



Flash mob. When members of Copenhagen Phil performed the Morning Mood movement from Edvard Grieg's *Peer Gynt* in the Copenhagen Metro one April day in 2012, they gave metro passengers an unexpected experience. On YouTube, the event has had an average of more than one million showings per month. See the video, and enjoy the music here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gww9_S4P-NV0

Photo: Copenhagen Phil

Using Experience Design to Reach a Broader Audience for Classical Music

How can we use new, digital technologies to make classical music more appealing and accessible – especially for a younger audience? A group of symphony orchestras and educational institutions in Denmark and Sweden have set out to address that question in a large-scale research collaboration that has received funding from the EU's interregional development fund.

By Hans Emborg Bünemann

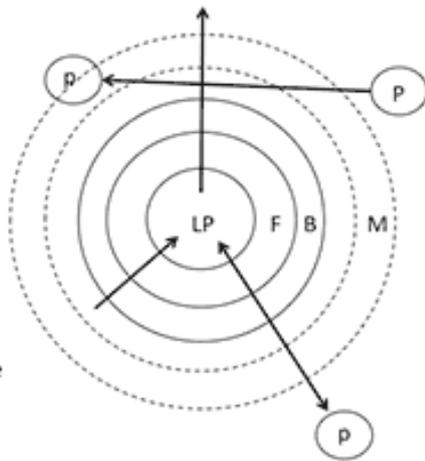
The symphony orchestras in the Øresund want to reach a larger – and, if possible, a younger – audience. Working with design researchers at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, School of Design and Malmö University, they are going to experiment

with new formats for symphonic music. That is the basic concept of a transnational research project in the Øresund region titled *Musikalsk oplevelsesdesign* (Musical Experience Design), which has received EUR 774,000 in partial funding from the EU's interregional development fund.

New Technological Platforms for Music

Renewal will rely in part on the use of new technological platforms, says Jakob Ion Wille, a dramaturge and a PhD scholar at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, School of Design. Together with Arthur Steijn, an installation artist and also a PhD scholar at the School of Design, he is one of the driving forces of the project. Jakob Ion Wille views technology as a means of leveraging the efforts to bring classical music to a wider audience. And the project is a good match for the design school's aim of ex-

Radius of the Live Performance



LP = Live Performance
 F = Foyer
 B = Building exterior
 M = Mobile units
 P = Other installations or (live) performances

Spatial spheres. The concert experience should be expanded to include other spheres than just the concert hall. Rethinking the dramatic composition of the experience and taking advantage of technological solutions such as smartphones, sound installations and live streaming make it possible to expand the overall experience for the audience.

Illustration: Arthur Steijn and Jakob Ion Wille

perimenting with new technology and developing methods for including both the users and producers of experiences.

“We need to find ways to use technology to maximise the synergy effect of having artists, experience designers and students work and experiment together,” says Jakob Ion Wille, adding that the project contains an interesting dilemma:

“On the one hand, classical symphonic music is a conservative art form in terms of its performance and the experience format. On the other hand, symphony orchestras are really keen to reach out and demonstrate the contribution they can make to the cultural scene.”

Altering the Dramaturgy of the Music Experience

Together with Arthur Steijn, Jakob Ion Wille aims to alter the dramaturgy of the concert experience. They wish to explore how audiences can have an experience that goes beyond the basic components of buying a ticket, going to the concert, having a drink during intermission, taking in the second part of the concert and going home again.

“We would like to extend the concert experience, so to speak, by altering the dramaturgy of the experience. Letting the music begin already outside the concert hall. Experimenting with the use of visual effects in the lobby and in the concert hall itself. Giving the audience a recording of the concert to take home on their phone. At the same time, we are also aware of the need to preserve the live experience and to avoid disturbing the artistic product,” he points out.

Flash Mobs

In fact, even before the project has begun, Copenhagen Phil is already experimenting with new formats. On several occasions, the orchestra has surprised the public by performing symphonic

music in places where it is least expected. These flash mob events have been a huge success, says Uffe Savery, orchestra leader of Copenhagen Phil.

“In May 2012 we played Peer Gynt in the Copenhagen Metro. People who don’t normally frequent classical concert halls were moved to tears and came up to thank us afterwards. For us as musicians, the receptiveness of the metro passengers to this initiative was a huge boost to our identity as artists who create something of value. And by using technology in the form of YouTube we can bring our flash mobs – and thus our music – to thousands of people who never knew that symphonic music actually speaks to them.”

Interactive Website

The orchestra has also embarked on a project to create a website that involves the users directly in developing the musical experience. The site will feature audio and video recordings of each of the orchestra’s 70 musicians playing their part of the score in the first movement of Beethoven’s fifth symphony. The 70 film clips will be accessible online to everyone. Uffe Savery explains:

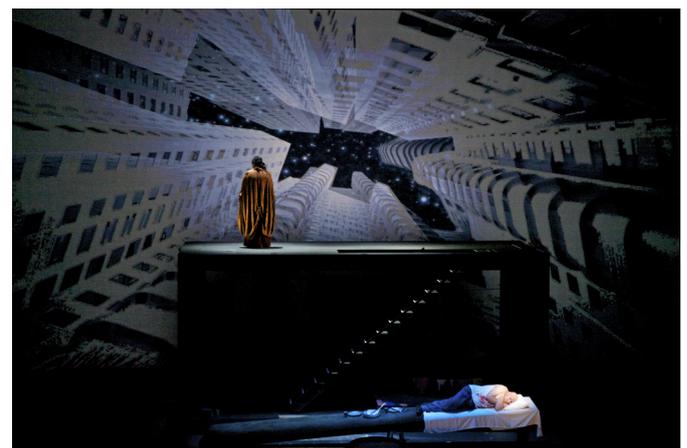
“Anyone will be able to go to the website and edit their own version of Beethoven’s fifth symphony, highlighting individual musicians both visually and in terms of sound. Musicians using the website can even record their own performance and add their music to the mix.”

Over time, this will produce a new version of the symphony that includes user contributions. “But the original version by Copenhagen Phil will remain available as well,” Uffe Savery reassures us. He explains that one of the ideas behind the project is to highlight the musicians’ individual contribution to the symphonic whole.

“Here, the new technology can help us make the music more accessible to a broader audience, who might have difficulty telling the instruments apart in the combined orchestral impression,” says Uffe Savery, adding that the experiences from this project will be included in the research project about musical experience design.

Visual experience design. Arthur Steijn has previously worked with visual design, for example for the Richard Strauss opera *Die Frau ohne Schatten* at the Royal Danish Theatre. In the current project on musical experience design, the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, School of Design will be focusing on visual experience design in connection with live concerts.

Motion graphics and animation: Arthur Steijn; scenography: Steffen Aarving; video design: Signe Krog





Cross-fertilisation. The project collaboration which involves creative industries, design researchers and concert halls in the Copenhagen-Malmö region, can help put the region on the map as a centre for new technology, experience design and symphonic music, says Jakob Ion Wille.
 Photo: Anton Wille

A Boost for Identity

Uffe Savery and the members of the orchestra are looking forward to working with researchers and fellow musicians on both sides of Øresund, the sound that separates Denmark and Sweden. And as a cultural institution with strong traditions, Copenhagen Phil should of course be open to cooperating with other cultural institutions, says Uffe Savery.

“We can inspire each other to find ways of justifying our existence,” he says, underscoring that flash mob events and other similar activities are a huge boost for the orchestra’s identity and legitimacy.

“Why should Copenhagen Phil receive DKK 40 million each year from the Ministry of Culture? Because the public wants it!”

Classical Music for Everyone

The goal of reaching a much larger audience is also close to the heart of the leader of the Malmö Symphony Orchestra, Dragan Buvac. He is very interested in taking advantage of the technological possibilities.

“Every symphony orchestra in the world faces the same challenge,” he says. “We need to bring the classical music into the Google society. I have no respect for the old notion that classical music is high culture for the upper classes. On the contrary, I see classical music as a subculture that can reach out to become part of everyone’s culture, and so I’m really looking forward to including the researchers’ perspective.”

Symphonic Music for Computer Games

The Malmö Symphony Orchestra has also begun to take the first steps toward embracing new and alternative means of making

their artistic product accessible to a wider audience. The orchestra has recorded music for the computer game Assassin’s Creed, which is known around the world, and subsequently performed the same music in concerts.

“That gave lots of young people, who had never before set foot in our concert hall, a great live experience with classical symphonic music. As a result, lots of teenagers in Malmö are huge fans of our symphony orchestra now,” says Dragan Buvac.

Business Development and Spinoffs

In Jakob Ion Wille’s assessment, the research project will also be able to promote development in small companies working with experience design, including exhibition design, visual effects for museum and digital products. He predicts that the project will generate concepts that companies can put into production.

“For example, I’m thinking of the development of interactive concert apps. Or of installing little cameras in the orchestra pit, so that concertgoers can use their phone as opera glasses, for example to study a musician’s hand position in a demanding sequence. In a business perspective, there are many potential spinoff opportunities for small companies,” says Jakob Ion Wille. »»»

The research project *Musikalsk oplevelsesdesign* (Musical experience design)

Project partners:

- Øresund Committee
- Malmö Symphony Orchestra, Sweden (lead partner)
- Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, School of Design, Denmark (coordinating partner for the Danish contribution)
- Malmö University (MEDEA), Sweden
- Copenhagen Phil, Denmark
- The Royal Danish Orchestra, Denmark
- Edition S, Denmark
- Media Evolution, Sweden

The project has received a grant of EUR 774,000 from the EU’s Interregional Development Fund.

Keywords: experience design, digital technology, classical music, Interreg, symphony orchestra, flash mob, computer game

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