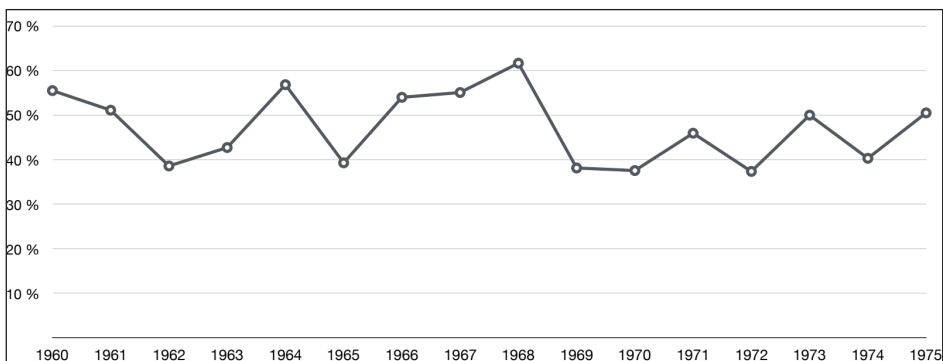
On average, the New York Philharmonic performed at least one work composed after 1925 on fifty percent of their concerts from 1960 to 1975. What changed over this fifteen-year span was the number of new works performed per year, the new music composers performed, and the ways in which new music was presented to the audience.

The number of contemporary compositions yearly by the Philharmonic fluctuated, as can be seen in Graph 1. The most new compositions, fifty-nine, were performed in 1966, while the least, twenty-three, were performed in 1973. In general, the number of compositions performed yearly declined on average from 1960 to 1975. Despite the downward trend in the number of new works performed, the average percentage of concerts that featured at least one new work remained level overall during this fifteen-year period, as can be seen in Graph 2.

While audiences were exposed to newer music at roughly the same frequency, the number of new compositions they heard was significantly reduced. Whereas



Graph 1. The number of compositions composed after 1925 performed by the New York Philharmonic yearly between 1960 and 1975. Source data: New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives.



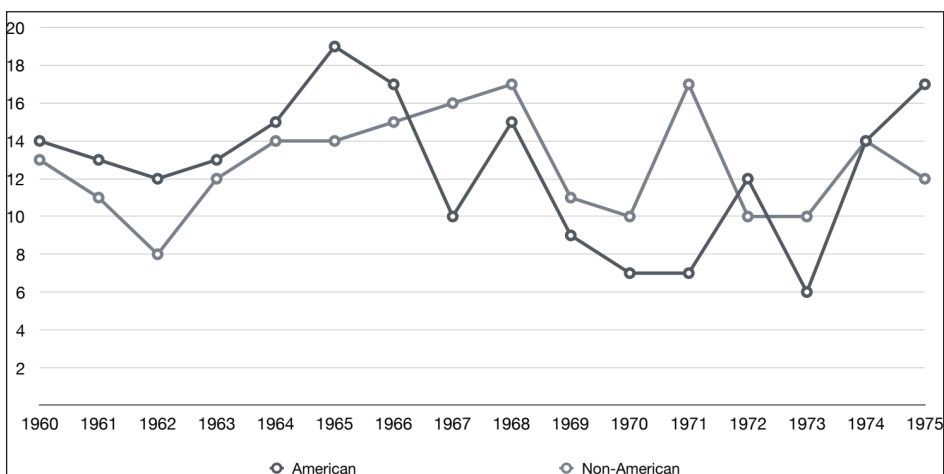
Graph 2. The percentage of concerts given by the New York Philharmonic that contained at least one composition composed after 1925. Source data: New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives.

concerts in the early 1960s often included multiple contemporary compositions, concerts in the 1970s more often contained only one contemporary work. However, special “New Music” concerts featuring multiple works were introduced in the 1970s. This change will be discussed later in the section “Special Concerts”..

Fewer new works performed resulted also in less stylistic variety. If one examines all the contemporary composers performed by the New York Philharmonic yearly during this span, one can observe a huge stylistic variety particularly from 1960 to 1966. For example, in 1964 audiences would have heard works twenty-nine different contemporary composers including Downtown composers Earle Brown (1926–2002), John Cage (1912–1992) and Morton Feldman (1926–1987), Midtown composers like Lukas Foss (1922–2009) and Alan Hovhaness (1911–2000), and

European modernists like György Ligeti (1923–2006) and Iannis Xenakis (1922–2001). In 1966, audiences would have been exposed thirty-two different composers including Uptown Milton Babbitt (1916–2011) and Elliott Carter (1908–2012), Boulez, Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887–1959), Midtown Aaron Copland (1900–1990) and Foss, as well as Salvatore Martirano (1927–1995) and Varèse. By contrast, in 1971, only seven Midtown composers like Bernstein, Copland and Andre Kostelanetz (1901–1980) were presented alongside seventeen European composers including Witold Lutoslawski (1913–1944), Olivier Messiaen (1908–1992), Luigi Nono (1924–1990), and Karlheinz Stockhausen (1928–2007).

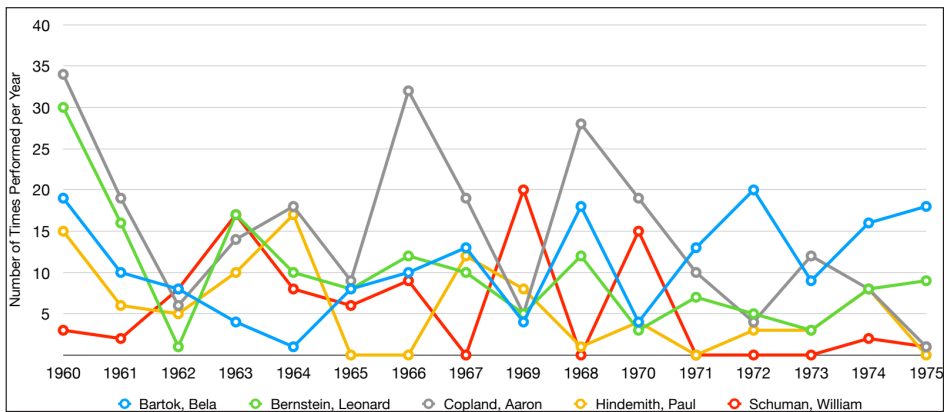
While American and European contemporary composers were equally represented, on average over these fifteen years, the peak of American compositional performance at the Philharmonic was in the mid-1960s. Towards the end of the 1960s, more European contemporary composers were featured, as one can see in Graph 3.



Graph 3. The number of American and non-American composers performed yearly by the New York Philharmonic between 1960 and 1975. Source Data: New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives.

Finally, we examine the most performed composers by the New York Philharmonic 1960–1975 in the Graph 4. The five most performed contemporary composers were Copland, Bernstein, Bela Bartók (1881–1945), Paul Hindemith (1895–1963), and Schuman. Copland, Bernstein, Schuman, and even Hindemith, could be considered aesthetically Midtown composers who worked in neoclassical and neoromantic styles and composed predominantly tonal music in traditional forms. Of the five, Bartók was the most stylistically modern. Bartók was the only composer of these five who was dominantly featured after Boulez took over as music director.

Other stylistically Midtown American contemporary composers who were per-



Graph 4. The five most performed contemporary composers by the New York Philharmonic from 1960 to 1975 by number of times they were performed per year. Source Data: New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives.

formed very frequently in the 1960s were Harris and Hovhaness. Both were performed significantly less after 1969. One can observe a similar trend with European composers Igor Stravinsky and Francis Poulenc (1899–1963), who were performed more in the 1960s than in the 1970s.

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC “SPECIAL CONCERTS” 1960–1975

Most New York Philharmonic concerts were performed in a concert hall, but there were also “special concerts” that were held in other venues around the city. Spearheaded by Philharmonic administrator Carlos Moseley, Parks Concerts in July and August began in the Bernstein years (Robin 2015). The initial goal of the Parks Concerts was public outreach and to increase accessibility by offering free or very low-cost concerts. The Philharmonic also performed a series of summer stadium concerts from 1960 to 1964 at Lewisohn Stadium at the City College of New York. Unlike the summer offerings of many large American orchestras, these were not designed to be pops, or popular, concerts. The chairman of the Philharmonic, David M. Kaiser, was quoted in *The New York Times*: “We will not do anything in the nature of pops concerts. The idea is to give the people of the city the same kind of fare our subscribers get during the regular season” (Robin 2015).

Image 1 shows an example of a Stadium concert programme from 1960 and Image 2 shows an example of an outdoor Park Concert programme from 1968. In both examples, one finds older symphonic masterworks by Mozart, Borodin, Ravel and Tchaikovsky alongside more contemporary compositions by Ginastera, Bernstein and Copland.

In addition to summer concerts, Promenade concerts began in spring 1963. Although these concerts were intended “to approximate the plan of ‘Pops’ concerts in Boston” (the famous Boston Pops performed by Boston Symphony Orchestra), the programmes were not unlike the Stadium or Parks concerts (“Series Planned by Philharmonic”, 1962). The programmes below, Image 3 and Image 4, show a combination of older classical repertoire alongside mid-twentieth century repertoire.

The Stadium, Park and Promenade concerts of the 1960s programmed more contemporary works by American composers than European composers. They also tended stylistically towards what would have been referred to twenty years later as Midtown, with heavy emphasis on the works of Bernstein, Copland, Gershwin, and Hovhaness.

The Special Concerts of the 1970s under Boulez were innovative and different from those of the 1960s. The Prospective Encounters series was intended to bring concerts out of Philharmonic Hall and into the downtown. They were first held at New York University and later at Cooper Union, both in lower Manhattan.

Saturday Evening, July 9th at 8:30 CA11344
(In case of rain before intermission this concert will be postponed until the next clear night)

Conductor: MAURICE LEVINE
Soloist: EARTHA KITT

- An Outdoor Overture COPLAND
- Group of Songs by Kurt Weill
 (In Commemoration of the Tenth Anniversary of the
 Composer's Death)
 - Lost In The Stars*, from "*Lost In The Stars*"
 - Trouble Man*, from "*Lost In The Stars*"
 - Mack the Knife*, from "*The Threepenny Opera*"
 - Barbara Song*, from "*The Threepenny Opera*"
 - Speak Low*, from "*One Touch Of Venus*"
 MISS KITT
- Dances from the Ballet, "Estancia" GINASTERA
 - The Land Workers* III. *The Cattle Men*
 - Wheat Dance* IV. *Malambo*
- Group of Songs:
 - Tierra Va Tembla MERCERON
 - Angelitos Negros MAGISTE
 - The Blues, from "Black, Brown and Beige" ELLINGTON
 - Finjan OVADIA
(First Public Performance)
 - B'arvot Ha Negev TRADITIONAL HEBREW
 - Ki M'Tzion PUGATCHOV-HELFMAN
 MISS KITT


- INTERMISSION -
- Polovetsian Dances, from "Prince Igor" BORODIN
- Songs for Orchestra from "West Side Story" BERNSTEIN-MASON
- Group of Songs:
 - Mountain High, Valley Low, from "Lute Song" SCOTT
 - Uska Dara TRADITIONAL TURKISH
 - April in Portugal FERRAO
 - Just an Old Fashioned Girl FISHER
 - Beat Out Dat Rhythm on a Drum, from
 "Carmen Jones" BIZET-HAMMERSTEIN
 MISS KITT

STADIUM CONCERTS REVIEW 39

Image 1. Concert program, 9 Jul 1960, Program ID 11344, New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives.

**NEW YORK
 PHILHARMONIC**
LEONARD BERNSTEIN, Music Director

Second Season of
**OUTDOOR CONCERTS IN THE PARKS
 OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK**
LEONARD BERNSTEIN, LUKAS FOSS, ALFRED WALLENSTEIN, CONDUCTORS



LUKAS FOSS, Conductor
Marian Anderson, Narrator

MOZART Symphony No. 40, G minor, K. 550
 Molto allegro
 Andante
 Minuet: Allegretto
 Allegro assai

***TCHAIKOVSKY** Francesca da Rimini, Opus 32

COPLAND A Lincoln Portrait
 MARIAN ANDERSON

***RAVEL** Daphnis and Chloé, Suite No. 2
*Recorded by the New York Philharmonic
 Columbia Records Steinway Piano

These admission free concerts are sponsored by:
CITY OF NEW YORK
 through the Office of Cultural Affairs of the Department of Parks
 Hon. John V. Lindsay, Mayor; Hon. Thomas P. F. Hoiving, Commissioner of the Department of Parks
 and Cultural Executive of the City; Hon. Henry J. Stern, Director, Office of Cultural Affairs

THE JOS. SCHLITZ BREWING COMPANY AND THE NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC-SYMPHONY SOCIETY
 The trailerized shell especially created for these concerts has been named by the City the "MINNIE"
 GUGGENHEIMER SHELL in honor of the late Mrs. Charles S. Guggenheimer.
 Chairs permitted only in designated areas. It is requested that the audience leave the park area promptly
 at the conclusion of the concert. Please deposit debris in waste baskets provided.

Contributions are vitally needed to help meet the cost of presenting these outdoor
 concerts. Gifts of all sizes, tax deductible, will be gratefully appreciated. Please make
 all checks payable to New York Philharmonic-Outdoor Concerts. (New York Philharmonic,
 Broadway & 65th Street, New York 23, N.Y.)

FORTHCOMING CONCERTS IN THIS SERIES

<small>Under the Direction of ALFRED WALLENSTEIN</small>	<small>Soloist: RUDOLF FIRKUSNY, pianist</small>
<small>Friday, August 12, 8:00</small>	<small>Botanical Garden, Bronx</small>
<small>Sunday, August 14, 8:30</small>	<small>Crocheron Park, Queens</small>
<small>Tuesday, August 16, 8:30</small>	<small>Sheep Meadow, Central Park</small>
<small>Thursday, August 18, 8:30</small>	<small>Prospect Park, Brooklyn</small>
<small>Saturday, August 20, 8:30</small>	<small>Clove Lakes Park, Staten Island</small>
	<small>BARBER Overture to "The School for Scandal"</small>
	<small>MENDELSSOHN Symphony No. 4, A Major, Opus 90, "Italian"</small>
	<small>BRAHMS Piano Concerto No. 1, D minor, Opus 15</small>

Image 2. Concert program, 2 Aug 1966, Program ID 6529, New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives.

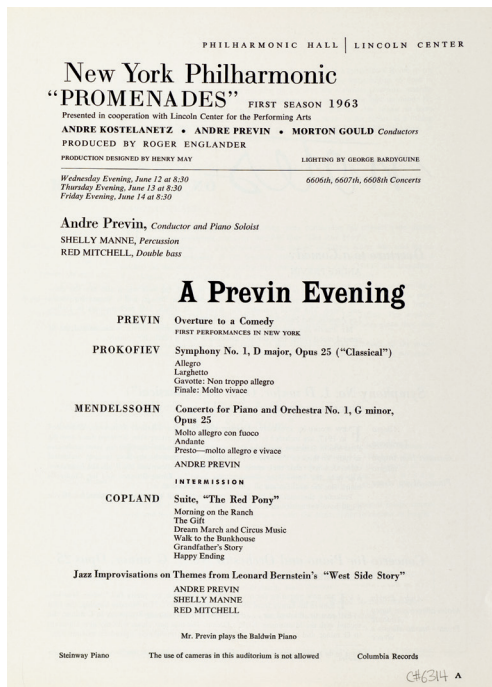


Image 3. Concert program, 12 Jun 1963, Program ID 6314, New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives.

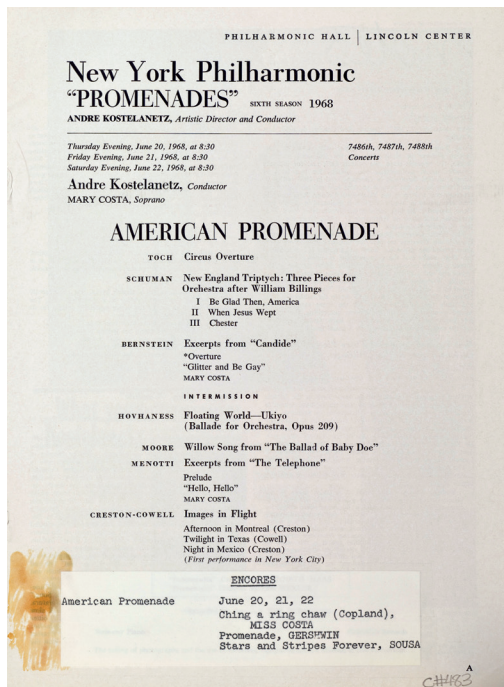


Image 4. Concert program, 20 Jun 1968, Program ID 483, New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives.

Images 5, 6 and 7 show examples of Prospective Encounters programmes. Repertoire for these concerts was exclusively contemporary by modernist composers like George Crumb (1929–2022), Peter Maxwell Davies (1934–2016), and Babbitt. Performances included some musicians from the Philharmonic, but more often other ensemble and extra players, serving in many ways as a precursor to the New Music concerts now commonplace in most large American Orchestras.

Boulez also introduced Informal Evening Concerts, whose goal was to educate listeners and promote active listening through both spoken lectures and repetition. These concerts were held across the street from Lincoln Center, at the Juilliard School. They focused on a single composer, sometimes even a single piece played multiple times. Featured composers were mostly of the Second Viennese school, but also included more contemporary modernists like Carter and Varèse.

Images 8 and 9 are two sample programmes from Informal Evening concerts. In Image 8, one can see a concert featuring Alban Berg’s (1885–1935) *Chamber Concerto* (1923–1925). In the first half, excerpts were performed from the work and following intermission, it was performed in its entirety. The programme shown in Image 9 demonstrates a concert focused entirely on Carter’s *Concerto for Orchestra*

Image 7. Concert program, 5 Dec 1975, Program ID 1729, New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives.

PROSPECTIVE ENCOUNTERS

Presented by the
New York Philharmonic
PIERRE BOULEZ, Music Director

Friday Evening, December 5, 1975 at 8:00
The Great Hall, Cooper Union

Pierre Boulez, Conductor

LUCIA DLUGOSZEWSKI "Abyss and Caress" (world premiere)
GERARD SCHWARZ, trumpet

flute, piccolo Renée Siebert Trudy Kane	oboe Albert Goltzer Eugene Box	clarinet, bass clarinet William Shadel	French horn John Cerminaro	trombone David Langitz	violin Kenneth Gordon Sanford Allen Hanna Lachert Barry Finclair	cello Gerald Appleman Evangeline Benedetti Kermit Moore	piano Paul Jacobs	bass trombone David Taylor
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DONALD MARTINO "Nocturno"
Renée Siebert flute, piccolo, alto flute
Peter Sirmenauer clarinet
William Shadel bass clarinet
Kenneth Gordon violin

Ralph Mendelson viola Gerald Appleman cello Richard Fitz percussion Paul Jacobs piano

HARRISON BIRTWISTLE "Verses for Ensembles"

flute, piccolo, alto flute Renée Siebert	oboe, English horn Albert Goltzer	clarinet Peter Sirmenauer William Shadel	bassoon, contrabassoon Leonard Hindell	French horn John Cerminaro	trumpet Gerard Schwarz Mark Gould	trombone David Langitz David Taylor	percussion Gordon Gottlieb Richard Fitz Joseph Passaro
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James Chambers, Orchestra Personnel Manager

This project is made possible in part with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts, Washington, D.C., a Federal agency.

Next Prospective Encounter: Friday, May 14 at 8:00

Pierre Boulez, Conductor
JON DEAK "Dive Expectations" (world premiere)
EARLE BROWN "Gathering"
GRIGORE ROCHBERG "Tableaux"

Steinway Piano Columbia Records 08/1729

and Debussy's *Dances*. In the programme shown in Image 11, the concert begins with Mozart *Adagio and Fugue*, K. 546 and ends with a New York Philharmonic premiere of Luciano Berio's (1925–2003) *Circles* (1960).

Special concerts were introduced in the late 1950s and early 1960s as community outreach, intended to bring New York Philharmonic concerts to a wider audience than might normally attend concerts at Lincoln Center or Carnegie Hall. The Special Concerts of the 1960s included Promenade, Stadium, and Park Concerts. Stadium concerts ended in 1964, but Promenade and Park concerts continued into the 1970s and Park concerts still exist today. Programmes for these concerts included both older and more contemporary repertoire, with a focus on neoclassical and neo-romantic American composers like Schuman, Hovhaness and Copland.

When Boulez became music director in the 1970s, he added three new types of Special Concerts: Prospective Encounters, Informal Evenings and Rug Concerts. Prospective Encounters were exclusively concerts of modern-style contemporary music, with smaller ensembles and extra performers from outside the Philharmonic. They were also held outside of Lincoln Center in lower Manhattan. Informal Evenings held at the Juilliard School were designed to be educational concerts where listeners would be taught about composers from the Second Viennese School as well as their contemporary peers. Finally, Rug Concerts were intended to invite new audiences to experience concerts in a new way at Lincoln Center, with pro-

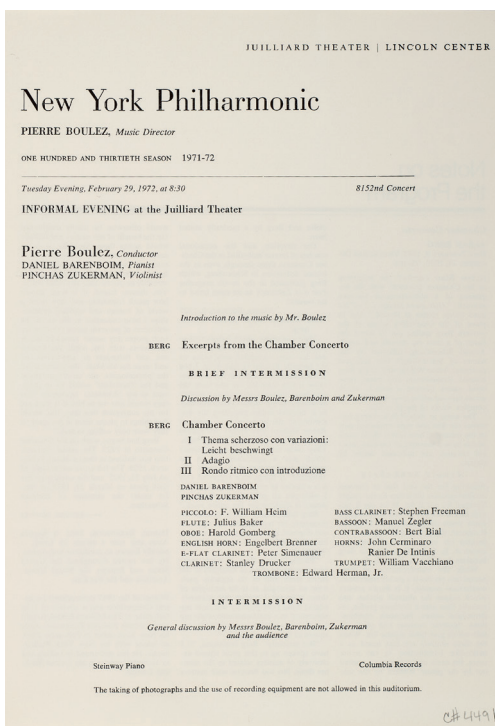


Image 8. Concert program, 29 Feb 1972, Program ID 4491, New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives.

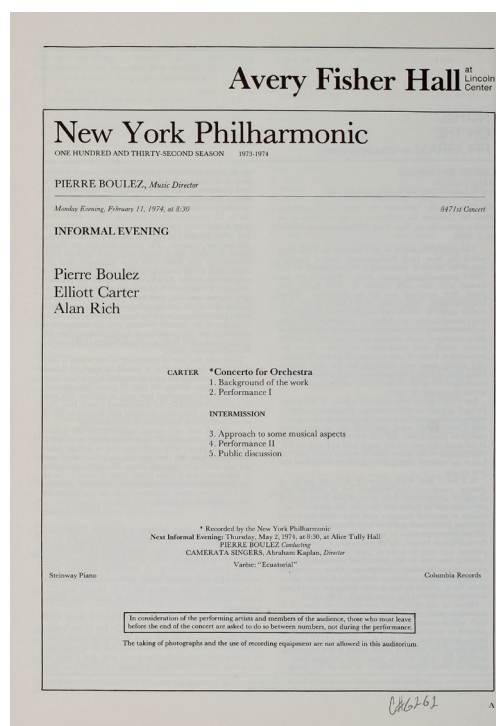


Image 9. Concert program, 11 Feb 1974, Program ID 6262, New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives.

grammes similar to what audiences would hear during regular subscription concerts. The goal of Boulez's concerts was outreach, but also education to train listeners in serialist, modern, serious contemporary composition.

PIERRE BOULEZ AND CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

Pierre Boulez became music director of the New York Philharmonic in 1971. Like Leonard Bernstein, he was a composer, and like Bernstein, he was considered a champion of contemporary repertoire. But for him, contemporary meant European modernist masters of the Second Viennese School and their disciples. Continuing the work he began with the Domaine Musicale society that he founded in 1954, Boulez attempted to build a new contemporary canon, "which did not reflect extant judgements – (it was initially scandalous to the establishment) – so much as construct them, creating a canon of great modern works and composers in the postwar vacuum in which none yet existed" (Born 1995, 180). Boulez's definition, or redefinition, of

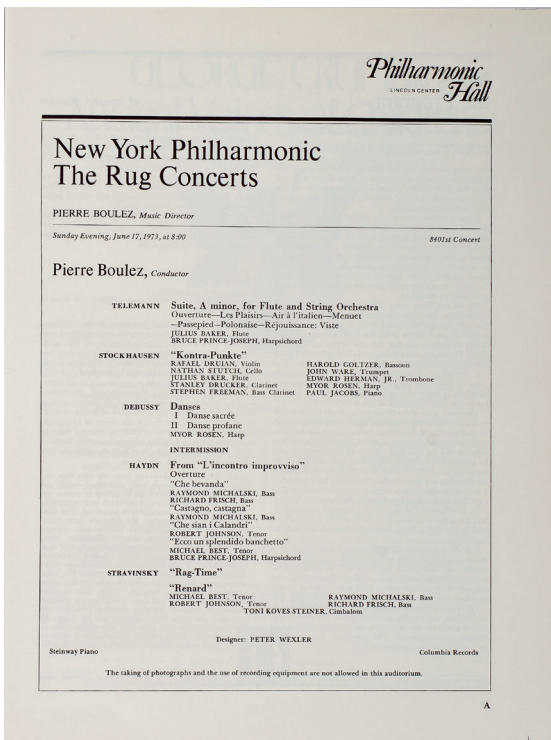


Image 10. Concert program, 17 Jun 1973, Program ID 4206, New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives.

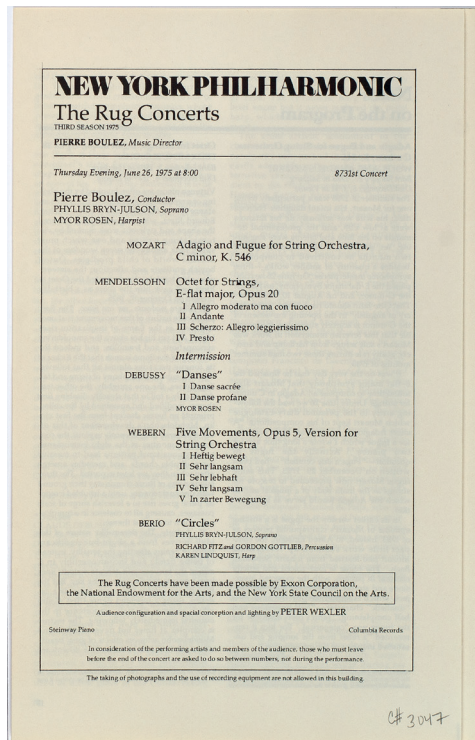
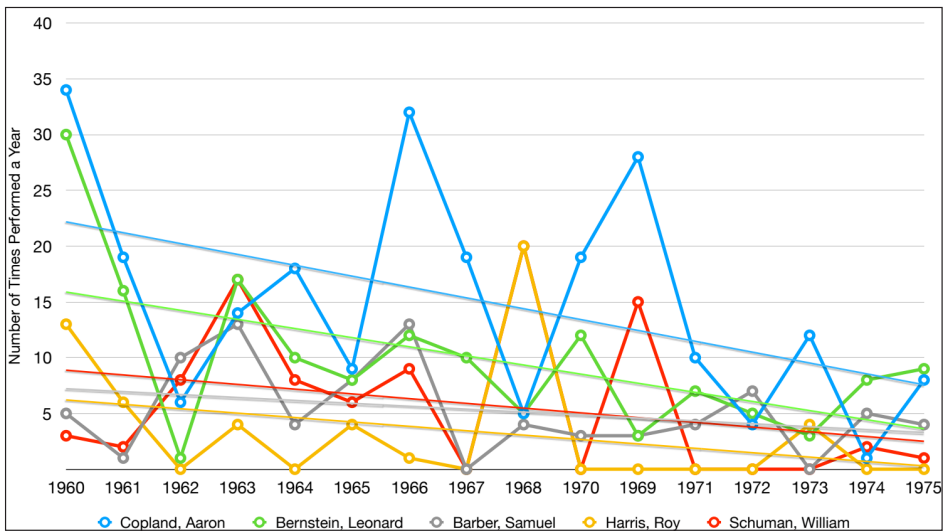


Image 11. Concert program, 26 Jun 1975, Program ID 3047, New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives.

contemporary music was one that focused on predominantly European composers as well as those Americans who composed in serialist and other atonal styles.

For most of the 1960s, there was a large amount of contemporary repertoire by American composers performed by the New York Philharmonic. The ten most frequently performed contemporary composers from 1960 to 1975 were, in order of frequency: Copland, Bernstein, Bartók, Hindemith, Schuman, Barber, Stravinsky, Gershwin, Harris, and William Walton (1902–1983). Six of these composers were American, four European, and they were mostly stylistically conservative, or Midtown.

From 1960 to 1975, Copland, Bernstein, Schuman, Barber and Harris were performed with decreasing frequency. The same was true of other stylistically Midtown composers like Hindemith, Poulenc, Foss, and Hovhaness. Gershwin was performed seventy-five times between 1960 and 1969, and only fourteen times between 1970 and 1975. Graph 5 illustrates the downward trend of programming for the five most frequently performed American composers from 1960 to 1975.



Graph 5. The five most frequently performed American contemporary composers by the New York Philharmonic by the number of times they were performed yearly between 1960 and 1975. Source Data: New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives.

Bartók was the only composer of the ten named above who continued to be performed with the same frequency from 1970. Boulez was a great supporter of Bartók’s music. Other contemporary composers who were performed with greater frequency after 1970 included Berio, Carter, Leon Kirchner (1919–2009), György Ligeti, Messiaen, Gunther Schuller (1925–2015), Carl Ruggles (1876–1971), Stockhausen, Karol Szymanowski (1882–1937), Varèse, and Webern.

In his chapter on the performance practices of the Ensemble Intercontemporain (EIC), which Boulez founded in 1976, Max Noubel observed:

Boulez’s contempt for, or at least disinterest in, most American music, however, comes neither from a lack of knowledge of American culture, nor from any stance on the hegemonic pressure the United States might exert. It derives simply from his refusal – which he openly acknowledges and advocates – to accept any conception of musical creation that is not based on a highly elaborated, rigorous knowledge and understanding of European masterpieces that is unconcerned with questions of accessibility. (Noubel 2014, 398.)

Boulez understood America’s role in twentieth-century music history to be minor, and therefore works by American composers were largely excluded from the canon he tried to establish in the European institutions he founded (Domaine Musicale, later at IRCAM and the EIC). Elliott Carter was the only American composer accepted by Boulez due to Carter’s “conceptual rigour, advanced elaboration of language, [and] rejection of all easy compromises” (Noubel 2014, 403). Boulez consid-

ered Carter “the most European of all American composers”, conducting his *Concerto for Orchestra* (1969) eight times between 1969 and 1975, more than any other American composer (Noubel 2014, 403).

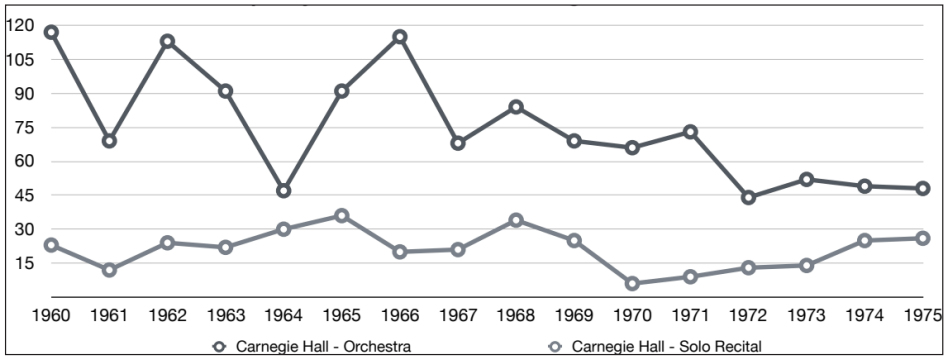
The New York Philharmonic, however, had an existing performance practice (after Toscanini) of championing American composers. And programming decisions were not Boulez’s alone, though he did hold great sway. Boulez chose to programme American contemporary composers who were more stylistically elaborate and modernist (Uptown), as well as those Americans who promoted his music. This introduced composers like Jacob Druckman (1928–1996), Barbara Kolb (b. 1939), and Ira Taxin (b. 1950) to New York Philharmonic subscription audiences, while relegating composers like William Bolcom (b. 1938), Donald Harris (1931–2016), Peter Lieberson (1946–2011), and Eric Salzman (1933–2017) to the Prospective Encounter series performances.

Stylistically Midtown and Downtown composers on Lincoln Center orchestral programmes were replaced by European modernists like Bartók, Berio, Harrison Birtwistle (1934–2022), Ligeti, Stockhausen, and Varèse. Boulez also heavily programmed the composers of the Second Viennese School, conducting Schoenberg thirteen times between 1969 and 1975, Berg fifteen times, and Webern twenty-five times.

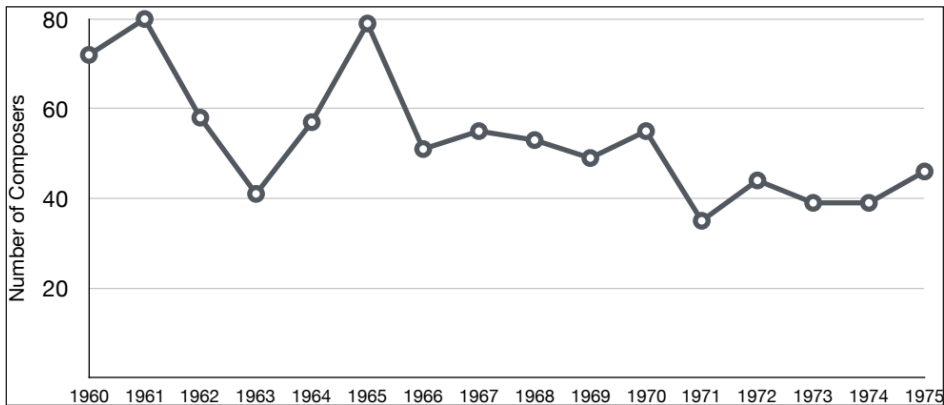
CARNEGIE HALL PROGRAMMING DATA 1960–1975

Despite Boulez’s influence, changes to contemporary programming practices were not exclusive to the New York Philharmonic. The other main institution of classical music in New York City was Carnegie Hall, which opened in 1891. It was home to the New York Philharmonic until 1962 when Philharmonic Hall (currently known as David Geffen Hall) opened at Lincoln Center. The Main auditorium of Carnegie Hall (currently Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage) is commonly accepted as the most prestigious and famous performing arts stage in the United States, and of course, known internationally. While there was no resident orchestra after 1962, performances at Carnegie Hall remain critical for both solo artists and orchestras.

I analysed programmatic data from Main Auditorium concerts from 1960 to 1975 using the same method as with the New York Philharmonic data, separating orchestral and solo recitals. Graph 6 below shows the number of contemporary works performed from 1960 to 1975 in both orchestral (or ensemble) concerts and solo recitals. While the average of contemporary works performed in solo recitals remained level, the number of contemporary works performed yearly in orchestral concerts fell by nearly half over this fifteen-year span. There was also a decreasing trend in the number of contemporary composers performed each year, which can be seen in Graph 7. The average number of composers performed also fell by almost half during this fifteen-year span.



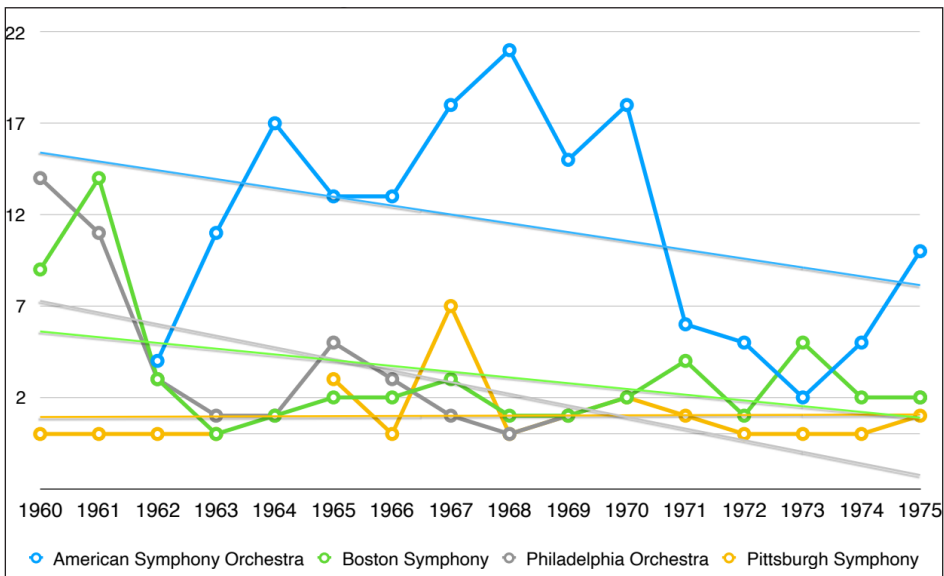
Graph 6. The number of contemporary works performed in the Main Auditorium of Carnegie Hall between 1960 and 1975, separated between orchestral concerts and solo recitals. Source Data: Carnegie Hall Rose Archive.



Graph 7. The number of contemporary composers performed per year in orchestral Main Auditorium Carnegie Hall Concerts between 1960 and 1975. Source Data: Carnegie Hall Rose Archive.

American orchestras that performed in Carnegie Hall came from large urban centres as well as smaller cities, and the orchestras that performed varied from year to year. The large American orchestras that performed most frequently at Carnegie Hall were the American Symphony Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra, and Cleveland Orchestra. (Excluding the New York Philharmonic, who performed exclusively at Carnegie Hall until 1962, but whose data has already been analysed.) The American Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1962 by Leopold Stokowski and is based in New York City.

Graph 8 shows the number of contemporary works performed in Carnegie Hall by four large East Coast American orchestras that performed regularly there from 1960 to 1975. The American Symphony, Boston Symphony and Philadelphia Orchestra all trended downwards in their contemporary music performance over this



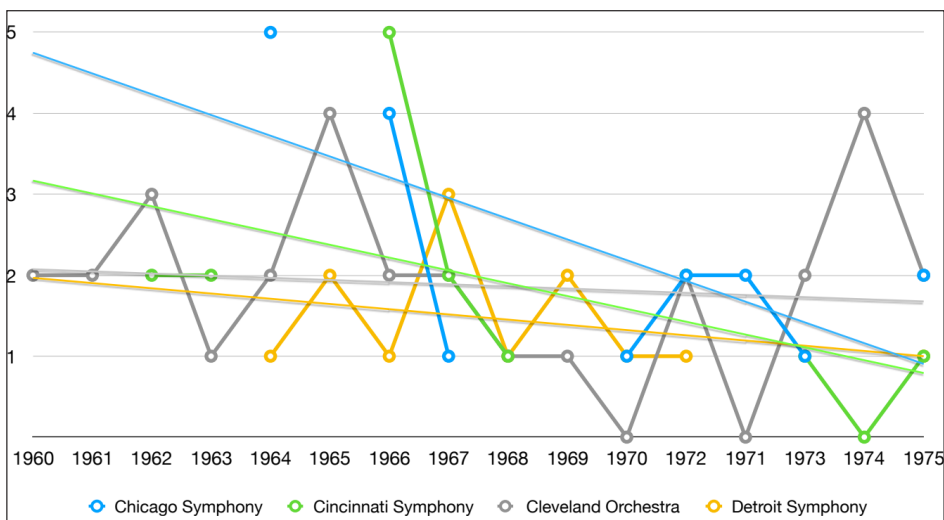
Graph 8. The number of contemporary works performed by four large East Coast American Orchestras in the Main Auditorium of Carnegie Hall between 1960 and 1975. Source Data: Carnegie Hall Rose Archive.

span, while the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra peaked in 1967, but stayed relatively low overall.

There is a similar trend illustrated amongst the large Midwest orchestras that performed at Carnegie Hall from 1960 to 1975 in Graph 9. The Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati Symphony and Detroit Symphony all performed fewer contemporary works over this fifteen-year span, while the Cleveland Orchestra varied greatly from season to season but stayed level on average. Because of the distance (travel from shorter distances was much easier and much less expensive), the east coast orchestras performed more frequently in Carnegie Hall, often multiple times a year. The trendlines indicate, however, that frequency had little effect on the amount of contemporary music performed. Performances in Carnegie Hall were important showcases for these orchestras, and most of them decreased the amount of contemporary music performed in this venue from 1960 to 1975.

CARNEGIE HALL – SPECIAL ENSEMBLES 1960–1975

Also observable in the Carnegie data from the 1960s is the presence of orchestras not affiliated or from a specific city or region, like the Ars Nova Orchestra, Orchestra of America, Symphony of the Air, Symphony USA, and Symphony of the New World. Many of these orchestras were based in New York City and did not employ



Graph 9. The number of contemporary works performed by four large Midwest American Orchestras in the Main Auditorium of Carnegie Hall between 1960 and 1975. Source Data: Carnegie Hall Rose Archive.

musicians full time, but rather made use of the enormous community of musicians residing in the area. Many of these orchestras performed a balanced mix of older and more contemporary repertoire, while others focused almost exclusively on new music, especially by American composers.

The most frequent of these orchestras to perform in the 1960s at Carnegie Hall was the Orchestra of America, founded and conducted by Richard Korn (1909–1981). Korn started the ensemble in 1959 and led it until it disbanded in 1965. Little is known about the orchestra, but Korn’s *New York Times* obituary describes it as “one of the first orchestras designed to encourage the participation of minority-group musicians” (“Richard Korn” 1981, 55). The ensemble played almost exclusively new American music, featuring many composers who were not performed by the New York Philharmonic or at Carnegie Hall by other orchestras, like Antheil, Arthur Kreutz (1906–1991), Lamar Springfield (1897–1959), Leland Smith (1925–2014), Donald Gillis (1912–1978), and Andrew Imbrie (1921–2007). Between 1960 and 1965, the Orchestra of America performed sixty-six contemporary orchestral works in Carnegie Hall in twenty concerts that included fourteen world premieres and two United States premieres.

The Symphony of the Air was formed by members of the former NBC Symphony in 1954 and it disbanded in 1963. Between 1954 and 1963, Symphony of the Air performed one hundred and one concerts at Carnegie Hall. Like the New York Philharmonic of the early 1960s, the orchestra performed a combination of nineteenth-century classical and romantic masterworks along with a large amount of

American contemporary repertoire. Another orchestra active in the early 1960s was Orchestra USA. It was founded by Gunther Schuller, John Lewis (1920–2001) and Harold Farberman (1929–2018) as an orchestra that blended jazz and classical music, performing a lot of jazz compositions but also contemporary works by the three founders along with composers David Ward-Steinman (1936–2015), Miljenko Prohaska (1925–2014), and Hall Overton (1920–1972).

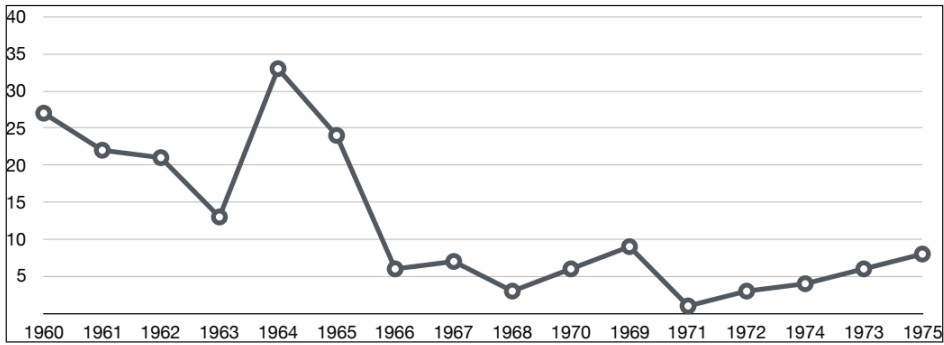
Finally, the National Orchestral Association (NOA) was founded in 1930 to train American orchestra musicians. The NOA performed regularly at Carnegie Hall through the 1960s and 1970s. They performed older and more contemporary repertoire, including nine world premieres and four United States premieres during this fifteen-year span. Only the NOA continued to perform in Carnegie after 1966; the rest of these orchestras ceased performance in Carnegie Hall by 1965.

From 1965 on, there began to appear the first Carnegie Hall performances by so-called contemporary ensembles who distinguished themselves by only focusing on new chamber music. They defined contemporary repertoire as Boulez did – modernist in style. Ensembles that premiered at Carnegie Hall in the 1960s and 1970s included the Contemporary Chamber Players, the Contemporary Chamber Ensemble, the Contemporary Music Orchestra of Paris, and the New Orchestra. Both the Contemporary Chamber Players and the Contemporary Chamber Ensemble were started by American instrumentalist, conductor, and composer Arthur Weisburg (1931–2009). The Contemporary Chamber Ensemble recorded extensively from 1969 to 1974 focusing on American modernists Roger Reynolds (b.1934), Stefan Wolpe (1902–1972), George Rochberg (1918–2005), Babbitt and Carter, as well as European composers Schoenberg and Varèse.

Examining the total number of contemporary works performed by the special orchestras and ensembles described above in Carnegie Hall from 1960 to 1975, there is a clear decrease in the amount of contemporary music performed in this time period. Except for the National Orchestra Association, most of the special orchestras active in the early and mid-1960s ceased to exist by the early 1970s. The contemporary ensembles that “replaced” them did not perform as many concerts nor as many contemporary works, as can be seen in Graph 10. They also defined contemporary music as more European and modern in style, decreasing the overall diversity of new music heard at Carnegie Hall by the mid-1970s.

CONCLUSION

Archival programming data from both the New York Philharmonic and Carnegie Hall indicate a change in programming practice and performance practice of contemporary orchestral music from the 1960s to the 1970s. Orchestras tended to perform less contemporary music by the mid-1970s than they had the decade before.



Graph 10. The number of contemporary works performed by special orchestras and ensembles in the Main Auditorium of Carnegie Hall between 1960 and 1975. Source Data: Carnegie Hall Rose Archive.

Contemporary music also began to be separated from older classical repertoire, performed in separate “contemporary concerts” and by “contemporary” ensembles. Finally, stylistically Midtown and Downtown contemporary composers, as well as lighter classical music, jazz and popular music, were performed less in orchestral concerts. The contemporary music performed by orchestras began to be more European, modern, and stylistically Uptown. This required, as it had around the turn of the twentieth century and during the interwar years, that composers occupy other institutional spaces like academia, fine art worlds or fields, popular music production, jazz, et cetera.

In his ethnography *Heartland Excursions* (1995) about the practice of classical music in music conservatory, Bruno Nettl writes that 1950s composers such as Copland, Schoenberg, Bartók and Hindemith tended not to be regarded “as [a] distinct, new [musical] language, but to integrate[d] into the musical and sociocultural framework of the classical, incorporated into the central performance framework and repertory” (Nettl 1995, 86). One reason could be that the orchestral performance practice of the mid-twentieth century, like those orchestral practices analysed here, promoted this approach. The contemporary music of the time, from Copland to Brown, Hovhaness to Cage, Poulenc to Stockhausen and Feldman to Boulez were all integrated into the same “performance framework” in the 1960s. It was not until the late 1960s, 1970s and into the 1980s that performance practices began to be deliberately separated.

The orchestral data analysed here characterises post-war and early Cold War contemporary music practices in New York City as more pluralistic than previous studies have articulated. This study is both institutionally and geographically specific and encourages similar studies to be undertaken in Midwest and West coast cultural centres. While modernist and avant-garde composers might have indeed “retreat[ed] from one bastion of middle-class culture, the concert hall, to another,

the university” to sustain themselves professionally, their music was not altogether absent from the concert hall, at least in New York City (Kerman 1985, 101). Furthermore, it is possible that the “precarious marginality of the high modernist wing in American new music” was not as evident in the New York City public performance institutions as was previously observed immediately following World War II (Brody 1993, 184).

This data indicates that diverse contemporary music practices and styles coexisted in New York City from the 1950s through the 1960s. I propose that the changes in practices that began in the late 1960s through the 1970s – the renewed separation of musical genres, the re-definition of contemporary music to mean Euro-centric, modernist, elaborate, and serious, the disappearing focus on American composition – contributed to separation and institutionalisation of Uptown, Midtown, and Downtown musical styles. The specific stylistic and geographic divisions are subject to debate, but they do reflect changes that lasted well into the 1980s and 1990s in New York City. While changes in orchestral practice by no means caused the stylistic diversity, they contributed in a meaningful way to the institutionalisation, or further institutionalisation, of certain artistic aesthetics and values.

The most pronounced effects of this division to American classical music practice, in my opinion, have been the way that contemporary music culture developed in academia and a re-education amongst the general concert-going public of what constituted contemporary classical music. Once it was removed from orchestral institutions, the practice of contemporary music culture that took hold in most of American academia continued to isolate composers from both the public and from orchestral musicians. While some composers already considered “the university [as] the fortress against cultural populism” by the late 1940s, the separation and institutionalisation of Uptown from the 1970s onwards perpetuated this phenomenon (Brody 1993, 168). It also preserved and continued the idea of composer as outsider, a position valued not only by many serialist composers but by west coast experimentalists as well (Beal 2008, 686).

In the realm of performance, ensembles specialising in contemporary music performance arose to meet the composers’ needs, but the separation of performance practice encouraged contemporary music to be thought of as “niche” amongst composers, classical musicians, and listeners. And for audiences, the lack of diversity in contemporary programming contributed to a belief that contemporary music was only serious, complicated, and difficult to listen to. It is possible that this created a feedback loop whereby orchestras, under growing economic pressure and upon receiving feedback from audiences, thus became less and less inclined to programme contemporary music, viewing it as financially risky.

This historic study of orchestral programming provides important perspective on current programming research. My current study of *Orchestral Programming in Twelve Large American and Northern European Orchestras* began tracking con-

temporary programming in 2017. Over the last five years, I have seen a prominent shift amongst the “big six” American orchestras (New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, and Los Angeles) towards not only more contemporary music programming, but a widening of the Uptown definition of contemporary classical music. It has been led by west coast practices, where in the 1970s, figures like John Adams and Michael Tilson Thomas approached orchestra programming in a completely different way than their east coast counterparts.

While the terms Uptown, Midtown, and Downtown are no longer used to define American contemporary music, the effects of their institutionalisation in the second half of the twentieth century can still be felt in American university-level music education and in the orchestral practices of some American orchestras. It has only been in the last couple of seasons that the New York Philharmonic has begun programming contemporary music at the same frequency it did in the early 1960s (“2020–2021 Contemporary Orchestra Programming”, 2020). Programming studies such as this one provide a useful tool for understanding the historical practice of contemporary classical music, and can help us better understand why it is practised the way it is today.

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Concert program, 17 Jun 1973, Program ID 4206, New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives. <https://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/89470457-2c68-47d5-8102-f2913401bc7e-0.1>

Concert program, 26 Jun 1975, Program ID 3047, New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives. <https://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/09c3f699-06f9-444f-b42b-81985bb2c464-0.1>