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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
SANTA CRUZ

**“First of All You Need a Good Foundation:” The Ford Foundation’s Program
for Symphony Orchestras**

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

MUSIC

by

Benjamin Negley

June 2019

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES.....	iv
ABSTRACT.....	vii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 1. HOW ORCHESTRAS ARE FUNDED IN THE UNITED STATES. ..	5
CHAPTER 2. THE FORD FOUNDATION AND THE PROGRAM IN THE HUMANITIES AND THE ARTS	57
CHAPTER 3. THE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA PROGRAM.....	109
CHAPTER 4. THE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA PROGRAM IN CONTEXT: THE OAKLAND SYMPHONY	146
CHAPTER 5. THE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA PROGRAM IN CONTEXT: THE MINNESOTA ORCHESTRA	200
CONCLUSION.....	251
APPENDIX 1. FINANAICAL POSITION OF THE FORD FOUNDATION, 1952 TO 1981	285
APPENDIX 2. WORKS PERFORMED BY GERHARD SAMUEL AS MUSIC DIRECTOR OF THE OAKLAND SYMPHONY, 1959 TO 1971	288
APPENDIX 3. FORD FOUNDATION PRESS RELEASE ANNOUNCING THE PROGRAM FOR SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAS.....	295
BIBLIOGRAPHY	321

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

TABLE 1.1: INCOME SOURCES AS PERCENTAGES OF TOTAL INCOME BY COUNTRY	15
TABLE 1.2: ANNUAL PAY OF SYMPHONY MUSICIANS AND ORCHESTRA MANAGERS.....	17
FIGURE 1.1: A FULL-PAGE ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE LOUISVILLE’S ORCHESTRA’S CONTEMPORARY MUSIC SUBSCRIPTION PROGRAM IN THE DECEMBER 10, 1955 EDITION OF THE NEW YORKER.....	53
TABLE 2.1: INDIVIDUAL INCOME TAX RATE CHANGES FROM 1925 - 1940 AND APPROXIMATE TAX LIABILITY FOR AN INDIVIDUAL EARNING \$10,000,000.....	60
TABLE 2.2: ESTATE TAX EXEMPTIONS AND RATES.....	62
TABLE 2.3: OWNERSHIP OF FORD MOTOR COMPANY SHARES BEFORE AND AFTER 1956 INITIAL PUBLIC OFFERING.....	92
TABLE 2.4: OPERAS PERFORMED BY THE NEW YORK CITY OPERA DURING SPRING 1958 WITH SUPPORT FROM THE FORD FOUNDATION	102
TABLE 3.1: FORD FOUNDATION PROGRAM IN THE HUMANITIES AND THE ARTS GRANTS 1957–72.....	110

TABLE 3.2: PARTICIPANTS IN THE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA PROGRAM	
.....	128
TABLE 3.3: DEVELOPMENT FUNDS USAGE AS A PERCENTAGE OF \$4.1	
MILLION TOTAL	132
TABLE 4.1: OAKLAND SYMPHONY MUSICIANS' OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT	
IN 1966	151
TABLE 4.2: SALARY GROWTH OF OAKLAND SYMPHONY MUSICIANS	
FROM 1965 TO 1970.....	152
TABLE 4.3: GIFTS RELATED TO EDGAR KAISER AND KAISER COMPANIES	
DURING THE MATCHING PHASE OF THE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA	
PROGRAM.....	171
TABLE 5.1: HISTORICAL MINNESOTA ORCHESTRA WAGE DATA	219
TABLE 5.2: "WHAT OTHER ORCHESTRAS ARE DOING"	234
TABLE 5.3: TEN-YEAR BUDGET PROJECTION 1965-74:.....	239
TABLE 5.4: MINNESOTA ORCHESTRA ENDOWMENT AS OF FEBRUARY 28,	
1977	243
TABLE 5.5: MINNESOTA ORCHESTRA INCOME STATEMENTS FOR 1973-	
76:	245
TABLE 6.1: WEEKS OF GUARANTEED EMPLOYMENT IN U.S. SYMPHONY	
ORCHESTRAS	261
TABLE 6.2: HISTORICAL GROWTH IN MINIMUM ANNUAL SALARIES IN	
CURRENT DOLLARS	264

TABLE 6.3: HISTORICAL GROWTH IN MINIMUM ANNUAL SALARIES IN
REAL DOLLARS (INFLATION-ADJUSTED FOR 2018)..... 265

TABLE 6.4: BASE SALARIES OF EIGHT HIGHEST PAID SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRAS COMPARED TO BASE SALARIES OF LOCAL PUBLIC
SCHOOL DISTRICT TEACHERS..... 269

ABSTRACT

“First of All You Need a Good Foundation:” The Ford Foundation’s Program for Symphony Orchestras

Ben Negley

In 1966, the Ford Foundation began an ambitious ten-year program to support North American symphony orchestras. Through a total investment of \$80.2 million to sixty-one orchestras in the United States and Puerto Rico, the Ford Foundation sought to improve the economic conditions of orchestral musicians and assure the financial stability of individual orchestral institutions. Toward this goal, the Ford Foundation issued both expendable funds, distributed during the first five years of the program, and endowment funds, which were released at the end of the program and contingent on the orchestras matching the foundation’s contributions. Building on heightened public interest in symphonic music, the Ford Foundation’s Program for Symphony Orchestras contributed to the growth and success of American orchestras in the 1960s and 1970s. In not only enhancing the level of standing associated with orchestral musicians and orchestral institutions, but also encouraging orchestras to develop and improve fundraising mechanisms, the Ford Foundation made an unprecedented bet on the success of orchestral music in North America.

This dissertation investigates the Ford Foundation’s support of orchestras in the 1960s and 1970s within postwar American culture, and examines how the Ford Foundation’s Program for Symphony Orchestras intertwined with local factors to transform individual orchestras. I focus on two divergent grantees: the Oakland

Symphony Orchestra, which eventually declared bankruptcy in the late 1980s, and the Minnesota Orchestra, which raised more endowment matching funds than any other grantee orchestra. Based on interviews and archival research, these case studies show how the efficacy of the Program for Symphony Orchestras depended greatly on local factors. Furthermore, I consider the longer-term effects of the program, and the prospects for a similar program today.

INTRODUCTION

Act II of Stephen Sondheim's 1984 musical *Sunday in the Park with George* is set in an 1980s-era art gallery, where an emerging artist named George displays his avant-garde light "sculpture:" "Chromolume #7," a reflection on George Seurat's celebrated *Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*. A coterie of revelers, critics, collectors, and philanthropists hover as George grumbles: "Art isn't easy / even when you're hot / advancing art is easy / financing it is not." George imagines a simpler time—presumably the French *fin de siècle*—when artists could focus on their art instead of fundraising. Introduced to a glad-handing philanthropist, George laments: "First of all you need a good foundation / otherwise it's risky from the start."

Sondheim's double entendre nimbly articulates a verity about making art in the United States: it requires not only artistic ability, but also a certain knack for fundraising and self-promotion; George's "good foundation" is more than just a grounding in the techniques of visual art. It is also an institutional web of financial support—in this case a charitable foundation—that makes his art possible. Sondheim's fictional George is certainly not the first creative person to understand or comment on the financial pressures of a life and career in the arts. But this George—an artist of the 1980s in America—unlike the real George Seurat of late-20th century Paris, faces a unique sphere of private charitable foundations with divergent goals and priorities.

Since the incorporation of the Carnegie Corporation of New York in New York in 1911, private charitable foundations have played an increasingly important role in American life, not only as funders of art exhibitions, concerts, and libraries, but also as underwriters of hospitals and medical research and bankrollers of public policy. Incentivized by the federal government—via tax deductions for charitable contributions—foundations are thus publicly subsidized but privately administered, with minimal required disclosures and lax oversight. Although they are required to give only to nonprofit organizations registered with the Internal Revenue Service, foundations support a large variety of causes both in the United States and abroad, with varying results.

In the realm of the arts, arguably no foundation has been as influential or as active as the Ford Foundation, which grew to be the largest philanthropic organization in the United States in the 1950s. Of all of the Ford Foundation's activities in music, dance, drama, and elsewhere, no single action in the arts was as large as the \$80.2 million Program for Symphony Orchestra of the 1960s and 1970s. Aimed not at a single artist or organization, the program was intended to transform the entire business of symphonic music in the United States. But as the Ford Foundation learned, oftentimes even the best foundation cannot transform an organization's own stubborn *foundation*; in most cases the Ford Foundation's grants subsidized the directions in which the orchestras were already going.

In Chapter 1 I discuss how orchestras are funded in the United States, with comparisons between the U.S. model of *indirect* government subsidy, via tax

deductions for charitable contributions to qualifying organizations, and characteristically Western European models of *direct* government subsidy, in which governments make regular sustaining grants to arts organizations. In addition, I outline several common organizational structures of orchestras in the United States, as well as the constellation of funding sources that nourish orchestras, including private foundations.

Chapter 2 focuses on the germination of the Ford Foundation in the 1930s and its rapid expansion in the 1950s. I argue that the Ford Foundation's nascent Program in the Humanities and the Arts evolved from the foundation's broader postwar objectives of the early 1950s through the adept leadership of executive W. McNeil Lowry. Furthermore, I show how the Ford Foundation's great financial windfall in 1956 as a result of the first public offering of Ford Motor Company stock created new opportunities, and how Lowry navigated the foundation's bureaucracy in support of the arts and artists.

The Program for Symphony Orchestras itself is the subject of Chapter 3. I identify the specific objectives of Lowry's orchestra program, as well as the extensive research and development that preceded the program's announcement in late 1965. In addition, I discuss some early results and reactions to the program, from sources within and without the Ford Foundation.

Chapters 4 and 5 are case studies of the Oakland Symphony Orchestra and the Minnesota Orchestra. Based on archival research as well as interviews with orchestra members, conductors, managers, and other stakeholders, these chapters illustrate how

results widely diverged from orchestra to orchestra. The Oakland Symphony's internal problems were exacerbated by the Ford Foundation's efforts, and the orchestra became the first of its size to declare bankruptcy, in 1986. By contrast, the Ford Foundation's arrival on the scene further strengthened the Minnesota Orchestra, an organization with an unusually robust foundation already in place.

Thus, this dissertation is an attempt to understand not only this singular program for orchestras in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s, but also to examine the efficacy of top-down philanthropic efforts like the Ford Foundation's Program for Symphony Orchestras. In addition, adding to a growing body of literature questioning the role of private foundations in American society, I ask questions about the value of the Ford Program, and the utility of such a program in relation to other arguably more pressing problems in the United States and abroad.

CHAPTER 1.

How Orchestras are Funded in the United States

Introduction

On January 8, 1995, *Washington Post* columnist George F. Will published a diatribe on the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the National Endowments for the Arts and the Humanities, provocatively titled “Give Them the Axe: Government Doesn’t Owe Big Bird.”¹ Writing in the wake of Newt Gingrich’s ascension to Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives in 1994, and the Republican Party’s Contract with America platform, Will argued that the NEA, NEH, and PBS not only failed to perform adequate federal functions, but also spawned “lobbying infrastructure” in the form of state arts councils and swaths of pro-public subsidy letter writers. Gingrich’s revolt would only truly matter if the three agencies were defunded completely: “If Republicans merely trim rather than terminate these three agencies they will affirm that all three perform appropriate federal functions and will prove that the Republican 'revolution' is not even serious reform.”²

The congressional appropriation for the National Endowment for the Arts represents a miniscule federal outlay; it only accounted for about .01 percent of

¹ George F. Will, "Give Them the Ax," *The Washington Post*, January 8, 1995.

² Will, "Give Them the Ax."

federal expenses in 1995.³ Nonetheless, the role of the government—and the subsidy that governments provide—has been extremely controversial since before the outline of the NEA began to take shape in the early 1960s. For many fiscal conservatives like George Will, government involvement in the funding of artistic enterprise represents a misappropriation of taxpayer money, as well as a federal intrusion into the cultural behavior of its citizens. To its supporters, by contrast, the national arts bureaucracy represents a negligible government expense that nourishes U.S. cultural institutions and artists. Encapsulated in the debate is the question of government subsidy, and more broadly, the question of how the arts should be funded in the United States.

This chapter seeks not to answer the question of how artistic endeavors should be financed in the United States, but rather to recognize the uniquely American non-profit funding model in this country and the successes and failures of this policy model in supporting the arts in the context of a relatively small central arts bureaucracy.

The Non-Profit Model

In the United States nonprofit corporations are incorporated at the state level, and each state has its own particular registration requirements, involving filing a certificate of incorporation, forming a board of directors, holding a board meeting,

³ See “Fiscal Year 2016 Historical Tables: Budget of the U.S. Government,” Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President of the United States, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BUDGET-2016-TAB/pdf/BUDGET-2016-TAB.pdf#page=32>.

adopting by-laws, and paying a statutory registration fee. Once approved by its home tax state, a nonprofit can apply for exempt status with the IRS, which exempts the organization from federal income tax and also allows for the organization to accept donations that can be deducted on individual income tax filings.

The exempt purposes set forth in section 501(c)(3) of the United States Code are charitable, religious, educational, scientific, literary, testing for public safety, fostering national or international amateur sports competition, and preventing cruelty to children or animals.⁴ But the IRS is extremely generous in granting exempt status. During fiscal year 2017 (October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017) the IRS approved 85,669 of the 91,975 applications it received; only sixty-eight completed applications were disapproved because they did not embody a charitable purpose.⁵ A report authored by Stanford Political Science Professor Rob Reich (not to be confused with UC Berkeley economist and former Secretary of Labor Robert Reich) in 2009 highlights the ease of achieving exempt status and notes a variety of “eccentric” public charities approved by the IRS in 2008. One such organization approved in 2008 is the International Society of Talking Clock Collectors (ISTCC), an organization described by Reich as a “private collection of talking clocks held in the home of the collector made into a nonprofit museum by taking photographs of the clocks and posting them online.”⁶

⁴ Internal Revenue Service, “Applying for 501(c)(3) Tax-Exempt Status,” Publication 4220, Washington, DC, March 2018.

⁵ Internal Revenue Service, Data Book, 2017, Publication 55B, Washington, DC, March 2018, 55.

⁶ Rob Reich, Lacey Dorn, and Stefanie Sutton, “Anything Goes: Approval of Nonprofit Status by the IRS,” *Stanford University Center of Philanthropy and Civil Society*, Draft Report of October 25, 2009, 20.

Although exempt status provides several major benefits, principally exemption from income tax, it also disallows nonprofits from distributing excess earnings—beyond reasonable remuneration—to shareholders.⁷ Thus, although nonprofits can sometimes pay salaries comparable to those in the for-profit sector, they cannot reward shareholders with dividends. The term “nonprofit” does not suggest that exempt organizations cannot or will not be profitable but that any profits—revenues in excess of expenses—cannot be distributed to stakeholders as they might be in a for-profit context.

Achieving a surplus of revenues over expenditures can be extremely difficult for performing arts nonprofits in general, though. This fact is particularly true when comparing the financial performance of a nonprofit to that of a for profit. Although the most basic metric used to measure the economic performance of a business—net profit, the bottom line on the income statement—is useful in non- and for-profit contexts, it delivers unique challenges in non-profit applications. In both contexts the bottom line can be deceiving because it can mask all kinds of inefficiencies or unusual aspects of the business. A positive net income—being “in the black”—is not necessarily a sign that a business is being run effectively, and vice versa.

In orchestras, a surplus of revenue over expenses can suggest that an orchestra is being run efficiently, but a deeper dive into the sources of revenue and expenses is needed to truly understand the financial picture of the organization. Key to

⁷ Paul J. DiMaggio, *Nonprofit Enterprise in the Arts: Studies in Mission and Constraint* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 21.

understanding this financial picture is the fact that orchestras generally derive less than half their revenue from ticket sales and other earned income sources, including recordings and broadcasts, and retail merchandise. Over the course of the twentieth century earned income sources covered less and less of the operating budget of American symphony orchestras. Although in the first half of the twentieth century ticket sales and recording revenue typically covered more than 50 percent of total expenses, this figure has fallen consistently in the subsequent years.

Concert attendance, performance quality, and revenues have all grown over the course of the twentieth century, but expenses—particularly since the 1960s—have grown at an exponentially faster clip. In 1966, economists William J. Baumol and William G. Bowen described how wages—expenses—increased in orchestras at a rate exceeding increases in productivity. They called this process the “cost disease.” Stanford economist Robert Flanagan summarizes the cost disease thus:

Labor productivity is simply output divided by labor input—output per employee or output per hour of work.... If both pay and output per employee in the goods-producing sector increase at 3 percent each year, labor costs per unit of output remain constant.... But if pay increases at 3 percent per year in an industry with *no* productivity growth, labor costs per unit of output will increase at 3 percent per year, creating pressure to cover the increased costs with higher prices.⁸

In industries like manufacturing and mining, wage growth has historically accompanied technological improvements that led to increases in productivity. In auto manufacturing, for example, it is not difficult to separate the output (the car)

⁸ Flanagan, Robert L, *The Perilous Life of Symphony Orchestras: Artistic Triumphs and Economic Challenges* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 9.

from the labor input (the worker); the average car buyer cares about factors such as affordability and reliability, but not necessarily the number of labor hours (input) that went in to the car's production. By contrast, in the performing arts, a performance—and thus the performer's labor hours—often *is* the product. According to Flanagan, “There is no way to separate output (a performance) from labor input. The performance (‘output’) and the performer (‘labor input’) are one and the same. So low productivity growth in the performing arts is not anybody's ‘fault’; it is inherent in the nature of performance.”⁹ Baumol and Bowen offer an elegant summary of the cost disease: “Human ingenuity has devised ways to reduce the labor necessary to produce an automobile, but no one has yet succeeded in decreasing the human effort expended at a live performance of a 45-minute Schubert quartet much below a total of three man-hours.”¹⁰

A similar assessment was made by American Symphony Orchestra League executive Helen Thompson in a 1964 discussion with Ford Foundation official Edward F. D'Arms; she noted that in the nineteen largest-budget American orchestras, between the 1947–48 and 1962–63 seasons, gross expenditures—driven by wage growth—grew 83 percent but the number of concerts played only increased 24 percent.¹¹ Although this fact may appear obvious—there are only so many days in

⁹ Flanagan, *The Perilous Life of Symphony Orchestras*, 10.

¹⁰ Forty-five minutes multiplied by four musicians equals three man-hours. See William J. Baumol and William G. Bowen, *Performing Arts: The Economic Dilemma; a Study of Problems Common to Theater, Opera, Music, and Dance* (New York: The Twentieth Century Fund, 1966), 164.

¹¹ "Interview with Mrs. Helen Thompson, Executive Vice President, American Symphony Orchestra League," October 8, 1964, box 37, WML.

the year—it is emphasized here to reinforce the limits on productivity growth that foster an environment of cost disease in orchestras.

Relatively low productivity growth in the performing arts coupled with expansive wage growth elsewhere in the economy means that expenses in orchestras and other arts organizations will rise relentlessly if the arts sector is to retain its employees. This rise in expenses—absent a relative rise in revenues—has created a situation where professional orchestras in the United States operate under consistently widening structural deficits, in which performance revenues fall short of performance expenses.

Michael G. Mauskapf, a musicologist and professor at Columbia University Business School, notes that from 1990 to 2012 performance income (earned income without investment-related gains i.e. endowment income) has remained relatively stagnant, while expenses have more than doubled. Thus, the percentage of total expenses covered by ticket sales has fallen from 50 percent in 1990 to 40 percent in 2012, indicating a greater reliance on endowments and contributions: “From a financial perspective, orchestras have transformed from service to fundraising organizations, becoming increasingly reliant on private contributions and overinflated investments to subsidize ever-growing operating costs.”¹²

This transformation did not occur overnight. Rather it is emblematic of how orchestras and orchestral musicians have adapted to local factors throughout history.

¹² Michael G. Mauskapf, “Enduring Crisis, Ensuring Survival: Artistry, Economics, and the American Symphony Orchestra” (Ph.D diss., University of Michigan, 2012), 266.

European Roots

The orchestra was born in Western Europe in the period between 1650 and 1750. As John Spitzer and Neal Zaslaw articulate in their exhaustive *The Birth of the Orchestra: History of an Institution, 1650–1815*, the birth of the orchestra involved a transformation of the meaning of the word “orchestra” from a place to an ensemble:

At the beginning of the period [1650–1750] ‘orchestra’ was an archaic, unfamiliar word that referred to a place in the theater where instrumentalists occasionally sat. By the end of the period the word had become familiar in all European languages, referring not only to the place but also to the instrumentalists themselves and to their identity as an ensemble.... By the last half of the eighteenth century the word had acquired general currency because by then the orchestra had emerged as an acknowledged, distinctive social institution.¹³

Although the history of the orchestra in Europe is typically described in terms of courtly patronage, *à la* Haydn at Esterházy, the courtly Kapelle orchestra, like Haydn’s, was just one of several modes in which orchestras were financed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Spitzer and Zaslaw outline three basic models of orchestras in the eighteenth century. The first, like Haydn’s, is the Kapelle model, in which the orchestra and its musicians are members of the household of a king, prince, or other ruler. In Kapelle orchestras musicians generally signed year-long or multi-year contracts and often serve the same patron(s) for their entire lives. Musicians were often restricted from performing outside of the patron’s household

¹³ John Spitzer and Neal Zaslaw, *The Birth of the Orchestra: History of an Institution, 1650-1815* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 18.

without prior approval, but enjoyed many of the fringe benefits of courtly patronage, including housing, meals, medical care, and long-term stability.

Spitzer and Zaslaw argue that as European nation-states congealed, the state itself became a metaphor for the human body as well as the world of nature, and that orchestras similarly played into the myth-building of monarchs and statehood: “Kings raised standing armies, they commissioned clocks, automatons, and other mechanical contrivances, they assembled and maintained orchestras. All these things signified, advertised, and magnified the state and its ruler.”¹⁴

By contrast, musicians in many larger European cities served as civil servants with varying musical responsibilities. These musicians typically held their positions as official offices, usually for life, and formed ensembles as needs and numbers permitted. Particularly in London, many musicians worked as freelancers, hired for various engagements on a contractual basis. Importantly, in the free market system, Spitzer and Zaslaw contend: “The instrumentalist sells his labor, not his person. Music and music performance are commodities; patrons are consumers.”¹⁵

Despite this operational connection between autocrats and their orchestras, Spitzer and Zaslaw push back against the simplified teleology that orchestras were born into courtly patronage in the seventeenth century and evolved into a middle-class institution in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In fact, early orchestral ensembles thrived in cities without kings or courts in the late seventeenth century,

¹⁴ Spitzer and Zaslaw, *The Birth of the Orchestra*, 526.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 404.

including in Rome, Hamburg, Lübeck, and Venice. Nonetheless, especially in Germany, aristocratic patronage remained essential to many orchestras into the eighteenth century. Thus, “during most of its history the orchestra has functioned, indeed it has thrived, in several different social situations and milieux simultaneously.”¹⁶

In Western Europe public subsidies—a legacy of courtly patronage—often provide the sustaining income source for theaters, museums, orchestras, dance companies, and other arts organizations. Due to many factors—including monarchical histories, stronger central bureaucracies, and vastly different tax codes—European orchestras, opera companies, theaters, and individual artists traditionally have been nourished by a combination of government subsidies and ticket sales. In addition to subsidies provided by individual European countries and cities, the European Union also supports cultural projects for its member states. The EU currently is investing nearly €1.5 billion in cultural projects for the years 2014–20; this investment alone, although spread over a larger population than that of the United States, easily dwarfs the contributions of the National Endowment for the Arts during any six-year period in its history.¹⁷

These differing funding models endure to the present day. The following table describes how orchestras are supported in countries with strong central arts bureaucracies:

¹⁶ Spitzer and Zaslav, *The Birth of the Orchestra*, 34.

¹⁷ The European Commission, “The European Union Explained: Culture and Audiovision,” http://europa.eu/pol/cult/index_en.htm (2014), accessed 22 August 2016.

Table 1.1: Income Sources as Percentages of Total Income by Country¹⁸

		Earned Income	Public Subsidy	Private Donations	Other
Australia	2003	28.0%	61.0%	9.0%	2.0%
Canada	2005–06	32.0%	41.0%	26.0%	1.0%
Finland	2006	12.0%	87.0%	0.0%	1.0%
Paris (Orchestre de Paris)	1986–87	28.0%	72.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Netherlands	2006–07	21.0%	75.0%	4.0%	0.0%
United Kingdom	2012–13	48.0%	34.0%	18.0%	0.5%
United States	2011–12	43.7%	4.6%	46.7%	5.0%

When making decisions about whom to fund and how much to give, publicly funded grantors—like the national and local arts councils—must consider how best to spend public money for the greater good. Grantees are afforded the stability that comes with consistent government support, but at the same time are beholden—at least theoretically—to the artistic and political priorities of local and national governmental funding bodies. The poet Dana Gioia, who chaired the NEA from 2003 to 2009, writes: “These systems [of direct government funding] provide smooth and stable planning for arts organizations, but they run the risk of dividing the cultural world into insiders and outsiders. The insider institutions tend to be well subsidized with large annual grants while the outsiders survive on the margins of the culture, if they survive at all.”¹⁹

¹⁸ All figures from Flanagan, *The Perilous Life of Symphony Orchestras*, except for the UK and US figures. The UK figures are from The Association of British Orchestras, “The State of Britain’s Orchestras in 2013,” accessed <http://www.abo.org.uk/media/32152/ABO-The-State-of-Britains-Orchestras.pdf>; US figures from The League of American Orchestras, “U.S. Orchestra Facts,” accessed http://www.americanorchestras.org/images/stories/adv_gov_pdf/QOF2015.pdf.

¹⁹ Flanagan, *The Perilous Life of Symphony Orchestras*, 167.

The contrasts articulated by Gioia are exemplified by the fact that bankruptcies are extremely rare for subsidized European orchestras but that musicians in top U.S. orchestras can earn wages that dwarf those of their international peers:

Table 1.2: Annual Pay of Symphony Musicians and Orchestra Managers.
 Source: Flanagan, *The Perilous Life of Symphony Orchestras*.²⁰

Country	Year	Average (a)	Range (b)			Percentage of Mean Income (c)		
Australia	2003							
Minimum		\$ 28,990	\$ 24,325	—	\$ 41,728	65%	—	111%
10 Years Experience		\$ 36,390	\$ 30,475	—	\$ 50,075	81%	—	134%
Finland	2005							
Section Principal		n.a.	\$ 30,840	—	\$ 52,440	105%	—	178%
Deputy Principal		n.a.	\$ 27,180	—	\$ 48,960	92%	—	166%
Musician		n.a.	\$ 25,500	—	\$ 42,660	87%	—	145%
Netherlands	2007							
Minimum		n.a.	\$ 35,820	—	\$ 41,196	84%	—	97%
10 Years Experience		n.a.	\$ 46,140	—	\$ 53,040	109%	—	125%
United Kingdom	1998–99							
Independent Contract		\$ 38,930	\$ 36,005	—	\$ 41,845	137%	—	160%
BBC		\$ 41,426	\$ 37,195	—	\$ 49,200	142%	—	188%
United States	2003							
52-week schedules								
Minimum		\$ 86,315	\$ 57,720	—	\$ 104,520	137%	—	248%
Average		\$ 100,480	\$ 63,700	—	\$ 127,556	151%	—	303%
30 largest orchestras								
Minimum		\$ 71,497	\$ 28,000	—	\$ 106,000	67%	—	252%
Average		\$ 84,168	\$ 33,280	—	\$ 134,514	79%	—	319%

- a. All salaries have been converted into U.S. dollars using the average interbank foreign exchange rate for each period.
 b. Data are for the six state orchestras in Australia, fifteen orchestras reporting to the association of Finnish Symphony Orchestras, eight orchestras in the Netherland, and six orchestras in the UK.
 c. Adjusted for differences in purchasing power.

n.a. = not available.

²⁰ Flanagan, *The Perilous Life of Symphony Orchestras*, 162.

Table 1.2 shows that although members of fifty-two-week U.S. orchestras earn considerably more than their European counterparts, musicians in smaller U.S. orchestras can make well below mean U.S. income. The wide range of pay in the thirty largest U.S. orchestras exemplifies the disparities between U.S. musicians, and the boom or bust atmosphere that leads to relatively frequent orchestra bankruptcies. Gioia describes the disparity in U.S. orchestra finances as a uniquely American feature/bug: “The dynamic nature of the system means that one decade’s high-flying leader can suffer huge reversal in the next—just as in corporate America.”²¹

Funding Orchestras in the United States

The historical lack of government subsidy in the United States means that U.S. orchestras and other performing arts organizations are uniquely vulnerable to market fluctuations and the whims of donors. Early symphonic activities in the American colonies existed primarily in the free-market model, and orchestras in the American colonies were similar to those in smaller English towns and provinces, with series of subscription concerts existing in larger cities like Charleston, Philadelphia, and New York by the early eighteenth century. Starting in 1766, the St. Caecilia Society of Charleston, South Carolina sponsored subscription concerts featuring orchestras of professionals recruited from Europe. Philadelphia, the largest city of the American colonies, with 17,000 residents in 1760, had theaters, pleasure gardens,

²¹ Flanagan, *The Perilous Life of Symphony Orchestras*, 105-106.

subscription concerts, and amateur musical societies by the end of the eighteenth century.²²

The oldest continuously operating orchestral organization in the United States is the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra, which traces its history to 1808, when six Harvard students founded an organization called the Pierian Sodality. Although in much of its early years the organization did not resemble a contemporary symphony orchestra—in 1832 the organization had only one member, a flutist who, according to *Time Magazine*, held meetings with himself in his chair and paid himself dues until he found another flutist to join him in duets—the organization persists to the present day.²³

Musicologist Mark Clague describes six basic models of U.S. orchestras started in the nineteenth century that endure to the present day. These are: club, co-op, entrepreneurial, conservatory, society, and corporate.²⁴ Under the club model, musicians are typically amateur volunteers who support the organization by paying membership fees, organizing concerts, securing venues, and attracting audiences. Most of the community orchestras in this country fall under the club model, with musicians rehearsing during the evening to accommodate their other non-musical careers.

Under the cooperative model, orchestras are organized with the dual purposes

²² Spitzer and Zaslaw, *The Birth of the Orchestra*, 301.

²³ “The History of the HRO,” The Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra, <http://www.harvardradcliffeorchestra.org/about-hro/>, accessed September 2018.

²⁴ Mark Clague, “Building the American Symphony Orchestra,” in *American Orchestras in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. John Spitzer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 27.

of making both music and money. The musicians generally assume organizational responsibilities and split the profits at the end of the season. The original New York Philharmonic, founded in 1842, followed this model, and several major U.S. orchestras—notably the Colorado Symphony and the Louisiana Philharmonic—recently reorganized under co-op principles. The Louisiana Philharmonic was formed in 1991 after the bankruptcy of the New Orleans Symphony in 1990 and began with musicians assuming most administrative and governing roles. Eventually the musicians hired an administrative staff and brought community members onto the Board of Directors, with a musician serving as Board President. Today the organization is governed by a two-president model—a musician president for the orchestra and a community president for the board, suggesting that despite its co-op roots the organization now resembles a more typical, corporate style structure.²⁵

The entrepreneurial model is idealized by impresarios like Theodor Thomas and P.T. Barnum. Entrepreneurial leaders exercise full control over artistic and administrative matters and receive full benefits from the endeavor's success and accept full liability for its failures. Although entrepreneurial efforts in the orchestra business are uncommon today because most cities have fine resident orchestras and because consumers have many options for entertainment, there are still a variety of entrepreneurial endeavors in the performing arts. Exemplifying this model currently is Dutch violinist André Rieu, who tours internationally with his Johann Strauss Orchestra. Drawing large crowds around the world in stadiums and large venues

²⁵ Flanagan, *The Perilous Life of Symphony Orchestras*, 88.

typically reserved for popular music events, Rieu is an outlier in the orchestral world, but proof that in the right context orchestral performances can be popular and profitable.

Clague's fourth model is the conservatory, in which an orchestra is connected to an educational institution like an independent school of music—such as the Curtis Institute of Music, the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, the Cleveland Institute of Music, etc.—or a public or private college or university. Because many research universities and liberal arts colleges maintain fine student orchestras, such as the Oberlin College Conservatory, the University of Rochester's Eastman School of Music, and the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University, among many others, Clague's conservatory model encompasses all collegiate orchestras, not just orchestras housed at dedicated music conservatories. Almost all universities, and even most community and junior colleges, have student orchestras, and these orchestras are supported by a combination of tuition, ticket sales, state funding—in the case of public colleges and universities—and endowment income. Although these orchestras are not professional, top student orchestras often surpass professional groups in terms of quality, make recordings, go on tours, and feature world-class guest conductors and soloists.

The fifth model, the society orchestra, is one in which volunteer leadership supports a professional ensemble through a combination of ticket sales and membership dues. Any revenues from concerts are used to pay expenses and reinvested in the society; the concerts sponsored by the St. Caecilia Society of

Charleston in the eighteenth century exemplified this model. A more modern example is the Bohemian Club of San Francisco, a private men's club founded in the late nineteenth century that commissions private operatic productions every summer at its wooded retreat in Sonoma County, CA. Although the enjoyment of these performances, called "high jinx," is restricted only to Bohemian Club members and their guests, the club also accepts artists and musicians as members at greatly reduced membership rates who compose and produce the various musical performances.²⁶

Clague's corporate model is embodied by the premier modern orchestras in the United States. Corporate orchestras are led by a generally well-to-do board of non-musicians, are supported by a combination of ticket sales and donations, and are owned by a non-profit corporation. Musicians in these orchestras are paid according to collective bargaining agreements established between management and the local chapter of the American Federation of Musicians, and generally earn their livelihood through orchestral playing and sometimes instrumental teaching. Corporate orchestras are run by dedicated managers and administrative staff, sometimes own their own performance and rehearsal spaces, and employ a professional conductor or music director from outside the corpus of regular orchestra members. Because authority is spread among conductor, manager, board, musicians, and the union, corporate orchestras, like businesses organized as for-profit corporations, are built to withstand changes in leadership and weather economic uncertainty.²⁷

²⁶ See Bill Domhoff, *Who Rules America?* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2013).

²⁷ Clague, "Building the American Symphony Orchestra," 29.

Although the top U.S. orchestras are run in the corporate model, there are numerous incorporated orchestras in the United States, and only the top twenty or so are as good or better than the top tier conservatory orchestras. The range of quality in corporate orchestras is as wide as the range in quality of conservatory and university orchestras; both models denote distinct organizational principles rather than a salient musical capability among individual ensembles.

The corporatization of orchestras—and other arts organizations in the United States—represents an institutionalization and homogenization of professional orchestras; the corporate orchestra represents stability and the diffusion of power. Whereas the future of an entrepreneurial orchestra is uncertain after the death of its leader, a corporate orchestra, such as the Philadelphia Orchestra or the Phoenix Symphony Orchestra will survive the death of its conductor or one of its star musicians by hiring someone to fill his or her place.

Entrepreneurs like Theodor Thomas ruled the orchestra business in the nineteenth century United States, but the twentieth century was a transitional period in which non-profit management—alongside for-profit management—became an academic and professional discipline. The first collegiate business school—the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania—was founded in 1881, and in 1900 the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College began offering a Master of Science in Commerce degree, the predecessor to the ubiquitous modern Master of Business Administration. As the science of business administration grew, so did the profession of arts manager. In the first half of the twentieth century the position was a

thankless administrative task, comprised of the duties of hiring musicians, organizing tours, and executing the mission of the board of directors. Orchestras were ruled either by domineering conductors—like George Szell, who exerted dictatorial influence over the Cleveland Orchestra from 1946 to 1970—or by singular sustaining patrons, such as Henry Higginson in Boston, Elbert L. Carpenter in Minneapolis, and William Andrews Clark Jr. in Los Angeles.²⁸

By the 1950s, the power centers in many U.S. orchestras had begun to shift. Sociologist Paul J. Dimaggio notes that between 1950 and 1980 the U.S. population underwent important changes that altered the business of the performing arts. First, the baby boom increased the size of the population. Second, a massive increase in the attainment of higher education created a dramatic increase in the numbers of college graduates. Finally, incomes continued to rise, and the changing economy increased the number of professional and managerial positions while the demand for blue-collar jobs waned: “During the 1960s and 1970s, demographic and social forces increased the market for the arts, enlarging the number of Americans who fit the arts consumer profile (affluent, educated, and white-collar workers) and decreasing the proportion of those who did not.”²⁹ These developments contributed to the ascendancy of arts

²⁸ The tyrannical exploits of some conductors, like Szell and Fritz Reiner of the Chicago Symphony are described in many scholarly and popular sources. Former Minnesota Orchestra musician describes the antics of these conductors in the context and labor relations in her informative 2005 book *More Than Meets the Ear*. See Julie Ayer, *More Than Meets the Ear: How Symphony Musicians Made Labor History* (Minneapolis, MN: Syren Book Company, 2005).

²⁹ Paul DiMaggio, “The Nonprofit Instrument and the Influence of the Marketplace on Policies in the Arts,” in *The Arts and Public Policy in the United States*, ed. W. McNeil Lowry (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1984), 68.

administrators, who were increasingly needed to manage the infusion of new wealth and interest enjoyed by orchestras:

Unlike his impresario counterpart, whose style was based on flattering and cajoling the affluent elite, while dominating performers and employees by an autocratic imposition of his will, the successful arts administrator relies on the ability to apply evenhandedly technical knowledge to obtain the best possible results for the arts organization and all interested parties.³⁰

DiMaggio further describes the “institutional revolution” that began in the 1960s in U.S. orchestras as a transition in emphasis from individual patrons to several sources of patronage: “Where the private patron once reigned supreme, the contemporary executive director or fund-raiser must know how to raise money from three local levels of government, private foundations, and corporations as well as the individual donor. Indeed, arts support has undergone an institutional revolution.”³¹

Sources of Patronage: Individuals

In 2011, individual taxpayers donated approximately \$13 billion to nonprofit organizations in the arts and humanities. Individuals account for about three-quarters of all charitable giving in the United States, with bequests, foundations and corporations providing the balance. Individual contributions accounted for 20 percent of revenue of not-for-profit performing arts groups and museums from 2006–10.³²

³⁰ Paul J. Dimaggio, *Nonprofit Enterprise in the Arts: Studies in Mission and Constraint* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 166.

³¹ DiMaggio, *Nonprofit Enterprise in the Arts*, 74.

³² National Endowment for the Arts, "How the United States Funds the Arts, 3rd edition," (Washington, DC: National Endowment for the Arts, 2012), 1.

Most individual patrons support orchestras in a sustaining fashion, in that their gifts support the year-to-year operations of the organization and occasional capital or endowment drives. Gifts can range from single gifts of negligible amounts to regular multi-million-dollar gifts. Donations from individuals sustain orchestras when ticket sales and other earned income cannot, and top professional orchestras employ large development staffs to cultivate and nourish sustaining patrons. Several especially large gifts merit particular attention as examples of two other modes of individual patronage: foundational and transformational.

The most famous foundational patron was Major Henry Lee Higginson (1834 – 1919), a banking magnate who founded the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1881, and the Boston Pops in 1885; in addition, he built Boston Symphony Hall, which opened in 1900. This venue was the first orchestral hall built in the United States with acoustical guidance from a scientist, Harvard’s Wallace Sabine. Higginson publicly retired from his role as patron and patriarch of the BSO in 1918, weeks after conductor Karl Muck was accused of anti-American sentiment for not conducting “The Star-Spangled Banner” during a concert in Providence, Rhode Island. Muck, whom Higginson considered “indispensable,” was arrested by U.S. marshals, despite Higginson taking the blame publicly for failing to communicate the audience’s wish to hear the anthem to Muck.³³ As a result of Higginson’s singular commitment, the Boston Symphony became the first world-class American Orchestra.³⁴

³³ “Maj. Higginson Absolves Dr. Muck,” *The Washington Post*, November 6, 1917.

³⁴ Joseph Horowitz, “Henry Lee Higginson,” in *Grove Music Online*, 2013.

Higginson’s patronage of the Boston Symphony was foundational, in that his efforts created and sustained the orchestra in its early years. Several more recent gifts to established organizations fall into the transformational category. The Cincinnati Symphony, founded in 1885—only four years after the Boston Symphony—struggled greatly during the “great recession” of 2007–09. Facing staff, wage, and programming cuts, longtime subscriber and patron Louise Dieterle Nippert (1911–2012) established the \$85 million Louis Dieterle Nippert Musical Arts Fund. A longtime owner of the Cincinnati Reds baseball team along with her late husband, an heir to fortune of James A. Gamble (of Proctor & Gamble), Nippert designed her gift to principally benefit the Symphony (75 percent of annual distributions), Cincinnati Opera (12 percent annual distributions) and Cincinnati Ballet (5 percent), with the remainder going to several smaller institutions, including the Cincinnati May Festival, Matinee Musicale, the Linton Chamber Music Series and Chamber Music Cincinnati, among others.

Coupled with a stabilization plan that included modest staff wage cuts and layoffs and an 11 percent pay cut to musicians, Nippert’s gift not only helped the orchestra navigate the financial crisis, but also endowed the Cincinnati Symphony with an additional steady income stream that has grown alongside the surging, post-recession stock market.³⁵ The orchestra cannot invade the endowment principal, because it is managed and administered independently by Nippert’s Greenacres

³⁵ Janelle Gelfand, “Nippert Gives \$85M to Cincinnati’s Arts,” *Cincinnati Enquirer*, December 11, 2009.

Foundation. Nonetheless, during the 2016 season Nippert's endowment contributed \$3.7 million to the Cincinnati Symphony, covering approximately 12 percent of the orchestra's expenses for the season.³⁶

Few orchestras have felt the ups and downs of the orchestra business quite like the San Diego Symphony, which ceased operations in 1987 to pay off creditors, and then in 1996 declared bankruptcy. It returned in 1998, and then in late 2001 received the largest single pledge ever made to a single American orchestra: \$100 million. Contributed by San Diego billionaire Irwin M. Jacobs, founder of telecommunications company Qualcomm, \$50 million was immediately given to establish an endowment, and the remaining \$50 million will be released to the orchestra upon Jacobs' death.³⁷ The endowment earns several million dollars in income each year; for the 2015 tax year, the Jacobs endowment distributed \$3 million, covering more than 12 percent of the orchestra's total expenses for the year (\$25 million).³⁸ The annual disbursement will only increase when Jacobs' estate is distributed and the endowment is doubled.

Several metrics encapsulate the transformation of the orchestra since the announcement of Jacobs's gift in 2001. Musician salaries in the San Diego Symphony have risen dramatically, from a minimum of \$25,950 in 2001 to \$45,750 in 2006, and

³⁶ See Greenacres Foundation Inc., 990 Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax, 2016, 18; and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, 990 Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax, Fiscal Year September 1, 2016 to August 31, 2017 2016, 1.

³⁷ Diane Haithman, "How to Save a Symphony," *Los Angeles Times*, June 9, 2002.

³⁸ See San Diego Symphony Foundation, 990 Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax, Fiscal year July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016, 13; and San Diego Symphony Orchestra Association, 990 Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax, (2015 San Diego Symphony Foundation 990, Fiscal year July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016, 1.

the season has grown from twenty-six weeks to forty-one.³⁹ The most recent collective bargaining agreement, signed in 2016, raises the minimum salary from just under \$70,000 to \$80,000 at the end of the five-year deal. Thus, in the twenty years since the announcement of the Jacobs gift and the last year of the current contract, the annual base salary in the orchestra will have risen from \$25,000 to \$80,000.⁴⁰

Sources of Patronage: Government

Table 1.1 above shows that federal, state, and local funding bodies provide relatively little direct subsidy to orchestras in the United States. This dearth of direct government support is emblematic of the individualistic, free-market roots of the American system. But the lack of formal subsidy offered by governmental agencies is not indicative of a lack of governmental support for arts organizations in the United States. Instead, federal and state governments subsidize the arts indirectly through tax provisions that allow for the deduction of charitable contributions from taxable income.

The subsidization of charitable giving in the United States is popular and well regarded, in that it encourages donating to noble causes that might not survive otherwise. In addition, Libertarian economist Tyler Cowen contends that U.S. indirect subsidy encourages a healthy competition for funding: “The genius of the American

³⁹ Haithman, “How to Save a Symphony.”

⁴⁰ George Carga, “San Diego Symphony Musicians Sign New 5-year Pact,” *San Diego Union-Tribune*, September 1, 2016.

system is to get most arts support off the direct public books. Instead it encourages competition for funds and the proliferation of the intermediate institutions that constitute civil society.”⁴¹

Although all charitable donations benefit the recipient, for tax purposes they only provide monetary benefit to taxpayers who itemize their annual deductions. These taxpayers are generally upper middle class or wealthy because their total itemized deductions—comprising medical expenses, state and property taxes paid, home mortgage interest, gifts to charity, and other miscellaneous deductions—must surpass the standard deduction of \$12,000 filing single or \$24,000 married filing jointly for the 2018 tax year.⁴² The tax benefits of charitable donations are overwhelmingly reaped by wealthier taxpayers because the greatest incentive to donate is also placed on these taxpayers; the wealthy have the most to gain via a lower tax liability. Thus, the U.S. mode of indirect subsidy via the Internal Revenue Code is inextricably linked to the outsized individual patronage of people like Louise Dieterle Nippert and Irwin M. Jacobs.

Through their contributions, wealthy individuals like Nipper and Jacobs exert a great deal of influence on the culture of their communities, using a publicly-

⁴¹ Tyler Cowen, *Good and Plenty: The Creative Successes of American Arts Funding* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006), 31.

⁴² The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 changes many aspects of the U.S. Tax Code for both corporations and individuals, beginning with 2018 tax year filings. Although there are notable changes in the Act that will impact charitable giving, the basic concept of the charitable deduction remains intact, and because the individual tax cuts were not made permanent in the 2017 Act and may be in flux as the political situation evolves, I have chosen not to engage in an in depth discuss of the differences between the new and old tax regimes. See Internal Revenue Service, Form 1040, 2018 Tax Year.

subsidized means, although they have not been elected through any sort of democratic process. There is considerable discussion about whether or not unelected and unaccountable leaders should be allowed to divert money that otherwise would have ended up in the U.S. Treasury for their own interests. Rob Reich argues that the charitable deduction “establishes a plutocratic element in public policy,” because the deduction “supplies a greater subsidy to the wealthy, who are, of course, already likely to possess a more powerful voice in associational life and the political arena without any subsidy whatsoever.”⁴³

It is difficult to imagine a scenario where there is too *much* private support for symphony orchestras, creating deleterious reverberations throughout society. But applied to other types of charities that the wealthy patronize, like think tanks that influence public policy, one can imagine how Reich’s thesis that “we get not egalitarian citizen voice in civil society but plutocratic citizen voice, underwritten by tax policy,” could be concerning.⁴⁴

The U.S. system—in which donors give directly to charitable organizations and then claim deductions on their personal income tax filings—is elegantly simple compared to the British Deed of Covenant and Gift Aid Systems. Under the former system, which was phased out in the early 2000s, a donation from an individual to a charity involved the original donation as well as the taxes forgone on the income donated to the charity.

⁴³ Rob Reich, *Just Giving: Why Philanthropy is Failing Democracy and How it Can Do Better*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2018), 132.

⁴⁴ Reich, *Just Giving*, 132.

J. Mark Schuster describes the complicated nature of the Deed of Covenant: “The deed of covenant separates the flow of money into two streams: the donor’s private contribution, flowing directly from the donor to the charity, and the forgone taxes, flowing first to the government and then reclaimed by the charity.” Compared to the U.S. charitable deduction, this British system is complex: “the most lasting impression of the deed of covenant must be its administrative complexity. British charities struggle with this problem constantly as they try to explain the tax implications of charitable giving to potential donors. The system is not an immediately transparent one, and it requires quite a bit of donor sophistication to be used effectively.”⁴⁵

The gift aid scheme, which was introduced in the United Kingdom in 1990, is also intricate in that it involves repayments from Her Majesty’s Revenue & Customs—the UK equivalent to the Internal Revenue Service—to the charity based on the taxes withheld on the donated income. Although these tax repayments to charities amounted to £1.27 billion generated from nearly £3 billion in total gift aid donations during the 2015–16 tax year, this form of direct charitable contribution—an indirect government subsidy—is considerably less popular than its U.S. counterpart.⁴⁶

The closest U.S. analog to the centralized arts bureaucracies of Europe is the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), founded in 1965 by Congress and President

⁴⁵ J. Mark Davidson Schuster, “Tax Incentives as Arts Policy in Western Europe,” in *Nonprofit Enterprise in the Arts: Studies in Mission and Constraint*, ed. Paul J. DiMaggio (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 327-329.

⁴⁶ See “UK Charity Tax Relief Statistics: 1990–91 to 2017–18,” HM Revenue & Customs, June 28, 2018.

Lyndon B. Johnson. Notable precursors to the NEA were the subsidies to artists during the Depression in the 1930s. Arts-oriented New Deal government programs, like the Federal Arts Project and Federal Writers' Project in the 1930s were created to employ jobless artists and writers during a national economic crisis. The Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1935, signed by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt on April 8, 1935, was a first step in this direction: it designated \$4.88 billion dollars for unemployment mitigation. Roosevelt subsequently established the Works Progress Administration (WPA) via executive order, which provided jobs for approximately 8.5 million Americans from 1935 until its dissolution in 1943.⁴⁷ Out of this WPA bureaucracy emerged several projects dedication to employing unemployed musicians, artists, writers, and actors; New Deal administrator Harry Hopkins justified federal support for artists by remarking, "Hell, they've got to eat like other people."⁴⁸

The NEA differs fundamentally from WPA-era projects in that it was not intended to mitigate unemployment or to bolster a political vision of how the nation would regroup after economic devastation.⁴⁹ Rooted in the early 1960s, in an era of economic prosperity and political optimism, the NEA is indebted to the leadership of President John F. Kennedy, and his special consultant on the arts, August Heckscher. Heckscher's May 1963 report, "The Arts and the National Government," frames the

⁴⁷ Mark A. Davidson, "Recording the Nation: Folk Music and the Government in Roosevelt's New Deal, 1936-1941" (PhD diss., University of California, Santa Cruz, 2015), 10.

⁴⁸ Mark Bauerlein and Ellen Grantham, eds., *National Endowment for the Arts: A History, 1965-2008* (Washington, DC: National Endowment for the Arts, 2009), 1.

⁴⁹ Bauerlein and Grantham, eds., *National Endowment for the Arts: A History, 1965-2008*, 1.

need for federal involvement in the arts in terms of a rising national interest in cultural pursuits (as he put it, “a recognition that life is more than the acquisition of material goods”) as well as a national interest in projecting cultural affluence. Heckscher wrote that “the United States will be judged—and its place in history ultimately assessed—not alone by its military or economic power, but by the quality of its civilization.”⁵⁰

As a result of Heckscher’s report, President Kennedy issued an executive order in June 1963 establishing the President’s Advisory Council on the Arts, with the purpose of studying the funding of the arts in the United States and identifying and evaluating existing federal policies affecting the arts and artists, submitting reports and recommendations to the President, encouraging and facilitating the effective use of resources, and promoting the importance of the arts and cultural institutions to U.S. welfare and international interests.⁵¹

Simultaneously, in Congress, a bipartisan push led by senators Jacob Javitz (R-NY), Joseph Clark (D-PA), Hubert Humphrey (D-MN), and Claiborne Pell (D-RI) was made to create a federal endowment in the arts. Although the White House’s progress was slowed because of President Kennedy’s assassination in November 1963, President Lyndon B. Johnson continued Kennedy’s momentum by hiring Roger L. Stevens as the first full-time presidential arts adviser; by contrast, Heckscher’s role under Kennedy was part-time and temporary.

⁵⁰ August Heckscher, “The Arts and the National Government: Report to the President,” (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963), 1.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 35.

By September 1964, the Congressional efforts to establish a National Council on the Arts had passed the Senate, and on September 3, President Johnson signed the National Arts and Cultural Development Act of 1964, establishing a council with twenty-four members to “recommend ways to maintain and increase the cultural resources of the nation...and encourage and develop greater appreciation and enjoyment of the arts by its citizens.”⁵² In addition to noted writers, actors, architects, visual artists, and dancers, the first National Council on the Arts included musicians Marian Anderson, Leonard Bernstein, Isaac Stern, Rudolph Serkin, and Duke Ellington.⁵³

Finally, on September 29, 1965, President Johnson signed the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Acts, establishing the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. With language reminiscent of Heckscher’s 1963 report, the 1965 Act argued that “the world leadership which has come to the United States cannot rest solely upon superior power, wealth, and technology, but must [also] be founded upon worldwide respect and admiration for the nation’s high qualities as a leader in the realm of ideas and of the spirit.”⁵⁴

Almost immediately, the NEA provoked resistance by Congress, with the first critical Congressional review of its programs in 1968, when the endowment’s budget

⁵² Bauerlein and Grantham, eds., *National Endowment for the Arts: A History, 1965-2008*, 15.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 225.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 18.

stood at \$7.2 million (only .004% of total federal outlays).⁵⁵ An early locus of controversy was a project undertaken in collaboration with the Rockefeller Foundation: the Theatre Development Fund (TDF), now known for its discount Broadway TKTS booths in New York City. Because the TDF helped stage productions that were unprofitable on Broadway, some critics in Congress castigated the program as a subsidy for unpopular esoterica. Representative Frank Bow (R-OH) alluded to the Vietnam War in his criticism of the program: “We cannot have guns and butter. And this is guns with strawberry shortcake covered with whipped cream and a cherry on top.”⁵⁶

Despite relentless attacks on its legitimacy—most notable during the 1990s during the aforementioned Gingrich revolution—the NEA has continued to garner financial support with an annual congressional appropriation of about \$150 million per year.⁵⁷ Although this outlay results in a small subsidy relative to private donations, endowment income, and ticket sales, the NEA has devoted more than \$250 million to U.S. orchestras since its founding.⁵⁸

Additional governmental dollars flow to orchestras via the state arts councils, George Will’s so-called “lobbying infrastructure;” since 1986, total annual state appropriations for the arts have actually surpassed NEA appropriations. In 2012, state

⁵⁵ “Fiscal Year 2016 Historical Tables: Budget of the U.S. Government,” Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President of the United States, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BUDGET-2016-TAB/pdf/BUDGET-2016-TAB.pdf#page=32>.

⁵⁶ Bauerlein and Grantham, eds., *National Endowment for the Arts: A History, 1965-2008*, 28.

⁵⁷ “National Endowment for the Arts Appropriations History,” accessed September 20, 2018, <https://www.arts.gov/open-government/national-endowment-arts-appropriations-history>.

⁵⁸ Bauerlein and Grantham, eds., *National Endowment for the Arts: A History, 1965-2008*, 228.

legislative appropriations totaled \$260 million, whereas the congressional appropriation for the NEA was only \$150 million.⁵⁹

The New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA), founded in 1960, is the largest state agency with \$36.2 million appropriated in 2012. Several states surpassed New York on a per capita basis, including Minnesota, Hawaii, Rhode Island, and Maryland. In 2012, total state legislative appropriations totaled \$260 to state arts councils. This figure was augmented by \$32.9 million from the National Endowment, for a total of more than \$290 million, almost exactly twice the entire National Endowment congressional appropriation of \$146 million.⁶⁰

The Minnesota State Arts Board is one of the oldest and most influential state arts councils in the country, and can trace its founding to 1903. During fiscal year 2017, the Minnesota State Legislature appropriated nearly \$38 million to the Minnesota State Arts Board. Of this amount, \$30 million came from the state's Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, a product of the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment to the Minnesota Constitution, passed in November 2008. The Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment created a miniscule state sales tax, with 19.75 percent of the total sales tax received devoted to the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund. The fact that the people of Minnesota voted for a tax increase benefitting the arts

⁵⁹ National Endowment for the Arts, "How the United States Funds the Arts, 3rd edition," (Washington, DC: National Endowment for the Arts, 2012), 6-7.

⁶⁰ National Endowment for the Arts, "How the United States Funds the Arts," 7.

during the height of the most recent economic recession is a testament to the state's exceptional support for the arts and artists.⁶¹

For 2011, Minnesota's legislative appropriation was augmented by a comparatively small block grant from the NEA of \$770,000. Of the State Arts Board's \$39 million in revenue, approximately \$25 million was distributed to individual and institutional grantees and \$11 million was allocated via block grant to Minnesota's eleven regional arts councils to further decentralize and localize the federal and state funds.⁶² A large portion of the \$25 million statewide grants go to theatre companies, orchestras, art museums and other institutions; the Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis was the largest single grantee, with operating support of \$1,053,958, while the Minnesota Orchestra received \$697,185.⁶³

Thus, although the NEA is the most visible source of direct government support, in most states, state and regional councils are the primary gatekeepers of tax dollars for arts organizations. But despite unusually large state outlays for the arts in Minnesota and several other states, direct tax support provides a negligible subsidy for most orchestras in the United States.

Sources of Patronage: Corporations

⁶¹ "Minnesota State Arts Board Fiscal Year 2011 Annual Report," (Saint Paul, Minnesota: Minnesota State Arts Board, 2011).

⁶² "Minnesota State Arts Board Fiscal Year 2017 Annual Report," (Saint Paul, Minnesota: Minnesota State Arts Board, 2017).

⁶³ Minnesota State Arts Board: Fiscal Year 2017 Operating Support Grantees, accessed September 20, 2018, <http://www.arts.state.mn.us/grants/2017/2017-awarded-opsup.htm>.

Like individuals, corporations may deduct all or some of their donations to charity against taxable income. Until the 2018 tax year and the passing of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Acts (TCJA) tax reform in 2017, the United States had the highest statutory tax rate of all Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) member nations at 39 percent (35 percent federal plus the average of state corporate income tax rates). The TCJA lowers this amount to 25.7 percent (federal plus average state), moving the United States to an average rate compared to its OECD peers.⁶⁴

But the pre-TCJA effective tax rate for corporations in the United States—the amount of tax a corporation pays divided by its income—was only about 29 percent, according to a 2012 study by the Congressional Budget Office.⁶⁵ This drop—from 39 percent to 29 percent—was the result of various deductions, including the charitable deduction. Thus, like individual taxpayers, corporations are strongly incentivized to make charitable deductions for purposes of tax mitigation.

Although the new lower corporate tax rate may lead to fewer and/or smaller corporate charitable contribution because the lower marginal rate could de-incentivize tax mitigation strategies, corporations make charitable contributions for many different reasons. A 2016 study of 125 U.S. corporations suggests that businesses consider the arts “to be important in building quality of life, stimulating creative thinking and problem solving, and offering networking opportunities and the potential

⁶⁴ Kyle Pomerleau, “The United States’ Corporate Income Tax Rate is Now More in Line with Those Levied by Other Major Nations,” *TaxFoundation.org*, February 12, 2018.

⁶⁵ Congress of the United States Congressional Budget Office, “International Comparisons of Corporate Income Tax Rates,” March 2017, 13.

to develop new business and market share.”⁶⁶

Although monetary gifts on behalf of a corporation or a corporation’s private foundation are most common, some companies also support the arts by maintaining a corporate art collection or presenting concerts or exhibitions in the workplace. Many larger businesses also offer employee matching programs wherein employee donations of cash, stock, or time are matched monetarily by the employer. An organization called Double the Donation collects information about corporate matching programs, and reports that 65 percent of Fortune 500 companies offer matching gift programs and that an estimated \$2 to \$3 billion is donated through matching gift programs annually.⁶⁷

Many of these matching programs exist alongside a corporate foundation. For example, the 3M Company—makers of post-it notes, dental drills, caution tape, and thousands of other products—operates the 3M Foundation, a charitable foundation that gave \$73 million in 2017.⁶⁸ Through its foundation, 3M is one of the top corporate sponsors of the Minnesota Orchestras, giving between \$100,000 and \$249,000 annually.⁶⁹ In addition, 3M offers a gift matching program for all employees and retirees until the five-year anniversary of their retirement. The company matches employee gifts 1:1 and retiree gifts .5:1 for gifts to colleges and

⁶⁶ Alex Parkinson, Graciela Kahn, Emily Peck, and Randy Cohen, "Business Contributions to the Arts: 2017 Edition," *The Conference Board*, Inc., 2017, 10.

⁶⁷ See <https://doublethedonation.com/tips/matching-grant-resources/matching-gift-statistics/#participation>.

⁶⁸ 3M Gives, "Annual Report 2017," <https://multimedia.3m.com/mws/media/1527766O/3mgives-annual-report-2017.pdf>, accessed September 20, 2018.

⁶⁹ See <https://www.minnesotaorchestra.org/give/institutional-giving/corporate-giving/corporations>.

universities up to \$5,000 per calendar year. In addition, 3M will donate \$500 for every 25 hours of volunteer service contributed by an employee to a nonprofit organization.⁷⁰ These matching grants and volunteer hours contributed to a total contribution of \$73.5 million and nearly 300,000 volunteer hours donated by 3M in 2017.⁷¹

Although corporate support for nonprofits often occurs at the intersection of the interests of employees and the needs of the community, corporations may also use charitable giving as a form of public relations and political lobbying as well. A 2018 study by economists from the University of Chicago, the University of British Columbia, and Boston University found strong connections between foundations set up by large U.S. corporations and nonprofits connected to prominent national politicians. Specifically, the researchers found that a nonprofit with a politician sitting on its board is more than four times more likely to receive grants from a corporate foundation. Corporate foundation grants are even more likely if the politician happens to sit on a congressional committee being lobbied by the corporation.⁷²

The researchers estimate that over 7 percent of corporate charitable donations are used to influence politicians: “Applied to \$18 billion worth of corporate philanthropy in 2014, that would amount to \$1.3 billion, almost four times as much as total political action committee contributions that year and 40 percent more than the

⁷⁰ “3M Matching Gift Programs,” https://www.3m.com/3M/en_US/gives-us/employee-and-retiree-matching-gifts/, accessed September 20, 2018.

⁷¹ 3M Gives, “Annual Report 2017,” <https://multimedia.3m.com/mws/media/15277660/3mgives-annual-report-2017.pdf>, accessed September 20, 2018.

⁷² Eduardo Porter, “Charitable Giving by Corporations is Also About Getting, a New Study Finds,” *The New York Times*, April 3, 2018.

corporations' lobbying expenditures."⁷³ Although these findings do not suggest that *all* corporate donations are tainted by inconspicuous or opportunistic motives, they do color the importance of big-time corporate philanthropy. Sponsorship of major arts organizations, such as museums, symphony orchestras, and opera companies, can position corporations squarely in elite and/or politically connected circles.

The 2018–19 San Francisco Opera season is sponsored by Wells Fargo, the banking giant trying to overcome a massive fraud involving millions of savings and checking accounts created on behalf of customers without their consent. By sponsoring the San Francisco Opera, Wells Fargo not only appears beneficent in the public sphere, but also may gain favor with the influential coterie of operagoers, such as current Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi, who regularly attends the season-opening San Francisco Opera Ball. Connections like these—between corporations and politicians—suggest to some that corporate charitable donations represent a form of campaign finance law subterfuge, paid for by tax payers (via tax deductions), and brokered by nonprofit recipients.⁷⁴

Nonetheless, corporate donations provide a wealth of needed support to U.S. arts nonprofits. A 2012 study by the National Endowment for the Arts found that for the years 2006–10 corporate donations accounted for 8.4 percent of all revenue for

⁷³ Porter, “Charitable Giving by Corporations is Also About Getting, a New Study Finds.”

⁷⁴ The increasing influence of philanthropy on U.S. politics is the subject of several recent books. See David Callahan, *The Givers: Wealth, Power, and Philanthropy in a New Gilded Age* (New York: Knopf, 2017), Anand Giridharadas, *Winners Take All: The Elite Charade of Changing the World* (New York: Knopf, 2018), and Rob Reich, *Just Giving: Why Philanthropy is Failing Democracy and How it Can Do Better*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2018).

nonprofit performing arts groups and museums in the United States.⁷⁵ Since at least the late 1980s contributions to orchestras from all private sources have increased, both as real dollars (inflation adjusted) and as a proportion of total orchestra revenues. But this increase has been largely due to growth in individual giving, while business giving has stagnated. In 1987 corporate donations to orchestras accounted for 29 percent of all private support for orchestras but in 2005 business contributions accounted for only 16 percent of private support. By comparison, individual support shifted from 38 percent to 50 percent during the same span.⁷⁶

Sources of Patronage: Foundations

Charitable foundations and trusts have existed since the birth of the United States. One of the first notable charitable trusts in the United States was established by Benjamin Franklin in 1790 to loan money to “married apprentices of upright behavior.”⁷⁷ The Magdalen Society of Philadelphia, established in 1800 to help “unhappy females who have been seduced from the paths of virtue and who are desirous of returning to a life of rectitude,” was reorganized in the 1910s as the White-Williams Foundation with the broader mission to offer counseling to high school students. The name was changed again in 1994 to White-Williams Scholars to reflect its mission of supporting high school students; one of the oldest philanthropic

⁷⁵ National Endowment for the Arts, "How the United States Funds the Arts," 1.

⁷⁶ Flanagan, *The Perilous Life of Symphony Orchestras*, 114.

⁷⁷ Dwight MacDonal, "Profiles: Foundation," *The New Yorker*, November 26 - December 10, 1955, 25.

organizations in the United States, the organization exemplifies how charitable organizations iterate to adapt to current needs.⁷⁸

A report prepared by the Twentieth-Century Fund in 1932, several years before the creation of the Ford Foundation, lists 129 charitable foundations in the United States, with assets ranging from \$3,168 (the Princeton, NJ Community Trust) to \$161,302,363 (the Carnegie Corporation of New York). The listed foundations gave between \$127 (the Princeton Community Trust) and \$15,876,403 (the General Education Board, a now defunct Rockefeller-adjunct charity) in grants, for a total of more than \$50 million during the year. Fifty-five of the 129 foundations were based in New York City, representing nearly 80 percent of total U.S foundation capital.⁷⁹

Of the top twenty largest foundations in terms of total assets in 1932, five were directly related to the fortune built by industrialist Andrew Carnegie in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Although the Carnegie Corporation of New York was the largest foundation in the U.S. in 1932, Carnegie's wealth also funded the Carnegie Institution of Washington (\$35,413,454), the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (\$31,824,500), the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (\$11,720,978), and the Carnegie Hero Fund (\$5,750,000). Taken together, these Carnegie institutions accounted for nearly \$250 million in charitable capital in the early 1930s, equivalent to more than \$4 billion in purchasing power in

⁷⁸ "History: Philadelphia Futures: A Union of White-Williams Scholars and Philadelphia Futures," <https://www.philadelphiafutures.org/about-us/organization-history>, accessed September 20, 2018.

⁷⁹ Twentieth Century Fund, Inc., "American Foundations and Their Fields: Edition of 1932," (New York: Twentieth Century Fund, Inc., 1932), 26.

2018.⁸⁰

Although the Carnegie Corporation of New York was founded in 1911, and is the oldest of the modern grant-making foundations, Andrew Carnegie's mission had first been expressed publicly twenty-two years earlier, in a June, 1889 article titled "Wealth" in the *North American Review*. In "Wealth," Carnegie noted that the industrial revolution had brought not only great change, but also a new degree of inequality: "The contrast between the palace of the millionaire and the cottage of the laborer with us to-day measures the change which has come with civilization."⁸¹ As a proud millionaire, Carnegie outlined the questions of what to do with his fortune: "What is the proper mode of administering wealth after the laws upon which civilization is founded have thrown it into the hands of the few?" Carnegie discussed three possibilities for the disposal of wealth: it can be left to families of the decedents, bequeathed for public purposes, or administered during life by its possessors.

Carnegie argued that the first option was least desirable: "I would as soon leave to my son a curse as the almighty dollar." He found the second to be lazy and unambitious: "It may fairly be said that no man is to be extolled for doing what he cannot help doing, nor is he to be thanked by the community to which he only leaves wealth at death." Finally, Carnegie argued that the third option—the distribution of wealth during life—was the "true antidote for the temporary unequal distribution of wealth, the reconciliation of the rich and the poor—a reign of harmony."⁸²

⁸⁰ Twentieth Century Fund, Inc., "American Foundations and Their Fields," 13-14.

⁸¹ Andrew Carnegie, "Wealth," *North American Review* 148, (June 1889): 653–665.

⁸² Carnegie, "Wealth."

Although “Wealth” is typically cited as an elegant argument for the efficacy of philanthropy, it is also simultaneously a rebuke of socialism and government intervention. Carnegie argues that the free-market system—the one that he acknowledges made him exceedingly wealthy—is the best mode of human organization: “To those who propose to substitute Communism [as proposed by Karl Marx] for this intense individualism the answer, therefore, is: The [human] race has tried that. All progress from that barbarous day to the present time has resulted from its displacement. Not evil, but good, has come to the race from the accumulation of wealth by those who have the ability and energy that produce it.”

Carnegie contends that the accumulation of wealth in the hands of producers like him is an intrinsically good thing, but he also pleads that attempting to change the system is a fool’s errand anyway, because the free-market system is the natural result of human nature and evolution:

Even if we admit for a moment that it might be better for the race to discard its present foundation, Individualism—that it is a nobler ideal that man should labor, not for himself alone, but in and for a brotherhood of his fellows, and share with them all in common...this is not evolution but revolution. It necessitates the changing of human nature itself a work of eons, even if it were good to change it, which we cannot know. It is not practicable in our day or in our age.⁸³

Thus, in “Wealth” Carnegie offers not only a template for a new way of distributing money, but also a guide to the interlocking contours of capitalism and private philanthropy; the idea that the large-scale private distribution of wealth could serve as an antidote to societal ills as well as a bulwark against socialist government

⁸³ Ibid.

interference would endure long past Carnegie's death in 1919.

Another enduring theme articulated in "Wealth" is the notion that philanthropy is most effective when it identifies and assists those individuals and organizations that are prepared to help themselves: "In bestowing charity, the main consideration should be to help those who will help themselves; to provide part of the means by which those who desire to improve may do so; to give those who desire to use the aids by which they may rise; to assist, but rarely or never to do all."⁸⁴

In Carnegie's mode of helping "those who will help themselves," the first annual report of the Rockefeller Foundation in 1913 describes the Rockefeller Sanitary Commission's massively successful efforts to eradicate hookworm in the southern United States not only in terms of curing the carriers of the disease, but also of engendering local understanding in how to battle the illness without Rockefeller intervention. "The work, if properly conducted, teaches the people by demonstration what the disease is, and what it means to them as a menace to health and working efficiency; it teaches them how they get it and how they may prevent it, and thus enlists their interest in carrying out the sanitary measures which are necessary for the control of the infection."⁸⁵

The Rockefeller Foundation's hookworm programs were expanded beyond the United States in ways that not only created awareness of the disease, but that also produced new local public health infrastructure. The 1913 report notes that in British

⁸⁴ Carnegie, "Wealth."

⁸⁵ The Rockefeller Foundation, "International Health Commission First Annual Report: June 27, 1913-December 31, 1914," New York: The Rockefeller Foundation, 1915, 31.

Guiana—now the country of Guyana—local authorities “have so thoroughly realized the benefit obtained from the expulsion of hookworm, and have so carefully realized the principles of reinfection, and the necessity of its prevention, that they have subscribed the necessary amount to maintain a Sanitary Inspector to devote his full time.”⁸⁶

The 1932 report from the Twentieth Century Fund, a think tank founded in 1919, found that private foundations overwhelmingly contributed to the areas of medicine and public health (31.4 percent of total foundation grants) and education (24.9 percent). The field of aesthetics—encompassing grants supporting arts education, research, and performance—encompassed 1.8 percent of total grants made in 1931, totaling \$982,124.⁸⁷ A report compiled in 2014 by the Foundation Center, an American organization that gathers data on U.S. foundations, notes that for the 2012 calendar year U.S. foundations devoted an equal amount of aggregate total grants to health and education (22 percent to each), and 10 percent to arts and culture, suggesting that the bulk of philanthropic resources in the United States—as in 1931—are still devoted to health and education.⁸⁸

In the 1930s, the Rockefeller Foundation and Carnegie Corporation partnered with the Public Works Administration—the large-scale construction agency created by the New Deal—to build new theater and art facilities at the University of Iowa.

⁸⁶ The Rockefeller Foundation, “International Health Commission First Annual Report,” 39.

⁸⁷ Twentieth Century Fund, Inc., “American Foundations and Their Fields,” 16.

⁸⁸ “Key Facts on U.S. Foundations,” *Foundation Center*, 2014, <http://foundationcenter.org/gainknowledge/research/keyfacts2014/grant-focus-geography.html>, accessed September 20, 2018.

The foundations contributed a combined \$132,500 for construction and support of the theater department, which was headed by Edward C. Mabie. During his thirty-five-year career, Professor Mabie, who also served as a regional director of the Works Progress Administration's Federal Theater Project, managed to develop the University of Iowa into a center of graduate education in theater.⁸⁹

On a much larger scale than the support for the University of Iowa, the Rockefeller Foundation's work with the Louisville Orchestra from 1953–58 established the City of Louisville as a locus of contemporary orchestral music.⁹⁰ Wholly unique in scope and scale, the Louisville Orchestra commissioned and recorded hundreds of new pieces during the 1950s and 1960s with the support and encouragement of Charles D. Farnsley, who served as mayor of Louisville from 1948 to 1953. Despite a lack of any formal training in music, Farnsley believed in the power of music as an educational tool, and invested public funds in a variety of projects that promulgated music for edifying purposes.

Under Farnsley's leadership, a nightly music history program aired on Radio Louisville and public libraries acquired thousands of LP records, which could be borrowed or enjoyed with audio equipment available at the individual branches.

⁸⁹ "University of Iowa - Dramatic Art," April 11, 1934, box 3, RG 1.1, Rockefeller Foundation Records, RAC.

⁹⁰ Extant research on the Louisville commissioning project includes Michael G. Mauskopf, "Enduring Crisis, Ensuring Survival: Artistry, Economics, and the American Symphony Orchestra" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 2012); Jeanne Marie Belfy, "The commissioning project of the Louisville Orchestra, 1948–1958: A study of the history and music," PhD Thesis, University of Kentucky, 1986; Carole C. Birkhead, "The History of the Orchestra in Louisville," M.A. Thesis, University of Louisville, 1977; Sandra Lee Fralin, "The role of the Louisville Orchestra in the fostering of new music, 1947–1997," D.M.A. Thesis, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2000, which contains over 500 pages of appendices and serves as the inspiration for the May 2010 documentary film, *Music Makes the City*.

Farnsley's principal interest, though, was the Louisville Orchestra, founded in 1936. The first American orchestra to start its own record label, the Louisville Orchestra began commissioning new works in the late 1940s at an expense of \$750 to \$1,000. Composers could earn an extra \$500 if they agreed to come to Louisville to conduct, and thus Louisville became an unlikely hotbed for new music.⁹¹

A savvy proselytizer for Louisville and its orchestra, Farnsley leveraged his connections with composers Virgil Thomson and Otto Leuning to gain an audience with the Rockefeller Foundation. In a 1952 meeting with Edward F. D'Arms, the associate director of the Rockefeller Foundation's humanities program, Farnsley emphasized the importance of the orchestra in the community:

EFD [Edward F. D'Arms] found F[arnsley] a most engaging and imaginative person who is sincerely convinced of the importance and value of music and the arts. F believes that the people of Louisville are beginning to acquire a strong liking for music and particularly contemporary music and referred to the fact that these programs have helped Louisville to obtain new business firms. A General Electric plant, for example, was finally located in Louisville recently largely because of the cultural opportunities available in the community.⁹²

In response to Farnsley's compelling pitch, which included giving D'Arms a miniature Louisville flag designed by Farnsley himself, the Rockefeller Foundation intensified the Louisville orchestra's commissioning efforts with a \$400,000 grant in 1953. Noting the exceptional nature of the proposal, the Rockefeller Foundation's grant approval noted:

Startling as this proposal may seem on first acquaintance, it proves to have

⁹¹ Edward F. D'Arms, Interview with Charles D. Farnsley, May 19, 1952, box 372, RG 1.2, Rockefeller Foundation Records, RAC.

⁹² Edward F. D'Arms, Interview with Charles D. Farnsley, May 19, 1952, box 372, RG 1.2, Rockefeller Foundation Records, RAC.

surprising cogency. That Louisville should be its location is due to the initiative of the Louisville Philharmonic Society, first in having developed a fifty-piece orchestra capable of high-quality performance of such music as is now being written, and, second, in having established the practice of commissioning and performing such compositions on the more limited scale that now prevails. . . . By encouraging such an imaginative and artistically creative project in Louisville, a medium-sized interior city of our country, a tangible stimulus should be given to the decentralization of the musical life of this country.⁹³

In addition to the importance of stimulating musical appreciation in Louisville, the Rockefeller Foundation also understood the impact the Louisville recordings had on the perception of American society abroad. Upon granting an additional \$100,000 to the orchestra in 1955, the foundation noted that the project “Was intended to be a demonstration that the United States, contrary to a widely prevalent opinion, maintains an interest in and provides a healthy environment for the arts.”⁹⁴

The Rockefeller Foundation’s support enabled the orchestra to commission, perform, and record dozens of new works per year by composers like Norman Dello Joio, Arthur Honegger, Heitor Villa-Lobos, Darius Milhaud, Paul Hindemith, Lou Harrison, and Virgil Thomson. Recordings were distributed to domestic radio outlets, such as the Voice of America and the National Association of Educational Broadcasters as well as international broadcasters, including Radio Free Europe. In addition, the recordings were sold as part of a subscription service by the Louisville

⁹³ "Louisville Philharmonic Society, Inc.," April 1, 1953, box 372, RG 1.2, Rockefeller Foundation Records, RAC.

⁹⁴ "Louisville Philharmonic Society - Commissioning Project," September 30, 1955, box 372, RG 1.2, Rockefeller Foundation Records, RAC.

Orchestra's in-house record label.⁹⁵

As the following ad from a December, 1955 issue of the *New Yorker* describes, for \$32.50 (equivalent to about \$300 in 2018) subscribers received six bi-monthly new releases throughout 1956, plus a bonus record from the 1955 season:

⁹⁵ "Louisville Philharmonic Society, Inc.," April 1, 1953, box 372, RG 1.2, Rockefeller Foundation Records, RAC.



The Louisville Orchestra

ROBERT WHITNEY, CONDUCTOR

presents a limited edition of original compositions by contemporary masters

The new, 1956 series of six 12" Long Playing, High-Fidelity Records for release bi-monthly by subscription only. Order now and receive a FREE Bonus Record from the history-making 1955 series. These recordings are made in consultation with the composers and are engineered by Columbia Masterworks technicians.

This is a rare opportunity to possess, or to give, the newly commissioned works of contemporary composers brilliantly recorded in high-fidelity sound by the internationally renowned Louisville Orchestra. Here is a priceless collection of new, provocative music, representing the finest expressions of living composers the world over. For those seeking an exciting listening adventure, here is a magnum opus of historic dimension.

The Louisville Orchestra and its unique project of commissioning new works by contemporary composers has won the acclaim of maestros, critics and music lovers everywhere. *Time Magazine* reported: "The over-all quality was higher than critics dared hope." The *Philadelphia Inquirer* said: "Provocative works, superbly performed and recorded in highest fidelity." Dimitri Mitropoulos commented: "Your encouragement of contemporary music and composers has had repercussions all over the world . . . you definitely put Louisville on the map as a world musical center." These superlative works are used in contemporary music courses by virtually all universities and are being broadcast throughout the world via the *Voice of America*.

Now, in a special series of six 12" Long Playing records, you and your friends can procure this exclusive, new music on a subscription plan described in the application coupon. And as a special introductory offer, The Louisville Orchestra will include with each subscription a bonus record from the history-making 1955 series. This 12" Long Playing bonus record will contain the works of one or more of these masters: Paul Creston, Henry Cowell, Heitor Villa-Lobos, Peter Mennin, Jacques Ibert, Alan Hovhaness, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Boris Blacher, Darius Milhaud, Luigi Dallapiccola, Gottfried Von Einem, Gian-Franco Malpiero, Wallingford Riegger and Alberto Ginastera.

The first record in the new series will be released in January, 1956; however, if you wish to give a subscription to a friend or relative for Christmas, the De Luxe Album to house the series and the bonus record with a Gift Certificate explaining the plan

will be mailed to you immediately upon receipt of your application. Fill it out now. A rich, new musical experience awaits you!

COLUMBIA RECORDS WILL SEND YOU THESE ORIGINAL COMPOSITIONS BI-MONTHLY FOR A YEAR

1. HILDRING ROSENBERG LOUISVILLE CONCERTO
CHOU MEN-CHING AND THE FALLEN PETALS
CAMARGO GUARNIERI SUITE IV CENTENARIO
2. ALEXANDRE TANSMAN CAPRICCIO
FELIX BOROWSKI THE MIRROR
INGOLF DAHL THE TOWER OF ST. BARBARA
3. ERNST KRENEK ELEVEN TRANSPARENCIES
ROBERTO CAAMANO MAGNIFICAT, OP. 20
Choir of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
4. GEORGE ANTHEIL THE WISH (OPERA)
Moritz Bomhard, Conductor
5. JUAN ORRIGO-SALAS SERENATA CONCERTANTE, OP. 42
HAROLD SHAPIRO CRIBO FOR ORCHESTRA
ROBERT MUCZYNSKI CONCERTO NO. 1 FOR PIANO & ORCH.
Robert Muczynski, Soloist
6. HENK BADINGS THE LOUISVILLE SYMPHONY
BEN WEBER PRELUDE AND PASSACAGLIA
LEO SOWERBY ALL ON A SUMMER'S DAY

MAIL TODAY for pre-Christmas delivery!

LOUISVILLE PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY
830 S. Fourth St., Louisville 3, Ky.

Please enroll me as a subscriber to your 1956 Record Plan. Send me the FREE bonus record and de luxe album in time for Christmas. If, within thirty days, after receiving the first record in the new series (to be released in January, 1956), I am dissatisfied in any way, I shall return both records and album, and my money will be refunded in full. I also reserve the right to cancel my subscription at any time upon thirty days' notice.

Enclosed is \$22.50 in full payment for the complete series of six 12" LP records. It is understood that I will receive at once, without charge, the 12" LP bonus record, the de luxe album, and gift certificate.

Enclosed is \$5.95 in payment for the first in the series of six 12" LP records. Upon receipt of each subsequent record, I agree to remit payments of \$5.95 each until the total of \$35.70 is paid. (This includes \$8.20 carrying charges.) It is understood that I will receive at once, without charge, the 12" LP bonus record, the de luxe album, and gift certificate.

ALL U. S. A. SHIPMENTS ARE POSTPAID. Add nothing extra for postage or handling.

If this is a gift subscription, please enclose name and address of recipient on separate paper.

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ADDRESS _____ ZONE _____
CITY _____ STATE _____

Figure 1.1: A Full-page Advertisement for the Louisville's Orchestra's Contemporary Music Subscription Program in the December 10, 1955 edition of the *New Yorker*⁹⁶

Although many composers accepted the Louisville Orchestra's commissions, some leading composers did not, despite the orchestra's best efforts. Samuel Barber, Leonard Bernstein, Benjamin Britten, Carl Orff, Francis Poulenc, Edgard Varèse, and William Walton were all too busy to accept new commissions. Ralph Vaughan Williams, Arthur Honegger, and Ernest Bloch died before responding to the orchestra's requests, and Carl Ruggles agreed to a commission but then stopped responding to the orchestra's letters. Although the Rockefeller grants allowed the orchestra to offer most of the composers commissions in the range of \$1,000 to \$1,500, (about \$8,800–\$13,000 in 2018), Igor Stravinsky, when approached by the orchestra in 1950, agreed to accept a commission only if he was paid \$7,500 for the work, \$1,500 to conduct it in Louisville, and an extra \$500 for expenses (the equivalent of \$100,000 in 2018). This extraordinary offer was not accepted by the Louisville Orchestra.⁹⁷

Despite the artistic successes of the Louisville Orchestra, and the 116 commissions completed from 1948 to 1958, the Louisville project ultimately failed to find commercial traction; the subscription sales of the recordings did not cover the associated expenses, and the orchestra never managed to achieve its record sales or attendance goals. By the mid-1950s it became clear that the project would not approach profitability, with fewer than a hundred subscriptions sold by the end of 1954. The results were dismal locally as well, with only ten records purchased by

⁹⁶ *The New Yorker*, December 10, 1955, 87.

⁹⁷ "Louisville Philharmonic Society - Commissioning Project," September 30, 1955, box 372, RG 1.2, Rockefeller Foundation Records, RAC.

Louisville residents.⁹⁸

In an October 1955 article, Harold Schonberg, music critic for *The New York Times*, noted artistic successes and financial weaknesses of the Louisville project:

Louisville has a problem. Any sales representative of a major record company would have laughed out loud at the mere possibility of selling enough sets of modern music, at \$65 a set, to begin to approach the sum of money desired. To say that the Louisville officials were a little naïve would be the understatement of the year.... On the other hand—and when discussing modern music there always is another hand—the actual merit of the music in question is less important than the fact that the composer has had a forum.... Whatever the final result, Louisville can glory in a stand well taken. Those responsible for the idea have fought the good fight, breaking away from the oppressive stagnation that has enveloped so many musical organizations.⁹⁹

Conclusion

This chapter demonstrates the complex patchwork of funding sources that support U.S. arts organizations. A constantly shifting balance between earned income, contributions, and direct government grants nourish U.S. symphony orchestras and other nonprofits. But no single piece was as influential to U.S. nonprofits as the Ford Foundation's emergence in the early 1950s as the most important philanthropic force in the United States and abroad.

Although the Rockefeller and Carnegie organizations dominated the large-scale Foundation philanthropic activity in the first half of the twentieth century, the

⁹⁸ Mauskopf, "Enduring Crisis, Ensuring Survival," 188.

⁹⁹ Harold C. Schonberg, "Noble Effort: Louisville Does its Best for Modern Music," *The New York Times*, October 15, 1955.

nascent Ford Foundation, founded in 1936, redefined the possibilities of foundation support for the arts beginning in the mid-1950s. Unlike the Carnegie and Rockefeller programs in Iowa and Louisville, the Ford Foundation's Program in the Humanities and the Arts emerged from the foundation's broader agenda to influence the entire orchestra business in the United States. Subsequently, it transformed the role of private support for orchestras and served as a blueprint for the National Endowment for the Arts.

In the following chapter I describe the development of the Ford Foundation from its modest roots in the 1930s to its world-historical influence in the mid-1950s and seek to situate the genesis of the Program in the Humanities and the Arts within the foundation's broader activities and objectives.

CHAPTER 2.

The Ford Foundation and the Program in the Humanities and the Arts

Introduction

The Ford Foundation was created in 1936 in Detroit to administer and execute the Ford family's charitable activities. Founded in 1903, the Ford Motor Company controlled 55 percent of market share in the U.S. automotive industry by 1923, making Henry Ford (1863–1947) one of the wealthiest people in American history.¹⁰⁰ Although the Ford Motor Company initially included investors outside the Ford Family, Henry Ford bought out the outside shareholders and reorganized the company into a family-owned and managed corporation in 1919.¹⁰¹

Ford's only child, Edsel Ford (1893–1943) joined the Ford Motor Company's board of directors in 1915 and gradually took over leadership of the company from his father; by 1919 he owned 41.7 percent of the company stock. In addition to their profitable automotive pursuits, both father and son served in various nonprofit capacities in Detroit and elsewhere.¹⁰² Henry Ford Hospital was founded by the Ford Family in Detroit in 1915, and subsequently evolved into the Henry Ford Health

¹⁰⁰ A 2007 ranking of the wealthiest Americans in history places Henry Ford's total fortune at \$54 billion in 2007 dollars behind both Andrew Carnegie (\$75 billions), and John D. Rockefeller (\$192 billion). See Tom Jackson and others, "The Wealthiest Americans Ever," *New York Times*, July 15, 2007.

¹⁰¹ Brittany Lynn Kienker, "The Henry Ford: Sustaining Henry Ford's Philanthropic Legacy" (PhD diss., Indiana University, 2013), 27.

¹⁰² Kienker, "The Henry Ford: Sustaining Henry Ford's Philanthropic Legacy," 28.

System, one of the largest health care systems in Michigan. Henry Ford was particularly interested in education and historical preservation and he founded a small experiential school system in 1929 that primarily educated the children of Ford Motor Company employees and their neighbors; part of this education involved teaching trades—such as how to fix Ford cars.¹⁰³

Central to the Ford family's early philanthropic efforts was the Edison Institute, an umbrella organization encompassing Henry Ford's educational and historical preservation efforts. Henry Ford was a voracious collector of American antiques, particularly watches and clocks. As his personal collection grew, Ford used his company's resources to house and maintain the artifacts he accumulated, including an empty tractor warehouse and assembly plant building attached to the company's engineering facility.¹⁰⁴ Ford's restoration efforts evolved into the sprawling nonprofit Edison Institute in Dearborn, Michigan, now known as the Henry Ford, encompassing museums, exhibits, historic re-enactments, as well as Henry Ford's childhood home and the one-room schoolhouse he attended as a child.¹⁰⁵

Incorporated in 1929, the Edison Institute embodied Henry Ford's interest in teaching people about history, particularly as it related to agriculture, transportation, and industry.¹⁰⁶ But the institute also evolved into a romanticized showcase of the transition from the agrarian world in which Ford was born to the industrial world in which he ruled. Although the institute continues to serve an educational purpose, it

¹⁰³ Ibid., 29.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 31.

¹⁰⁵ See <https://www.thehenryford.org/visit/greenfield-village/districts>, accessed October 15, 2018.

¹⁰⁶ Kienker, "The Henry Ford: Sustaining Henry Ford's Philanthropic Legacy," 42.

tells a story in which Henry Ford is the key protagonist, the world-historical figure who created the automotive age.

Furthermore, the institute provided a means to mitigate the Ford family's federal tax burden. In the early years of the Edison Institute, Ford was able to deduct up to 15 percent of his annual income for charitable donations, while also using the staff of the Ford Motor Company to administer the institute's day-to-day operations. Prior to 1936, Henry Ford's personal contributions to the Edison Institute totaled more than \$33 million (approximately \$500 million in 2018 dollars).¹⁰⁷

Initiated with a \$25,000 gift from Edsel Ford, the Ford Foundation's early activities supported hometown organizations, like the Detroit Symphony, Henry Ford Hospital, and the Edison Institute.¹⁰⁸ As shown in Table 2.1, tax law changes in the early 1930s raised the marginal income tax rate while maintaining the charitable deduction up to 15 percent of net income.

¹⁰⁷ Kienker, "The Henry Ford: Sustaining Henry Ford's Philanthropic Legacy," 50.

¹⁰⁸ Patricia Rosenfield and Rachel Wimpee, "The Ford Foundation: Themes, 1936-2001," (Tarrytown, NY: The Rockefeller Archive Center, 2015), 3.

Table 2.1: Individual Income Tax Rate Changes from 1925 - 1940 and Approximate Tax Liability for an Individual Earning \$10,000,000¹⁰⁹

Year	Charitable Deduction	Normal Tax	Surtax (\$)	Top Surtax Net Income (\$)	Top Surtax Rate (%)	Tax Liability After Charitable Deduction (\$)	Effective (Average Rate)
1925	15%	6%	170,020	500,000	40%	3,880,020	38.80%
1926	15%	5%	11,660	100,000	20%	2,116,660	21.17%
1927	15%	5%	11,660	100,000	20%	2,116,660	21.17%
1928	15%	5%	11,660	100,000	20%	2,116,660	21.17%
1929	15%	5%	11,660	100,000	20%	2,116,660	21.17%
1930	15%	5%	11,660	100,000	20%	2,116,660	21.17%
1931	15%	5%	11,660	100,000	20%	2,116,660	21.17%
1932	15%	8%	491,460	1,000,000	55%	5,296,460	52.96%
1933	15%	8%	491,460	1,000,000	55%	5,296,460	52.96%
1934	15%	4%	533,000	1,000,000	59%	5,298,000	52.98%
1935	15%	4%	533,000	1,000,000	59%	5,298,000	52.98%
1936	15%	4%	3,591,000	5,000,000	75%	6,556,000	65.56%
1937	15%	4%	3,591,000	5,000,000	75%	6,556,000	65.56%
1938	15%	4%	3,591,000	5,000,000	75%	6,556,000	65.56%
1939	15%	4%	3,591,000	5,000,000	75%	6,556,000	65.56%
1940	15%	4%	3,597,780	5,000,000	75%	6,562,780	65.63%

¹⁰⁹ The normal tax is the normal tax rate multiplied by total income less the charitable deduction. The total surtax is the top surtax amount, plus the top surtax rate times the amount of total income less the charitable deduction over the top surtax net income. The total of the normal tax and the surtax is the total tax liability. For example, for 1925, the formula is thus: $(6\% * (\$10,000,000 - \$1,500,000)) + (\$170,020 + (40\% * ((\$10,000,000 - \$1,500,000) - \$500,000))) = \$3,880,020$. The effective tax rate is the average taxation rate. It is calculated by dividing total tax liability by income. See Internal Revenue Service, Form 1040, Years 1925–1940, irs.gov.

The creation of the Ford Foundation had two main tax ramifications. First, in the short-term, donations to the foundation were deductible up to 15 percent of net income, like the earlier donations to the Edison Institute and elsewhere. But second, and more importantly, the establishment of the family foundation mitigated the effect of transfer taxes (estate taxes) from Henry Ford to his heirs.

In the first decade of the twentieth century, when there was no permanent federal income or estate tax in the United States, President Theodore Roosevelt advocated for a progressive income tax—in which the tax rate increases as taxable income increases—as well as an inheritance tax on large estates.¹¹⁰ This political atmosphere—in which new taxes aimed at curbing income inequality seemed imminent—contributed to the establishment of the Carnegie Corporation of New York (1911) and the Rockefeller Foundation (1913). In 1913, the sixteenth amendment the U.S. Constitution was passed, giving Congress the power “to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.”¹¹¹ Furthermore, Congress passed the Revenue Act of 1916, creating a tax on the transfer of wealth from an estate to its beneficiaries:

¹¹⁰ Darien Jacobson, Brian Raub, and Barry Johnson, “The Estate Tax: Ninety Years and Counting,” *Internal Revenue Service Statistics of Income Bulletin*, June 22, 2007, 120.

¹¹¹ U.S. Const., amend. XVI.

Table 2.2: Estate Tax Exemptions and Rates¹¹²

Year(s)	Exemption	Top Rate	Top Bracket
1916	\$ 50,000	10%	\$ 5,000,000
1917	\$ 50,000	25%	\$ 10,000,000
1918–1923	\$ 50,000	25%	\$ 10,000,000
1924–1925	\$ 50,000	40%	\$ 10,000,000
1926–1931	\$ 100,000	20%	\$ 10,000,000
1932–1933	\$ 50,000	45%	\$ 10,000,000
1934	\$ 50,000	60%	\$ 10,000,000
1935–1939	\$ 40,000	70%	\$ 50,000,000
1940	\$ 40,000	70%	\$ 50,000,000
1941	\$ 40,000	77%	\$ 10,000,000
1942–1976	\$ 60,000	77%	\$ 10,000,000
1977	\$ 120,000	70%	\$ 5,000,000
1978	\$ 134,000	70%	\$ 5,000,000
1979	\$ 147,000	70%	\$ 5,000,000
1980	\$ 161,000	70%	\$ 5,000,000
1981	\$ 175,000	70%	\$ 5,000,000
1982	\$ 225,000	65%	\$ 4,000,000
1983	\$ 275,000	60%	\$ 3,500,000
1984	\$ 325,000	55%	\$ 3,000,000
1985	\$ 400,000	55%	\$ 3,000,000
1986	\$ 500,000	55%	\$ 3,000,000
1987–1997	\$ 600,000	55%	\$ 3,000,000
1998	\$ 625,000	55%	\$ 3,000,000
1999	\$ 650,000	55%	\$ 3,000,000
2000–2001	\$ 675,000	55%	\$ 3,000,000
2002	\$ 1,000,000	50%	\$ 2,500,000
2003	\$ 1,000,000	49%	\$ 2,000,000
2004	\$ 1,500,000	48%	\$ 2,000,000
2005	\$ 1,500,000	47%	\$ 2,000,000
2006	\$ 2,000,000	46%	\$ 2,000,000
2007–2008	\$ 2,000,000	45%	\$ 1,500,000
2009	\$ 3,500,000	45%	\$ 1,500,000
2010	\$ 5,000,000	35%	\$ 500,000
2011	\$ 5,000,000	35%	\$ 500,000
2012	\$ 5,120,000	35%	\$ 500,000
2013	\$ 5,250,000	40%	\$ 1,000,000
2014	\$ 5,340,000	40%	\$ 1,000,000
2015	\$ 5,430,000	40%	\$ 1,000,000
2016	\$ 5,450,000	40%	\$ 1,000,000
2017	\$ 5,490,000	40%	\$ 1,000,000
2018	\$ 11,180,000	40%	\$ 1,000,000

¹¹² The exemption amount is the amount of the transfer that is exempt from estate taxes; any amount above the exemption is subject to estate taxes. The top rate is the marginal rate paid on income above the exemption and the top bracket. See Jacobson, Raub, and Johnson, “The Estate Tax: Ninety Years and Counting,” 122; and Internal Revenue Service, Form 706, Years 2008–2018, irs.gov.

Under the original estate tax, transfers of wealth over \$50,000 were taxed at a marginal rate ranging from 1 percent to 10 percent. From the early 1940s to the mid 1970s however, 77% of transfers over \$10 million could be payable in estate taxes, representing a colossal burden to extremely high wealth individuals.¹¹³ With Henry Ford's health declining in the mid-1930s, it became apparent that formal action was needed if he were to circumvent Franklin Delano Roosevelt's estate tax hikes; the deaths of Henry and Edsel would trigger hundreds of millions in estate taxes if they transferred their wealth directly to their heirs.¹¹⁴ The Ford family elided these taxes by transferring 90 percent of their shares to the newly-formed Ford Foundation. In addition, to retain control of voting power over the company, two share classes of stock were created, with 95 percent of the company stock functioning as non-voting, and 5 percent as voting. The voting shares were held by the family members while the non-voting shares were given to the foundation.¹¹⁵ Because the majority of Henry and Edsel's wealth consisted in Ford Motor Company stock—which was not publicly traded until the late 1950s—hundreds of millions of dollars in stock would have needed to be sold to satisfy the estate tax bill, and control of the Ford Motor Company would have escaped the control of its founder and his direct heirs.¹¹⁶

Thus, by leaving their Ford Motor Company holdings to the Ford Foundation,

¹¹³ See Jacobson, Raub, and Johnson, "The Estate Tax: Ninety Years and Counting," 122.

¹¹⁴ Kienker, "The Henry Ford: Sustaining Henry Ford's Philanthropic Legacy," 62.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 63.

¹¹⁶ For a concise summary of the estate tax planning implications of charitable foundations owning private companies, and proposed tax legislation in the early 1950s intended to curb this practice, see Francis W. Sams, "Control of Closely Held Family Corporations Through Charitable Foundations," *American Bar Association Journal*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (March 1956), 278-279.

Henry and Edsel guaranteed that control of the company was maintained by the Ford Foundation and the foundation's chairman, Henry Ford II, Edsel's son. Furthermore, the estate tax savings for the Ford family amounted to approximately \$280 million (about \$5 billion in 2018 dollars).¹¹⁷

The original bequest of Edsel Ford allowed for the Ford Foundation to tackle various issues in Detroit, but with such a small endowment, the foundation was not among the larger foundations in the United States. In 1937, when the Ford Foundation's endowment totaled only \$25,000, at least twenty-five U.S. foundations had assets of at least five million. In the 1930s and early 1940s the Ford Foundation was not even the largest foundation in the state of Michigan, and was dwarfed by national institutions such as the Rockefeller (\$184 million) and Carnegie (\$164 million) Foundations, as well as defunct organizations such as the Le Tourneau Foundation (\$12 million), and highly specialized organizations such as the Juilliard Musical Foundation (\$12 million).¹¹⁸

Upon Edsel's death in 1943 and Henry's in 1947, the foundation received Ford Motor Company stock valued privately at \$417 million. But because the stock had been held entirely by Henry and Edsel since 1919 and had no established market value, its worth was purely an estimate. Nonetheless, because of these bequests, by the end of the 1940s the Ford Foundation's endowment stood at more than three times the size of its closest competitor, the Rockefeller Foundation.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ Kienker, "The Henry Ford: Sustaining Henry Ford's Philanthropic Legacy," 64.

¹¹⁸ "The Large Foundations," 1960, box 3, Ford Foundation records, Office of the President, Office Files of Henry T. Heald, RAC.

¹¹⁹ Valued at \$417,137,580 (\$3.8 billion in 2017) in 1952, the Ford Foundation's endowment has

In 1948 the foundation formed a committee made up of “men widely known and respected in such fields as education, medicine and public health, the natural sciences, political science and government, the social sciences, the humanities, and modern business and industry,” to “block out in general terms those critical areas where problems were most serious and where the Foundation might make the most significant contributions to human welfare.”¹²⁰ Headed by H. Rowan Gaither, an attorney and banker who would later become president of the Ford Foundation, the committee proposed five broad areas on which the foundation should focus its efforts:

1. The Establishment of Peace
2. The Strengthening of Democracy
3. The Strengthening of the Economy
4. Education in a Democratic Society
5. Individual Behavior and Human Relations¹²¹

To sum up the overall mission, then-President of the Ford Motor Company and Chairman of the Ford Foundation Henry Ford II, grandson of Henry Ford, outlined the newly wealthy foundation’s mission:

The people of this country and mankind in general are confronted with problems which are vast in number and exceedingly disturbing in significance. While important efforts to solve these problems are being made by government, industry, foundations, and other institutions, it is evident that new resources, such as those of this Foundation, if properly employed, can result in significant contributions.¹²²

generally mirrored the performance of the U.S. stock market, rising through the 1950s and 1960s, stagnating in the 1970s, rocketing upwards through the 1980s and 1990s, and then falling during the dot-com crisis of the early 2000s, and the great recession of 2007-2009. For an in-depth financial history of the Ford Foundation and the performance of its endowment, see Appendix 1.

"The Large Foundations," 1960, box 3, Ford Foundation records, Office of the President, Office Files of Henry T. Heald, RAC.

¹²⁰ The Ford Foundation, *Report of the Study for the Ford Foundation on Policy and Program* (Detroit: The Ford Foundation, 1949), 10.

¹²¹ The Ford Foundation, *Report of the Study for the Ford Foundation on Policy and Program*, 49.

¹²² *Report of the Trustees of the Ford Foundation: September 27, 1950*, (Detroit, MI: The Ford Foundation, 1950), 4.

The five program areas of the Gaither Report would shape the evolution of the Ford Foundation from its provincial origins in the late 1940s to its complex international efforts in the late 1950s. Although these five areas for action eventually merged into a more general social justice approach in the late 1960s, I discuss them in detail here because they set the tone for the engagement of the Ford Foundation for years after their obsolescence as discrete organizational categories.

Program Area 1: The Establishment of Peace

“The Ford Foundation will support activities that promise significant contributions to world peace and the establishment of a world of law and justice.”¹²³

In 1951—the first year in which financial figures were published in an annual report—the foundation awarded fewer than fifty grants for a total of just over \$22 million. Governmental and non-governmental organizations in India and Pakistan were allocated millions for projects supporting education in agriculture and engineering, as well as training in “home economics” for rural Pakistani women.¹²⁴ In support of the organization’s mission in South Asia, the Ford Foundation established its first international office in New Delhi in 1952. Built at the invitation of Jawaharlal Nehru, India’s first post-independence Prime Minister, the Delhi office is a palatial space in the historic Lodi Gardens, which at its apex employed hundreds of staff

¹²³ *Report of the Trustees of the Ford Foundation: September 27, 1950*, 19.

¹²⁴ See *the Ford Foundation: Annual Report for 1951* (Pasadena, CA: The Ford Foundation, 1951).

members, maintained a private guesthouse for visiting dignitaries and consultants, and kept two private jets available for staff transportation.¹²⁵

After establishing independence and ratifying a democratic constitution, India was the perfect laboratory for the Ford Foundation to work toward establishing peace in a country with untested democratic institutions. In accordance with the foundation's enduring mission to help people help themselves, educational programs formed the core of modernization efforts, both by the Indian Government and the Ford Foundation: "Through the village development projects, the villagers learn improved methods in agriculture, public health, and social education, and are assisted in adapting better practices to their own situation."¹²⁶

In addition to the New Delhi office and its headquarters in New York City, the foundation gradually opened outposts in Nairobi, Cairo, Johannesburg, Lagos, Beijing, Jakarta, Santiago, Rio de Janeiro, and Mexico City. Consistent with the Marshall Plan—which was administered by Paul G. Hoffman before he became president of the Ford Foundation in 1950—the newly international foundation initially heavily supported German institutions, most notably the Free University of Berlin, which received \$1.3 million "for the improvement of its plant and the extension of its work."¹²⁷ The result of Soviet control over the original University of Berlin (now known as the Humboldt University of Berlin), the Free University of Berlin was established in 1948 as a contrast to the "un-free" former institution. The

¹²⁵ See Larissa MacFarquhar, "What Money Can Buy: Darren Walker and the Ford Foundation set out to Conquer Inequality," *The New Yorker*, January 4, 2016.

¹²⁶ *The Ford Foundation: Annual Report for 1952 (Pasadena, CA: The Ford Foundation, 1952)*, 16.

¹²⁷ *The Ford Foundation: Annual Report for 1951*, 15.

most visible result of the foundation's support is the Henry Ford building, which houses the university's library and is protected by the City of Berlin as an historic monument.¹²⁸

The East European Fund, an independent nonprofit created by the Ford Foundation in 1951, received millions for projects related to helping exiles from the Soviet Union become acclimated in the United States. It also created a company called the Chekhov Publishing Company to

print in Russian some of the classics of Russian and Western literature and other books by Russian that are not now available in the Russian language. In this way it is hoped that Russian people may resume touch with the common spiritual and cultural heritage of the world.¹²⁹

Until its closure in 1956, the Chekhov Publishing Company published, in Russian, pre-Soviet Russian literature, works by Soviet writers that had been suppressed in the Soviet Union for political reasons, and translations of books about the United States and U.S. history. For example, Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We*, published in English in 1924, describes a dystopian futuristic communist society. Immediately banned by Soviet authorities, the text was not published in Russian until the Chekhov Publishing Company released it in 1952.¹³⁰ An undeniable inspiration for more famous dystopian classics like Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1931) and George Orwell's *1984* (1949), *We* was not available in the Soviet Union until 1988.

Russian-speaking emigrants interested in U.S. history and culture could read

¹²⁸ "Henry Ford Building of Freie Universität Berlin," <http://www.fu-berlin.de/en/sites/hfb/>, accessed October 14, 2018.

¹²⁹ *The Ford Foundation: Annual Report for 1951*, 12.

¹³⁰ Michael Karpovich, "The Chekhov Publishing House," *The Russian Review*, 1957.

biographies such as Herbert Agar's *Abraham Lincoln*, and George Kennan's *The Realities of American Foreign Policy*. Winston Churchill's epic *The Second World War* was also translated into Russian. In total more than one hundred and fifty titles were published by the Chekhov Publishing Company and the East European Fund between 1952 and 1956.¹³¹

The Ford Foundation sustained criticism from the early 1950s for its activities at home and abroad, particularly regarding those perceived as socialist. In 1965, under the headline "U.S. Has 2 Faces in Regard to Reds, Italian Discloses" the *Miami Herald* reported that:

Renato Guttuso, a Roman painter, member of the top-level Central Committee of the Communist Party, has revealed that Luigi Nono, a Milanese composer, was offered a \$20,000 grant by Ford last summer for a year's study in West Berlin. Nono refused the alleged offer and reported his renunciation in writing to Guttuso, his party superior.¹³²

The article alleges that Nono, despite his communist sympathies, was offered a visa to enter the United States because he was a favorite of the Ford Foundation. After receiving threats of boycotts, Ford Motor Company executives wrote to Ford Foundation president Henry T. Heald requesting an investigation. Ford Foundation staff quickly concluded that Nono had never been offered a grant, and that the foundation had never contacted the State Department concerning Nono's visa status.¹³³

¹³¹ Karpovich, "The Chekhov Publishing House," *The Russian Review*, 1957.

¹³² George Weller, "U.S. Has 2 Faces in Regard to Reds, Italian Discloses," *Miami Herald-Chicago Daily News Wire*, February 20, 1965.

¹³³ Letter from Henry T. Heald to Allen W. Merrell Concerning a Miami Herald Article About a Grant to Luigi Nono, March 2, 1965, box 4, Ford Foundation records, Office of the President, Office Files of Henry T. Heald, RAC.

Suggesting not only that the Ford Foundation offered a grant equivalent in 2016 dollars of more than \$150,000 to an Italian communist, but also more insidiously that the Ford Foundation had the power to influence the U.S. Department of State concerning visa applications, the *Herald* article confirmed to many cynics that the Ford Foundation held an at best leftist, at worst anti-American objectives. An institution with seemingly inexhaustible resources, an opaque organizational structure, and sometimes contradictory objectives, the foundation has constantly been the locus of suspicion both domestically and internationally.

Program Area 2: The Strengthening of Democracy

“The Ford Foundation will support activities designed to secure greater allegiance to the basic principles of freedom and democracy in the solution of the insistent problems of an ever-changing society.”¹³⁴

In 1951 the foundation allocated \$15 million to found the Fund for the Republic in Santa Barbara, California. The fund was created to promote civil liberties and study the balance between individual freedoms and the protection of national security. Towards the mission of “Strengthening of Democracy” as outlined in Gaither’s report, the fund supported projects that might be too provocative for the Ford Foundation:

In that report, the Foundation recognized the following facts: First, that one of the major problems of any democratic society is how to secure greater allegiance to the basic principles of freedom and democracy in an ever-

¹³⁴ Report of the Trustees of the Ford Foundation: September 27, 1950, (Detroit, MI: The Ford Foundation, 1950), 19.

changing world. There is real danger that the gap between profession [sic] and pursuit of the ideals of American freedom may widen under the tensions and pressure of the international crisis. Second, that the spread of Communism represents one of the most critical threats to the American public welfare. And third, that some of the measures taken to deal with the threat of Communism in themselves pose grave problems concerning traditional freedoms.¹³⁵

The fund's charter acknowledged both that communism represented a serious threat to Americans, but also that the perception of a threat invited a disproportionate response from the U.S. government and the public. In the context of Senator Joseph McCarthy's efforts to root out accused communists, as well as the permanent status afforded the House Committee on Un-American Activities in 1945, the fund's first large grant was to the American Bar Foundation to study congressional investigations. In addition, the fund supported studies on religion in schools, communism, blacklisting, and housing discrimination, with a focus on de-segregation in the South.¹³⁶

Despite its ostensible independence, public disapproval for the activities of the Fund for the Republic were often directed at the Ford Foundation. Already branded as an organization with a "leftist slant," the activities of the Fund for the Republic crystalized the suspicions of the Ford Foundation within the minds of many Americans.¹³⁷ And, as criticism for the Fund for the Republic spilled over to the Ford Foundation, disapproval for the Ford Foundation burgeoned into denunciations of

¹³⁵ See "Supplement B to Statement of H. Rowan Gaither, Jr., to the Special Committee to Investigate Tax Exempt Foundations, House of Representatives, 83rd Congress: History of the Establishment of the Fund for the Republic," September 29th, 1955, box 222, report 005019, Ford Foundation records, Catalogued Reports, Reports, RAC.

¹³⁶ Rosenfield and Wimpee, "The Ford Foundation: Themes, 1936-2001," 7.

¹³⁷ William Fulton, "Leftist Slant Begins to Show in Ford Trust," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, October 19, 1951.

the Ford Motor Company. Various letter writing campaigns encouraged Ford owners to personally write Henry Ford II—then CEO of the Ford Motor Company and Chairman of the Ford Foundation—to announce a boycott of Ford cars. One of hundreds of variations on a theme, a Dallas housewife wrote in 1965: “None of our family buys Fords, Mercury’s [sic], or Lincolns because the Ford Foundation tends to favor left wing projects. Oh that the real Henry Ford were with us! He’d trust LBJ as far as he could throw him.”¹³⁸

Letter-writers accused the Fund for the Republic, the Ford Foundation, or the Ford Motor Company of being “infiltrated by Jews,” smelling “to high heaven of Communism and internationalism,” and “backing pagan immorality.”¹³⁹ Programs that supported de-segregation efforts received particularly caustic responses. A member of the Mississippi State Legislature wrote: “I think God made the white person white for a purpose and made the Negro black for a purpose, and didn’t intend for the Ford Foundation or any other organization to change it to a mongrel race.”¹⁴⁰ The Ford Foundation’s National Achievement Scholars Program drew the ire from a Tampa, Florida parent who wrote:

I was greatly angered when my teen-aged daughter brought home her Student Information Bulletin regarding the National Merit Test and I read of the National Achievement Scholarship Program for Negro students. Isn’t this discrimination against the white student? I was amazed that your company would sponsor such a program thru [sic] the Ford Foundation. I own two late model Falcons and a ’52 Ford but I’ll not buy any more Ford products. Let’s

¹³⁸ Letter from L.J. Learner to Ford Motor Company Concerning Lyndon B Johnson, April 27, 1965, box 4,

Ford Foundation records, Office of the President, Office Files of Henry T. Heald, RAC.

¹³⁹ "Letters re Fund to Ford Motor Company," 1956, box 5, Ford Foundation records, Office of the President, Office Files of Henry T. Heald, RAC.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

give the white kids a break for a change.¹⁴¹

In the context of reactionary anti-communist panic, the foundation's mandate to "strengthen democracy" was interpreted by many in the United States as socialist and by extension unpatriotic. Henry Ford II, chairman of the foundation in the early 1950s, and president of the Ford Motor Company from 1945 to 1960, was the recipient of most of the public criticism of the foundation's activities, despite his lax involvement with the foundation's day-to-day activities. On claims that the foundation harbored communist intentions, Ford II remarked in 1955: "The American Legion used to claim we were full of Communists.... Once I was called a Communist myself, at a social gathering, by a very influential woman.... You call someone a Communist when you don't agree with him. I don't agree with [Senator Joseph] McCarthy, so I suppose that makes me a Communist."¹⁴²

By contrast, the foundation's international efforts were interpreted abroad in the exact opposite way. The conclusion was not altogether unreasonable; the 1948 Gaither Report includes the statement "as the tide of communism mounts in Asia and Europe, the position of the United States is crucial.... The United States appears to be the only country able to provide even a part of the urgently needed assistance."¹⁴³ While it was interested in probing the anti-communist mania in the United States, the Ford Foundation was simultaneously focused on promoting democracy and free

¹⁴¹ Letter from M.S. Heffner to Henry Ford II Concerning the National Merit Test, February 28, 1965, box 4, Ford Foundation records, Office of the President, Office Files of Henry T. Heald, RAC.

¹⁴² Dwight MacDonal, "Profiles: Foundation," *The New Yorker*, December 10, 1955, 78.

¹⁴³ The Ford Foundation, *Report of the Study for the Ford Foundation on Policy and Program*, 1949, 27.

markets abroad. Historian Hugh Wilford describes the American mentality after the Second World War:

The United States had the upper hand in many dimensions of the rapidly developing Cold War. Economically, it was clearly the strongest power on earth...and it still enjoyed sole possession of the atom bomb. However, in an equally important theater of this new kind of international conflict—the ideological struggle between capitalism and communism for the “hearts and minds” of nonaligned peoples around the world—its advantages were far less obvious.¹⁴⁴

As discussed in Chapter 1, governments play a larger role in direct support for the arts and the humanities in Europe than they do in the United States. Whereas private philanthropy fills this void in the United States, in Europe large-scale charitable giving is relatively uncommon, and in some cases viewed with suspicion. The late French-born economist and art historian John Michael Montias noted in 1986 that in France “the patronage of private individuals and firms is regarded with suspicion, for fear of money-minded interference. The tendency is to ‘demand more state intervention because it offers better guarantees of liberty and equality.’”¹⁴⁵

Emblematic of a bureaucratic, institutional form of philanthropy, the Ford Foundation was viewed with heightened curiosity in the 1950s as it expanded its operation abroad. In his four-part series on the Ford Foundation for the *New Yorker* in 1955, Dwight MacDonal cited a letter from an American sociologist working in Paris on a Ford Foundation grant: “Some [French intellectuals] suspect that these

¹⁴⁴ Hugh Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2008), 5.

¹⁴⁵ Michael Montias, “Tax Incentives as Arts Policy in Western Europe,” in *Nonprofit Enterprise in the Arts: Studies in Mission and Constraint*, ed. Paul J. DiMaggio (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 306.

foundations are some sort of quasi-official intelligence agencies working for the State Department under cover of scientific respectability. Giving one's private goods for public welfare on such a scale just doesn't fit with French experience. Of course, the motivation *is* complex, and Americans don't wholly understand it, either. But they believe it. The French just don't believe it."¹⁴⁶

Darren Walker, President of the Ford Foundation since 2013, recognizes that throughout much of its history the Ford Foundation was ideologically aligned with the U.S. government in its promotion of a liberal international order based on promoting democratic values, open markets, and durable civil institutions. In a 2018 essay in *Foreign Affairs*, Walker writes: "During much of the last century, philanthropic foundations based in the United States exported American ideals about democracy, market economies, and civil society. That mission was made possible by ideological support from and alignment with the U.S. government, which, in turn, imbued foundations with prestige and influence as they operated around the world."¹⁴⁷

In fact, many high-ranking Ford Foundation officials were directly involved in anti-communist efforts with the U.S. Government or influential non-governmental organizations in the post-World War II period. H. Rowan Gaither, who chaired the foundation's Study Committee in the late 1940s and served as president of the foundation from 1953 to 1956, was a founder of the Rand Corporation, a think tank

¹⁴⁶ Dwight MacDonal, "Profiles: Foundation," *The New Yorker*, November 26, 1955, 76.

¹⁴⁷ Darren Walker, "Old Money, New Order," *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2018.

entangled in the Cold War arms race. Paul G. Hoffman, president of the Ford Foundation from 1950 to 1953, headed the Economic Cooperation Administration, the U.S. Government agency created to administer the Marshall Plan from 1948 until 1950.

McGeorge Bundy, Ford Foundation president from 1966 to 1979, was also intimately involved with the Marshall Plan as a member of the Council on Foreign Relations in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Before joining the Ford Foundation, he served as National Security Adviser to Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, where he played crucial advisory roles in the Bay of Pigs Invasion, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the Vietnam War. In addition, Bundy was responsible for supervising the Central Intelligence Agency, which allegedly maintained a close relationship with the Ford Foundation.¹⁴⁸

As argued in several books, principally Frances Stoner Saunders' *The Cultural Cold War* and Hugh Wilford's *The Mighty Wurlitzer*, the CIA and the Ford Foundation maintained some deal of coordination in the 1950s and 1960s, as the CIA operated various front groups in the United States and abroad. Stonor explains how by the mid 1950s the foundation was so close to the CIA that the foundation was regularly coordinating with the agency, and the foundation was responsible for funding a variety of CIA front organizations, including the Congress for Cultural Freedom, which received millions from the Ford Foundation and was exposed as a

¹⁴⁸ See Frances Stoner Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters* (New York: The New Press, 2001).

CIA front organization by the *New York Times* in 1967.¹⁴⁹

The connections between the Ford Foundation and the U.S. foreign policy apparatus were not lost on citizens of countries in which the foundation operated during the Cold War period. Although some Americans perceived the foundation as a leftist organization, many outside the United States suspected it not only of being anti-socialist, but also of being an agent of the U.S. government.

For example, the foundation's activities in Greece in the early 1970s were viewed with great local suspicion. Governed by a military dictatorship from 1968 to 1974, Greece maintained a tenuous relationship with the United States. Concerned with the preservation of ancient Greek artifacts during this period of political instability, the foundation responded to the military junta in Greece with the 1968 Emergency Program of the Arts in Greece.¹⁵⁰ Supporting preservation-minded performing arts groups, writers, and researchers, the efforts in Greece constituted an ostensibly apolitical reaction to political unrest.

But several Greek grantees were imprisoned after receiving foundation grants related to projects that were perceived as being critical of the military government.¹⁵¹ Dr. Dionysios Karagiorgas, an economics professor and leader of an opposition network called the Democratic Defense, was imprisoned after a bomb exploded in his hand at his home. In possession of a dozen small explosives smuggled from Sweden,

¹⁴⁹ "Subversion by C.I.A.," *The New York Times*, February 20, 1967.

¹⁵⁰ *The Ford Foundation Annual Report: October 1, 1967 to September 30, 1968* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1968), 109.

¹⁵¹ Letter from W. McNeil Lowry to McGeorge Bundy Regarding the Situation in Athens, February 15, 1973, box 2, Ford Foundation Records, Office of the President, Office Files of McGeorge Bundy, RAC.

Karagiorgas admitted that he intended to explode the bombs publicly in protest of the military dictatorship. Although the bombs were largely innocuous—evidenced by the fact that Karagiorgas survived an explosion of one in his hand—two Greeks had been accidentally killed by similar devices in the late 1960s, and the government reacted by sentencing Karagiorgas to life in prison. Working with only his left hand—his right one was wounded in the bomb incident—Karagiorgas completed, under a Ford Foundation grant, a critical book entitled *The Distribution of Fiscal Burden in Greece* in 1972.¹⁵²

Tensions over the situation in Greece prompted the foundation to send Vice President W. McNeil Lowry to Athens in early 1973 to answer questions about the foundation's intentions. During a four and a half hour press conference on January 12, 1973, Lowry noted the foundation's reliance on a local consultant in its decision making processes, a Mrs. Kety Myrivili, and vehemently stated that the foundation made its grants without political interference: "No government, either the American government or, in this case, the Greek government is involved at any stage of the procedure [of grantmaking].... Very often...I am asked by the person concerned what his obligations toward the Ford Foundation will be if he gets a grant. My answer is invariably: none."¹⁵³

Although the Ford Foundation's international projects were generally not focused on the arts, we will see that the international political activities of the

¹⁵² Henry Kamm, "Greek Publishes Work from Jail," *the New York Times*, January 31, 1972.

¹⁵³ Letter from W. McNeil Lowry to McGeorge Bundy Regarding the Situation in Athens, February 15, 1973, box 2, Ford Foundation Records, Office of the President, Office Files of McGeorge Bundy, RAC.

foundation figured into the rationale for the creation of the domestic Program for the Humanities and the Arts and the subsequent Program for Symphony Orchestras.

Program Area 3: The Strengthening of the Economy

“The Ford Foundation will support activities designed to advance the economic well-being of people everywhere and to improve economic institutions for the better realization of democratic goals.”¹⁵⁴

The Ford Foundation’s early activities in support of its mission to strengthen the economy were small in comparison to its other program areas. Although in 1950 and 1951 many projects under the auspices of the “establishment of peace” umbrella had economic components, no domestic economic projects were supported financially by the foundation until 1952. In 1952 Ford grants supporting the mission of strengthening the economy comprised a total of only \$627,463, compared to \$11,537,361 for the establishment of peace, \$1,289,000 for strengthening free institutions, \$22,065,232 for education in a democratic society, and \$2,094,800 for human behavior.¹⁵⁵

To administer its economic programs, the Ford Foundation created an independent organization called Resources for the Future in the mold of the East European Fund and the Fund for the Republic; from the mid 1950s through the 1970s

¹⁵⁴ *Report of the Trustees of the Ford Foundation: September 27, 1950*, (Detroit, MI: The Ford Foundation, 1950), 20.

¹⁵⁵ See *the Ford Foundation: Annual Report for 1952* (Pasadena, CA: The Ford Foundation, 1952).

Resources for the Future received more than \$50 million in operating funds from the Ford Foundation. Created nearly two decades before the establishment of the Federal Environmental Protection Agency, Resources for the Future was concerned primarily with the increasingly symbiotic relationship between the growth of the world economy and the preservation of natural resources. Benefitting from the leadership of Chairman Horace Albright, who by 1952 had served as director of the National Park Service as well as president of the U.S. Potash Corporation, Resources for the Future was a research institution dedicated to pragmatic approaches to conservation.¹⁵⁶

In 1953, Resources for the Future organized the Mid-Century Conference on Resources for the Future in Washington, D.C. with a grant of \$175,000 from the Ford Foundation. More than 1,500 attendees participated in the conference, with working groups organized around land use, domestic and international natural resources issues, mining, and other topics.¹⁵⁷ President Dwight D. Eisenhower wrote to Horace Albright with interest about the Mid-Century Conference: “I believe the full and economic development of natural resources is essential to economic growth and national security. I hope the conservation movement, begun under President Theodore Roosevelt, will continue to prosper and grow in influence.”¹⁵⁸ In addition, Eisenhower expressed support for the input of Resources for the Future in policy discussions: “I believe that private organizations, such as Resources for the Future,

¹⁵⁶ *The Ford Foundation Report for 1954* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1954), 44.

¹⁵⁷ *The Ford Foundation: Annual Report for 1953* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1953), 48.

¹⁵⁸ Letter from Dwight D. Eisenhower to Horace M. Albright Concerning a Mid-Century Conference on Resources, March 6 1953, The American Presidency Project, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=9767>, accessed October 14, 2018.

Inc., should be encouraged to undertake studies and promote discussion of national issues on a competent and nonpartisan basis, and I am sure that both the Executive Branch and the Congress will review with interest the conclusions reached.”¹⁵⁹

In the spirit of opening new channels of dialogue, the Mid-Century Conference provided preservation-minded policy-makers with a forum to develop potential legislation. One such piece of legislation is the Wilderness Act of 1964, which protects nearly ten million acres of federal land under the National Wilderness Preservation System. The Act elegantly describes a wilderness as: “An area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.”¹⁶⁰ Although the passage of the Wilderness Act was the result of hard work from several organization, Horace Albright’s declaration at the Mid-Century Conference is an important predecessor of the Act’s formal protection of wilderness areas:

The wilderness areas in the national forests have never had a basis in law. They have been set aside by the Secretary of Agriculture for a good many years, and I am not sure that even now he can go to Congress and get such a law. Right away it would be asked: Would that mean the stopping of grazing, or of mining, or of cutting? But, just the same, law is the only means by which the areas can eventually be protected. The wilderness areas, or some of them and some of their characteristics, ought to be embodied in the law.¹⁶¹

In addition to ongoing support for the Resources for the Future fund throughout the 1950s, a great deal of the Ford Foundation’s economic program

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ *Wilderness Act, U.S. Code* 16 (1964), §§ 1131-1136.

¹⁶¹ Michael Frome, “20th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act: Still in Pursuit of the Promised Land,” Given as the 1984 Horace M. Albright Lecture on Conservation at the University of California, Berkeley, April 26, 1984, <https://nature.berkeley.edu/albright/1984>, accessed October 16, 2018.

support funded Ph.D and faculty research on topics ranging from public housing to public utility rate-making. Similar to the foundation's programs to study the government's role concerning civil liberties, the economic programs often focused on the government's growing role in economic matters. In this vein, a \$750,000 grant to the Brookings Institution in 1960 intended to

explore urgent policy questions raised by government's expanding economic role, which is evidenced by the fact that in the past decade government expenditures have increased more than twice as much as the gross national product. Such matters will be studied as revision of tax legislation, financing of state and local expenditures, and evaluation of government services competing for shares of the public treasury.¹⁶²

An organization founded in 1916 as an instrument of public policy and economic research, the Brookings Institution has regularly received Ford Foundation grants since 1954, and has served, alongside other institutions such as the RAND Corporation, Harvard, Yale, and Stanford Universities, and others, as a research arm of the foundation. Although the foundation created organizations like the Fund for the Republic and Resources for the Future when needed, it has also outsourced research to established organizations when appropriate.

Concerned with the economic issues related to population growth, the Ford Foundation granted more than \$40 million from 1954 to 2001 to the Population Council, a nonprofit founded in 1952 by John D. Rockefeller III.¹⁶³ The council conducted research projects domestically and internationally on the relationship

¹⁶² *The Ford Foundation Annual Report: October 1, 1959 to September 30, 1960* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1960), 51.

¹⁶³ See Ford Foundation Annual Reports: 1954 to 2001 (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation).

between population growth, economies, and natural resources. The Ford Foundation grants to the Population Council and to individual scientists contributed to the development and distribution of contraceptives internationally, particularly intrauterine devices (IUDs), as well as research into the effectiveness of various contraceptives for women and drugs for men that suppress sperm formation.¹⁶⁴

Program Area 4: Education in a Democratic Society

“The Ford Foundation will support activities to strengthen, expand and improve education facilities and methods to enable individuals more fully to realize their intellectual, civic, and spiritual potentialities; to promote greater equality of education opportunity; and to conserve and increase knowledge and enrich our culture.”¹⁶⁵

Central to the foundation’s early activities in education were the Fund for the Advancement of Education and the Fund for Adult Education, both established in 1951. Created with grants of \$7 million and \$4.8 million, respectively, the funds reflected the foundation’s interest “in exploring the kinds of ventures in the organization and content of education that would help the American people meet their new responsibilities in the world.”¹⁶⁶

Early programs of the Fund for the Advancement of Education were directed towards teacher training; fellowships for younger college instructors allowed for a

¹⁶⁴ *The Ford Foundation Annual Report: October 1, 1976 to September 30, 1977* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1977), 45.

¹⁶⁵ Report of the Trustees of the Ford Foundation: September 27, 1950, (Detroit, MI: The Ford Foundation, 1950), 21.

¹⁶⁶ *The Ford Foundation: Annual Report for 1951* (Pasadena, CA: The Ford Foundation, 1951), 16.

paid year of advanced training, and state teachers' colleges were given grants to improve liberal arts education for prospective secondary teachers. Concerned with educational setbacks associated with universal military service, the fund established scholarships for outstanding sixteen-year-old students to take college classes before beginning military service.¹⁶⁷

In 1951 the fund began its "Test Cities Project," an experiment designed to emphasize continuing education for adults. The Test Cities Project involved eleven cities: Akron, Ohio; Bridgeport, Connecticut; Chattanooga, Tennessee; Kansas City, Missouri; Little Rock, Arkansas; Lubbock, Texas; Memphis, Tennessee; Niagara Falls, New York; Racine, Wisconsin; Sioux City, Iowa; and York, Pennsylvania. Also included were two regional programs focused on West Texas and the San Bernardino Valley region of Southern California. It is unclear how or why these cities and regions were chosen, but starting in 1951, each city or region received \$24,000 from the Fund for Adult Education to design and administer its own adult education program focused on the liberal arts and/or the humanities. The programs ranged from informal debates on foreign affairs, discussions on local issues, and book clubs. Unlike traditional vocational programs, the programs were not career oriented, but rather were intended to develop citizenship and civil debate over issues of local and national importance.¹⁶⁸

Although the Test Cities Project was not focused on the performing arts, it

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 17.

¹⁶⁸ Benjamin Fine, "Education in Review: Progress Report on Ford-Sponsored Plan for Liberal Training of Adults in Test Cities," *The New York Times*, July 18, 1954.

exemplifies several salient concepts that would inspire other programs, like the Program for Symphony Orchestras. First, it was intent on spreading the wealth to cities and regions large and small, beyond simply pouring more resources into established cultural centers. Second, it embodied a largely hand-off approach to the activities of its grantees. Instead of partnering with each individual city/region to help design programs that would be most relevant or beneficial to each region, the foundation simply provided the capital and let local leaders design and execute programs relevant to their interests and priorities.

The Fund for Adult Education also focused on educational television and radio programs, spending more than \$11 million between 1951 and 1957 to set up twenty-eight educational television stations around the country.¹⁶⁹ This nascent educational television network was supported by the Educational Television and Radio Center in Ann Arbor, Michigan, which helped provide program material to the local educational stations around the country, and served as a clearinghouse for content sharing.¹⁷⁰

Although the Fund for Adult Education was phased out by 1960, the Ford Foundation's support for educational television spread to dozens of local channels in the 1960s. After granting more than \$200 million in the 1950s and 1960s, the Ford Foundation's efforts were superseded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting

¹⁶⁹ "Higher Education for Adults Gains: \$6,921,242 Spent for it in 2 Years by the Fund Financed by Ford," *The New York Times*, May 22, 1958. Also See Robert C. Williams, JR, "'Saving Radiance: U.S. Broadcast Reformers, ETV and the Invention of National Public Television. UNM Diss, May 2001.

¹⁷⁰ *The Ford Foundation: Annual Report for 1953* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1953), 59.

(CPB) in 1967.¹⁷¹ Nonetheless, the foundation emerged as a key funder of the CPB and its national networking organization—not unlike the earlier Education Television and Radio Center—the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), and served as a backer of projects like the Children’s Television Workshop, the producer of *Sesame Street*.¹⁷²

Program Area 5: Individual Behavior and Human Relations

“The Ford Foundation will support scientific activities designed to increase knowledge of factors which influence or determine human conduct, and to extend such knowledge for the maximum benefit of individuals and society.”¹⁷³

The Ford Foundation’s early programs in Individual Behavior and Human Relations were focused on improving techniques for the scientific study of human behavior, training behavioral scientists, and applying research in the areas of the behavioral sciences in the processes of social change.¹⁷⁴

Principal among these contributions in the area of behavioral sciences was the creation of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences in Palo Alto, California in 1954 with an initial contribution of \$3.5 million. Since its inception, the Center has offered behavioral scientists residencies and research support. Work conceived at the Center has led to more than 1,900 publications on topics ranging

¹⁷¹ *The Ford Foundation Annual Report: October 1, 1969 to September 30, 1970* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1970), 53.

¹⁷² *The Ford Foundation Annual Report: October 1, 1972 to September 30, 1973* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1973), 8.

¹⁷³ *Report of the Trustees of the Ford Foundation: September 27, 1950*, (Detroit, MI: The Ford Foundation, 1950), 22.

¹⁷⁴ *The Ford Foundation: Annual Report for 1952* (Pasadena, CA: The Ford Foundation, 1952), 48.

from Navajo use of Peyote—*The Peyote Religion Among the Navaho* by David Friend Aberle, 1957—to approaches to gender and identity in the millennial generation—*Where the Millennials Will Take Us: A New Generation Wrestles with the Gender Structure* by Barbara J. Risman, 2018. Major funding for the Center from the Ford Foundation continued through the late 1970s, and the Center now continues its mission with support from nearby Stanford University.¹⁷⁵

Earlier work in the area of human behavior also included grants to individual researchers, universities, and the Institute for Social Research in Oslo, Norway. An additional \$875,000 was granted to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology with the vague mandate to study “what information and ideas reach various kinds of people in foreign countries; the channels by which the information and ideas are conveyed; and the effect of psychological, institutional, political, economic, and philosophical factors on the ways in which people interpret, and react to, the information and ideas.”¹⁷⁶

The foundation took specific interest in mental illness and mental health, noting in its 1955 annual report a dearth of knowledge in the field: “Professionals in the field, government, and the general public have been concerned with the incidence of mental illness, the expense of hospitalization for mentally ill patients, the inadequacy of basic knowledge and of available therapies, and the general cost in

¹⁷⁵ See “Recent Works by Fellows,” Center for Advanced Study of the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University, <https://casbs.stanford.edu/books-by-fellows>, accessed October 14, 2018.

¹⁷⁶ *The Ford Foundation: Annual Report for 1952* (Pasadena, CA: The Ford Foundation, 1952), 52.

human terms.”¹⁷⁷

Noting an uptick in psychiatric hospital admissions beginning in 1946 and continuing exponentially into the 1950s, the foundation appropriated \$15 million—or nearly three times all federal and state expenditures for mental health research in 1951—in 1955 for a program tasked with determining the causes of mental illness, developing and testing methods of treatment and prevention, and increasing positive mental health in the general public.¹⁷⁸

Beginning in the early 1950s, \$600,000 in grants to the law schools of the University of Chicago and Harvard University focused on juries and juvenile delinquency. This funding supported Harvard researchers Drs. Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck and their Social Factor Scale, used to predict the future behavior of a child. The Gluecks’ studies of juvenile delinquency began in the 1920s, and by the mid-1950s the Gluecks were considered experts in the field of criminology. Describing this research, the 1956 Ford Foundation Annual Report shows a photograph of an elementary school boy entering the front door of his home alone; the caption notes: “No one greets this boy on his return. Warmth or indifference of home atmosphere and consistency of discipline and supervision are weighed in Glueck scale predicting future behavior of child.”¹⁷⁹

The issue of juvenile delinquency continued to interest the Ford Foundation

¹⁷⁷ *The Ford Foundation Annual Report: October 1, 1954 to September 30, 1955* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1955), 28.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 32.

¹⁷⁹ *The Ford Foundation Annual Report: October 1, 1955 to September 30, 1956* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1956), 55.

through the 1950s and 1960s. In addition to the Gluecks' studies, the foundation supported institutional research studies at the University of Southern California (\$700,000) and Syracuse University (\$740,000). The Syracuse study involved the impact of young people moving into a new low-income housing project in a middle-class residential area. USC's study concerned teenage boys who had dropped out of high school or who were considering dropping out of high school, particularly the connections between centers of authority: the home, the school, and the correctional center.¹⁸⁰

By the mid 1950s, the distinctions among the five main action areas outlined in the Gaither report began to fade, and the Ford Foundation relocated from Pasadena, California to Lower Manhattan in New York City, where it remains today. In 1953, Wilson McNeil Lowry (1913–93) joined the foundation to head its education program. Born in 1913 in Columbus, Kansas, Lowry earned a Ph.D from the University of Illinois in 1941, where he taught English and edited *Ascent*, a quarterly literary journal, from 1940 to 1942. Lowry joined the war effort in 1942, first as a writer with the Office of War Information, and then as an active duty lieutenant in the U.S. Navy until 1946. After the war, he worked as a newspaper editor in Ohio, chief of the Washington bureau of the James M. Cox Newspapers, and associate director of the International Press Institute in Zurich.¹⁸¹

¹⁸⁰ *The Ford Foundation Annual Report: October 1, 1959 to September 30, 1960* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1960), 30.

¹⁸¹ See "W. McNeil Lowry: An Inventory of the W. McNeil Lowry Papers at the University of Illinois Archives," <https://archives.library.illinois.edu/ead/ua/2620096/2620096f.html>, accessed October 15, 2018.

Lowry served in many different official capacities with the Ford Foundation from 1953 to his retirement in 1975, beginning as assistant to foundation vice president William McPeak. McPeak served as staff secretary for the original Ford Foundation Study Committee in 1948 that produced the Gaither Report, and consulted with Lowry about the possibility of explicitly including the arts and humanities in the Ford Foundation's expanded program. But even by this point, early on in the Study Committee's work, it was clear that the foundation's efforts would be, as Lowry described retrospectively in 1972 "completely post-war oriented and what later became called 'problem solving oriented' Already it was clear that the drift and bias of the Study Committee was international and national affairs."¹⁸²

Although funding for the arts was not emphasized in the post-Gaither Report Ford Foundation of the early 1950s, Lowry's ascension to Program Director of Education in 1955 came on the eve of a financial windfall that necessitated expanding the foundation's purview.

The Initial Public Offering of Ford Stock

On January 18, 1956 the Ford Foundation made its first public offering of Ford Motor Company shares, marking the first time since 1919 that a significant number of shares were held outside of the Ford family and the Ford Foundation.

¹⁸² "Interview with W. McNeil Lowry for the Ford Foundation Oral History Project," January 14, 1972, box 3, Ford Foundation Records, Oral History Project, RAC, 2.

Between Henry Ford's death in 1947 and the initial public offering in early 1956, the Ford Foundation held 88 percent of the company's shares, while the Ford Family—and a small group of key Ford employees—held the remainder. This arrangement was designed to protect the family's controlling stake in the company. Thus, the foundation's shares were strictly non-voting, and the family's shares retained voting power, meaning that only the family members had the ability to elect company board members and steer the overarching direction of the corporation.¹⁸³ Table 2.3 summarizes the Ford Motor Company's capitalization before and after the 1956 initial public offering.

¹⁸³ *The Ford Foundation Annual Report: October 1, 1954 to September 30, 1955* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1955), 168.

Table 2.3: Ownership of Ford Motor Company Shares Before and After 1956 Initial Public Offering¹⁸⁴

	Ford Foundation		Ford Employees		Ford Family			
	"Class A" - Nonvoting				"Class B" - Voting			
	# of Shares	%	# of Shares	%	# of Shares	%	# of Shares	%
Pre-1955	3,089,908	88.4%	42,140	1.2%	190,347	5.4%	172,645	4.9%

	Ford Foundation		Ford Employees		Ford Family			
	<i>15-1 Split of Original Class A Shares</i>				<i>21-1 Split of Original Class B Shares</i>			
	New Class A - Voting				New Class B - Voting			
	# of Shares	%	# of Shares	%	# of Shares	%	# of Shares	%
At Recapitalization	46,348,620	86.7%	632,100	1.2%	2,855,205	5.3%	3,625,545	6.8%

	Ford Foundation		Ford Employees		Public		Ford Family			
	New Class A - Voting						New Class B - Voting			
	# of Shares	%	# of Shares	%	# of Shares	%	# of Shares	%	# of Shares	%
After IPO	36,148,620	67.6%	632,100	1.2%	10,200,000	19.1%	2,855,205	5.3%	3,625,545	6.8%

¹⁸⁴ *The Ford Foundation Annual Report: October 1, 1955 to September 30, 1956* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1956).

The first sale of company stock in early 1956 earned the Ford Foundation nearly \$650 million dollars in proceeds, amounting to a gain of more than \$500 million over the value of the shares on the books at the end of 1955.¹⁸⁵ This first sale accounted for about 22 percent of the foundation’s holdings in Ford Motor Company stock, and periodic sales continued until the foundation was completely divested from the company in 1974. In 1955, before the first sale, the foundation’s total assets were \$580 million. In 1956, after the sale, total assets stood at \$999 million, and by 1965 the foundation crossed the \$3 billion threshold for the first time. As of December 31, 2017, the foundation’s assets totaled nearly \$14 billion.¹⁸⁶

Commenting on the transformative nature of this sale, foundation president H. Rowan Gaither, Jr. noted in the 1956 Annual Report: “In sum, the Foundation’s programs during this year took on new dimensions, moved into new areas, reflected anew the cast range of possibilities and choices which confront the entire institution of American philanthropy—and, we hope, reaffirmed basic principles that link the past and its performance to the future and its promise.”¹⁸⁷

Empowered by the windfall of the initial public offering, Lowry, as the foundation’s Education Program Director, developed a \$500 million program to help

¹⁸⁵ See *the Ford Foundation Annual Report: October 1, 1955 to September 30, 1956* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1956).

¹⁸⁶ It is important to note that as a private foundation the Foundation does not accept donations; the growth in its assets over time is a result of the careful stewardship and appreciation of its investments. See *the Ford Foundation: Financial Statement as of December 31, 2017 and 2016*, <https://www.fordfoundation.org/media/3845/the-ford-foundation-2017-financials-final.pdf>, accessed October 16, 2018.

¹⁸⁷ *The Ford Foundation Annual Report: October 1, 1955 to September 30, 1956* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1956), 12.

raise faculty salaries at hundreds of private liberal arts colleges, endow medical schools at private universities, and expand the services of privately supported hospitals.¹⁸⁸

The faculty salary grants—totaling \$260 million split between all 630 private, accredited, four-year colleges in the United States—combined endowment grants and “accomplishment” (expendable) grants. The endowment grants were allocated based on the undergraduate instructional costs for the 1954–55 academic year, and were mandated to be invested as endowment funds for a period of ten years, with all income applied to increasing faculty salaries. After the ten-year period, the colleges were free to use the endowment funds as they pleased. The outlay for expendable, “accomplishment grants”—totaling \$50 million to 126 colleges—was devised to reward “colleges selected from among the institutions emphasizing liberal arts and sciences which have, since World War II, shown special leadership within their own regions in improving the status and compensation of their teachers.”¹⁸⁹ This basic dual model of endowment and expendable funds would inspire the design of the foundation’s symphony orchestra program in the 1960s and 70s.

Although the 1956 teacher salary efforts did not have a mandatory matching component, Lowry recalled in his 1972 oral history how the foundation’s intervention attracted donors to education: “College after college reported that a potential donor sitting over here, who had never given to the college or if he had he usually gave to it

¹⁸⁸ *The Ford Foundation Annual Report: October 1, 1955 to September 30, 1956* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1956), 12.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 30.

for a building or a plaque or something, was now giving to it for faculty salaries.”¹⁹⁰

Reflecting his background from rural Kansas and the University of Illinois, Lowry notably bucked the foundation’s focus on east-coast, blue blood academic institutions, principally Harvard. Instead, beginning with the \$500 million faculty and medical school grants, Lowry insisted on spreading the wealth throughout the entire United States; a 1973 *Washington Post* article about Lowry noted: “He still recalls his boyhood days in Kansas; points out that he was born near the then geographical center of the United States..., remembers hearing about how his grandfather cried when McKinley defeated William Jennings Bryan. He roots his populism in the arts in the political populism of his Kansas family.”¹⁹¹

The Program in the Humanities and the Arts

In November 1955, Lowry prepared a memo proposing “a program of philanthropic support of cultural affairs through institutions in the humanities and creative arts.” The spirit of the Rockefeller Foundation’s justification for renewing its Louisville project in 1955—that the project “was intended to be a demonstration that the United States, contrary to a widely prevalent opinion, maintains an interest in and provides a healthy environment for the arts” was smartly repurposed by Lowry: “Earlier studies of European and Asiatic attitude towards the United States since

¹⁹⁰ Charles T. Morrissey, "Interview with W. McNeil Lowry for the Ford Foundation Oral History Project," January 14, 1972, box 3, Ford Foundation Records, Oral History Project, RAC, 35.

¹⁹¹ Jean M. White, "The Ford Foundation's Lowry," *The Washington Post*, March 4, 1973.

World War II had shown full awareness of our military, industrial and commercial resources but a very distorted picture of American culture, and even in some quarters a disbelief that an American culture in fact existed.”¹⁹² Lowry quickly transitioned, though, and argued for the significance of cultural and artistic programs beyond their geopolitical benefits:

In any nation where the importance of the individual is paramount, increased support of cultural affairs for themselves will probably have more lasting effects on intercultural movements among nations than a program which begins with one national political objective, however idealized.¹⁹³

And unlike his predecessors at the Carnegie and Rockefeller Foundations, Lowry departed widely from the prevailing gestalt of the arts as an adjunct to education; he wrote in 1984:

[Fred] Keppel of Carnegie and [Raymond] Fosdick and his associate, David Stevens of Rockefeller worked professionally toward identified objectives in the humanities, but in programs of modest scale and viewing art largely as the handmaiden of education.¹⁹⁴

Instead, Lowry elegantly argued that the arts were an intrinsically indispensable part of civilized society:

The sciences, even those we call social, essentially must move in a rigorous climate that is ethically neutral. Art and culture do not. The “best that has been thought and said in the world” is at least as important to a society that is approaching a material and technological peak as to any other. In few generations could the cultivation of activities in which the individual reigns supreme have been more urgent than in ours.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹² “A Program of Philanthropic Support of Cultural Affairs Through Institutions in the Humanities and Creative Arts,” box 5, WML.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ McNeil Lowry, ed., *The Arts and Public Policy in the United States* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1984), 10-11.

¹⁹⁵ “A Program of Philanthropic Support of Cultural Affairs Through Institutions in the Humanities and Creative Arts,” W. McNeil Lowry, November 11, 1955, box 5, WML.

Consistent in his staunch defense of the arts, Lowry maintained this position in his 1972 oral history, conducted as part of the Ford Foundation Oral History Project, and described his approach to funding the arts “in the artist’s own terms just as you would do a program in science, hopefully, in the scientist’s own terms. In other words, I was declaring war on the whole treatment of the arts by foundations to this date [1972] which had been an adjunct to education.” Lowry continued: “We’re going to get in bed, figuratively, with the artist and the artistic director and in those terms...we’re going to try to develop a philanthropic program in the arts.”¹⁹⁶

In 1955, Lowry noted several opportunities for foundation investment in the arts, including opera, symphonic music, ballet, composition, book publishing, and others, with estimated total grants of \$82 million.¹⁹⁷ In 1957, a Program in Humanities and the Arts was approved on an exploratory basis, with an annual budget of \$2 million and a focus on the

creative development of individual talents; stimulation of experiments, demonstrations, and studies helping to clarify objectives, set standards, or open new avenues in the arts and humanities; preparation of a comprehensive study of the economic and social positions of the arts and of the artist in America today; and encouragement of scholarship and scholarly projects basic to the humanities generally rather than to specialized fields.¹⁹⁸

Inspired by the earlier cultural programs of the Carnegie and Rockefeller Foundations, Lowry consistently focused his efforts not only on the blue-blooded

¹⁹⁶ Charles T. Morrissey, "Interview with W. McNeil Lowry for the Ford Foundation Oral History Project," January 14, 1972, box 3, Ford Foundation Records, Oral History Project, RAC, 364.

¹⁹⁷ "A Program of Philanthropic Support of Cultural Affairs Through Institutions in the Humanities and Creative Arts," W. McNeil Lowry, November 11, 1955, box 5, WML.

¹⁹⁸ *The Ford Foundation Annual Report: October 1, 1956 to September 30, 1957* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1957), 19.

cultural capitals of the United States—at that time Boston, New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia—but also on many smaller communities. In addition, Lowry encouraged the use of matching grants, which essentially forced his grantees to learn how to raise money on their own, a philanthropic method that would later be adopted by the National Endowment for the Arts.¹⁹⁹

Ford Foundation officials visited communities across the country and spoke with local experts to identify needs in artistic fields. The foundation followed up on these investigations by appropriating \$1.5 million for grants in opera, \$775,000 in other forms of music, \$1.5 million to theater, \$750,000 to visual arts, \$300,000 to creative writing, and \$175,000 to ballet. In addition, approximately \$775,000 was granted for various humanities-related projects.²⁰⁰ These grants involved developing a curriculum for the Minneapolis School of Art (\$150,000), implementing a program to develop actors and produce theater in the Midwest by the Cleveland Play House (\$130,000), and funding contemporary music at the Experimental Opera Theatre of America in New Orleans (\$165,000), at the New York City Opera (\$105,000), and at

¹⁹⁹ Lowry's personal influence on the foundation of the NEA cannot be understated; Representative Frank Thompson of New Jersey described Lowry's influence in a speech on the floor of the House of Representatives on March 8, 1973: "I was...working on the legislation which eventually passed creating the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities.... Mac Lowry persuaded me that there should be a delicate and continuing balance between Federal support of the arts and private support.... It would not have been possible, I believe, without Mac Lowry's support and advice." "Congressional Record - House," March 8, 1973, box 2, Ford Foundation Records, Office of the President, Office Files of McGeorge Bundy, RAC. See Also: "By 1968 NEA's leverage ratio had reached 1 to 3. For every dollar the endowment granted three came in from other sources. Leverage became a persuasive selling point for arts lobbyists and foundation program directors alike." Mark Dowie, *American Foundations: An Investigative History* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2001), 175.

²⁰⁰ "An Enlarged Program in the Arts: Humanities and the Arts Program Policy Discussion Paper," March 17th, 1960, box 122, report 002782, Ford Foundation records, Catalogued Reports, RAC.

six regional symphony orchestras (\$210,000).²⁰¹

The \$150,000 grant to the Minneapolis School of Art funded five-years of experimental course design in visual education. In his grant application, W.B. Bryan, the director of the Minneapolis school, noted that during his fifteen years as a counselor at Princeton he observed that many of the students who struggled academically were visual learners, rather than verbal ones: “The vision of the artist, Mr. Bryan believes, is not conventional and is not considered academically and philosophically respectable. If the visual artist’s own approach were experimentally to be accepted as a positive base for general education even in the liberal arts and sciences, it might have imaginative and liberating results.”²⁰²

Although Lowry’s staff noted that Bryan’s application was vague; (“The outlines of curricular development foreseen by the Minneapolis School necessarily remain very general at this date,” they wrote) the proposal was nonetheless approved under the assumption that “the Foundation’s grant, coming at this time, would not only permit the Minneapolis School of Art the widest latitude in studying and making plans but would be taken as at least a token of concern for the future of the independent arts school as an institution.”²⁰³

The grant to the Cleveland Playhouse had a dual mission to support emerging actors and extend professional theater to small towns in the Midwest. To develop

²⁰¹ *The Ford Foundation Annual Report: October 1, 1956 to September 30, 1957* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1957), 19.

²⁰² Ford Foundation records, Office of the President, Office Files of Henry T. Heald, RAC; "Humanities and the Arts: The Minneapolis School of Art," 1958, box 5, Ford Foundation records, Office of the President, Office Files of Henry T. Heald, RAC.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*

talent, a portion of the grant was devoted to three-year paid fellowships for fifteen actors. During the third year of the fellowship, the fifteen actors would tour the region for a thirty-six-week season.²⁰⁴ After two years in Cleveland, the actors began their tour in late 1960, covering twenty-five states, with productions of Christopher Marlowe's "Doctor Faustus," Ben Jonson's "Volpone," and George Bernard Shaw's "Candida." *New York Times* music and drama critic Howard Taubman joined the company for several performances and remarked on the flexibility of the troupe in accommodating unusual conditions:

In an Alabama town the "theatre" was a long, narrow room without a raised stage or raked seats. "Candida" was enacted with actors and audience at the same eye level. When the actors played a scene sitting down, the audience stood up. To save the audience that trouble of jumping up and down, and to spare themselves the intrusive noise of scraping chairs, the performers went through the later stages of the play standing up.²⁰⁵

Taubman concluded his review by noting the great expense of touring productions, and he readily conceded that it was unlikely that small towns would be able to support one-night tour stops, let alone their own resident theater companies. But he made a plea for the continuation of such performances through government or philanthropic intervention: "Is there any hope of breaking through this vicious circle? Only if a powerful foundation or the Federal Government underwrote a long-range program.... Have we the daring as a nation to engage in such an enterprise? Can we afford to? Or, to be more pertinent, can we afford not to?"²⁰⁶

²⁰⁴ See "Humanities and the Arts: Cleveland Play House Foundation," 1958, box 5, Ford Foundation records, Office of the President, Office Files of Henry T. Heald, RAC.

²⁰⁵ Howard Taubman, "Testing the Road: Brave Experiment in Introducing Theatre to Small Towns," *The New York Times*, May 7, 1961.

²⁰⁶ Taubman, "Testing the Road," *The New York Times*, May 7, 1961.

Starting in 1957, the Ford Foundation made many grants to the New York City Opera Company to support performances of contemporary operas. The foundation's first grant to City Opera of \$105,000 partially underwrote the performances of a series of operas written by Americans—including naturalized European-born composers—during the five-week spring 1958 season:

Table 2.4: Operas Performed by the New York City Opera during Spring 1958 with Support from the Ford Foundation²⁰⁷

Composer	Title	Date Composed
Gian Carlo Menotti	"The Old Maid and the Thief"	1939
Gian Carlo Menotti	"The Medium"	1947
Gian Carlo Menotti	"The Consul"	1950
Carlisle Floyd	"Susannah"	1956
Douglas Moore	"The Ballad of the Baby Doe"	1955
Douglas Moore	"Devil and Daniel Webster"	1939
Kurt Weill	"Lost in the Stars"	1950
Marc Blitzstein	"Regina"	1949
Vittorio Giannini	"Taming of the Shrew"	1954
Leonard Bernstein	"Trouble in Tahiti"	1953

City Opera's successful spring season in 1958 led to several subsequent grants to for the same purpose, and an expansion of the program to the Metropolitan Opera Company, the Lyric Opera of Chicago, and the San Francisco Opera in 1959.²⁰⁸

In 1959 the Foundation partnered with the Music Educators National Conference on a program that placed seventy-three talented young composers in secondary school music programs and communities around the country. With a \$3 million grant in 1963, the program expanded and continued under the auspices of MENC until 1973, training dozens of young composers, commissioning hundreds of new works, and hosting workshops and residencies in communities around the country. The first cohort included well-known wind band composer John Barnes Chance, composer and comedian Peter J. Schickele (a.k.a. PDQ Bach), and twenty-

²⁰⁷ "Humanities and the Arts: New York City Opera Company," 1958, box 5, Ford Foundation records, Office of the President, Office Files of Henry T. Heald, RAC.; See also Tedrin Blair Lindsay, "The Coming of Age of American Opera: New York City Opera and the Ford Foundation, 1958-1960" (PhD diss., University of Kentucky, 2009).

²⁰⁸ *The Ford Foundation Annual Report: October 1, 1958 to September 30, 1959* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1959).

three-year-old Philip Glass.²⁰⁹

Assigned to Pittsburgh, PA schools in 1962 and 1963, Glass wrote ten choral works, one band work, four orchestral works, and five chamber works, all for high school students. The only work from this period acknowledged by Glass in his online catalog is the *Brass Sextet*, which was published in 1964 and is accompanied by this note:

Brass Sextet, composed in 1962/64 for two trumpets, two horns, trombone and tuba, is something of a curiosity. It was written when Philip Glass, after graduating from the Juilliard School of Music, was composer-in-residence with the Pittsburgh Public Schools on a Ford Foundation project. This was several years before he began to become known for the repetitive minimalist techniques which launched him to fame and have enabled him to enter some of the world's leading opera houses.²¹⁰

An early signature program of the Ford Foundation's Arts and Humanities Program, the Young Composer's Project served not only to fund young composers and encourage their careers, but also to expose young music students to contemporary music. Consistent with McNeil Lowry's interest in American communities large and small, composers were placed in tiny towns like Hastings-on-Hudson, New York, and Winfield, Kansas, as well as big cities such as Philadelphia and Los Angeles.

Conclusion

This chapter shows how the Ford Foundation grew from its \$25,000 origins in

²⁰⁹ See Paul Covey, "The Ford Foundation—MENC Contemporary Music Project (1959- 1973): A View of Contemporary Music in America" (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 2013).

²¹⁰ See: https://philipglass.com/compositions/brass_sextet/, accessed October 14, 2018.

1936 to its multi-billion-dollar scope in the late 1950s. Beginning with roots in Detroit, and a local focus on projects close to the Ford family's interests, in the early 1950s the foundation moved its headquarters to New York City and developed a five-point program of international scope. With input from leaders in business, politics, and academia from throughout the United States, and eventually the world, the foundation transcended its roots as a family effort as it achieved independence from its founding family. Although the bonds between the Ford family and the Ford Foundation began to fray in the early 1950s, in the late 1950s the foundation began formally dissolving its relationship with the Ford Motor Company and the Ford family through its divestment of Ford Motor Company stock. By 1974 the foundation owned no shares of Ford Motor Company Stock, and by 1977 there were no Ford family members on the Foundation's board.²¹¹

Beyond the severing of these financial and administrative ties, though, the Ford Foundation's salient leftist political philosophy starting in the early 1950s, draws a direct contrast to Henry's Ford famously right-wing politics. Beyond the libertarian ethic embodied by the Edison Institute, Ford expressed stridently reactionary and anti-Semitic views through his hometown newspaper, *The Dearborn Independent*, which he purchased in 1918. He published a lengthy series of articles that claimed a vast Jewish conspiracy was attempting to re-shape America. These articles were eventually bound and collected into four volumes titled "The

²¹¹ See *the Ford Foundation Annual Report: October 1, 1973 to September 30, 1974* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1974); and *The Ford Foundation Annual Report: October 1, 1975 to September 30, 1976* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1976).

International Jew,” and distributed widely to Ford dealers around the country. Ford also republished in English *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a notorious forgery originating in Russia that describes a sinister cabal of Jewish puppet-masters.

Furthermore, Ford was greatly admired by Adolph Hitler, who awarded him an award from the Nazi regime called the “Grand Cross of the German Eagle” in 1938.²¹²

Although Ford died in 1947, and thus had nothing to do with the Ford Foundation’s activities in the 1950s and beyond, it is nonetheless interesting to consider how the foundation quickly developed priorities that might not have aligned with those of its founder. The Ford Motor Company received more than 1,000 letters in the 1950s complaining about the Ford Foundation, the Fund for the Republic, or both. And as we have seen, many of these letters contrasted the activities of the Ford Foundation with the ideology of Henry Ford. A summary of these letters prepared by a Ford Foundation staffer recognized a

deep admiration for Henry Ford, Sr., and a phrase that recurs constantly is that he “must be turning over in his grave” at the antics of his grandson [Henry Ford II, chairman of both the Ford Foundation and the Ford Motor Company]. There are definite indications that many of these writers share Henry Ford, Sr.’s attitude on United States involvement in foreign affairs, on labor unions, and other matters.²¹³

As I discuss in depth in the Conclusion, the Ford Foundation’s current focus, as of 2018, is on reducing income inequality; whereas Henry Ford may have been interested in alleviating poverty, the foundation’s current president Darren Walker

²¹²American Experience, “Ford’s Anti-Semitism,” accessed January 28, 2019, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/henryford-antisemitism/>.

²¹³ “Letters re Fund to Ford Motor Company,” 1956, box 5, Ford Foundation records, Office of the President, Office Files of Henry T. Heald, RAC.

sees poverty as a symptom of an increasingly unequal financial system in which too much capital is held by too few: “We understand...that social, cultural, political, and economic inequalities set in place reinforcing conditions from the very start of life—in homes, in neighborhoods, and in schools—that create cycles of poverty, illiteracy, and lack of opportunity.”²¹⁴ If Ford was “turning over in his grave” in the 1950s, as many letter writers guessed, he would certainly be confounded by the state of the Ford Foundation today.

Furthermore, Ford might have been surprised also by breadth of the Ford Foundation’s activities undertaken in the years after his death. During his life the foundation had made grants almost exclusively in Detroit and Michigan. But by the early 1950s, the Ford Foundation was making grants throughout the United States and around the globe. Despite being one of the richest, most influential men in history, Henry Ford was still intrigued by tawdry anti-globalist conspiracy literature like the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*; ironically, starting in the 1950s the Ford Foundation became the object of the same kind of reactionary anti-elitism that its founder espoused.

Thus, although the postwar Ford Foundation was preoccupied primarily with the requisite hard sciences needed to reimagine and redesign the world after the war—as exemplified by the five-point program of the Gaither Report—it also became interested in envisioning an America that transcended military domination. It is important to remember that a key rationale for the creation of the Program in the

²¹⁴ Darren Walker, “Toward a New Gospel of Wealth,” The Ford Foundation, 2015.

Humanities and the Arts was that it would help the United States project the influence afforded by cultural proficiency.

In a similar vein, the U.S. State Department sponsored hundreds of trips of U.S. musicians and ensembles abroad beginning in the early 1950s. These trips were, according to musicologist Danielle Fosler-Lussier, a form of “development aid,” in concert with agricultural, scientific, and technical projects. In addition to symphony orchestras and chamber groups, the State Department also organized trips of African American jazz musicians. The Soviet Union alone received one hundred of these visits between 1950 and 1980, but other less obvious countries received State Department attention as well, including Iceland (forty-six performances), Uruguay (fifty-three), and Indonesia (ninety-one). According to Fosler-Lussier, this musical diplomacy served several purposes:

The musicians toured in order to make music, as themselves—but they also appeared as an expensive gift from one country to another, as spokespersons for America’s goodwill, and as examples of particular ideas (musical freedom, racial equality).²¹⁵

This idea, that a cultural reputation would temper the image of the United States and persuade other countries to emulate the United States resonates with the concept of “soft power,” coined by Harvard political scientist and former U.S. deputy Undersecretary of State Joseph S. Nye, Jr., in his 1990 book *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*. According to Nye, “hard power” results from coercion or payment. By contrast, “soft power,” is earned by getting people to want

²¹⁵ Danielle Fosler-Lussier, *Music in America’s Cold War Diplomacy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015), 286.

the same things that you want. Whereas hard power is achieved through military and economic success, the tools of soft power are things like democracy, human rights, and cultural diversity.²¹⁶ Although the Ford Foundation's Program for the Humanities and the Arts—as well as the State Department's musical diplomacy efforts—was founded many years before the ideation of “soft power,” it is evident that Lowry's pet program was created in this vein; with U.S. military and economic might solidified by the end of the second world war, as McNeil Lowry argued, it was time for the U.S. to flex its cultural muscles.

Starting in the late 1950s McNeil Lowry and his staff began diverting Ford Foundation funds to deserving artists and organizations around the country through the Young Composer's Project, as well as through smaller grants to various opera and theater companies. But the ballooning Ford Foundation budget and the ongoing public offering of Ford stock necessitated larger, more ambitious outlays. In the next chapter I discuss McNeil Lowry's answer to the foundation's call for a program in the \$50 to \$100 million range: the Program for Symphony Orchestras.

²¹⁶ See Joseph S. Nye Jr., *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 1991), and Joseph S. Nye Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004).

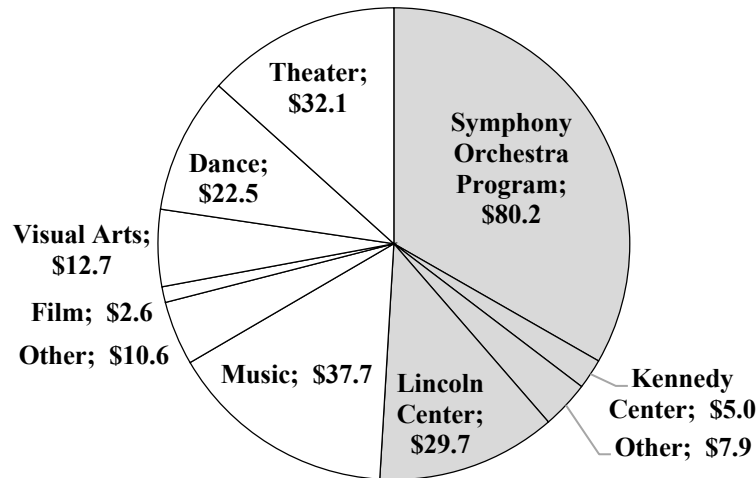
CHAPTER 3.

The Symphony Orchestra Program

Introduction

From 1957 to 1972 the Ford Foundation's Program in the Humanities and the Arts granted approximately \$250 million to music, theater, dance, visual arts, and film. Of this total, \$37.7 million went to various music programs, like the Contemporary Music Project, and a wide swath of individual organizations and institutions, like the New York City Opera and the Berkshire Music Center. But in addition to the regular activities of the Humanities and Arts Program, several projects with special significance occupied the department's time and/or resources.

Table 3.1: Ford Foundation Program in the Humanities and the Arts Grants 1957–72.
Source: the Washington Post²¹⁷



Approximately \$8 million was granted with funds outside the Humanities and Arts Program’s budget for projects related to the Ford Motor Company and the Ford Family, principally grants to the Dearborn (MI) Library for the commemoration of Henry Ford’s hundredth birthday and a gift in honor of Edsel Ford to the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Although these funds came from outside Lowry’s budget, they utilized Lowry’s staff resources for research and administration.²¹⁸

Support for the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts began in 1957 in an effort led by John D. Rockefeller III to bring together physically the Metropolitan Opera, the New York Philharmonic, and the Julliard School. Begun before the formal creation of the Program in the Humanities and the Arts, the Foundation’s trustees

²¹⁷ Jean M. White, "The Ford Foundation's Lowry," *The Washington Post*, March 4, 1973.

²¹⁸ Charles T. Morrissey, "Interview with W. McNeil Lowry for the Ford Foundation Oral History Project," January 14, 1972, box 3, Ford Foundation Records, Oral History Project, RAC, 519.

believed that the “national and international significance” of the project was “sufficient to merit its encouragement,” and approved close to \$30 million in grants.²¹⁹

Unlike most projects, where the staffs of various divisions—like Humanities and the Arts—research and submit projects up the chain to the foundation’s president, who then submits the proposals for board approval, special projects like Lincoln Center were often driven by foundation executives or by board members themselves. In the case of Lincoln Center, McNeil Lowry recalls that the impetus came directly from foundation president Henry Heald, whose close acquaintance George Stoddard was one of Lincoln Center’s original board members and planners.²²⁰

Similarly, in April, 1963, the Ford Foundation’s trustees approved a \$5 million grant for the construction of what would become the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. Joining a protracted fundraising effort that begun during the Eisenhower presidency and continued during the Kennedy years, the Ford Foundation was among a large group of funders, including the Kennedy family and several foreign governments.²²¹ Despite Eisenhower’s initiation of the project in the late 1950s, Kennedy’s personal leadership in the early 1960s brought the project into greater focus, and Kennedy proved especially adept at wrangling support from disparate sources. McNeil Lowry recalls it as “one of the worst cases of arm twisting

²¹⁹ *The Ford Foundation Annual Report: October 1, 1956 to September 30, 1957* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1957), 20.

²²⁰ Charles T. Morrissey, "Interview with W. McNeil Lowry for the Ford Foundation Oral History Project," January 14, 1972, box 3, Ford Foundation Records, Oral History Project, RAC, 520.

²²¹ “\$3-Million in Gifts Adorn Center,” *The New York Times*, September 6, 1971.

that any President of the United States ever put on a Foundation.”²²²

This arm twisting came primarily via Ford Foundation chairman and Kennedy adviser John J. McCloy. Kennedy wrote to McCloy in February, 1963 with great interest in the project: “I understand the Ford Foundation will be considering the Cultural Center this week. Their assistance is vital and I would appreciate very much anything you can do to encourage their interest.”²²³ McCloy responded that although he could not make any commitments prior to the board’s discussion, he did agree to privately discuss the matter with trustee Eugene Black—another Kennedy acquaintance—and Ford Foundation President Henry Heald.²²⁴ During the board’s discussion of the cultural center, Lowry remembers:

There was open discussion in the Board about the kind of arm twisting that had been applied to the Chairman.... After the vote was taken and one member of the Board voted ‘No’ and said he was going to go outside and throw up...word leaked out...and President Kennedy attempted to find out...who said that, so that he could wreak havoc on him. I don’t think he ever did find out; but that was his attitude.²²⁵

The Special Programs in the Humanities and the Arts undertaken under Lowry were encouraged by powerful interests like the Ford Family, Nelson Rockefeller III, and John F. Kennedy himself. But none of these programs were as large as the Ford

²²² Charles T. Morrissey, "Interview with W. McNeil Lowry for the Ford Foundation Oral History Project," January 14, 1972, box 3, Ford Foundation Records, Oral History Project, RAC, 528-529

²²³ Letter from John F. Kennedy to John J. McCloy, February 18, 1963, Folder: McCloy, John J., December 1960-June 1963, JFKPOF-031-025-p0021, Papers of John F. Kennedy, Presidential Papers, President's Office Files, <https://www.jfklibrary.org/asset-viewer/archives/JFKPOF/031/JFKPOF-031-025>.

²²⁴ Letter from John J. McCloy to John F. Kennedy, February 21, 1963, Folder: McCloy, John J., December 1960-June 1963, JFKPOF-031-025-p0021, Papers of John F. Kennedy, Presidential Papers, President's Office Files., <https://www.jfklibrary.org/asset-viewer/archives/JFKPOF/031/JFKPOF-031-025>.

²²⁵ Charles T. Morrissey, "Interview with W. McNeil Lowry for the Ford Foundation Oral History Project," January 14, 1972, box 3, Ford Foundation Records, Oral History Project, RAC, 529.

Foundation's \$80.2 million Program for Symphony Orchestras. This chapter explores the reasons why symphony orchestras were chosen for such a large Ford Foundation outlay, the process undertaken by Lowry and his staff in earning board approval, and the terms and dimensions of the program itself.

U.S. Orchestras in the 1950s and Early 1960s

Lowry's Program in the Humanities and the Arts was approved in 1957 with a small annual budget of \$2 million, and research on symphony orchestras began immediately, involving meetings in New York, extensive correspondence, and visits to orchestras and communities throughout the country. Lowry and his staff consulted managers, musicians, conductors, union leaders, and others concerning the needs of orchestral musicians and the problems facing American orchestras.

George Kuyper, manager of the Chicago Symphony from 1944 to 1959, was engaged as a lead consultant.²²⁶ In 1957 Kuyper described to Lowry several problems facing symphonic orchestras; beyond the difficulties of building audiences, managing budgets, and cultivating donors, Kuyper articulated a struggle in finding musicians:

One of the great problems for the future is the shortage of players able to carry their weight. The Chicago Symphony added five new players this year and had to raid smaller orchestras like New Orleans, Kansas City and so on to do so. If the smaller orchestra dries up, the big ones will, therefore dry up too,

²²⁶ "Request for Extension of Formal Appointment of George Kuyper as Consultant to the Humanities and the Arts Program," August 19, 1965, box 62, Ford Foundation records, Education and Public Policy Program (EPP), Office of the Arts, Program Files, RAC.

because the conservatories are not training replacements.²²⁷

In the 1950s, most orchestras struggled to find quality musicians, particularly string players. For top orchestras, like the Chicago Symphony, most vacancies were filled by players from lower-tier orchestras. Ramsi P. Tick, the manager of the Buffalo Philharmonic, noted in an interview with Edward F. D'Arms in 1957 the particular difficulty of retaining players as a middle-tier orchestra: "It is difficult to hold good musicians in the orchestra because of the shortness of the season and the low minimum wages. The result is that Buffalo has a large proportion of young players who are on their way up; this provides good musicianship but prevents the development of a distinctive style in ensemble playing."²²⁸ Tick's appraisal of the orchestra business is representative of the general malaise among managers interviewed by the foundation: "He was clearly very gloomy over his own situation and very much harassed by his numerous duties.... He felt that the basic problem was not to aid the composer, but to enable orchestras such as the Buffalo orchestra to stay alive."²²⁹

In contrast to Kuyper, Alice Taylor, the manager of the Southern California Symphony Association (the Los Angeles Philharmonic) said in 1957 that she was

²²⁷ Edward F. D'Arms, "Humanities and the Arts Staff Work--Interview with George Kuyper, Manager, The Chicago Symphony, Chicago," November 4, 1957, box 29, W. McNeil Lowry Papers, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, WML.

²²⁸ Edward F. D'Arms, "Humanities and the Arts Staff Work--Interview with Ramsi P. Tick, Manager, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra," October 22, 1957, box 37, WML.

²²⁹ Ibid.

“quite optimistic about the future of her orchestra.”²³⁰ But she also shared the concerns of Kuyper and Tick over the lack of quality string players: “Like so many others, Miss Taylor is worried by the shortage of strings,” she told D’Arms.²³¹ Furthermore, Taylor’s main concern was the dearth of good concert halls in Los Angeles; until Dorothy Chandler Pavilion was completed downtown in 1964, the Los Angeles Philharmonic performed in an auditorium owned by the local Baptist Church. Although Taylor acknowledged the hall’s adequate size and good acoustics, she wanted the orchestra to have a permanent home and thought that the Ford Foundation could help by studying the condition of auditoria throughout the country.²³²

Many managers were troubled by the fact that capable musicians often graduated from conservatories and music schools and then decided to become public school teachers, because they could make more as teachers than they could as orchestral musicians. The Minneapolis Symphony’s manager Boris Sokoloff noted in 1957 that “at some schools [conservatories and schools of music] they try to tell the students what it is to work in an orchestra, but if they are honest and explain the low financial return, it is not very stimulating to the student’s choice.”²³³ In a similar vein, the Rockefeller Foundation’s 1965 *Panel Report on the Future of Theatre, Dance,*

²³⁰ Edward F D’Arms, "Humanities and the Arts Staff Work--Interview with Miss Alice Taylor., Manager of Southern California Symphony Association, Los Angeles" October 3, 1957, box 30, WML.

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ W. McNeil Lowry, "Humanities and the Arts Staff Work--Interview with Boris Sokoloff, Jr., Manager, Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra," July 12, 1957, box 30, WML.

and Music in America, recommended “that the artistic goal of the nation be the day when the performing arts are considered a permanent year-round contribution to communities throughout the country, and our artists are considered as necessary as our educators.”²³⁴ A press release from the Ford Foundation announcing its symphony orchestra program in 1966 noted that “any player in a major symphony has had to spend at least as much time, money, and effort on his education as a teacher. Furthermore, the conditions of employment are more favorable to schoolteachers than to orchestra musicians.”²³⁵

In a 1965 meeting with Ford Foundation consultant George Kuyper, Los Angeles Philharmonic manager W.O. Severns, who succeeded Alice Taylor as LA Phil manager, cited public-school teacher wages as a target for orchestral musicians’ salaries: “He believes they should take teachers’ salaries as a yardstick with \$10,000 as the minimum salary.... At the present this minimum is about \$7,500 or \$8,000.”²³⁶ In the early 1960s, only in the “Big Five” orchestras were median musician salaries higher than those of public-school teachers, and raising orchestra salaries above those of public school teachers became a particular priority for any prospective action in the orchestra field.²³⁷

²³⁴ *The Performing Arts: Rockefeller Panel Report of the Future of Theatre, Dance, Music in America* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965), 49.

²³⁵ "News from the Ford Foundation: Ford Foundation Program for Symphony Orchestras," July 6, 1966, Box 3, Series 1.3, MOAA.

²³⁶ Notes on a meeting with W.O. Severns, Manager, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Los Angeles Philharmonic Board Members, March 11, 1965, box 30, WML.

²³⁷ See "The Ford Foundation: Millions for Music – Music for Millions," *Music Educators Journal*, Vol .53, No. 1 (Sep., 1966), pp 83–86; and "News from the Ford Foundation: Ford Foundation Program for Symphony Orchestras," July 6, 1966, Box 3, Series 1.3, MOAA.

By contrast, in terms of artistic reputation, the Ford Foundation learned that top U.S. orchestras were highly regarded at home and abroad. Although the bulk of music played by orchestras around the world was (and continues to be) predominantly of European origin, the foundation noted that the New York Philharmonic was formed in 1842, the same year as the Vienna Philharmonic; the Boston Symphony was founded in 1882, a year before the Berlin Philharmonic; the St. Louis Symphony came into existence in 1885, before the Amsterdam Concertgebouw; and the Chicago and Cincinnati orchestras both performed before the London Symphony.²³⁸ In addition, Ford Foundation research suggested that top U.S. orchestras were already performing more concerts than their European peers; during the 1963–64 season the Vienna Philharmonic gave twenty-three concerts and the London Symphony performed sixty-six. By contrast, during the same season, the Boston Symphony gave 121 concerts, the Philadelphia Orchestra gave 159, and the New York Philharmonic gave 183.²³⁹ The United States also benefitted from a diffusion of symphonic talent across the country, second only to Germany. In France in the early 1960s there were only two orchestras outside Paris, and in England there were only five outside London; aside from several orchestras maintained by the Italian state radio, there was only one professional symphony orchestra in Italy.²⁴⁰

Ford Foundation staff interviewed conductor, impresario, and Metropolitan Opera broadcast commentator Boris Goldovsky no fewer than nine times between

²³⁸ "News from the Ford Foundation: Ford Foundation Program for Symphony Orchestras," July 6, 1966, Box 3, Series 1.3, MOAA.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

1957 and 1964, and consulted with renowned conductors such as Leopold Stokowski and Fritz Reiner.²⁴¹ In 1958, while Musical Director of the Houston Symphony, Stokowski thought that efforts to compare the United States and Europe in terms of cultural sophistication were misguided: “There are, he says, thirty centuries of culture in Italy versus three in the United States.... In Italy people must have opera just as they must have spaghetti.... With the Americans music is more of an intellectual thing but with the Italians it is a thing of the heart.”²⁴² Stokowski also believed that orchestras could not support themselves without either government or foundation support: “Eventually we have to find a way to overcome these difficulties through foundations, government support or some other way. Government support, however, would require more taxation and people don’t want to stand for it.”²⁴³

Fritz Reiner, conductor of the Chicago Symphony, echoed Kuyper’s belief that one of the Chicago’s Symphony’s biggest problems was the lack of string players, and that the reason was partially that “the conservatory trained people for virtuoso performances” rather than “orchestral participation.”²⁴⁴ One positive development noted by Reiner was the increased number of musicians trained in the United States: “He contrasted the situation of large symphony orchestras when he

²⁴¹ See "Humanities and the Arts Staff Work--Interview with George Kuyper, Manager, The Chicago Symphony, Chicago," November 4, 1957, box 29, WML; "Humanities and the Arts Staff Work--Interview with Leopold Stokowski, Musical Director, Houston Symphony," November 7, 1958, box 37, WML; and "Music Interviews," February 9, 1965, box 37, WML.

²⁴² "Humanities and the Arts Staff Work--Interview with Leopold Stokowski, Musical Director, Houston Symphony," November 7, 1958, box 37, WML.

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ "Humanities and the Arts Staff Work--Interview with George Kuyper, Manager, The Chicago Symphony, Chicago," November 4, 1957, box 29, W. McNeil Lowry Papers, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, WML.

came to America in 1922 with the situation today. He said that the Chicago Symphony now had about 95 percent Americans in the orchestra, whereas in 1922 it would have been about 50–50.”²⁴⁵ Furthermore, whereas during the first half of the twentieth century it was almost mandatory for aspiring American musicians to acquire training in Europe, by the 1950s the top American conservatories, principally the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia (founded 1924) and the Juilliard School in New York City (founded 1905), among others, were considered as good if not better than the premier European schools.

Although foundation leaders talked extensively to conductors about the situation of orchestras, they were also careful to forge relationships with the American Federation of Musicians (AFM) and the American Symphony Orchestra League (ASOL, known today as the League of American Orchestras). Helen Thompson of the American Symphony Orchestra League appears to have first suggested the idea of a large-scale program for symphony orchestras sometime in 1959, and the ASOL provided the foundation with information on orchestra budget sizes as early as 1957.²⁴⁶ Thompson also hoped that the creation of the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians (ICSOM)—an organization founded in 1962 and incorporated within the AFM to specifically represent major symphony musicians—would improve labor relations and help raise wages. Furthermore, she believed that orchestras would need endowment funds to sustain and improve their

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ See Edward F. D'Arms to Helen M. Thompson, December 1, 1959, box 37, WML; and "Metropolitan and Major Orchestra Listings," November 13, 1957, box 62, Ford Foundation records, Education and Public Policy Program (EPP), Office of the Arts, Program Files, RAC.

operations long-term.²⁴⁷

One of the ASOL's key contributions to the foundation's research was the sharing of its financial data on hundreds of orchestras throughout North America. Under Thompson, the ASOL grouped orchestras into several categories based on annual budget size. Orchestras were classified as "major," "metropolitan," or "community," based on guidelines established by the managers of the largest major orchestras. Although this classification was somewhat trivial in the 1950s, it became a symbol of legitimacy in the 1960s and 1970s, and was a key metric used by the Ford Foundation in choosing participants for its nascent Symphony Orchestra Program.²⁴⁸ In 1958, twenty-six orchestras with annual budgets exceeding \$175,000 were classified as major, while seventeen with annual budgets between \$100,000 and \$175,000 were considered metropolitan. By the early 1960s, major orchestras had budgets above \$250,000, and in 1966 the threshold was again moved, this time to \$500,000. In 1966, the ASOL classified twenty-five orchestras as major and thirty-six as metropolitan; by 1971, thirty orchestras were in the major category, and seventy-six were in the metropolitan category.²⁴⁹ The semi-professional community orchestras, with annual budgets below \$100,000, were not offered grants as part of the Program for Symphony Orchestras.

Meetings with union leadership (the AFM), indicated not only the difficulties of a career in the orchestra (low pay, irregular employment schedules, etc.) but also

²⁴⁷ "Interview with Mrs. Helen Thompson, Executive Vice President, American Symphony Orchestra League," October 8, 1964, box 37, WML.

²⁴⁸ The Oakland Symphony's strains to achieve major status are discussed in Chapter 4.

²⁴⁹ American Symphony Orchestra League Classification Lists, January 18, 1971, box 37, WML.

trepidation regarding a large-scale infusion of foundation funding. In a 1961 meeting with AFM president Herman Kenin and officials from the New Orleans, Atlanta, Seattle, Newark, Pittsburgh, and Detroit locals, many issues facing orchestral musicians were discussed. If the foundation were to give large amounts of money to the orchestras, some worried that local donors might curtail their contributions under the assumption that costs were now covered by an enormously wealthy third-party (a fear articulated in the literature as “crowding out”).²⁵⁰ Edward F. D’Arms summarized the opinions of various AFM officials thus: “If the FF were to aid in the expanded program, care must be taken to make clear to the local citizenry that their help is still needed, perhaps more than ever.”²⁵¹ Because the foundation money wouldn’t exist in perpetuity, the orchestras would need to maintain ties to local donors while simultaneously receiving the foundation’s support.

Considering the input of these various stakeholders, several priorities became evident to Lowry and his staff. First, although it was necessary to guarantee longer employment, approaching fifty-two weeks, and higher wages for the players, it would only be possible if salaries increased enough for musicians to drop other non-musical, part-time jobs.²⁵² Second, if there were to be a large infusion of Ford Foundation

²⁵⁰ This theoretical process of government funding compromising private funding has been referred to as “crowding out” in economic literature. For an empirical study of the relationship between private donations and the NEA see Jane K. Dokko, “Does the NEA Crowd Out Private Charitable Contributions to the Arts?” *Finance and Economics Discussion Series*, Divisions of Research & Statistics and Monetary Affairs, Federal Reserve Board, Washington, D.C., 2007.

²⁵¹ See Edward F. D’Arms “Humanities and the Arts Staff Work--American Federation of Musicians Meeting,” June 11, 1961, box 11, WML.

²⁵² It is unclear exactly why the fifty-two-week season became a goal for all of the orchestras, but it was part of Helen Thompson and the ASOL’s plan to allow orchestral musicians to be able to focus their efforts only on their careers in the orchestra, without down time when orchestras were out of season. In a 1958 interview with the Foundation, Thompson articulated full-time employment and a

money, local fundraising mechanisms would need to be maintained and new ones developed. Finally, it would be essential not only to provide short-term operational support, but also to encourage the creation and augmentation of orchestral endowment funds. As these needs became clear, Lowry and his staff began work on a formal program for symphony orchestras.

Internal Competition for a Large Arts Project

In the wake of the Ford Motor Company IPO in 1956, the Ford Foundation searched for large spending programs in the \$75 million to \$100 million range. McNeil Lowry recalls that Henry Heald, the foundation's president from 1956 to 1965, was under pressure to find suitable ways to distribute the foundation's money: Heald "asked each division to bring up big spending programs.... Every program—because that's what they were in those days; there were thirteen of them; put forward ideas for how to spend somewhere between seventy-five and one-hundred million."²⁵³ Lowry's humanities and arts program submitted two proposals: one for art museums, and one for symphony orchestras.²⁵⁴

Humanities and arts staff members fixated on museums and orchestras in their research and travel in the late 1950s; a departmental budget proposal for the 1960

living wage as here two greatest needs for orchestras. See "Humanities and the Arts Staff Work--Interview with Mrs. Helen Thompson, Executive Secretary, American Symphony Orchestra League," March 20, 1958, box 37, WML.

²⁵³ Charles T. Morrissey, "Interview with W. McNeil Lowry for the Ford Foundation Oral History Project," January 14, 1972, box 3, Ford Foundation Records, Oral History Project, RAC, 530.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 530.

fiscal year notes visits to museums and symphony orchestras as the top two travel destinations for H&A staffers.²⁵⁵ Although it seems like museums share a similar niche, Lowry recalls that “both Mr. Heald and the Board showed a disposition about the orchestra as the oldest center of cultural activity spread geographically in the United States and in its cultural history.”²⁵⁶ Furthermore, Lowry believed that symphony orchestras were chosen partly because the estimated cost of a program for orchestras was between seventy-five and eighty-five million, whereas a similar program for the sixty leading art museums would have cost more than one-hundred million.²⁵⁷

A Rockefeller Foundation Report on the performing arts published in 1965 resonates with this notion of the orchestra as the oldest and most geographically diffuse of cultural activities, noting that “of all existing professional organized activity in the performing arts, the longest established, most widely dispersed, and most stable is the symphony orchestra.”²⁵⁸ In addition, the Rockefeller Report argues that orchestras formed the backbone of broader cultural activities in a city:

Because of the superior organization and stability of symphony orchestras, they might well become the keystone in a developing arch of cooperative performing arts endeavors. Neither opera nor ballet can properly exist without an orchestra. . . . Using the orchestra as the basic component, these other forms

²⁵⁵ "Humanities and the Arts Program: Proposed Budget Estimates Fiscal Year 1960," box 1, Ford Foundation records, Office of Humanities and the Arts, Office of the Vice President, Office Files of Wilson McNeil Lowry, RAC.

²⁵⁶ Charles T. Morrissey, "Interview with W. McNeil Lowry for the Ford Foundation Oral History Project," January 14, 1972, box 3, Ford Foundation Records, Oral History Project, RAC, 530.

²⁵⁷ Charles T. Morrissey, "Interview with W. McNeil Lowry for the Ford Foundation Oral History Project," January 14, 1972, box 3, Ford Foundation Records, Oral History Project, RAC, 530-531.

²⁵⁸ *The Performing Arts: Rockefeller Panel Report on the Future of Theatre, Dance, Music in America*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965, 24.

might be created around it.²⁵⁹

Paul Ylvisaker, the director of the Ford Foundation's Public Affairs Program during the early phases of the symphony program, recalled an almost religious reverence for symphony orchestras among board members: "Since symphonies are like motherhood, nobody was going to stand in the way of this thing, and it sailed all the way on up...to the trustees' level. And here are the trustees whose wives were on the [symphony] boards and, you know, it meant something in the social pages, and how could you say anything against symphonies."²⁶⁰ According to Ylvisaker, only trustee Henry Ford II—Henry Ford's grandson—questioned the program's necessity, asking why classical music organizations should take preference over music in popular culture:

Henry Ford [II] looked round the room and he was embarrassed 'cause he knew he was a philistine and he knew how he was regarded.... He was kind of a skunk at the tea party. He looked round the table and finally he blurted out. He said, "You know, I know what you're going to think, but look, I'm going to ask a question: Given American tastes, why should we decide that we should give eighty-million to the symphony and not the same amount to the Beatles?"²⁶¹

Ylvisaker continued: "I had the feeling that was a good fair democratic question, you know.... Well, of course, he was quickly encased in motherhood words and so forth and the vote went through."²⁶²

Looming large over any discussion of a large symphony program was the

²⁵⁹ Ibid., 24.

²⁶⁰ Charles T. Morrissey, "Interview with Paul Ylvisaker for the Ford Foundation Oral History Project," September 27, 1973, and October 27, 1973, box 3, Ford Foundation Records, Oral History Project, RAC, 48.

²⁶¹ Ibid., 48.

²⁶² Ibid., 48.

Rockefeller Foundation's Louisville Orchestra project in the 1950s. Boris Sokoloff, manager of the Minneapolis Symphony, said to McNeil Lowry in a 1957 interview that the Rockefeller Foundation was misguided in granting to only one orchestra and noted "a tendency on the part of many foundations to rush into things without adequate grass roots investigation."²⁶³

A strong link between the Rockefeller Louisville Program and the Ford Foundation's Symphony Orchestra Program existed partly because Lowry's assistant, Edward F. D'Arms, served in a similar role with the Rockefeller Foundation from 1947 to 1957, during the early years of the Louisville grants.²⁶⁴ As discussed in Chapter 1, when D'Arms interviewed Louisville's Mayor Charles Farnsley in 1952, Farnsley said that support for the Louisville Orchestra "helped Louisville to obtain new business firms."²⁶⁵ A similar argument was made in 1964 when the Humanities and the Arts Program presented a discussion paper on the Program for Symphony Orchestras to the Ford Foundation board: "Many communities are aware of the importance of cultural activities as a means of attracting and holding industries and commercial enterprises which employ many workers."²⁶⁶

More broadly, the assertion that grants to artists, and the arts in general, improved communities was essential in the Ford Foundation's messaging. Lowry's

²⁶³ "Humanities and the Arts Staff Work--Interview with Boris Sokoloff, Jr., Manager, Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra," July 12, 1957, box 30, WML.

²⁶⁴ "Edward F. D'Arms, 87, Executive and Teacher," *The New York Times*, May 3, 1991.

²⁶⁵ Interview with Charles D. Farnsley, May 19, 1952, box 372, RG 1.2, Rockefeller Foundation Records, RAC.

²⁶⁶ "Humanities and the Arts Program Discussion Paper: Program for Symphony Orchestras," September 24–25, 1964, box 63, Ford Foundation records, Education and Public Policy Program (EPP), Office of the Arts, Program Files, RAC.

1960 plea for increased funding for his arts and humanities program noted that “this is a time when the arts are important to national interest.... There are increasing and spontaneous utterances, public and private, of the belief that art and the artist cannot be left as mere ornaments to American life.”²⁶⁷

The Program for Symphony Orchestras

McNeil Lowry and his staff submitted a discussion paper concerning a “program for symphony orchestras” to the Ford Foundation’s Executive Committee in September 1964. Lowry’s paper included a request for up to \$110 million to “consolidate, through one historic action, the position of the symphony orchestra in the United States.”²⁶⁸ Of this \$110 million, \$25 million would be granted as expendable funds, and \$77–85 million, in the form of Ford Motor Company stock, would be held in trust, and distributed to the orchestras after a period of ten years.

Lowry explicitly outlined the mission of the proposed program:

The purposes of such a program would be 1) to maintain and improve the quality of performance of fine music by the leading orchestras in the country; 2) to increase the amount of quality music played by these orchestras; 3) to improve the financial situation of orchestral musicians and so to ensure an adequate supply of fine players both now and in the future; and 4) to stabilize the financial position of the leading American orchestras.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁷ "An Enlarged Program in the Arts: Humanities and the Arts Program Policy Discussion Paper," March 17th, 1960, box 122, report 002782, Ford Foundation records, Catalogued Reports, RAC.

²⁶⁸ "Humanities and the Arts Program Discussion Paper: Program for Symphony Orchestras," September 24–25, 1964, box 63, Ford Foundation records, Education and Public Policy Program (EPP), Office of the Arts, Program Files, RAC.

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

More specifically, the program would work toward season expansion and higher wages for musicians, while also developing fundraising mechanisms and building administrative competence among participating orchestras. After approval by the board, the foundation notified the public of the Symphony Orchestra Program via press release on October 22, 1965.²⁷⁰ Negotiations with individual orchestras during the subsequent months determined appropriate allocations of expendable and endowment funds, and by June 1966, the sixty-one participating orchestras were privy to the grant terms and their individual allocations.²⁷¹

²⁷⁰ Sigmund Koch to Harold L. Gregory, October 22, 1965, box 31, WML.

²⁷¹ "Telephone Calls from Orchestras After Receipt of Letters of Grant," June 29, 1966, box 30, WML.

Table 3.2: Participants in the Symphony Orchestra Program²⁷²

	Year Founded	Average Yearly Salary 1965–1966	Inflation- adjusted for 2018	Matching Ratio	Endowment Funds	Development Funds	Expendable Funds	Required Matching	Achieved Matching	
Group 1										
	Boston S.O.	1881	\$ 12,606	\$ 101,024	2:1	\$2,000,000		\$500,000	\$4,000,000	\$4,133,721
	Los Angeles P.O.	1919	\$ 9,303	\$ 74,554	2:1	\$2,000,000		\$500,000	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000
	Chicago S.O.	1891	\$ 11,121	\$ 89,123	2:1	\$2,000,000		\$500,000	\$4,000,000	\$4,025,429
	Philadelphia O	1900	\$ 12,700	\$ 101,777	2:1	\$2,000,000		\$500,000	\$4,000,000	\$4,132,421
	Cleveland O	1918	<i>Unavailable</i>	<i>Unavailable</i>	2:1	\$2,000,000		\$500,000	\$4,000,000	\$6,540,427
	Minneapolis S.O.	1903	\$ 7,250	\$ 58,101	2:1	\$2,000,000		\$500,000	\$4,000,000	\$7,924,814
Group 2										
	National (D.C) S.O.	1931	\$ 6,456	\$ 51,738	3:2	\$2,000,000		\$500,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,114,054
	Pittsburgh S.O.	1926	\$ 5,373	\$ 43,059	3:2	\$2,000,000		\$500,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000
	San Francisco S.O.	1910	\$ 5,992	\$ 48,020	3:2	\$2,000,000		\$500,000	\$3,000,000	\$4,124,855
	Cincinnati S.O.	1895	\$ 5,290	\$ 42,394	3:2	\$2,000,000		\$500,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000
Group 3										
	Houston S.O.	1913	\$ 4,463	\$ 35,766	1:1	\$2,000,000		\$500,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,022,582
	St. Louis S.O.	1880	\$ 5,146	\$ 41,240	1:1	\$2,000,000		\$500,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,475
	Dallas S.O.	1899	\$ 4,168	\$ 33,402	1:1	\$2,000,000		\$500,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,036,808
	Indianapolis S.O.	1929	\$ 3,778	\$ 30,277	1:1	\$2,000,000		\$500,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,247,885
Group 4										
	New York P.O.	1842	\$ 12,400	\$ 99,373	2:1	\$1,000,000		\$500,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,001,252
	Detroit S.O.	1914	\$ 8,600	\$ 68,920	2:1	\$1,000,000		\$500,000	\$2,000,000	\$1,960,916

²⁷² See the Ford Foundation: Millions for Music – Music for Millions,” *Music Educators Journal*, Vol. 53, No. 1 (Sep., 1966), pp. 83–86; "Orchestras by Group and 65–66 Budget," 1966, box 63, Ford Foundation records, Education and Public Policy Program (EPP), Office of the Arts, Program Files, RAC.

	Year Founded	Yearly Salary 1965–1966	Inflation- adjusted for 2018	Matching Ratio	Endowment Funds	Development Funds	Expendable Funds	Required Matching	Achieved Matching	
Major	Group 5									
	Baltimore S.O.	1914	\$ 4,590	\$ 36,784	1:1	\$1,000,000	\$250,000	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,008,489
	Buffalo P.O.	1936	\$ 4,720	\$ 37,826	1:1	\$1,000,000	\$250,000	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,009,373
	Seattle S.O.	1903	\$ 2,901	\$ 23,249	1:1	\$1,000,000	\$250,000	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,109,354
	New Orleans S.O.	1935	\$ 3,930	\$ 31,495	1:1	\$1,000,000	\$250,000	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,073,667
	Rochester P.O.	1923	\$ 5,600	\$ 44,878	1:1	\$1,000,000	\$250,000	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,009,641
	San Antonio S.O.	1939	\$ 2,929	\$ 23,473	1:1	\$1,000,000	\$250,000	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,109,354
	Kansa City S.O.	1933	\$ 3,360	\$ 26,927	1:1	\$1,000,000	\$250,000	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	\$132,092
	Denver S.O.	1934	\$ 3,216	\$ 25,773	1:1	\$1,000,000	\$250,000	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,002,657
	Atlanta S.O.	1945	\$ 2,070	\$ 16,589	1:1	\$1,000,000	\$250,000	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,017,763
Metropolitan	Group 6									
	Milwaukee S.O.	1959	\$ 4,257	\$ 34,115	1:1	\$1,000,000		\$250,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,239,232
	Utah (Salt Lake City) S.O.	1940	\$ 2,278	\$ 18,256	1:1	\$1,000,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,053,832
	Hartford S.O.	1947	\$ 2,398	\$ 19,217	1:1	\$1,000,000	\$250,000	\$100,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,003,664
	Oakland S.O.	1933	\$ 1,242	\$ 9,953	1:1	\$1,000,000	\$250,000	\$100,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,808
	American S.O.	1962	\$ 1,600	\$ 12,822	1:1	\$1,000,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$1,000,000	\$0
	Portland (Oregon) S.O.	1911	\$ 1,700	\$ 13,624	1:1	\$1,000,000		\$250,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,074,655
	Group 7									
	Honolulu S.O.	1901	\$ 2,885	\$ 23,120	1:1	\$750,000	\$100,000	\$250,000	\$750,000	\$781,741
	Syracuse S.O.	1961	\$ 1,740	\$ 13,944	1:1	\$750,000		\$250,000	\$750,000	\$776,075
North Carolina S.O.	1932	\$ 1,260	\$ 10,098	1:1	\$750,000		\$250,000	\$750,000	\$843,171	
Group 8										
Phoenix S.O.	1947	\$ 1,846	\$ 14,794	1:1	\$600,000	\$50,000	\$150,000	\$600,000	\$666,656	
Oklahoma City S.O.	1937	\$ 2,545	\$ 20,396	1:1	\$600,000		\$150,000	\$600,000	\$599,982	
Birmingham S.O.	1933	\$ 1,490	\$ 11,941	1:1	\$600,000	\$50,000	\$150,000	\$600,000	\$682,858	

	Year Founded	Average Yearly Salary 1965-1966	Inflation- adjusted for 2018	Matching Ratio	Endowment Funds	Development Funds	Expendable Funds	Required Matching	Achieved Matching
Group 9									
San Diego S.O.	1927	\$ 1,250	\$ 10,017	1:1	\$500,000		\$100,000	\$500,000	\$531,816
Louisville O	1937	\$ 1,850	\$ 14,826	1:1	\$500,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$500,000	\$556,898
Florida (Orlando) S.O.	1951	\$ 1,802	\$ 14,441	1:1	\$500,000		\$100,000	\$500,000	\$523,832
Tulsa P.O.	1948	\$ 1,300	\$ 10,418	1:1	\$500,000		\$100,000	\$500,000	\$561,037
Nashville S.O.	1946	\$ 1,400	\$ 11,220	1:1	\$500,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$500,000	\$506,658
New Haven S.O.	1894	\$ 1,000	\$ 8,014	1:1	\$500,000		\$100,000	\$500,000	\$606,728
New Jersey S.O.	1924	\$ 1,100	\$ 8,815	1:1	\$500,000	\$50,000	\$150,000	\$500,000	\$517,370
Columbus (Ohio) S.O.	1951	\$ 905	\$ 7,253	1:1	\$500,000		\$100,000	\$500,000	\$597,804
Toledo O	1943	\$ 850	\$ 6,812	1:1	\$500,000	\$50,000	\$100,000	\$500,000	\$510,091
Sacramento S.O.	1948	\$ 720	\$ 5,770	1:1	\$500,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$500,000	\$538,039
Richmond S.O.	1957	\$ 655	\$ 5,249	1:1	\$500,000	\$50,000	\$100,000	\$500,000	\$500,508
Kalamazoo S.O.	1921	\$ 420	\$ 3,366	1:1	\$500,000		\$100,000	\$500,000	\$758,850
Wichita S.O.	1944	\$ 500	\$ 4,007	1:1	\$500,000	\$50,000	\$100,000	\$500,000	\$608,620
Group 10									
Memphis S.O.	1951	\$ 930	\$ 7,453	1:1	\$400,000		\$100,000	\$400,000	\$404,822
Omaha S.O.	1924	\$ 800	\$ 6,411	1:1	\$400,000		\$100,000	\$400,000	\$486,012
Group 11									
Little (New York City) O	1947	\$ 2,500	\$ 20,035	1:1	\$350,000		\$75,000	\$350,000	\$81,309
Rhode Island (Providence) P.O.	1945	\$ 1,360	\$ 10,899	1:1	\$350,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$350,000	\$354,708
Festival (New York City) O	1964	\$ 900	\$ 7,213	1:1	\$350,000		\$75,000	\$350,000	\$0
Hudson Valley (Poughkeepsie) P.O.	1960	\$ 856	\$ 6,860	1:1	\$250,000		\$75,000	\$250,000	\$250,778
Brooklyn P.O.	1954	\$ 787	\$ 6,307	1:1	\$250,000		\$75,000	\$250,000	\$77,866
Shreveport S.O.	1948	\$ 953	\$ 7,637	1:1	\$350,000		\$75,000	\$250,000	\$250,778
Fort Wayne P.O.	1944	\$ 490	\$ 3,927	1:1	\$250,000		\$75,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
Jacksonville S.O.	1949	\$ 884	\$ 7,084	1:1	\$250,000		\$75,000	\$250,000	\$264,343
Group 12									
S.O. of Puerto Rico	1957	\$ 1,016	\$ 8,142	N/A	\$0	\$375,000	\$0	\$0	\$0

Although Lowry initially asked for a total of \$110 million, including \$25 million for expendable funds and \$85 million for the endowment trust, discussions with the Ford Foundation's trustees brought the total amount of the program down to \$80.2 million. In addition to \$25 million in expendable funds, as originally planned, the endowment trust received \$58.75 million, with \$58 million making up the endowment fund contributions of the foundation and the remaining \$750,000 allocated to the two program beneficiaries for which no endowment funds were distributed: The Symphony Orchestra of Puerto Rico, which was given \$375,000 to promote annual tours in the Caribbean, and the American Symphony Orchestra League, which received \$360,000 for operating costs.²⁷³

Twenty-five of the participating orchestras also received what were designated as "developmental funds," which were additional expendable funds paid yearly. These funds were given to the smaller major orchestras (that is, those shown in Table 3.2 that received only \$1 million in endowment funds), and to the so-called metropolitan orchestras. Whereas the regular expendable funds were intended to help the orchestras maintain and grow their regular operations, the development funds were intended to help orchestras with special projects. In addition, unlike the expendable funds, the orchestras themselves were required to apply for their allocated development funds annually and specify exactly how they would be utilized.

For example, the Baltimore Symphony received \$50,000 in development funds annually for five years, for a total of \$250,000 (in addition to the orchestra's

²⁷³ "Puerto Rico Symphony Developmental Funds," 1971, box 30, WML.

endowment and expendable funds). This sum was devoted primarily to paying salaries for new weeks added to the season, but also to establishing twelve regional symphony societies.²⁷⁴ Table 3.3 shows the uses of the total developmental funds by the twenty-five orchestras as described in the Foundation's 1972 developmental fund assessment.

Table 3.3: Development Funds Usage as a Percentage of \$4.1 Million Total²⁷⁵

Direct Salary Support	61%
Extending Performance Opportunities	19%
Miscellaneous Items	9%
"Assistance with Total Operation"	6%
Pension Funds	3%
Extra Musicians	1%

The announcement of the Symphony Orchestra Program and the allocations to its participants led to great disappointment among the many small orchestras around the country that were not included. Although the foundation only accepted major and metropolitan orchestras, according to the ASOL's budgetary standards, it still received a great deal of correspondence from smaller orchestras. As late as February

²⁷⁴ It is unclear what exactly the '12 regional societies' did, where they were located or if any still exist. The Mid-Shore Symphony Society of Centreville, Maryland, which is currently active as of 2018, may have been one of these societies created by the Ford Foundation's developmental grant; it was created in 1970. See "Review and Evaluation of Symphony Developmental Funds Granted Under the 1966 Symphony Orchestra Program," October 20, 1972, box 62, Ford Foundation records, Education and Public Policy Program (EPP), Office of the Arts, Program Files, RAC; and <http://www.baltimoresymphonyontheshore.com/>.

²⁷⁵ "Review and Evaluation of Symphony Developmental Funds Granted Under the 1966 Symphony Orchestra Program," October 20, 1972, box 62, Ford Foundation records, Education and Public Policy Program (EPP), Office of the Arts, Program Files, RAC.

1966, the foundation still considered including community orchestras below the \$100,000 threshold, and requested information from the ASOL about these smaller orchestras.²⁷⁶ In addition, many smaller orchestras, including some with expenses of more than \$100,000 annually, expressed frustration for not being included in the program.

One such orchestra was the Dayton Philharmonic, which maintained membership with the ASOL and paid its annual membership dues, but failed to provide its annual financial information to the league. This financial information was collected by the ASOL every year from member orchestras and used to update its listings of major and metropolitan orchestras. But because this classification held little importance in the 1950s and early 1960s, some smaller orchestras failed to send in their financial information, were not included in the ASOL's listings, and thus not referred to the Ford Foundation in preparation for the Symphony Orchestra Program.

A letter from Helen Thompson to Edward F. D'Arms in October 1965 notes the newfound importance of the ASOL's classifications. "Had it been possible for us to have known how vital this listing would be in conjunction with the endowment program, I would have discussed it more fully with you.... We do not include any orchestra on these listings unless and until the orchestra has documented its financial operations with the League office."²⁷⁷ Because the Dayton Philharmonic failed to

²⁷⁶ Letter from Helen M. Thompson to Edward F. D'Arms, February 17, 1966, box 62, Ford Foundation records, Education and Public Policy Program (EPP), Office of the Arts, Program Files, RAC.

²⁷⁷ Letter from Helen M. Thompson to Edward F. D'Arms, October 26, 1965, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC.

send in any financial reports, it was not included on ASOL lists, and was not included in the Symphony Orchestra Program, even though its budget qualified it for “metropolitan” status.²⁷⁸

The Dayton Philharmonic was a close case, but many smaller, more obscure orchestras wrote to the Ford Foundation and/or the ASOL hoping for last-minute inclusion. Boston Symphony Orchestra violinist Victor Manusevitch was particularly persistent with his pet project, the semi-professional Cambridge Civic Orchestra, and he corresponded intermittently with Ford Foundation staff from 1964 to 1970 in an attempt to wrangle financial support for his orchestra. Although the Cambridge Civic Orchestra was too small and too amateurish for consideration in the Symphony Orchestra Program, Manusevitch persisted until a meeting in 1970 with foundation staffer Richard P. Kapp, in which Kapp noted: “I outlined to him all of the reasons that I could not encourage him to look to the FF for assistance and I think he finally realized that no help could be expected.” Frustrated, Manusevitch responded: “If I don’t believe that there is an ultimate chance of FF help I have nothing to look forward to and will probably disband the whole orchestra.”²⁷⁹

Some smaller orchestras worried that they would be crowded out by nearby orchestras receiving Ford funds. The Philharmonic Society of Northern New Jersey—a small community orchestra in Paterson, NJ not included in the Ford trust—wrote to foundation president Henry Heald expressing worry that the grantee New Jersey

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

²⁷⁹ "Interview with Victor Manusevitch, Music Director, Cambridge Civic Symphony Orchestra, Inc.," June 29, 1970, box 28, WML.

Symphony would overwhelm the Newark metro area with free and discounted concerts and render the Philharmonic Society of Northern New Jersey irrelevant. Ford staff member Sigmund Koch wrote back and argued that this was not the case: “I can assure you that even if the New Jersey Symphony were to be one of the grantees in this program, its expanded activities would not reach the proportions of flooding the Paterson area with concerts, free or otherwise, in a manner to endanger the future activities of the Philharmonic Society of Northern New Jersey.”²⁸⁰

Helen Thompson and the ASOL received a bevy of similarly distressed letters from small-budget orchestra. Thompson noted in late 1965 that

the announcement of the program seems to be casting a cloud of doom over a good many of the more enterprising and rapidly expanding community orchestras.... Some of these orchestras... seem to feel that the endowment program is going to give such a push forward to the majors and metropolitans in their geographical regions... that they—the community orchestras—will find they are no longer needed in the musical world. I do not share this apprehension.²⁸¹

Small community orchestras, ranging from unpaid volunteer orchestras, to semi-professional union orchestras, are the most prevalent class of orchestras in the United States, with a great deal of organizational and operational diversity. Thus, it is difficult to assess the impact of the Program for Symphony Orchestras on the community orchestras, because unlike the major and metropolitan orchestras, community orchestras as a group do not share as many salient characteristics. Most of

²⁸⁰ Letter from Sigmund Koch to Carl E. Schmid, President, the Philharmonic Society of Northern New Jersey, December 28, 1965, box 62, Ford Foundation records, Education and Public Policy Program (EPP), Office of the Arts, Program Files, RAC.

²⁸¹ Letter from Helen M. Thompson to Edward F. D’Arms, October 26, 1965, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC.

the larger budget community orchestras in the 1960s, like the Amarillo, Harrisburg, and Springfield (IL) Symphonies still exist. Others, such as the Scranton Philharmonic, merged with other local orchestras, and some, like the Albuquerque Civic Symphony and the Philharmonic Society of Northern New Jersey, are now defunct.

The lucky participating organizations received a combination of expendable and developmental funds paid quarterly during the first five years of the program as well as endowment funds payable at the termination of the grant period on June 30, 1976.²⁸² To prioritize fundraising, the endowment funds would only be released to orchestras that succeeded in raising matching funds to the foundation's contributions. Although the orchestras received notice of the grant program in 1966 and could count on a certain level of expendable funds over the next five years, they were not entitled to any of the endowment money until 1976, and only then if they independently raised a specified amount of matching funds by June 30, 1971. As shown in Table 3.2 above, except for the Detroit Symphony, the Kansas City Symphony, the American Symphony, the Oklahoma City Symphony, the Festival Orchestra of New York, the Little Orchestra (N.Y.), and the Brooklyn Philharmonic, all of the participating orchestras were successful in raising matching funds. At the conclusion of the matching period a total of more than \$84 million—more than half a billion dollars of purchasing power in 2018—had been independently raised by all of the orchestras.²⁸³

²⁸² "Ford Foundation: Grants, April 11, 1963–December 5, 1968," *The New York Philharmonic Digital Archives*, accessed November 2015, <http://archives.nyphil.org/>.

²⁸³ "Special Report: Symphonic Strains (Financial)," February 1, 1973, box 29, WML.

For example, as shown in Table 3.2, the New York Philharmonic was notified of a total grant of \$1.5 million on June 24, 1966.²⁸⁴ As the foundation's letter to the orchestra explains, \$1 million would be devoted to endowment funds (payable at the end of the ten-year period) and \$.5 million would be designated as expendable funds and paid quarterly from 1967 to 1971. Like the other premier orchestras, the New York Philharmonic was obligated to match each Ford Foundation endowment dollar at a 2:1 ratio. Thus, the total impact of the program would be the \$1.5 million from the Foundation, plus the \$2 million raised by the orchestra itself, for a total of \$3.5 million.

As discussed in detail in Chapter 5, the Minnesota Orchestra raised more money than other participating orchestra. Required to raise \$4 million to claim a final endowment grant of \$2 million from the foundation, the orchestra instead raised nearly \$8 million in matching funds by 1971, resulting in a total endowment fund of more than \$10 million.²⁸⁵

Of the sixty orchestras awarded a beneficial interest in the trust, by 1971, five—the American Symphony Orchestra, the Brooklyn Philharmonic, the Festival Orchestra Society, the Kansas City Symphony, and the Little Orchestra Society—failed to reach their matching requirements and were cut off. This reduction in beneficiaries resulted in a rebalancing of the trust in 1971, with the terminated orchestras' interests—a total of \$2.995 million—split among the fifty-five remaining

²⁸⁴ "Ford Foundation: Grants, April 11, 1963–December 5, 1968," *The New York Philharmonic Digital Archives*, accessed November 2015, <http://archives.nyphil.org/>.

²⁸⁵ See "Financial Position of the Minnesota Orchestral Association," 1971, box 30, WML; and Minnesota Orchestra Reconciliation, 1971, box 30, WML.

orchestras.²⁸⁶ Two orchestras—the Detroit Symphony and the Oklahoma City Symphony—were slightly below their required matching amounts but were allowed to maintain their interests in the Trust.

Notably, among the five New York City orchestras included in the endowment trust, only the New York Philharmonic succeeded in its matching program. The Festival Orchestra Society went out of business in 1968, and the Brooklyn Philharmonic, Little Orchestra Society, and American Symphony ended well below their matching goals. In the case of the Little Orchestra Society, a New York City orchestra that is still active today, the foundation demanded at the start of the program in 1966 “that the Orchestra take effective steps to diversify its base of philanthropic support.”²⁸⁷ The Little Orchestra’s did manage to raise \$81,309 towards its goal of \$350,000. But in addition to falling short in its fundraising, the Little Orchestra received 99 percent of its annual maintenance funds—its regular fundraising operations—from the music director, Thomas K. Scherman, and the Scherman Foundation, a family foundation for which the conductor was a benefactor.²⁸⁸

The American Symphony Orchestra, founded by Leopold Stokowski in 1962, was a particularly difficult case. It appears that the orchestra’s administrators were woefully unprepared to participate in the Symphony Orchestra Program. Although it was required to raise \$1 million, the ASO reported exactly \$0 in its endowment

²⁸⁶ "Termination of Five Grants Awarded Under the Symphony Orchestra Program," September 1, 1972, box 29, WML.

²⁸⁷ Notes on the Little Orchestra Society, 1972, box 30, WML.

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

matching account on June 30, 1971. Curiously, the orchestra did note \$5,262 of royalties raised toward the matching challenge in its June 30, 1967 report to the Foundation. But by the following year's report, this small sum had been transferred to a separate fund, the "Leopold Stokowski Fund."²⁸⁹ The orchestra was terminated from the trust in 1971, but has maintained operations, under longtime conductor Leon Botstein, to the present day.

In July 1972—the first year without the discontinued orchestras—the trustee of the Ford trust, the Bank of New York, made erroneous distributions of income to four of the discontinued orchestras, including the American Symphony. The other three orchestras returned the erroneous distributions to the bank, but the American Symphony Orchestra refused to return the mistaken \$12,941, instead asking that the bank consider the distribution as a charitable contribution. This request was of course not acceptable, and a lawsuit was filed demanding the return of the full amount.²⁹⁰ Because the orchestra nearly declared bankruptcy in the early 1970s when Leopold Stokowski resigned as conductor and returned to London, it is unlikely that the \$12,941 was ever returned to the Bank of New York.

Even some orchestras that achieved their matching requirements by June 30, 1971 were not entirely out of the woods and in the foundation's good graces. One of the terms outlined in the June 24, 1966 letter to the participating orchestras stated:

Funds raised by the Orchestra for the purpose of Foundation matching are to be retained by the Orchestra in an isolated endowment account, established for

²⁸⁹ American Symphony Orchestra Notes, December 21, 1971, box 29, WML.

²⁹⁰ Letter from Marcia Thompson to Symphony Orchestra Program Trust, April 30, 1973, box 29, WML.

the purpose of this program, the principal of which is to be retained by the Orchestra until the termination of the program on June 30, 1976.²⁹¹

Thus, the matching funds raised toward the endowment challenge could not be withdrawn until June 30, 1976. The New Jersey Symphony appears to have overlooked this provision; according to annual financial reports submitted by the orchestra to the Ford Foundation, \$250,000—half the total \$500,000 raised—was withdrawn between November 4, 1971 and February 18, 1972. \$50,000 was restored in May, 1972, leaving the New Jersey Symphony “owing” \$200,000 to its isolated Ford endowment account.²⁹² As a result of this mistake, on June 29, 1972, the foundation issued a stern warning:

If the Symphony prior to September 1, 1972 has not restored to its Ford isolated endowment account all principal withdrawn from the account, the Symphony authorizes the Trustee to pay all income accruing on or after September 1, 1972, and upon the termination of the Trust the Symphony’s share of principal, to all other qualifying orchestras according to their pro rata share of income and principal.²⁹³

The New Jersey Symphony provided fiscal year 1972 audited financial statements to the foundation in December, 1972, but they were apparently so incomplete and confusing that the foundation decided to withhold final judgment until fiscal year 1973 statements were released. The 1973 audit was released late, in May, 1974, and revealed that not only had the orchestra failed to reimburse its isolated Ford account, but that it had further withdrawn the principal, leaving only

²⁹¹ “Ford Foundation: Grants, April 11, 1963–December 5, 1968,” *The New York Philharmonic Digital Archives*, accessed November 2015, <http://archives.nyphil.org/>.

²⁹² Letter from Symphony Orchestra Trust Committee to Alan V. Lowenstein, June 29, 1972, box 29, WML.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*

\$25,000 left in the account. Of this unfortunate failure, Program Officer Marcia Thompson noted “there seems little alternative, unhappily, but to advise the Symphony that its beneficial interest in the Trust has been terminated.”²⁹⁴

The Orchestra of Puerto Rico was a special case, in that it was the only grantee orchestra incorporated outside of a U.S. state. In addition, the Orchestra of Puerto Rico was the only orchestra included to receive most (95 percent) of its funding from direct government subsidy, via the government of Puerto Rico and the government’s Puerto Rico Industrial Development Company.²⁹⁵ The orchestra performed a short season of eight weeks, with some musicians imported from the mainland, and the remainder mostly associated with the Conservatory of Puerto Rico. In early 1966 two representatives of the orchestra visited with the foundation in New York seeking participation in the Symphony Orchestra Program. But when it became clear that there would be a matching component, the orchestra’s leaders balked at the impracticability of raising matching funds under a regime of direct government subsidy.²⁹⁶

In lieu of a stake in the endowment trust, the Ford Foundation granted the Orchestra of Puerto Rico developmental (expendable) grants of \$75,000 per year for five years (\$375,000 total) for annual two-week, off-island tours. Although this appropriation differed from the others, both because it had no matching component and also because of its rigid specificity of purpose, Lowry’s staff related its objectives

²⁹⁴ "Symphony Orchestra Program: New Jersey Symphony Orchestra," July 31, 1974, box 29, WML.

²⁹⁵ "Proposed Expendable Grant to the Orchestra of Puerto Rico," April 8, 1966, Box 30, WML.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

to the greater objective of the Symphony Orchestra Program in that they would serve to extend the season, increase the income for players, expose an underserved region (the Caribbean) to orchestral music, and “enhance the prestige of Puerto Rico and its orchestra in Latin American circles.”²⁹⁷ When reviewing the grant to the Orchestra of Puerto in 1972, after the five years of expendable funds were distributed, Program Officer Oleg Lobanov noted: “This is a laudable program although there seems little lasting benefit. All in all, a good utilization of funds.”²⁹⁸

Conclusion

Before and during the Symphony Orchestra Program, officials from the Ford Foundation and the ASOL tried to convey to all involved that the \$80.2 million investment was not a panacea for all of the troubles faced by orchestras. Helen Thompson noted that

This program—exciting, challenging and generous as it is—will not even yield sufficient endowment income to meet the present operating deficits of the major orchestras—to say nothing of the combined operating deficits of the major and metropolitan orchestras or the inevitable increase in the operating deficits over the next several years.²⁹⁹

The Ford Foundation echoed this point in its 1966 press release announcing

²⁹⁷ "Proposed Expendable Grant to the Orchestra of Puerto Rico," April 8, 1966, Box 30, WML.

²⁹⁸ "Puerto Rico Symphony: Evaluation o Developmental Grant of \$375,000," August 8, 1972, Box 30, WML.

²⁹⁹ "Comments on the Ford Foundation Orchestra Endowment Program from Helen M. Thompson to Large Budget Community Orchestras Affiliated with the League," October 28, 1965, box 62, Ford Foundation records, Education and Public Policy Program (EPP), Office of the Arts, Program Files, RAC.

the allocations to the orchestras: “The Foundation’s program, despite its size, will hardly solve all the problems of the orchestras. Nor does it mean anything like affluence to the orchestra musician.”³⁰⁰ For every major and metropolitan orchestra musician to earn annual salaries of \$15,000 and \$5,000 respectively (\$116,000 and \$39,000 in 2018 dollars), a program in the range of \$463 million was required, nearly six times the Ford Foundation’s \$80.2 million effort.³⁰¹

The Ford Foundation expected that the results of the program would vary depending on the situations of each individual orchestra and the people involved in the day-to-day operations, echoing the Rockefeller Foundation’s 1965 Panel Report:

Too many people believe that a simple infusion of more money will solve all the problems of the performing arts in this country. But money is, in the last analysis, a neutral object, a tool. It has no capacity for vision; this must be supplied by men. Money can be poured into any project, but if it is not used wisely and imaginatively, it is money wasted.³⁰²

And as early as 1973, some Ford Foundation officials characterized the symphony orchestra program as misguided. Ford Foundation staff member Paul Ylvisaker predicted that “all it would do is raise the union wages and would put the orchestras right back where they had been.” Describing the program overall as “a disaster from start to finish,” Ylvisaker based his claims on the idea that without drastic changes such as raising revenues, lowering expenses, and building audiences,

³⁰⁰ "News from the Ford Foundation: Ford Foundation Program for Symphony Orchestras," July 6, 1966, Box 3, Series 1.3, MOAA.

³⁰¹ "News from the Ford Foundation: Ford Foundation Program for Symphony Orchestras," July 6, 1966, Box 3, Series 1.3, MOAA.

³⁰² *The Performing Arts: Rockefeller Panel Report of the Future of Theatre, Dance, Music in America* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965), 149.

the foundation's contributions wouldn't engender any sustainable change.³⁰³ In her 1973 oral history, Marcia Thompson (not to be confused with Helen Thompson, the ASOL director), the Ford Foundation Program Officer presiding over the Symphony Orchestra Program, distrusted the abilities of the individual orchestras to manage their own large endowments: "If we had to do it over, if we had that \$80 million...I wouldn't start out with endowment because I think endowment is only as good as the management of the endowment or the management of the institution, and I just don't think most symphony orchestras have disciplined themselves sufficiently."³⁰⁴

It is tempting to judge orchestras based on their success in raising matching funds relative to their endowment goals. But a successful matching campaign did not necessarily ensure long-term success, and the efficacy of the Ford Foundation's Program for Symphony Orchestras should be rated in terms of the long-term success of orchestras who met their matching requirements. In the case of the Oakland Symphony, for example, successful matching efforts appear to have had the opposite of the intended effect, with the orchestra eventually filing for bankruptcy in 1986. As we shall see in Chapter 4, the Oakland Symphony fell into the pattern of mismanagement to which Thompson and Ylvisaker alluded, despite receiving more than \$1 million as part of the Symphony Orchestra Program.

³⁰³ Charles T. Morrissey, "Interview with Paul Ylvisaker for the Ford Foundation Oral History Project," September 27, 1973, and October 27, 1973, box 3, Ford Foundation Records, Oral History Project, RAC, 47.

³⁰⁴ Charles T. Morrissey and Ronald J. Grele, "Interview with Marcia T. Thompson for the Ford Foundation Oral History Project," August 28, 1973, box 3, Ford Foundation Records, Oral History Project, RAC, 25–26.

By contrast, the Minnesota Orchestra thrived under the Symphony Orchestra Program. It raised more endowment matching funds than any other participating orchestra, expanded its reach through extended touring, augmented its administrative staff, and built a new hall in downtown Minneapolis. The orchestra leveraged robust local support and efficient management to wring maximum benefit from the Ford Foundation's contributions.

In the following chapters I discuss the long-term implications of the symphony orchestra on two particularly divergent orchestras: the Oakland Symphony and the Minnesota Orchestra. The results of these case studies suggest that ultimately the results of the Ford Foundation's Program for Symphony Orchestras depended not so much on the design or implementation of the program, but rather on the orchestras' complex local situations.

CHAPTER 4.

The Symphony Orchestra Program in Context 1: The Oakland Symphony

Introduction

On September 13, 1986, the front page of the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported the collapse of the fifty-three-year-old Oakland Symphony Orchestra.³⁰⁵ After losing nearly \$1 million in its final season, amassing unsustainable debts, and exhausting the interest of donors, the financial outlook of the Oakland Symphony was grim. But alongside the financial struggles encountered by many U.S. orchestras, the Oakland Symphony's demise also represented a dearth of purpose; one of the most dynamic orchestras in the United States in the 1960s had simply become a lesser iteration of the nearby San Francisco Symphony.

The Oakland Symphony's downfall typifies many of the difficulties experienced by performing arts non-profits, and the myriad pitfalls available to executives, board members, and musicians. But the orchestra's final decline into bankruptcy also exemplifies the optimism of orchestras in the period following the Ford Foundation's Symphony Orchestra Program. Having successfully participated in the Ford Program by raising matching funds and expanding programming with expendable funds, the fall of the Oakland Symphony suggests that the Symphony Orchestra Program was not a panacea for every orchestra.

³⁰⁵ Michael Harris, "Oakland Symphony Cancels Season," *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 13, 1986.

Although no single person or organization was ultimately responsible for the Oakland Symphony's decline, the Ford Foundation's intervention in the 1960s and 1970s led to unrealistic ambitions by board members, managers, and musicians in the subsequent decades. This chapter discusses how the Ford Foundation's money ironically contributed to the orchestra's decline and eroded the orchestra's identity in the Bay Area and the United States.

The Ford Grant and Musician Compensation

The total stated grant to the Oakland Symphony from the Ford Foundation equaled \$1.35 million, including \$1 million in matched endowment funds, \$250,000 in expendable funds distributed annually from 1967 through 1971, and \$100,000 in “developmental” funds, distributed annually for special projects proposed by the orchestra.³⁰⁶ The orchestra was also entitled to the dividends earned by the Ford stock placed in trust, as well as to the long-term capital gains accrued by the trust fund over the ten year grant period. In addition, in 1971, a reallocation of shares of the several orchestras that had failed to match the Ford Foundation's endowment contributions increased the Oakland symphony's share of the total Ford trust.³⁰⁷ Thus, the Ford Foundation's total contribution to the Oakland Symphony—not including the \$1,000,808 raised by the orchestra itself—amounted to \$2,130,343: \$1 million in trust

³⁰⁶ Letter from Joseph M. McDaniel to Edgar Kaiser, 1966, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC.

³⁰⁷ Letter from William H. Nims to Harry R. Lange, 1972, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC.

principal, \$230,930 in long-term capital gains (a result of the increase in stock price from \$50.50 per share in 1966 to \$58.50 per share in 1976), \$350,000 in expendable funds, and \$549,413 in dividends.³⁰⁸

As with many other participating orchestras, the distribution structure of the Ford program proved problematic for several reasons. By delivering expendable funds for only five years, the orchestras' budgets were dramatically increased with the expectation that they would be able to raise funding from other sources when the Ford Foundation distributions ceased. In addition, the expendable funds, which were intended for new endeavors and salary development, created unsustainable expectations among audiences and musicians. When the Ford Foundation wrote its last expendable fund checks in 1971, the orchestras that failed to successfully capitalize—by creating sustainable programs and developing new audiences—were left to make difficult cuts.

The New Jersey Symphony, based in Newark, is somewhat similar to the Oakland Symphony in that both orchestras were located in the immediate vicinity of world-class orchestras. The distance between Newark and Manhattan, home of the New York Philharmonic, is about the same distance between Oakland and San Francisco, and the New Jersey Symphony's premature invasion of its endowment funds in 1971—as discussed in Chapter 3—exemplifies the pressure orchestras were under when the expendable funds ceased.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁸ "Symphony Orchestra Program: Summary of Transactions," 1976, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC.

³⁰⁹ Letter from Symphony Orchestra Trust Committee to Alan V. Lowenstein, June 29, 1972, box 29, WML.

Although the Oakland Symphony did not invade its endowment funds as early as the New Jersey Symphony did, the the expendable contribution of the Ford Foundation to the Oakland Symphony—\$350,000 spread over five seasons—amounted to an annual distribution of \$70,000, a large part of the orchestra’s total annual budget of \$320,000 during the 1965–66 season.³¹⁰ Melanie Beene, in her exhaustive 1988 study of the orchestra’s decline, *Autopsy of an Orchestra*, describes the impact of the Ford Foundation’s expendable funds:

Calculating from the ten-year long-range plan submitted with the Ford proposal, during the first year under the grant program Ford funds supported 26% of the Association’s annual budget. This declined to 15% after five years and to 5% of the budget after ten years. The Ford Foundation funds effectively inflated the organization’s budget only then to be withdrawn. The Association was not able to replace the missing Ford income.³¹¹

The foundation’s intention was that the expendable funds would help the orchestras tap new audiences and donors, and raise the salaries of orchestral musicians. Symphony musicians in many of the recipient orchestras, chronically underemployed and underpaid, seized on the Ford program as an opportunity to raise their compensation. Indeed, one of the Ford Foundation’s goals in establishing the program in the first place was to provide enhanced compensation for the musicians, as we saw in Chapter 3. The Oakland musicians were no exception, working under a

³¹⁰ "Orchestras by Group and 65–66 Budget," 1966, box 63, Ford Foundation records, Education and Public Policy Program (EPP), Office of the Arts, Program Files, RAC.

³¹¹ See Melanie Beene, Patricia A. Mitchell, And Fenton Johnson, "Autopsy of an Orchestra: An Analysis of Factors Contributing to The Bankruptcy of The Oakland Symphony Orchestra Association" (San Francisco: Melanie Beene, 2012), 48.

contract that guaranteed them less than \$800 for the entire 1965–66 season.³¹² As a result, the majority of Oakland musicians worked other jobs, many of them nonmusical, and the orchestra’s official 1966 application to the Ford Foundation includes a diverse list of these occupations. Although many players maintained musical jobs typical of orchestral musicians around the country, such as college teaching and freelancing, many also taught in public and private schools, and managed their own private studios. In addition, many maintained non-musical careers as engineers, small business owners, and craftspeople:

³¹² Adjusted for inflation this would account for about \$6000 in 2016 purchasing power. Oakland Symphony Wage Scale, 1970, box 27, Ford Foundation records, Education and Public Policy Program (EPP), Office of the Arts, Program Files, RAC.

Table 4.1: Oakland Symphony Musicians' Outside Employment in 1966³¹³

Institutional Teaching:

College (9)
Public School (17)
Private School (2)

Private Studio Teaching (28)

Free Lance/Casual Musical Jobs (54)

Miscellaneous, Comprising the Following Occupations (41)

Student
Structural Engineer
Housewife
Office Worker
Restaurateur
TV-Stereo Salesman
Clerk
Jewelry Maker
Stage Manager (Oakland Symphony)
Card Writer
Sales Clerk
Clerk-Typist
Office Clerk
Multilith Operator
Carpenter/Cabinet Maker
Personnel Manager and Librarian (Oakland Symphony)
Computer Programmer
Systems Co-ordinator, Auto Club
Electronic Technician

During the 1966–67 season, the orchestra began to implement a dramatic rise in salaries that brought the musicians from a minimum salary of \$784 in 1965–66 to \$2,025 in 1969–70:

³¹³ "Oakland Symphony Orchestra Association: Ford Foundation Application," January 14, 1966, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC.

Table 4.2: Salary Growth of Oakland Symphony Musicians from 1965 to 1970³¹⁴

Season	Min Scale Per Set	Sets Per Season	Min Scale Per Season	Inflation Adjusted (2018 Dollars)	Year Over Year Increase
1965–1966	\$ 98	8	\$ 784	\$ 6,294	-
1966–1967	\$ 130	8	\$ 1,040	\$ 8,117	33%
1967–1968	\$ 165	8	\$ 1,320	\$ 9,994	27%
1968–1969	\$ 180	8	\$ 1,440	\$ 10,464	9%
1969–1970	\$ 225	9	\$ 2,025	\$ 13,953	41%

Although these increases most likely did not allow orchestra members to drop other jobs completely, they certainly helped, and were indicative of the promising early returns of the Symphony Orchestra Program. In 1970, at the conclusion of the orchestra’s two-year master agreement starting in the 1967–68 season, the vice president of Local 6, the Bay Area’s American Federation of Musicians chapter, wrote directly to the Ford Foundation as thanks for a musician-friendly agreement:

We recently concluded a new two-year master agreement with the Oakland Symphony Association. It provides the foundation for a bright future for a great young orchestra, and, at the same time, includes substantial pay increases and sorely needed additional benefits. Please accept our thanks and the grateful thanks of our musicians for the grants which have enabled a wise and progressive management to provide this new agreement.³¹⁵

The 1967 agreement included a tenure provision to fortify job security, and the 1974 contract increased the size of the orchestra to eighty-six players, which

³¹⁴ Oakland Symphony Wage Scale, 1970, box 27, Ford Foundation records, Education and Public Policy Program (EPP), Office of the Arts, Program Files, RAC.

³¹⁵ Letter from J.J. Spain to the Ford Foundation, October 2, 1967, Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC; and Oakland Symphony Wage Scale, 1970, box 27, Ford Foundation records, Education and Public Policy Program (EPP), Office of the Arts, Program Files, RAC.

remained the standard until 1986.³¹⁶ The Oakland musicians were never paid as well as the musicians of the so-called “major” orchestras—like the cross-bay San Francisco Symphony—but they continually outpaced musicians in comparable orchestras. As Melanie Beene notes, from 1976 to 1986, the Oakland musicians’ wages increased 340 percent; during this period a musician in the Oakland Symphony could expect to earn from 52 to 160 percent more per season than the national average for comparable “regional” orchestras. And although the relatively high cost of living in the Bay Area may have accounted for part of the reason why Oakland musicians were better paid than their peers, the 340 percent increase in wages outpaced changes in the Bay Area’s consumer price index, which increased only 103.³¹⁷

The Ford Program was directly responsible for these increases, not only because it provided the orchestras with the financial means to support their musicians and lengthen their seasons, but also because it created new expectations among the players. In fact, in Oakland, the 1967 agreement was precipitated by a brief strike because the musicians were aware of the approaching Ford windfall.³¹⁸

A letter from Helen Thompson of the American Symphony Orchestra League to Ford Foundation Program Officer Edward F. D’Arms from April 1966 suggests that Ford Foundation officials were aware of the pressure the grant funds placed on orchestras in the process of personnel negotiations:

³¹⁶ Beene, Mitchell, and Johnson, “Autopsy of an Orchestra,” 53.

³¹⁷ See Beene, Mitchell, and Johnson, “Autopsy of an Orchestra,” 55.

³¹⁸ Beene, Mitchell, and Johnson, “Autopsy of an Orchestra,” 53.

I am writing to you on behalf of a number of the major orchestras (as well as a few of the metropolitans) to ask if it would be possible for the Foundation to help the orchestras resolve, in some manner, a situation in reference to the endowment Program that is becoming more crucial day by day.

....The funds that may be available to the orchestras through the Endowment Program are being made the focal point of contract discussion by representatives of the musicians in the negotiations of a number of the orchestras.

The representatives of the musicians are reluctant (and, in some cases are actually refusing) even to continue negotiation discussions until the orchestras' association representatives can tell them the exact provision (to the dollar) of a given orchestra's arrangement with the Foundation relative to the Endowment Program.

....As a result of this complex situation, the negotiation committees for both the musicians and the orchestras are becoming worn out, weary, frustrated and quarrelsome with resulting loss of good will, faith and constructive approaches to the many other facets of the working agreements that are covered in the contracts.

....Well do we understand that the Foundation's main concern is to assist the orchestras in the overall strengthening of their operations and future development, and no one wishes to have the present exigencies overshadow the long term goals and benefits of the Endowment Program.³¹⁹

D'Arms had already discussed the details of the Symphony Orchestra Program with Herman Kenin, President of the American Federation of Musicians, several months earlier, in February 1966. Kenin quickly recognized the program's implications on collective bargaining, and employed a "pot of gold" metaphor when the describing the effect the Ford contributions would have on negotiations:

Mr. Kenin seemed to grasp the essential points quickly and understandingly, including the fact that negotiations between players and management were

³¹⁹ Letter from Helen M. Thompson to Edward F. D'Arms, April 15, 1966, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O-R, RAC.

currently delayed because of players' natural desire to share in the "pot of gold" they seemed to think was to be received by the orchestras.³²⁰

Jack Bethards, who managed the Oakland Symphony in the early 1970s, characterized the effect of the Ford Program in similar terms:

One of the big problems is the orchestra knew that we had this huge endowment, and that killed negotiations completely.... They were making far more than any orchestra of the same status, and then want even more, more and more control, more and more regulations, work rules and so on.³²¹

Michael Morgan, who has, since 1990, conducted the Oakland-East Bay Symphony Orchestra—the orchestra created to fill the space left by the bankruptcy of the Oakland Symphony, echoes the remarks of Kenin and Bethards:

It's like anything, in that once somebody gets something, they think they're going to have it all the time, and now everyone has really contentious negotiations...because everyone thinks there's more money around than there is. And all of that started back then, people and the players thinking there's a whole big pile of money being hidden from them somewhere; it makes the relations more adversarial when people think there's something being kept away from them.³²²

Bethards contends that the large salary gains won by the musicians were the result of the combination of an easily coerced and overly social board and a frustrated group of musicians who formed the orchestra's bargaining committee.

I can remember one of the big negotiations; we were just near opening night for a season, and I said [to the board], "Let's take the strike...." And they would not do it because all of their opening night parties were all arranged and that's the true reason, they said so.... The board would never take the hard way and face a strike.

The problem with negotiations with symphony orchestras is not the union; the union is generally very practically minded. It's the players' committee....

³²⁰ Interview with Herman D. Kenin, 1966, box 30, WML.

³²¹ Author's interview with Jack Bethards, October 15, 2016.

³²² Author's interview with Michael Morgan, June 17, 2016.

They are far more adamant about every detail of the contract than the union. If you were dealing directly with the union, it would be a relatively reasonable contract. But the players' committees are made up of lower section players, and symphony players in general are a very depressed bunch.... So the players' committee was very tough and hard to reason with, and most of it was the Ford Foundation's fault.³²³

Melanie Beene articulated a similar opinion about negotiations with orchestral musicians in general:

The San Francisco Symphony employs about 100 wonderful musicians, but there's another 100 just as qualified who could fill every seat in that orchestra. So all the freeway philharmonic people that occupy all of these other orchestras are frustrated because their classmates are sitting pretty making \$100,000 a year and they're barely making it driving all over.

I remember at the time of the study [*Autopsy of an Orchestra*] there was some survey in the *Times* about job satisfaction, and symphony musicians were the lowest, below cab drivers. And I remember somebody I interviewed on the board said "I don't know why they expect to get paid.... Don't they enjoy what they're doing?".... So there was this tension around "should we pay for this?" that's complicated.³²⁴

The Ford Foundation's goal to raise salaries in orchestras was a laudable one, and the bargaining struggles early on during the program were necessary growing pains towards bringing orchestral salaries to levels comparable to other professionals. But coupled with other ultimately untenable projects, like the purchase of the Paramount Theater in Oakland, the Ford money was simply not enough to engender the kind of advancement that the Oakland Symphony envisioned.

The Paramount Theater

³²³ Author's interview with Jack Bethards, October 15, 2016.

³²⁴ Author's interview with Melanie Beene, November 6, 2016.

Although the increase in musician compensation eventually contributed to the shaky pecuniary situation of the orchestra, the purchase and subsequent renovation of the Paramount Theater in downtown Oakland also led to financial difficulty. Built in 1931 and acquired by the Oakland Symphony in October 1972, the Paramount Theater began its life as an art deco movie house. Compared to the orchestra's former home, the drab 2,000-seat Auditorium Theater, the Paramount was larger, at 3,000 seats, and more attractive, with a classic interior and a striking hundred-foot mosaic façade. Depicting male and female puppeteers, the colorful Paramount mosaic is one of downtown Oakland's most striking constructions, and part of the renewed interest that accompanied the orchestra during the early and mid 1970s.

According to Melanie Beene, the orchestra's board planned to raise \$4 million to purchase, refurbish, and endow the Paramount. Prominent board members Edgar Kaiser and Stephen Bechtel each contributed \$250,000, and the previous owner of the theater contributed \$500,000 so that the \$1 million purchase price was covered. But only \$705,000 was pledged to complete the renovation, and no monies were raised for endowment funds.³²⁵

Furthermore, the pledges were not all received before the renovations were scheduled to begin, and the orchestra needed a \$1 million loan to complete the project on time. The loan—and its accompanying interest—put great pressure on the

³²⁵ See Beene, Mitchell, and Johnson, "Autopsy of an Orchestra," 14.

orchestra to succeed in the new hall.³²⁶ As Bethards suggests, the orchestra did enjoy early success at the Paramount; subscription sales increased 161 percent in the first season in the hall, from 4,381 in 1972–73 to 11,434 in 1973–74.³²⁷ Sales remained strong the next year; in both of the first two seasons in the Paramount subscription sales accounted for more than 80 percent of capacity, and including single ticket sales, the hall was nearly sold out both years.³²⁸ By comparison, the San Francisco Symphony sold an average of 69.4 percent of capacity on subscription from 1973 to 1988.³²⁹

But by the end of the second season at the Paramount, Bethards was gone after serious disagreements with the board of directors (discussed below). His departure led to a slow subscription campaign for the following season; during the 1975–76 season, the orchestra's third at the Paramount, only 70 percent of capacity was sold on subscription, and the hall was only at 78 percent of total capacity, including single ticket sales.³³⁰ This downward trend continued until the orchestra's last years; on average, the orchestra only sold 66 percent capacity at the Paramount.³³¹

³²⁶ Beene, Mitchell, and Johnson, "Autopsy of an Orchestra," 14.

³²⁷ Memorandum: Danny Newman to Marcia Thompson, May 8, 1974, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC.

³²⁸ Including single ticket sales, the Paramount was sold at 95 percent capacity in 1973–74, and 89 percent in 1974–1975. See Beene, Mitchell, and Johnson, "Autopsy of an Orchestra," 27.

³²⁹ The San Francisco Symphony performed in the 3100-seat War Memorial Opera House until 1980, when the 2700-seat Davies Symphony Hall was completed. See Beene, Mitchell, and Johnson, "Autopsy of an Orchestra," 26.

³³⁰ Beene, Mitchell, and Johnson, "Autopsy of an Orchestra," 27.

³³¹ *Ibid.*, 27.

The Paramount project soon proved to be deeply problematic. The hall was too large for the orchestra to fill once the initial excitement had faded, and in addition to the usual expenses associated with operating a large hall, the Paramount accrued a sizeable annual property tax bill of \$50,000. In May 1975, the orchestra negotiated the sale of the hall to the city of Oakland, in exchange for \$1.00 and forty years of free rent.³³² But the \$1 million loan taken out to renovate the hall—and the accompanying interest—still required servicing by the orchestra.

At the conclusion of the Ford Foundation Program in 1976, the orchestra was awarded custody of the Foundation's endowment contribution, a total of \$1.23 million, including capital gains. Instead of placing this money in a permanent endowment, the orchestra used the money to service debt associated with the Paramount's renovation loan.³³³ The combination of the Ford Foundation's \$1,230,000 and the \$1,000,808 raised locally to match the Ford dollars should have left for a total endowment in 1976 of at least \$2,230,808. Instead, as a result of the many factors outlined above, from 1976 to 1983 the endowment hovered between \$1 million and \$1.4 million. By 1985—when the orchestra was in its last season—the endowment was worth less than \$300,000.³³⁴

Melanie Beene summarized the Paramount boondoggle thus:

The Oakland Symphony's restoration of the Paramount Theatre is an example of how an institution put its central mission – maintaining a viable symphony orchestra – at risk.... The result was financial crisis. From running a symphony orchestra, the organization suddenly took on the tasks of

³³² Ibid., 27.

³³³ See Beene, Mitchell, and Johnson, "Autopsy of an Orchestra," 15.

³³⁴ Ibid., 50.

landowner, historical restorer, and facility renter.... The perils of the so-called “edifice complex” are not uncommon in the performing arts, and the Oakland Symphony is not the first organization to allow a building acquisition to derail it from its central purpose.³³⁵

Thus, the costly restoration of the Paramount Theater contributed to the orchestra’s troubles in the 1970s and 1980s, as part of a broader transformation of the orchestra during and after the Symphony Orchestra Program. Encouraged by the successful results of the Ford matching challenge, the Oakland Symphony board tried and failed to capitalize on its fundraising momentum to raise enough money for the hall’s renovation. Nonetheless, in a sustained bid to become a major orchestra, and in fact achieve major budgetary status, the board took on major debt to finance the Paramount’s renovation.

It was not uncommon for orchestras to upgrade their performing spaces in the 1970s; as we will see in Chapter 5, the Minnesota Orchestra built a new hall around the same time the Paramount was renovated. But the pressures of owning, renovating, and maintaining an auditorium are manifold, and the Oakland Symphony’s leaders simply were not prepared to capitalize on it.

Crises of Leadership

In addition to the myriad difficulties associated with the Paramount, leadership problems plagued the Oakland Symphony beginning in 1971 at the

³³⁵ Ibid., 75.

conclusion of the Ford match. The success of the orchestra in the matching challenge empowered the board to reimagine the Oakland Symphony as more than just a regional orchestra, which led to disagreements about the organization's purpose. At the end of the successful second season at the Paramount, Jack Bethards left following an acrimonious falling out with the board. Bethards describes his departure thus:

I just had a total split with the board. I didn't like the way things were going; I particularly didn't like how they were trying to handle the theater part of it... That was one big controversy, and just general personality clashes. I'd had enough.³³⁶

Bethards's departure created great strife within the organization, and left the orchestra without decisive management. The aforementioned dip in subscription sales during the orchestra's third season (1975–76) at the Paramount was in large part the result of Bethards' departure. Danny Newman, the Ford Foundation consultant who worked with the Oakland orchestra in the 1970s, noted in his June 1975 report to Marcia Thompson the implications of Bethards' departure on ticket sales:

Although the Oakland Symphony had a good subscription year [the 1974–75 season], even higher than the year before when we had made that enormous gain, there was a considerable internal dissatisfaction due to the departure of the general manager, Jack Bethards, who had dominated the workings of this organization for the past few years. Because of his falling out with the Board, nothing much had been done the entire winter and spring concerning the subscription effort for the 1975-76 season. Now that he is gone and a much-belated campaign is underway, the renewal [of concert subscriptions] appears to be poor.³³⁷

³³⁶ Author's interview with Jack Bethards, October 15, 2016.

³³⁷ Memorandum: Danny Newman to Marcia Thompson, June 14, 1975, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC.

After Bethards' departure, nine out of eleven administrative staffers were dismissed or fired between June 1975 and October 1976.³³⁸ Newman believed that Musical Director Harold Farberman also represented an obstinate barrier to smooth workings at the orchestra:

The musical director has always been very sensitive about renewal, somehow taking any person's refusal to renew as a rebuke to his artistic direction.... Last year, too, he pressed very hard for comparative figures on this subject—that is compared with other Orchestras. After he left the meeting to catch his plane for the American Symphony League's conference in San Diego, I was able to concentrate more on the practical plans for the next several months³³⁹

Hired in 1971 to replace the renowned and adventurous Gerhard Samuel, Farberman incited great resistance during his tenure, which lasted until 1979. Whereas German-born Samuel deftly combined Germanic sensibility with emblematically west-coast musical progressivism, Farberman came from New York City with a swagger that charmed the board and annoyed the musicians. Although the board saw Farberman as a means to ground the orchestra in the classics and expand the organization's social reputation, he was deeply unpopular with the musicians and administrative staff. Jack Bethards recalls him as an able musician but an injudicious leader:

Really solid professional musician, from a commercial musical family in New York. He was a typical powerhouse working musician, very skilled guy, but a terribly difficult person to get along with, in many ways.... He had a lot of skill and thorough training and background and so on, but he just rubbed people the wrong way, and he rubbed me the wrong way.³⁴⁰

³³⁸ Robert Commanday, "Upheavals Within the Oakland Symphony Structure," *The San Francisco Chronicle*, October 24, 1976.

³³⁹ Memorandum: Danny Newman to Marcia Thompson, June 14, 1975, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC.

³⁴⁰ Author's interview with Jack Bethards, October 15, 2016.

Farberman's difficulties in the early 1970s with the musicians were exacerbated by a constant flow of negative press. In the pages of the *Oakland Tribune* and the *San Francisco Chronicle*, local critics Robert Commanday, Paul Hertelendy, and Heuwell Tircuit consistently panned Farberman, mostly for non-musical transgressions. Danny Newman's May 1974 report to Marcia Thompson noted Farberman's difficulties with the press and his impact on subscriptions sales:

The big problem seems to be that their musical director, Maestro Farberman, has been under an unremitting attack from the critical press. When I read some of these reviews a few months ago I told the Oakland Symphony management to expect a negative reaction from the subscribers; they felt that I was unnecessarily pessimistic.³⁴¹

Heuwell Tircuit's Nov, 1973 review "Oakland Symphony's Decline" in the *San Francisco Chronicle* typifies the negative response to Farberman in the press:

The radical decline in performance standards by the Oakland Symphony was shocking. What had been the Bay Area's second orchestra—and at one time, many of us felt it was number one—has now sunk to fourth, at best.

Harold Farberman, excuse me, it is now officially "Maestro Farberman"—churned out a pedestrian, humorless performance.

A week ago, without mentioning Watergate, I wrote a calm, rather friendly letter to President Nixon trying offer logical reasons as to why he should resign. Clearly, it is time to begin composition of such a letter to Maestro Farberman. Farberman has managed, if only passively, to destroy the Oakland Symphony, its personnel, repertory, performance standards and reputation.³⁴²

Tircuit also responded negatively to the Paramount—"How can anyone be expected to stay awake amid that morass of bad sight lines and yucky colors"—but

³⁴¹ Memorandum: Danny Newman to Marcia Thompson, May 8, 1974, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC.

³⁴² Heuwell Tircuit, "Oakland Symphony's Decline," *The San Francisco Chronicle*, November 1, 1973.

his distaste with the hall resonates more as condescension from a San Francisco critic accustomed to the San Francisco Symphony's august War Memorial Opera House, than as objective critique.³⁴³ He was not alone—and perhaps not unjustified—in his reproach of the haughty Farberman.

Los Angeles Times critic Martin Bernheimer visited with Farberman before a concert in 1974 at the newly-renovated Paramount Theater and noted the sparkle of the updated hall: “the Paramount conveys a warmth and a charm that seem to elude our stark and sterile *new* houses.” Echoing the Bay Area critics, Bernheimer was critical of Farberman's conducting: “The strings sounded muffled, the brass disembodied, the winds out of kilter. To complicate matters, the orchestra responded sluggishly to Farberman's brisk, efficient, ultimately impersonal urges.... From where I sat, things definitely looked better than they sounded.”³⁴⁴

A critical assessment of Farberman penned in 1973 by *Chronicle* critic Robert Commanday earned the writer a “thank you” card signed by thirty-seven members of the orchestra. When Commanday mentioned the card to Farberman and Bethards—as an example of the orchestra's discontent—the conductor responded by telling the orchestra that he had “seen” the card, insinuating that he knew which orchestra members had signed it. A musician told Commanday about Farberman's boast, and finally Bethards intervened in support of Commanday.³⁴⁵

³⁴³ Tircuit, “Oakland Symphony's Decline.”

³⁴⁴ Martin Bernheimer, “Concerts Amid Art Deco Glitter,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 19, 1974.

³⁴⁵ Letter from Robert Commanday to Michael Sleeter, 1973, Oakland Symphony Orchestra Archive, Museum of Performance and Design, San Francisco, California (Hereafter cited as OAK).

Although Hertelendy, Commanday, and Tircuit grated against Farberman's personality, their reviews of Farberman's musical abilities were somewhat mixed. Responding to Tircuit's claim that the Oakland Symphony had "sunk to fourth" best in the Bay Area, Hertelendy gave high marks to Farberman for a 1973 performance of Felix Mendelssohn's Fourth Symphony: "The orchestra appeared stung by a lone trans-bay critic's contention that it had slipped to No. 4 among Bay Area orchestras, because the way that it played Mendelssohn's Fourth Symphony, it was second to nobody in Northern California.... Farberman's interpretation of the symphony was a gem, and the musicians played like masters all the way."³⁴⁶ In 1977 Commanday offered praise in the *Chronicle*: "High praise goes to Farberman for his attentiveness to [piano soloist Lazar] Berman's constant give-and-take rubato, shaping a performance in which the orchestra was one with Berman in feeling and romantic style.... The Farberman-Oakland Symphony performance was energetic and dynamic."³⁴⁷

But the musicians' dislike of Farberman continued through the mid 1970s. In 1976 the orchestra produced a series of concerts conducted by Antonia Brico, the first woman to conduct the Berlin Philharmonic, and a graduate of the University of California, Berkeley and Mills College.³⁴⁸ Brico conducted Brahms, Mozart, and

³⁴⁶ Paul Hertelendy, "Symphony Scores Success," *The Oakland Tribune*, November 11, 1973.

³⁴⁷ Robert Commanday, "At the Oakland Symphony: The Other Side of Rachmaninoff's Coin," *The San Francisco Chronicle*, March 17, 1977.

³⁴⁸ See Leta E. Miller and Catherine Parsons Smith, "Playing with Politics: Crisis in the San Francisco Federal Music Project," *California History* 86, no. 2, 2009; and Donal Henahan, "Antonia Brico, at 72, Finds Her Baton in High Demand," *The New York Times*, May 19, 1975.

Sibelius with the Oakland players in April 1976, and a press release by the players suggested that her concerts symbolized the orchestra's frustrations with Farberman:

The reasons for the players' sponsoring their own concerts were several. One important reason was the seeking of artistic rewards. The Orchestra had played five years under the leadership of Harold Farberman with no guest conductor until this year. The musicians were looking for new inspiration, for more variety in programming, and the orchestra was unhappy with the musical leadership of Mr. Farberman.... The enthusiastic response of the audiences to the concerts was rewarding to the musicians. The standing ovation for Brico, the soloists and orchestra was tremendous. Now the players must decide if they will produce further concerts.³⁴⁹

In 1977, when Farberman's contract was up for renewal the second time, the majority of orchestra members again voiced their opposition to him; a letter from the Players' Committee to the board's president indicated that 66 percent of musicians did not want his contract renewed. The board renewed it nonetheless.³⁵⁰

In 2016 Farberman recalled the distaste of the musicians as growing pains: "The orchestra support was spotty, especially at the beginning of my tenure when I had to replace several musicians who were not professional quality but were long time members of the initially amateur orchestra."³⁵¹ But he recalls a strong working relationship with the board: "The Board renewed my contract three times. We worked well together.... The Board insisted I transform the quality of the orchestra and supported me fully as I did change the performing level of the orchestra."³⁵²

³⁴⁹ Oakland Symphony Players' Committee Press Release, April 5, 1976, OAK.

³⁵⁰ Beene, Mitchell, and Johnson, "Autopsy of an Orchestra, 5.

³⁵¹ Harold Farberman, e-mail message to author, November 22, 2016.

³⁵² Ibid.

Erstwhile Oakland Symphony bassoonist Robert Hughes recalls that Farberman's personality and ability to hobnob with the board as the reason for his continued employment by the orchestra, despite the protests of the musicians:

He was popular with the board, and he had the ability to socialize and flatter and invite to dinner members of the board. He could cultivate the board. I would have expected them to see through the flattery, but apparently they didn't, and they granted him what he wanted until ultimately it didn't work out.³⁵³

As a result of the heightened importance placed on American Symphony Orchestra budgetary categories by the Ford program, Farberman and the board believed that the orchestra should strive quickly to attain "major" status—as defined by the American Symphony Orchestra League—under the impression that the orchestra would be eligible for larger NEA grants, and it is clear that a sense of factionalism emerged within the organization.³⁵⁴ Jack Bethards and the musicians appear to have opposed the rapid transformation of the organization. In contrast, Farberman and the board bullishly pushed for growth in all aspects. New concert series, for example, created confusion for audiences; by 1986 the orchestra was selling tickets for seven different series.³⁵⁵

From 1970 to 1986 the orchestra went through seven different managers, including Jack Bethards. A report prepared by a consultant in 1977 noted: "The Oakland Symphony Orchestra has not been distinguished in its history of general

³⁵³ Author's interview with Robert Hughes, December 9, 2017.

³⁵⁴ See Beene, Mitchell, and Johnson, "Autopsy of an Orchestra."

³⁵⁵ These were the Grand Series, Features, Pops, Favorite Classics, and Musical Galaxy Series in Oakland, the Zellerbach Series in Berkeley, and the Rheem Series in Moraga. See Oakland Symphony 1986–1987 Season Brochure, OAK.

managers, the position having been something of a revolving door.”³⁵⁶ In addition, the board consistently failed to adequately staff the marketing department. Melanie Beene notes that for most of 1976 to 1982 the orchestra did not employ a marketing director or manager, or consider the position critical to fill.³⁵⁷

The notoriously difficult Farberman also exacerbated staffing problems.

Danny Newman, the Ford Foundation consultant, wrote in 1975:

The current promotion person is evidently not a favorite of the music director’s, yet we cannot afford to rock the boat with the coming season so close now. I have urged him [Farberman] when I later saw him in San Diego, to step aside and let her work without fear of being fired.³⁵⁸

Bethards describes some of the particular difficulties in working with Farberman:

He could be sloppy, he would program something and then leave things up in the air for me to pick up the pieces. He would treat the orchestra members in the little ways that a conductor can needle people. He was a needler, and also sometimes would come a little bit unprepared, not for lack of talent, but sometimes just a little laziness. He very much wanted to put himself at the forefront of everything. It was just a lot of little things that added up to an unpleasant situation.³⁵⁹

Although Bethards characterized his split with the orchestra in terms of personality clashes, Farberman recalls Bethards’ departure in different terms: “Finally Edgar Kaiser’s Vice President, Phil Bush, examined the Paramount financials and discovered Mr. Bethards was charging the Symphony expenses that actually belonged

³⁵⁶ George Alan Smith, "A Report of the Place and Use of the Oakland Symphony Orchestra," 1977, OAK.

³⁵⁷ See Beene, Mitchell, and Johnson, “Autopsy of an Orchestra.”

³⁵⁸ Memorandum: Danny Newman to Marcia Thompson, June 14, 1975, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC.

³⁵⁹ Author’s interview with Jack Bethards, October 15, 2016.

to the Paramount. He was fired on the spot.”³⁶⁰ It is unclear exactly how Bethards’ short tenure with the Oakland Symphony came to an end and whether he resigned or was fired, but his unceremonious departure is indicative of the disagreements that clouded the top levels of the orchestra’s leadership. Bethards’ vision of careful growth clashed with Farberman and the board’s Ford-financed visions of grandeur.

The Board

Because of staff discontinuities, Farberman and the board enjoyed a unique degree of autonomy and continuity. The board revolved around Edgar Kaiser and his various lieutenants, as well as representatives from several other large Oakland companies, including Bechtel Engineering and Mervyn’s department stores. Stephen D. Bechtel and Edgar Kaiser were each responsible for the \$250,000 gifts that enabled the Paramount purchase; in addition to serving as a board member of the Oakland Symphony, Bechtel was a trustee of the Ford Foundation from 1961 to 1970.³⁶¹

Industrialist Edgar Kaiser Sr. served as chairman of the Oakland Symphony board for seventeen years starting in 1962 and was vital in wrangling support from his eponymous corporate and nonprofit enterprises.³⁶² Head of the Kaiser companies,

³⁶⁰ Harold Farberman, e-mail message to author, November 22, 2016.

³⁶¹ Although Bechtel was a trustee of the Ford Foundation, it is unlikely that his service had an impact on the Oakland Symphony’s inclusion in the Program for Symphony Orchestras. The orchestra was automatically included because it was classified as a metropolitan orchestra by the American Symphony Orchestra League.

³⁶² See Beene, Mitchell, and Johnson, “Autopsy of an Orchestra.”

including the Kaiser Aluminum and Chemical Corporation, the Kaiser Cement Corporation, and the Kaiser Steel Corporation, Kaiser's influence was essential in raising matching funds during the Ford Program. In addition to cash gifts totaling at least \$139,350, Kaiser directed donations of \$100,000 each from the Kaiser Foundation and Kaiser Industries; Kaiser executives and family members also chipped in with gifts of Kaiser stock totaling \$216,750.

Table 4.3: Gifts Related to Edgar Kaiser and Kaiser Companies During the Matching Phase of the Symphony Orchestra Program³⁶³

Gifts of Kaiser Corporation Securities

Season	Company	Donor	Amount
1966–1967	Kaiser Industries	Mrs. George Havas	\$ 25,000
	Kaiser Industries	Mrs. T.M. Price	\$ 1,250
1967–1968	Kaiser Industries	Clay Bedford	\$ 1,900
	Kaiser Industries	Edgar Kaiser	\$ 22,000
	Kaiser Industries	Miller, M.	\$ 850
	Kaiser Industries	Mrs. T.M. Price	\$ 1,250
1968–1969	Kaiser Industries	Mrs. T.M. Price	\$ 2,000
	Kaiser Industries	Mrs. T.M. Price	\$ 1,000
	Kaiser Steel	Heiner	\$ 1,500
	Kaiser Industries	Edgar Kaiser	\$ 17,500
1969–1970	Kaiser Steel	Heiner	\$ 1,500
	Kaiser Steel	Myers	\$ 16,000
1970–1971	Kaiser Industries	Edgar Kaiser	\$ 114,000
	Kaiser Steel	Myers	\$ 20,000
Total Kaiser Securities			\$ 225,750

Cash Gifts by Edgar Kaiser and Kaiser-Directed Philanthropies

Kaiser Himself	\$ 139,350
Kaiser Industries	\$ 100,000
Kaiser Foundation	\$ 100,000
<i>Total Ford Match Gifts Explicitly Tied to Edgar Kaiser</i>	\$ 565,100
<i>Total Endowment Match Gifts From All Sources</i>	\$ 835,908

³⁶³ See "Oakland Symphony Orchestra Association: Securities Received as Ford Gifts From July 1, 1970 — June 30, 1971," 1971, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC; "Oakland Symphony Orchestra Association: Ford Endowment Gifts Received 1968/1969," 1969, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC; "Oakland Symphony Orchestra Association: 1969/1970 Payments on Endowment Pledges," 1970, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC; "Oakland Symphony Orchestra Association: Securities Received as Ford Gifts From July 1, 1967 — June 30, 1968," 1978, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC; "Oakland Symphony Orchestra Association: Securities Received as Ford Gifts From July 1, 1966 — June 30, 1967," 1967, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC.

These donations—explicitly tied to Edgar Kaiser and/or Kaiser companies—totaled more than \$550,000. The total raised by the orchestra through June 30, 1971 amounted to only \$835,908—more than \$150,000 short of the \$1,000,000 needed to secure the Ford Foundation endowment grant—but an anonymous donor stepped in at the last minute to plug the gap.³⁶⁴

Although there is no way of confirming who anonymously saved the orchestra's stake in the Ford Program, it is clear that the orchestra relied on Edgar Kaiser and his influence for more than 50 percent of the funds needed to accomplish the Ford match. A development department staffer during Kaiser's chairmanship pithily summarized his influence: "Mr. Kaiser could materialize money."³⁶⁵

During and after the Kaiser Chairmanship, many involved with the Oakland Symphony believed that Kaiser was responsible for plugging the orchestra's deficits. Mark Drury, a member of the bass section in the 1980s, and chairman of the orchestra's final negotiating committee in 1986, recalls hearing from longtime members of the orchestra: "At the end of each fiscal year, management would go to Kaiser and say 'we have a deficit of this much' and he would just write a check. When he died in the early 1980s, there was no one to sign those checks."³⁶⁶

³⁶⁴ See "Oakland Symphony Orchestra Association: Securities Received as Ford Gifts From July 1, 1970 — June 30, 1971," 1971, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC; "Oakland Symphony Orchestra Association: Ford Endowment Gifts Received 1968/1969," 1969, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC; "Oakland Symphony Orchestra Association: 1969/1970 Payments on Endowment Pledges," 1970, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC; "Oakland Symphony Orchestra Association: Securities Received as Ford Gifts From July 1, 1967 — June 30, 1968," 1978, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC; "Oakland Symphony Orchestra Association: Securities Received as Ford Gifts From July 1, 1966 — June 30, 1967," 1967, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC.

³⁶⁵ Beene, Mitchell, and Johnson, "Autopsy of an Orchestra," 34.

³⁶⁶ Author's interview with Mark Drury, February 19, 2017.

Kaiser's death in 1981 left the orchestra without its sustaining patron, and the overreliance on him throughout the 1960s and 1970s illustrates the board's greatest failure to capitalize on the Ford Program by expanding the orchestra's donor base. Because failing to achieve the Ford match would have been a tremendous embarrassment for the orchestra—and by extension Kaiser and his board—Edgar Kaiser took it upon himself to make the Ford match a success, even if by doing so he failed in the task of cultivating new donors. Thus, instead of fostering new sources of fundraising, the Ford match program had the opposite effect of reinforcing the perception that Kaiser could bankroll the entire Oakland Symphony operation. Melanie Beene writes: "Kaiser's not inconsiderable clout and resources had, in the earlier years of the organization, contributed to the creation of an assumption on the part of the board that someone would always be there to help the Symphony out of the financial crisis of the moment."³⁶⁷ Although the Oakland Symphony's board never approached the wealth or prestige of the San Francisco Symphony's, it would have been prudent to diversify its donor base beyond a single patron and his employees.

During Farberman's last season as music director (1978–79), six guest conductors were invited to audition for the post: Calvin Simmons, an assistant conductor under Zubin Mehta in Los Angeles; Christopher Keene, music director of the Syracuse Symphony; Michael Palmer, music director of the Wichita Symphony; David Gilbert, a winner of the Mitropoulos Conducting Competition; Lawrence

³⁶⁷ Beene, Mitchell, and Johnson, "Autopsy of an Orchestra," 34.

Smith of the Oregon Symphony; and Daniel Lewis, music director of the Pasadena Symphony and Professor at the University of Southern California.³⁶⁸

Despite the many lows of the 1970s, the appointment of Calvin Simmons, a twenty-nine-year-old African-American San Francisco native as music director created new buzz about the orchestra in 1979. Simmons brought renewed interest in the orchestra, and drove increases in ticket sales and fundraising; his first season (1979–80) was the only one after 1976 in which the orchestra finished with a budgetary surplus.³⁶⁹ The orchestra also received exceptionally large public subsidies from the NEA and the California Arts Council during the Simmons years; the California Arts Council's grant for the 1980–81 season (Simmons' second) was the largest given to an organization with a budget comparable to Oakland's.³⁷⁰

Reviews of Simmons were positive. Heuwell Tircuit wrote in *The Chronicle* that Simmons was “a real gem,” and that his concerts were “a great improvement over recent seasons.”³⁷¹ But in addition to his musical ability, Simmons's ethnicity brought wider interest to the orchestra. The local African-American weeklies in the Bay Area—the *San Francisco Sun Reporter* and the *Oakland Post*—both reported on Simmons' selection and homecoming.³⁷² The *Sun Reporter* noted the historic nature of his appointment:

A precocious Black youngster from San Francisco has become one of the leading young conductors of opera and symphony in this country. Before the

³⁶⁸ Paul Hertelendy, “Symphony Slates Six Guest Conductors,” *The Oakland Tribune*, April 8, 1978.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 44.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 42.

³⁷¹ Heuwell Tircuit, “The Oakland Symphony Has Come Up with a Real Gem,” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, November 1, 1979.

³⁷² “Black Conductor for Oakland Symphony,” *The Oakland Post*, September 29, 1978.

age of 28, he established a reputation in Europe as well. His recent selection as music director of the Oakland Symphony makes him the first Black conductor of a major symphony orchestra in the United States. Calvin Simmons continues to excel in a field where few Blacks have gained prominence.

Will Simmons, as a Black conductor, attract more minority members to the symphony? He says honestly, "I don't know," then laments, "Where are the Black musicians? Are they just staying away from auditions? It's open to everybody. Let's just see what happens now." Good musicians of any color—those who meet the standards of the orchestra—are hard to find, he emphasizes. Simmons doesn't want to "change" the present group of subscribers—only to "enlarge" them to include more Blacks and other minorities. "The Oakland Symphony is for everyone" has been a slogan of recent years. In the future, with Simmons leading the way, the symphony's goal could become a reality.³⁷³

Simmons himself was keenly aware of what it meant for a young African-American man to be at the helm of a symphony orchestra. Although Oakland is a city with a large African-American population, the Oakland Symphony was a majority white ensemble. When asked at the time of his hiring how many black musicians were in his new orchestra, Simmons replied simply, "I'm it."³⁷⁴ In addition, Simmons recognized the intrinsic difficulties associated with building audiences for symphonic music in Oakland, and the elitism that often kept San Francisco audiences away from the East Bay: "Why shouldn't people cross the bridge? It's that damned Bay Area prejudice, and I find it a little provincial."³⁷⁵

The excitement regarding Simmons was ultimately short lived, though. His

³⁷³ Anna Dabney, "Calvin Simmons: A Local Boy Makes Good," *The Sun Reporter*, February 15, 1979.

³⁷⁴ Angela Woodall, "City's Symphony Rose and Fell with Calvin Simmons," *East Bay Times*, December 3, 2007.

³⁷⁵ Angela Woodall, "City's Symphony Rose and Fell with Calvin Simmons," *East Bay Times*, December 3, 2007.

tenure came to a tragic and abrupt end when he drowned while canoeing in upstate New York in August 1982. An unusual and ultimately unexplained incident, Simmons arrived early for a dinner party held at a home near Lake Pleasant and took a canoe out on nearby Connery Pond. Although there were campers nearby who saw him canoeing, none of them witnessed his fall into the water, and his body was never recovered. The entire incident is odd considering that Simmons was an experienced canoer: he spent three weeks on a canoe trip in Minnesota during the prior year.³⁷⁶

If not for his untimely death, it is possible that the appointment of Simmons could have saved the Oakland Symphony. Although Simmons did not have enough time to define his programming style to the extent that Samuel and Farberman did, his presence—the African-American son of a local working-class family—distinguished the orchestra from the Edo de Waart-led San Francisco Symphony. And although the Oakland Symphony survived for several seasons after his death, his passing haunted the orchestra until the very end. Melanie Beene recalls a voice message left by a woman on the answering machine in the post-bankruptcy Oakland Symphony office: “The Symphony died because Calvin died.”³⁷⁷

After a year-long search during the 1982–83 season, in which Leonard Slatkin served as artistic adviser, Richard Buckley assumed the role of Music Director. A young American who had been based in Seattle—and who was involved with the first

³⁷⁶ Richard D. Lyons, “Police Continuing the Search for Body of Calvin Simmons,” *The New York Times*, August 25, 1982.

³⁷⁷ Author’s interview with Melanie Beene, November 6, 2016.

North American production of the Ring Cycle at the Seattle Opera—Buckley had dramatic plans to expand the offerings of the orchestra:

I felt that we needed to find an identity, so I created with Arthur Jacobus, the orchestra's manager, this idea of us becoming the regional orchestra that would be based at the Paramount Theater but also do outreach programs and do family concerts that would go to the different communities.³⁷⁸

Buckley and Jacobus outlined their plan for regionalization in the orchestra's 1985–89 Long-Range plan, entitled "A Plan of Artistic and Management Objectives for the Future."³⁷⁹ In addition to performing runout concerts in the East Bay suburbs of Moraga, Concord, Martinez, Walnut Creek, Livermore, and Pleasanton, the objectives outlined in the 1985–89 plan included splitting the board of directors into smaller regional boards, a tour of the Western United States, a recording project, and an endowment drive to raise \$5 million.³⁸⁰ Although the orchestra did perform runouts and split up the board, its other goals proved impractical. According to Melanie Beene, "The Oakland Symphony's plans were often idealized visions rather than delineations of carefully constructed, achievable objectives."³⁸¹

Buckley maintains that the regionalization idea was a good one: "I still believe in it conceptually," but that labor strife prevented the organization from reaching its potential, "We got great press, the orchestra was responding to me well, we were reviewed as the most improved orchestra, and we were flying high (ish). Then we go into the 1985–86 season, and it is negotiation time again."³⁸² Although Buckley's

³⁷⁸ Author's interview with Richard Buckley, January 15, 2017.

³⁷⁹ Beene, Mitchell, and Johnson, "Autopsy of an Orchestra," 22.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 22.

³⁸¹ Beene, Mitchell, and Johnson, "Autopsy of an Orchestra," 18.

³⁸² Author's interview with Richard Buckley, January 15, 2017.

plans for the orchestra may have been overly ambitious, he aimed to remedy one of the orchestra's central deficiencies: the lack of a clearly definable—and thus marketable—identity.

Loss of Identity

The Oakland Symphony first performed in 1933, but its modern history began in the late 1950s, when the musicians first began receiving paychecks, and when, in 1959, Gerhard Samuel became the orchestra's music director.³⁸³ Leading the orchestra in its first years as a professional ensemble, Samuel expanded the season from eight to twenty-four concerts, and helped Oakland and the Bay Area develop a national reputation as a locus of new music. Praised locally in the *Oakland Tribune* and the San Francisco *Chronicle*, as well as nationally in the *Los Angeles Times* and the *Boston Globe*, Samuel cultivated a unique reputation as a dual specialist of both Mozart and twentieth-century music, with a particular focus on West Coast composers.

A list of Samuel's performed works with the Oakland Symphony Orchestra illustrates his eclectic approach to programming with a striking preponderance of West Coast composers, some of whom had scant reputations outside of California.³⁸⁴ Among those programmed by Samuel were Larry Austin, Charles Boone, Ingolf

³⁸³ See Beene, Mitchell, and Johnson, "Autopsy of an Orchestra," 53.

³⁸⁴ A complete list of works performed by Gerhard Samuel during his tenure with the Oakland Symphony comprises Appendix 2.

Dahl, Richard Felciano, Lou Harrison, Andrew Imbrie, Wayne Peterson, and Morton Subotnick.³⁸⁵ By comparison, of the aforementioned composers, the San Francisco Symphony during the same span only performed the music of Charles Boone, Andrew Imbrie, and Wayne Peterson.³⁸⁶

Samuel enjoyed a particularly strong relationship with Lou Harrison—whose music was performed at least ten times from 1959 to 1969.³⁸⁷ Although recognized in Oakland and by the Bay Area press, Harrison did not receive performances by the San Francisco Symphony in the 1950s, 1960s, or 1970s.³⁸⁸

In 1961, composer and conductor Robert Hughes began composition lessons in Aptos, California with Harrison and began to organize concerts at a coffeehouse called the Sticky Wicket. By 1963, the concerts at the Sticky Wicket evolved into the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music at nearby Cabrillo College. In that same year Hughes joined the Oakland Symphony as a bassoonist and recruited Samuel to become the first music director of the Cabrillo Festival.³⁸⁹ During his tenure from 1963 to 1968, Samuel guided the Cabrillo festival towards international renown as a

³⁸⁵ "Music Performed by Maestro Gerhard Samuel and the Oakland Symphony: 1959-1969," (Oakland, CA: The Oakland Symphony Orchestra, 1969).

³⁸⁶ "Repertoire of the San Francisco Symphony: September 1, 1959 to August 31, 1981," Unpublished Report Produced Internally by San Francisco Symphony Orchestra Archivist Joseph Evans, March 10, 2014.

³⁸⁷ "Music Performed by Maestro Gerhard Samuel and the Oakland Symphony: 1959-1969," (Oakland, CA: The Oakland Symphony Orchestra, 1969).

³⁸⁸ "Repertoire of the San Francisco Symphony: September 1, 1959 to August 31, 1981," Unpublished Report Produced Internally by San Francisco Symphony Orchestra Archivist Joseph Evans, March 10, 2014.

³⁸⁹ See "Festival History," The Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, accessed November 15, 2018, <http://cabrillomusic.org/about-us/festival-history-archives/>.

summer parallel to the Oakland Symphony.³⁹⁰ Drawing mainly from the membership of the Oakland Symphony, the Cabrillo festival—like the Oakland Symphony—consciously embraced Harrison and other composers working on the West Coast.

In addition, during this period Samuel created the Oakland Symphony Chorus and the Oakland Youth Orchestra, which toured internationally, made commercial recordings, and was the first youth orchestra to win an ASCAP (American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers) Award for services to contemporary music.³⁹¹ Under the direction of Robert Hughes, the Youth Orchestra developed its own reputation as a home for new music; the orchestra even commissioned and premiered new works, including Lou Harrison's second symphony: *The Elegiac* in 1975, and Ned Rorem's *Water Music* in 1967.³⁹²

In fact, Samuel's Oakland Symphony provided a professional institutional home for many composers associated with the experimental Bay Area music scene centered around Mills College in Oakland. A tiny women's liberal arts college, by the 1930s Mills College had developed an extraordinary commitment to new music.³⁹³ Assisted by several grants from the Rockefeller Foundation in the 1960s, Mills College absorbed the resources and the expertise of members of the San Francisco

³⁹⁰ Leta E. Miller and Fredric Lieberman, *Composing a World: Lou Harrison, Musical Wayfarer*, (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 61.

³⁹¹ See Beene, Mitchell, and Johnson, "Autopsy of an Orchestra," 2.

³⁹² Miller and Lieberman, *Composing a World*, 70; and Robert Commanday, "Youth Orchestra Plays New Work," *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 11, 1967.

³⁹³ See Robert Commanday, et al. "San Francisco." *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed April 7, 2017, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/24512>, and David Bernstein, *The San Francisco Tape Music Center: 1960s Counterculture and the Avant-Garde* (Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press, 2008).

Tape Music Center, which eventually became the Mills Center for Contemporary Music. Under the initial direction of Pauline Oliveros, Mills became a home for the burgeoning field of electronic music.³⁹⁴ Ford Foundation Program Officer Richard Kapp described a 1970 meeting with composer and co-director of the Mills' Center for Contemporary Music Robert Ashley:

The college has what appears to be a unique center.... What makes the Mills program unique is that all facilities are open not only to the college community but to the general public and most are in use at least 16 hours a day. The policy of the college has been to provide these facilities as what amounts to a national resource for serious and interested (but non-commercial) users who pay a fee of about \$2.50 per hour for the use of any studios, including a fully trained engineer-technician.... The Mills facility is the only one in the country that brings together all of the various approaches to electronic musical synthesis under one roof.³⁹⁵

Ashley and the music department at Mills ultimately received several Ford Foundation grants in the 1970s, to help composers visit and utilize Mills' studios and create documentary films about American composers. In collaboration with the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations, Ashley's fourteen-hour series *Music with Roots in the Aether* highlighted the work of composers David Behrman, Philip Glass, Gordon Mumma, Pauline Oliveros, and Terry Riley, as well as Ashley himself.³⁹⁶

Samuel was closely involved in the scene surrounding the San Francisco Tape Music Center and Mills College in the 1960s. David Bernstein writes in his history of the San Francisco Tape Music Center: "Gerhard Samuel was a friend of new music,

³⁹⁴ David Bernstein, *The San Francisco Tape Music Center: 1960s Counterculture and the Avant-Garde* (Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press, 2008), 34.

³⁹⁵ Richard P. Kapp, "Interview with Robert Ashley, Co-director of Mills' Center for Contemporary Music, Mills College, Oakland, California," 1970, Box 21, WML.

³⁹⁶ *The Ford Foundation Annual Report: October 1, 1975 to September 30, 1976* (New York, NY: The Ford Foundation, 1976).

and his Oakland Symphony, then a sort of glorified community orchestra, was a source of lively concerts and chamber-music spin-offs, mostly at Mills College.³⁹⁷ In 1967 a *McCall's Magazine* piece on the Tape Music Center reported on Oliveros's approval of Samuel: "She says musicians today are the most conventional people she knows, with the possible exception of Mills' great composer, Darius Milhaud, and Oakland Symphony conductor Gerhard Samuel."³⁹⁸

Under Samuel, the Oakland Symphony earned a reputation for adventurous performances of new music, while during the same period the San Francisco Symphony lacked vitality under Josef Krips. In 1969, a *Los Angeles Times* feature by Martin Bernheimer described the rivalry between the two orchestras and the difficulties of the San Francisco Symphony:

The San Francisco-Oakland rivalry was healthiest and most defensible in the days when Josef Krips used his orchestra primarily as a vehicle for the stodgy standards while, across the bay, Samuel made flamboyant but intelligent experimentation a way of musical life.³⁹⁹

Harold Farberman also recalls the rivalry between the two orchestras at the start of his tenure in 1971:

When I arrived in Oakland Josef Krips, an older German conductor, was the Music Director of San Francisco, which was great for me. His programs were considered boring and old fashioned, the orchestra good but not special. . . . The Oakland performance level slowly grew to that of San Francisco when Krips finally retired. When Ozawa succeeded Krips [in 1970] the San Francisco reviews for Oakland Symphony performances were equal to San Francisco's, and the two orchestras were actually considered rivals, although San Francisco had a Major Orchestra budget and reputation, and Oakland a Regional Orchestra budget and an "is there a there *there*" reputation.⁴⁰⁰

³⁹⁷ David Bernstein, *The San Francisco Tape Music Center*, ix.

³⁹⁸ "San Francisco: The Tape Center," *McCall's Magazine*, February 1967.

³⁹⁹ Martin Bernheimer, "Orchestral Woes in San Francisco," *The Los Angeles Times*, October 31, 1969.

⁴⁰⁰ Harold Farberman, e-mail message to author, November 22, 2016.

During a 1965 meeting with Ford Foundation consultant George Kuyper, Oakland Symphony senior staff and board members articulated the strong position of the orchestra relative to its rival across the Bay. Kuyper recalled:

In reply to my query as to competition with the San Francisco Orchestra he [board member Stephen G. Herrick] replied that...more and more the Oakland Symphony is becoming the cultural image of the community; the concerts are the city's leading social events. Oakland is growing rapidly—physically and economically—and the Symphony under Samuel “has captured the leadership position in the community's cultural growth.” They feel that the competition (“Samuel has more stimulating programs”) is good for San Francisco.⁴⁰¹

From the perspective of the players, Robert Hughes recalls that playing under Samuel's leadership was artistically stimulating, “It was a well-rounded and adventuresome time with him,” and that “critics agreed that the liveliest and most interesting orchestra in the Bay Area was the Oakland Symphony.”⁴⁰²

Thus, the Oakland Symphony's position in the Bay Area was strongest under Samuel, as it differentiated itself from the more conservative San Francisco Symphony. The orchestral voice of cutting-edge California composers, the Oakland Symphony occupied a unique musical space in Northern California and the Western United States. But conflicts between Samuel's programming and the more conservative tastes of the orchestra's Board led to his resignation in 1971.

Although he offered his resignation to the board in July 1969, Samuel conducted through the 1969–70 season, as well as several concerts during the 1970—

⁴⁰¹ Report of George Kuyper's Luncheon Meeting with Oakland Symphony Personnel, 1965, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC.

⁴⁰² Author's interview with Robert Hughes, December 9, 2017.

71 season while a search was underway. He read a statement at the December 9, 1969 board meeting:

Many of you seem to be unaware of the fact that the Oakland Symphony exists at all and is miraculously known in wide international circles because it has, for eleven years, pursued a rather more relevant artistic policy than most other orchestras.

...Mounting pressures by donors who feel that the orchestra should reflect their tastes and what generally amounts to a lack of vision as to where we should be heading to remain alive artistically, have made my work difficult and have frustrated any attempt to forge ahead spectacularly in directions which seem so clearly indicated by the changing times.

...This Board must support the musical policy of its Musical Director, and not cater to the tastes of individual financial contributors whose sole aim should be the perpetuation of a first-class symphonic institution which will be able to accommodate the needs and tastes of audiences who are rapidly changing their listening habits and who will not remain satisfied with the status quo.⁴⁰³

George Kuyper recalled in his 1965 meeting report—at which Samuel was not present—a reluctance towards Samuel’s experimental programming: “Samuel has been commended for his stimulating programs. And yet at luncheon there was some grumbling about the inclusion of ‘avant garde’ music in the concerts.”⁴⁰⁴ Robert Hughes echoes Kuyper recollection, and notes that a faction of the board found Samuel too far out: “The orchestra would not have wanted him to leave. But the less-cultured, moneyed members of the board did.”⁴⁰⁵ *LA Times* critic Martin Bernheimer said that Samuel “antagonized the sing-along contingent, both on his board and in his audience.”⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰³ Statement from Gerhard Samuel to Oakland Symphony Orchestra Board Members Detailing the Reasons for his Resignation, 1969, Oakland Symphony Orchestra Archive, OAK.

⁴⁰⁴ Martin Bernheimer, "Orchestral Woes in San Francisco," *The Los Angeles Times*, October 31, 1969.

⁴⁰⁵ Author’s interview with Robert Hughes, December 9, 2017.

⁴⁰⁶ Martin Bernheimer, “Concerts Amid Art Deco Glitter,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 19, 1974.

Samuel himself summed up the situation succinctly to the *San Francisco Chronicle* when news of his resignation was reported: “They would like me to become terribly establishment, with the ‘right’ artists and the ‘right’ programs.... What I’ve been doing is right for me. So they have to do their thing and I have to do mine.”⁴⁰⁷

Although the orchestra may have enjoyed a robust reputation in critical circles, contemporary music—as it does today—lacked the wider appeal of the canonic warhorses by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Brahms. Jack Bethards recalls the contrast between popular and critical opinion during the Samuel years:

Now, the reason it did well before Ford came in, Gerard Samuel, who was a really magnetic conductor, really brilliant guy, made Oakland the new music center of the United States. He premiered more new music and played more new music, than any other orchestra in the country, and you’d read about the Oakland symphony in the *New Yorker*, the *New York Times*, everywhere; they were the forerunner of modern music, and so they had a nationwide reputation in the 1960s but no audience, because the audience hated the music. But they had a great reputation in artistic circles.⁴⁰⁸

Farberman recalls a respect for—and maintenance of—Samuel’s patronage of contemporary music: “I was completely aware of Samuel's programming and admired him for it. I continued his new music programming, but with different repertoire.... New Music and commissions remained a feature of my Oakland programming.”⁴⁰⁹

The Ford program should have capitalized on the Oakland Symphony’s identity as an originator of contemporary music. Instead, the program inspired the

⁴⁰⁷ Joshua Kosman, "Conductor, Composer Gerhard Samuel Dies at 83," *SFGate*, March 29, 2008.

⁴⁰⁸ Author’s interview with Jack Bethards, October 15, 2016.

⁴⁰⁹ Harold Farberman, e-mail message to author, November 22, 2016.

board to reimagine the orchestra in more widely appealing terms. Farberman began his tenure by publicly repudiating Samuel's programming choices in the press. John Rockwell announced Farberman's appointment in Oakland in a 1970 *Los Angeles Times* article:

A majority of the Oakland Symphony board in recent years had come to resent Samuel's highly adventuresome programming, and his attention to avant-garde scores in particular. Farberman himself has something of a reputation as a conductor of modern, if not exactly radical music. But, he stated at a recent Bay Area press conference, that he was interested in "good music, not isms," and that an orchestra "must not be a refuge for contemporary music, but play all kinds of music, and have a representative feeling for different aspects within the contemporary fold."⁴¹⁰

The transition from Samuel to Farberman accompanied a shift of the opposite kind in San Francisco. Seiji Ozawa replaced Krips in San Francisco, and brought energy both as a conductor and as an innovative programmer. Ford Foundation Program Officer Oleg Lobanov recalled a 1972 trip to the Bay Area and a concert by the San Francisco Symphony:

The real highlight of the trip, however, came two days later at the San Francisco Symphony concert. In my judgement Ozawa is molding a first-rate orchestra; he is an exceptional conductor. The concert included a stunning performance of the "Mozart Piano Concerto No. 21 in C Major K.467" with Christoph Eschenbach, and an excellent reading of the Scriabin "Poem of Ecstasy." But the program also included the first West Coast performance of Roger Sessions "Symphony No. 8" and the first American symphony appearance of the Japanese Imperial Court Orchestra performing a fascinating piece for the Court Orchestra and a traditional symphony orchestra written by Maki Ishii. All in all, one of the finest concerts I've heard in years.⁴¹¹

⁴¹⁰ John Rockwell, "Farberman Named to Post with Symphony," *The Los Angeles Times*, March 6, 1970.

⁴¹¹ Note from Oleg Lobanov Regarding his Recent Visit to the Bay Area, 1972, Ford Foundation Records, Grants 0-R (FA732F), RAC.

The shifted focus of the Oakland Symphony—away from contemporary music and towards more traditional symphonic repertoire—and the simultaneous re-emergence of the San Francisco Symphony as a vital institution dulled the luster of the Oakland orchestra. Melanie Beene notes that by offering a unique product, Samuel’s orchestra could attract audiences from San Francisco: “They [the Oakland Symphony] would never draw from here [San Francisco]. People from here were going there [Oakland] because the product was different.”⁴¹² But once Samuel was gone, the orchestra became more like a typical symphony orchestra, lost its niche in the Bay Area, and instead attempted to compete with the San Francisco Symphony. Inferior musically, and lacking the social cache of San Francisco, the Oakland orchestra’s decline ultimately was hastened in the 1970s by a crisis of mission. Jack Bethards summarized the orchestra’s predicament in the 1970s:

There was no reason for the Oakland Symphony to exist. It did not need to be there, because you have one of the world’s top orchestras in the country right there in San Francisco twenty minutes away, and it had all the social prestige. But when it [the Oakland Symphony] started trying to become a miniature San Francisco Symphony, that’s when it got in trouble.

The real socialites of the Oakland area really were San Francisco socialites. There was really no artistic, or no market reason for the orchestra to exist. Who needs a second orchestra that is not quite as good as San Francisco? And you can go to San Francisco for a full 26-week season, and 3 nights a week every week.

I suggested to the board very early in my tenure, look we should become differentiated from San Francisco, and I made several suggestions. I said how about a pops orchestra? How about a chamber orchestra? And how about, you won’t believe this, how about a band, a concert band? Do something that was completely different from San Francisco, but they wouldn’t hear of it, because

⁴¹² Author’s interview with Melanie Beene, November 6, 2016.

they wanted the society glamour of a symphony orchestra and symphony artists.⁴¹³

Bethards was not alone in proposing an alternate vision for the Oakland Symphony. In 1986, Charles Shere, writing for *The Oakland Tribune*, made a list of ways the Oakland Symphony could transcend its position as “a second-string San Francisco Symphony.”⁴¹⁴ Among other ideas, Shere suggested a staged production of *Porgy and Bess*, readings of the music of living California composers, chamber-orchestra concerts of music by Asian, Latino, and African-American composers throughout the Bay Area, and lunchtime concerts in corporate cafeterias and roof gardens.⁴¹⁵

But in arguing for new approaches, Bethards and Shere were competing not only with the board and musicians of the Oakland Symphony, but also with the general perception of the Symphony Orchestra as an elite institution. Shere argued that this crisis was an existential one: “The conventional orchestra concert is often more entertainment than art. And nothing is more demeaning than being out of a job and on the dole—which may be the alternative to a number of local musicians if the Oakland Symphony doesn’t adapt to the changing musical needs of the community that supports it.”⁴¹⁶

Although the Ford Foundation was not responsible for the germination of the

⁴¹³ Author’s interview with Jack Bethards, October 15, 2016.

⁴¹⁴ Charles Shere, “Oakland Symphony Needs to Risk Search for Identity,” *The Oakland Tribune*, August 17, 1986.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid.

⁴¹⁶ Charles Shere, “Oakland Symphony Needs to Risk Search for Identity,” *The Oakland Tribune*, August 17, 1986.

idea that symphonic music was more sophisticated than wind band music, jazz, or popular music, the Symphony Orchestra program reinforced the dual notion that professional symphony orchestras were a mark of civic merit, and that even cities like Oakland could—and should—support a professional orchestra. Although Oakland would never enjoy the philanthropic resources of New York, Boston, or San Francisco, the Symphony Orchestra Program encouraged the Oakland Symphony Orchestra to strive to compete with orchestras in wealthier cities. Ironically, as evidenced in reviews and interviews, at the end of Samuel's tenure, and before the distribution of the Ford Endowment funds and the purchase of the Paramount, many believed that the Oakland Symphony actually *was* better than the San Francisco Symphony. It never achieved that level acclaim again.

The ultimate death knell for the orchestra came in September 1986, when, after guaranteeing the musicians a base annual salary of \$12,000 (\$27,688 in 2018 dollars) for the 1986–87 season, the board—with a projected deficit of nearly \$1 million for the upcoming series—told the musicians that it could only afford to pay about half that amount: \$5,872.⁴¹⁷ The players—under contract for the agreed upon minimum of \$12,000—offered to take a cut to \$8,500, but were ultimately rebuffed, leading to a stalemate in negotiations, and the ultimate shuttering of the organization.

Conclusion

⁴¹⁷ Michael Harris, "Oakland Symphony Cancels Season," *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 13, 1986.

The story of the Oakland Symphony—and its ultimate downfall—exemplifies the complicated nature of the Ford Foundation’s Program for Symphony Orchestras. Blame for the bankruptcy of the orchestra can be assigned to many causes. Unaware of the seriousness of the situation, the musicians failed to accept a working compromise in the final hours. But it was the board and the management that misrepresented the association’s finances until the very end and who unsustainably raised supply—and by extension expenses—without a demand-based mandate. For example, Harold Lawrence, manager of the orchestra from November 1977 to September 1981, increased the number of guaranteed services drastically from 72 to 124 under the assumption that “supply creates demand.”⁴¹⁸

But the “supply creates demand” approach that ultimately sank the orchestra was made possible by the Ford Foundation’s grants under the Program for Symphony Orchestras. Although the foundation cannot be held accountable for the tragic and inexplicable death of Calvin Simmons, the mishandling of the foundation’s grant monies exacerbated the association’s worst impulses.

The orchestra failed to capitalize on the matching mechanism and expand its fundraising base, ultimately relying on the same small moneyed group that had funded the orchestra all along. In addition, the orchestra misused the Ford funds, by financing the purchase and renovation of the Paramount Theater, which was simply too large and expensive to become profitable. Concurrently, though, in many ways

⁴¹⁸ See Beene, Mitchell, and Johnson, “Autopsy of an Orchestra.”

the orchestra did succeed in fulfilling the Ford Foundation's general aims. By lengthening seasons, and improving pay, the Oakland Symphony improved the financial well-being of its musicians and provided the East Bay with an arguably finer orchestral instrument, if only until 1986. None of the positives helped the orchestra keep its doors open in the end, though, and the Oakland case—starting with the departure of Gerhard Samuel in 1971—can be directly tied to decisions made in response to the Ford Foundation program.

The orchestra's final negotiations in the fall of 1985 and summer of 1986 appear to have been exceptionally acrimonious. Interferences from several outside actors added to the pressures placed on both musicians and management. Lew Waldeck, former tubist of the New York City Opera Orchestra and director of the AFM's Symphonic Services division, encouraged orchestral musicians throughout the country to fight for better wages and working conditions. After joining the AFM staff in 1984, Waldeck helped many orchestras define their priorities in negotiations in the 1980s. But he was also at the center of the collective strife felt by many smaller, regional orchestras in the late 1980s. Although the Oakland Symphony was the first to declare bankruptcy, the orchestras of Honolulu, Denver, Sacramento, Phoenix, and Oklahoma City, struggled through wage freezes, strikes, and concessions during the 1986 season, and in New York, Waldeck led a collective strike of several New York orchestras, including the American Symphony Orchestra, American Composers Orchestra, Brooklyn Philharmonic, and the Orchestra of St. Luke's.⁴¹⁹

⁴¹⁹ John Rockwell, "Many Orchestras in Financial Straits," *The New York Times*, January 19, 1987.

Mark Drury recalls Waldeck as a galvanizing presence when he visited Oakland in the 1980s and spoke to members of the orchestra: “He gave us a long speech and answered questions, and then we went to work. We tried to raise awareness of the musicians and we all tried to get on board with the attitude that we deserved more and that there was more to be had.”⁴²⁰

Waldeck and the AFM’s involvement led the musicians to strike and delay the start of the 1985–86 season, but eventually management agreed to many of the musicians’ demands, lending credence to the what Melanie Beene calls the “credibility gap”: “The repeated pattern of the Association saying first ‘we can’t afford this,’ then agreeing to a contract which called for ever-expanding activity.”⁴²¹ According to Robert Hughes, Waldeck and the AFM argued that over decades the musicians were always let down by management: “We had gone through a number of decades where symphony orchestras in negotiations would back down on the conditions of a contract, and lose a little money and benefits.”⁴²²

When in August 1986 the board announced its intention to file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection—a technique typically used to restructure existing contracts—the orchestra’s Players’ Committee accused the board of overstating its financial problems:

The Association’s filing of a bankruptcy petition is meant as a guillotine suspended over the heads of the Players to force renegotiation. We will not succumb to the Association’s attempt to circumvent the democratic processes

⁴²⁰ Author’s interview with Mark Drury, February 19, 2017.

⁴²¹ See Beene, Mitchell, and Johnson, “Autopsy of an Orchestra,” 57.

⁴²² Author’s interview with Robert Hughes, December 9, 2017.

by which we work and we are confident that the Bay Area community will not be misled by the Association's irresponsibility.⁴²³

Although the endowment earned from the Ford Foundation was essentially exhausted, the lawyer for the players specifically noted the health of the orchestra's balance sheet as justification that the organization was more stable than the board was letting on:

David Rosenfeld, attorney for AFM Local 6 (to which orchestra members belong) states, "...There is a serious question as to the validity of the bankruptcy filing because the actual assets of the Oakland Symphony are far greater than its liabilities. As a result, the union's view is that the only reason the bankruptcy was filed was to reject the union contract. This has become clear because less than one week after filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, a motion was filed to reject the musicians' contract."⁴²⁴

Rosen was correct in stating that the reported assets of the orchestra were greater than its liabilities; the orchestra's 1984 tax return shows assets of \$2,897,123 and liabilities of only \$1,247,014, suggesting a degree of solvency.⁴²⁵ But in fact, the orchestra's accountants—overseen by auditors at Price Waterhouse—had included a "future rent benefit" of \$1,302,649, the estimated amount the orchestra would have paid to rent the Paramount if not for the forty-year free rent agreement established with the City in the 1970s. Thus, in the years leading up the bankruptcy, the orchestra reported the Paramount as an asset—as if it still owned the hall—and positively inflated its balance sheet. Melanie Beene considers this issue a key source of misunderstandings in the final days:

⁴²³ "Press Release: Musicians Call Oakland Symphony Bankruptcy Ploy to Sidestep Union Contract," The American Federation of Musicians, September 2, 1986, OAK.

⁴²⁴ "Press Release: Musicians Call Oakland Symphony Bankruptcy Ploy to Sidestep Union Contract," The American Federation of Musicians, September 2, 1986, OAK.

⁴²⁵ 990 Return of Organization Except from Income Tax, 1984, OAK.

I fault as well as Ford, Price Waterhouse, the auditor.... They counted the free rent in the Paramount theater for the forty years as an unrestricted asset which skewed the bottom line, which made the musicians think they had more money than they had, and the board members didn't know exactly how bad things were, because it kind of confused things on the audit.⁴²⁶

Confusion over the solvency of the organization led to a ratcheting up of the rhetoric by the players and their allies. The International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians released a statement:

Resolved: That the governing board and delegates of the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians and their constituent orchestras...support the musicians of the Oakland Symphony in their struggle to maintain their orchestra as a major symphony with concomitant wages, benefits and working conditions in the face of their management's appalling use of the Chapter 11 of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code to circumvent their hard-won contract.⁴²⁷

In a similar vein, American Federation of Musicians President Victor W.

Fuentealba stated:

What they did...was thumb their noses at musicians and audiences alike. But, at least, they are now out in the open. Anyone who believes they'd have done otherwise even if the musicians had knuckled under to Mr. Markham's [the orchestra's manager] blackmail, is naïve. They'd have kept whittling away at salaries, benefits and working conditions until they found an excuse to try and void the contract. By taking action, the musicians merely forced them to move up their schedule.⁴²⁸

Beyond the basic financial misunderstandings, the caustic 1985 negotiations had solidified a deep antipathy between the musicians and management. Mark Drury recalls being deeply distrustful of Henson Markham in particular: "It was such a nasty

⁴²⁶ Author's interview with Melanie Beene, November 6, 2016.

⁴²⁷ "Press Release: Musicians Call Oakland Symphony Bankruptcy Ploy to Sidestep Union Contract," The American Federation of Musicians, September 2, 1986, OAK.

⁴²⁸ "Press Release: Musicians Call Oakland Symphony Bankruptcy Ploy to Sidestep Union Contract," The American Federation of Musicians, September 2, 1986, OAK.

negotiation and we had been such at odds that I basically didn't believe anything that came out of Henson Markham's mouth, and I essentially just waived him off when he told me that they were out of money."⁴²⁹ Robert Hughes remembers Markham as an absentee manager who was seldom seen by the musicians, and also that there was a sense of distrust between Markham and the musicians: "I don't think the management and Markham ever negotiated in good faith."⁴³⁰

In addition, Drury and the Players' Committee hoped that Richard Buckley would offer his support and conduct concerts produced by the musicians: "We had asked Richard Buckley to speak out on behalf of the orchestra, but he had refused because he was concerned that he would be blacklisted. This was a huge disappointment to us."⁴³¹ Stuck in an extremely precarious position, Buckley recalls this situation with great regret:

At that time in the business, being a music director—if a strike happened, management and the board expected you to not necessarily be on their side, but to not pick up against them. They were trying to do concerts together and I said, "I'm sorry but I'm being advised by everyone that I shouldn't do that." And I think that the musicians thought that I was against them which I was not. It's still a very painful, emotional experience because I loved that orchestra.⁴³²

Unfortunately for all involved, the situation was more dire than assumed by the musicians, and on September 13, the orchestra officially declared Chapter 7 bankruptcy; the *Chronicle* reported grimly that there was little hope for those who

⁴²⁹ Author's interview with Mark Drury, February 19, 2017.

⁴³⁰ Author's interview with Robert Hughes, December 9, 2017.

⁴³¹ Ibid.

⁴³² Author's interview with Richard Buckley, January 15, 2017.

had already purchased tickets: “Subscribers who paid \$600,000 in advance will be in line with other creditors.”⁴³³

In addition to the central fiscal misunderstanding associated with the purchase and renovation of the Paramount, the Ford Foundation Program also had the effect of reinforcing the notion that the orchestra was financially secure because it had the foundation’s backing. And by relying on several donors—principally Edgar Kaiser and Stephen Bechtel—the orchestra failed to articulate a strong case for increased financial involvement by board and community members. The orchestra’s overreliance on Kaiser in particular resonates with a statement made to the *New York Times* in 1968 by Stewart Warkow, manager of the American Symphony Orchestra: “The Ford grant has become the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval for orchestras. We’ll get the money, by hook or by crook, because we must.”⁴³⁴

Although it is tempting to blame the fall of the Oakland Symphony on a variety of factors—not just the Ford Program—it is illustrative to imagine the Oakland Symphony as if the Ford Program had never happened. The first effects of the program were felt in the mid 1960s when musicians began demanding more work and higher pay, and it is clear that musicians were aware of the impending Ford windfall, and cognizant of the possibilities the Ford millions to come. The Oakland musicians, like most around the county, deserved a raise, and the Ford Foundation’s goal of raising salaries was a laudable one. But the Oakland Symphony’s unique

⁴³³ Michael Harris, "Oakland Season Cancels Season," *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 13, 1986.

⁴³⁴ Donald Henahan, “Nation’s Orchestras Unsettled by Need to Match Ford Grants,” *The New York Times*, January 10, 1968.

position across the bay from the bigger and better San Francisco Symphony put extra pressure on bargaining because the musicians as well as the board wanted to compete with their transbay rival. Thus, although salary increases were urgently needed, they were also a major factor in the rising costs that ultimately sunk the orchestra.

By the late 1960s, the orchestra's board had grown tired of Gerhard Samuel's stubborn focus on new music and looked to move the orchestra in a new direction toward a more focused repertoire as well as "major" status. While Samuel became Associate Conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Oakland board hired Harold Farberman to lead the orchestra toward a new degree of professionalism. Although he succeeded in re-orienting the orchestra and replacing many hold-over musicians from the orchestra's more amateurish past, he did so at the expense of the unique identity that the orchestra enjoyed in the 1960s, and it is not clear that he improved the overall quality of the orchestra. Enabled by the impending distribution of the Ford endowment money, the orchestra purchased and renovated the Paramount Theater in Oakland in 1972. But having failed to expand its donor base and generate sustainable interest, the Paramount project was critically undercapitalized and quickly led to the pillaging of the newly received endowment. Finally, by the mid 1980s, with the endowment nearly depleted, labor relations strained, and audience interest waning, the association collapsed.

Thus, a clear causal relationship exists between the announcement and distribution of the Ford money in the 1960s, and the ultimate disbandment of the orchestra in the 1980s. But more broadly, the Oakland Symphony situation shows

how the Ford Foundation's one-size-fits all approach of endowment and expendable funds didn't fit in every case. Rather than a series of essentially blank checks, perhaps what the Oakland Symphony needed was several smaller project-oriented grants that developed its strength as a contemporary music ensemble. In addition to general support and salary increases, these funds could have been earmarked for specific commissions, recording projects, or tours that expanded the orchestra's reputation and skill without exposing it to direct competition with the San Francisco Symphony.

It is impossible to know what would have become of the Oakland Symphony if the Ford Foundation had not devised its Program for Symphony Orchestras, or if the Oakland Symphony had not been included, or if the money had been managed differently by the orchestra's leaders. But it is clear that the money ultimately led in part to the orchestra's bankruptcy, and the idealistic goals of the foundation ultimately undermined the stability of an institution it aimed to support and improve.

Postlude

Although the Oakland Symphony Orchestra was disbanded in 1986, the story of the Oakland Symphony is incomplete without mention of the Oakland East-Bay Symphony Orchestra. Initially formed in 1988, Michael Morgan has served as the orchestra's Music Director since 1990, and the orchestra has maintained a level of stability and continuity that the original Oakland Symphony never enjoyed. Hired at the age of thirty-three after serving as an assistant conductor with the Chicago

Symphony, Morgan has provided the Oakland East-Bay orchestra with not only the constancy of an unusually long tenure as music director, but also with a canny sense of relevance in the community that transcends the role of the orchestra as an “elite” institution.

Whereas the leaders of the original Oakland Symphony valued expansion, Morgan and his orchestra have placed a premium on community engagement, through educational programs and bridge-building events, like the annual “nontraditional holiday tradition” Let Us Break Bread Together concert. Bringing together diverse performers—the 2016 version featured the Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir, an *a cappella* ensemble, a Klezmer band, a local high school choir, and others—Morgan imagines his orchestra as an organization rooted firmly in the public interest.

Although the Oakland East-Bay Orchestra does not perform as many concerts or compensate its musicians on the same scale that the original Oakland Symphony did, it is arguably more focused and relevant than its predecessor. Finally, in 2016, the Oakland East-Bay Symphony Orchestra officially changed its name; thirty years after bankruptcy, the Oakland Symphony Orchestra has returned both in spirit, and in name.

CHAPTER 5.

The Symphony Orchestra Program in Context 2: The Minnesota Orchestra

Introduction

The Minnesota Orchestra's work stoppage from October 2012 to February 2014 was one of the most surprising orchestral crises in U.S. history. Hailed in 2010 as sounding "like the greatest orchestra in the world" by *New Yorker* critic Alex Ross, the obstacles that emerged between the musicians and management of the Minnesota Orchestra in late 2012 highlight the often confusing and incongruous balance between artistic and financial success; whereas the orchestra received almost unanimous critical praise—culminating in a Grammy Award in 2013—the financial stability of the organization became tenuous in the long shadow of the economic downturn of the late 2000s.

In the wake of deficits of \$2.9 million and \$6 million in 2011 and 2012, Minnesota Orchestra President and CEO Michael Henson, with the support of his board, proposed a dramatic salary cut to the musicians, lowering the annual base salary from \$113,000 to \$78,000.⁴³⁵ As was the case in the original Oakland Symphony's final negotiation, a credibility gap grew over the financial viability of the organization. Racked with deficits, Henson and Jon R. Campbell, the board chairman, saw the need to cut expenses to preserve the long-term health of the

⁴³⁵ James R. Oestreich, "An Orchestra in the Throes of a Lockout," *The New York Times*, May 13, 2013.

endowment and thus the institution. But for the musicians, several factors poisoned negotiations.

The planned \$50 million renovation of Minneapolis's Orchestra Hall, eventually completed in Fall 2013, coupled with the orchestra's \$59 million endowment (as of the end of the 2011 – 2012 season), suggested to the musicians that management was being disingenuous with its financial figures.⁴³⁶ Musicians were also outraged to learn of Henson's compensation package, which included a \$202,500 performance bonus in 2011. Osmo Vänskä, the orchestra's music director since 2003, publicly sided with the musicians against Henson, in an unusual show of solidarity by a music director caught in a strike; after resigning his directorship in protest, Vänskä told Minnesota Public Radio that "for any healing to begin at the orchestra, Michael Henson must go."⁴³⁷ The orchestra finally reached an agreement in January 2014 and organized a six-month season beginning in February. Vänskä returned to his role as music director in April 2014, only weeks after Henson's announcement that he would step down in August of that year.⁴³⁸

Central to the crisis was the \$50 million Orchestra Hall renovation, part of a broader, \$100 million long-term fundraising effort called "Building for the Future." Divided 40/30/30 among funds for renovations, endowment, and "artistic and

⁴³⁶ See Minnesota Orchestral Association, 990 Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax, 2011, 26.

⁴³⁷ Kristin Tillotson, "Michael Henson to Step Down as CEO of Minnesota Orchestra," *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, March 21, 2014.

⁴³⁸ *Ibid.*

educational endeavors,” \$82 million had already been raised toward the “Building for the Future” initiative by 2010.⁴³⁹

Although the Minnesota Orchestra ultimately survived what became the lengthiest orchestra labor dispute in modern U.S. history, the crisis serves as a potent example of the often-counterintuitive instability of U.S. symphony orchestras. The “Building for the Future” initiative was just the latest in a string of ambitious fundraising drives completed by the Minnesota Orchestra, dating back to its first endowment drive, launched on April 28, 1967, as part of the Ford Foundation’s Program for Symphony Orchestras. Setting off a string of large-scale fundraising campaigns, first to satisfy the terms of the Ford grant, then in the early 1970s to endow Orchestra Hall, next in the early 1980s to raise an additional \$30 million for endowment, and finally in the late 2000s to fund the hall renovation, the Ford Foundation’s Program for Symphony Orchestras emboldened the leaders of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra—as it was known until 1968—to build one of the world’s premier orchestras.

This chapter approaches the influence of the Ford Program for Symphony Orchestras on the Minnesota Orchestra from three primary angles: the circumstances surrounding the name change from the Minneapolis Symphony to the Minnesota Orchestra in 1968, the orchestra’s unusual continuity of administrative and artistic leadership, and finally the long-range planning and effective fiscal stewardship that

⁴³⁹ Christian Lloyd, “Aiming High: Michael Henson Profile,” *International Arts Manager*, July 2, 2010, accessed November 12, 2018 at <https://songofthelarkblog.com/2012/10/15/the-mysterious-disappearing-michael-henson-article/>.

defined the orchestra in the years before, during, and after the Ford Foundation's Symphony Orchestra Program.

Regionalization/Name Change

Founded by Munich-born choir director and organist Emil Oberhoffer, the Minneapolis Symphony performed its first concert on November 5, 1903. Established three years after the Philadelphia Orchestra, eight years before the San Francisco Symphony, and fifteen years before the Cleveland Orchestra, the Minneapolis Symphony was the eighth major orchestra founded in the United States. The orchestra's first permanent hall was built by the Northwestern National Life Insurance Company in 1905 at the corner of Nicollette Mall and 11th Street, catty-corner to the orchestra's current home in downtown Minneapolis.⁴⁴⁰

From 1903 until 1945 lumber executive Elbert L. Carpenter was the Minneapolis Symphony's sustaining patron. Carpenter proselytized on behalf of the orchestra with local business leaders and began touring the orchestra regionally in 1907 to Moorhead and Duluth in Minnesota, as well as to Grand Forks, North Dakota.⁴⁴¹ The orchestra performed in Chicago in 1911 and made its Carnegie Hall debut in 1912; in 1913 the *New York Times* noted that "The Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra seems to have a 'wanderlust' or mania for traveling far from home."⁴⁴² In

⁴⁴⁰ John K. Sherman, *Music and Maestros: The Story of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1952), 66.

⁴⁴¹ Sherman, *Music and Maestros*, 90.

⁴⁴² *Ibid.*, 111.

addition to touring, radio broadcasts and recordings brought the Minneapolis Symphony international acclaim. Under conductor Henri Verbrugghen, the orchestra first performed live radio broadcasts in 1923, and made its first recording while on tour in New York in 1924.⁴⁴³

Eugene Ormandy's tenure as conductor from 1931 to 1936 further solidified the orchestra's reputation. During an eleven-day period in January 1935, Ormandy made no less than twenty recordings with the Minneapolis Symphony on the Victor label, including the first American recording of Mahler's Second Symphony.⁴⁴⁴ Ormandy's concert performance of the Mahler during the 1934–35 season was a polarizing extravaganza involving 350 singers, where the offstage brass musicians in the fifth movement received the beat via electrical lights that were manipulated by a push button under the foot of the assistant concertmaster. The *Minneapolis Daily Star's* critic wrote a cantankerous review: "We can learn more about death and resurrection in five minutes of Bach than from ten times five minutes of Mahler."⁴⁴⁵

Dimitri Mitropoulos and Antal Dorati continued the recording tradition after Ormandy's departure for the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1936; Dorati alone made more than fifty recordings from 1949 to 1960.⁴⁴⁶ Radio broadcasts of the orchestra's recordings were also heard around the world; Richard Cisek, who managed the

⁴⁴³ See Janet Meyer, "Minnesota Orchestra," MNopedia, Minnesota Historical Society, accessed November 12, 2018, <http://www.mnopedia.org/group/minnesota-orchestra>.

⁴⁴⁴ See "The Midwest Experience: Ormandy in Minnesota," University of Pennsylvania Libraries, Accessed November 11, 2018, http://www.library.upenn.edu/exhibits/music/ormandy_minn/case7.html.

⁴⁴⁵ Sherman, *Music and Maestros*, 214

⁴⁴⁶ "Recordings by the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati Conducting," December 5, 1958, Series 2.2, MOAA.

orchestra from 1964 to 1990, first heard of the Minneapolis Symphony on Armed Forces Radio while stationed in Korea in the late 1950s.⁴⁴⁷

Frequent tours, especially in the upper Midwest region, remained a mainstay of the Minneapolis Symphony. The orchestra regularly performed more concerts on tour than it did at home; the 1945 annual report—released soon after Elbert Carpenter’s death—notes that the orchestra gave thirty-seven concerts in the Twin Cities and fifty-one concerts on tour.⁴⁴⁸ The 1944–45 season was also the first season in which the orchestra operated without a deficit; Carpenter’s last gift to the orchestra was \$67,000 to completely eliminate the accumulated deficit.⁴⁴⁹ Incredibly, by 1952 the orchestra had appeared in forty-five states, Canada, and Cuba.⁴⁵⁰

The Minneapolis Symphony’s constant touring exemplified Carpenter’s mission to make the orchestra available to listeners not only in the Twin Cities, but also throughout Minnesota and the upper Midwest. The 1905 death of Theodore Thomas—the impresario who toured the Midwest relentlessly in the late nineteenth century and founded the Chicago Symphony in 1891—left many areas of the region without regular symphonic concerts. The impact of the Minneapolis Symphony’s tours on small Midwestern towns should not be underestimated. John K. Sherman’s 1952 *Music and Maestros: The Story of the Minneapolis Symphony* describes how the orchestra’s tours were often multi-day mini festivals that incorporated local musicians:

⁴⁴⁷ Author’s interview with Richard Cisek, June 23, 2017.

⁴⁴⁸ "Annual Report - June 30, 1945," Series 1.1, MOAA.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁰ Sherman, *Music and Maestros*, 90.

The unaccustomed sound of a symphony orchestra, in itself, was an alluring and even exotic importation for towns whose musical culture was sustained, if at all, by local choruses. These choruses, incidentally, were a large factor in the success of the orchestra in building up its tours, for they were eager to sing with instrumental support and spent many weeks before the orchestra's visit in preparing.... The orchestra served many towns' yearning for an annual music festival in the spring months, and its visit in many cases *was* the festival. Often several days were spent in a single community, with the musical diet varied by recitals given by the vocal and instrumental soloists of the orchestra.⁴⁵¹

Despite the Minneapolis Symphony's reputation as a touring orchestra, the orchestra's leaders began to feel that the organization's name was an obstacle to an even richer regional identity. Board President Kenneth N. Dayton—head of Dayton Department Stores, the eventual parent company of Target Stores—described in his January 1955 President's Report the necessity of expanding the orchestra's reach and adding more donors:

You will hear shortly of the very successful series of concerts which we gave in Rochester [Minnesota] this year. In addition to Rochester, the Orchestra played concerts in Faribault, Northfield, Fergus Falls, Moorhead and Virginia [Minnesota]; also suburban concerts were given in Richfield, Edina and Minnetonka.... If another eight or ten state communities could be added to the list, the Orchestra could make a highly successful state tour. This in turn should help enlarge the membership of the association in many communities throughout the State. I feel strongly that this is the direction in which we should and must move rapidly.⁴⁵²

In addition, Dayton advocated for a change of the name of the orchestra's parent organization to attract more patrons outside of Minneapolis:

At some point in this program of increased membership and increased service to the whole State I think it would be well to change the name of the

⁴⁵¹ Sherman, *Music and Maestros*, 92.

⁴⁵² "President's Report - 1955," Series 1.2, MOAA.

Association from the Orchestral Association of Minneapolis to the Minnesota Orchestral Association, thus making it a truly statewide organization.⁴⁵³

This subtle name change occurred in the late 1950s, while the orchestra still operated publicly as the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra. The announcement of the Ford Foundation's Program for Symphony Orchestras in 1966 gave the orchestra's leaders, including Richard Cisek, who was appointed general manager in 1964, license to think more broadly about how the orchestra could appeal beyond Minneapolis.

The Ford Foundation's grant to the Minneapolis Symphony was a total of \$2.5 million, including \$2 million in endowment funds and \$500,000 in expendable funds. The orchestra was one of only eight—including Boston, New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Los Angeles, and Detroit—included in the top tier of grantees who were required to match their Ford contributions at a 2:1 ratio. Thus, to earn the Ford Foundation's \$2 million, the Minneapolis Symphony had to raise \$2 million on its own. As we shall see, the orchestra succeeded in raising nearly \$8 million, or almost four times its required match; its closest competitor was the eminent Cleveland Orchestra, which raised only \$6.5 million.

As a young general manager at the start of the Ford Program, one of Cisek's primary goals was to increase support from the neighboring "twin" City of St. Paul. Cisek described the relationship between St. Paul and Minneapolis in terms of the U.S. Congress, with St. Paulites as the august Senate and Minneapolitans as the

⁴⁵³ "President's Report - 1955," Series 1.2, MOAA.

boisterous House of Representatives. By the 1960s, the two cities had long maintained a “foolish enmity.”⁴⁵⁴

Although St. Paulites did patronize the orchestra, Cisek and the board felt that bringing more supporters from outside Minneapolis would help to bolster the orchestra’s finances. In the 1960s, although there were concerts in St. Paul as part of larger regional tours, there was no regular subscription series in Minneapolis’s twin city.⁴⁵⁵ To bring in more St. Paulites and solidify the orchestra’s reach throughout Minnesota, Cisek and the board worked to enact a name change of the orchestra itself.

A formal name change study began in 1966, with a solicitation of opinions from Helen Thompson of the American Symphony Orchestra League, John S. Edwards, Manager of the Pittsburgh Symphony, Ronald Wilford of Columbia Artists Management Inc., and representatives of New York public relations firm Edgar Vincent Associates. These consultants recommended against the change: “The unanimous tenure of opinion seems to advise us to proceed with extreme caution in any plans we may have to change the name of the Minneapolis Symphony.”⁴⁵⁶ Specifically, the consultants noted that “the general public in this country and abroad does not identify Minneapolis and Minnesota in the same light as far as cultural enlightenment....Minnesota has an image that is primarily agrarian with perhaps the Gophers [the University of Minnesota mascot] being the next most recognizable image one thinks of in identifying this state.”⁴⁵⁷ In addition, the consultants noted the

⁴⁵⁴ Author’s interview with Richard Cisek, June 23, 2017.

⁴⁵⁵ "Narrative Account of Activities Minnesota Orchestra, 1970-71 Season," Series 5.8, MOAA.

⁴⁵⁶ Memo from Richard M. Cisek to Judson Bemis, February 18, 1966, Series 1.3, MOAA.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.

orchestra's history of great conductors: "The history...as the Orchestra of Ormandy and Mitropoulos...probably would be lost in the transfer of names," as well as the detrimental effect on recording and touring a name change could engender: "No appeal to record companies or foreign tours would be found in the new name of Minnesota, whereas the image of the Minneapolis Symphony carries with it considerable luster and attractiveness."⁴⁵⁸ Although the consultants unanimously opposed incorporating Minnesota into the title of the orchestra, they expressed interest in renaming the orchestra the Minneapolis-St. Paul Symphony Orchestra, as a way to both preserve the Minneapolis name as well as bring St. Paulites into the fold.⁴⁵⁹

By 1967, the Ford endowment drive placed added pressure on the board to decide whether or not to change the name. If managed effectively, the name change could frame the endowment drive as part of a larger transformation of the orchestra, rather than just as a typical fundraising effort. But if done ineffectively, the name change could alienate the core Minneapolis patrons who were the key subscribers and supporters of the orchestra itself. A poorly executed name change could also have the effect of confusing outside audiences and critics into thinking that the renamed orchestra was a new orchestra entirely, or that the Minneapolis Symphony had gone out of business. Echoing the 1966 consultants' mention of "the Gophers," at least one patron wondered "How many record hunters will assume that the symphony is a

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid.

University of Minnesota student orchestra? The name could confuse a very significant share of the public.”⁴⁶⁰

Despite these concerns, the board seriously considered three possible new names: the Minnesota Philharmonic Orchestra, the Minnesota Orchestra, and the Minnesota Symphony. The Minnesota Orchestra was chosen, and announced to the public by Association President Judson Bemis on September 26, 1968: “As the MINNESOTA ORCHESTRA, ours becomes the first major regional orchestra in the county—with a name signifying its mission to bring the enjoyment and rewards of great music to increasing numbers of Upper Midwest residents.”⁴⁶¹

Although the name change had many influential supporters, including Elmer L. Andersen—longtime Minneapolis Symphony Patron and Governor of Minnesota from 1961 to 1963—it had many detractors as well. Many angry letter writers noted that all the “Big Five” orchestras of Chicago, Cleveland, Boston, and Philadelphia—the New York Philharmonic’s name being somewhat ambiguous—were named after cities rather than states. Many also expressed elitist responses along the lines of the 1966 consultants’ estimation that Minneapolis had a stronger artistic reputation than Minnesota: “‘Minneapolis Symphony’ connotes dignity, excellent musicians, and names like Mitropoulos, Ormandy, Dorati, and of course Skrowaczewski. ‘Minnesota Orchestra’ brings to mind a group of amateurs.... How could anyone seriously state

⁴⁶⁰ Letter from Mr. and Mrs. B.F. Cunnington to the Editorial Editor of the *Minneapolis Sunday Tribune*, September 24, 1968, Series 1.4, MOAA.

⁴⁶¹ Letter from Judson Bemis to Friends of the Minnesota Orchestra, September 26, 1968, Series 1.4, MOAA.

that ‘several years of careful deliberation and planning’ brought forth a name as unimaginative and hick-sounding as ‘Minnesota Orchestra’? Shame on Someone!”⁴⁶²

The highest profile name-change detractor was the Music Director himself, Stanislaw Skrowaczewski. Cisek recalled to me the nature of Skrowaczewski’s distaste with the name change: “The musicians had great resentment over it, as did the conductor, Stanislaw Skrowaczewski. Because they felt they had come to this institution and piggy-backed on its reputation, and an orchestra with a new name had no reputation.”⁴⁶³ A memo from Skrowaczewski to the Board of Directors in 1971—several years after the change of name—suggests that his concerns did not diminish over time:

As much as I disliked and opposed the change of the name of our Orchestra, I am bothered more and more by this fact.... I personally and many of our musicians are approached by people who, if they know about our past, consider us a University or provincial team. Those who knew about the change believe that the Minneapolis Symphony collapsed and this is somehow new and without a fine tradition.... How much damage has already been done by this change.... It is not too late to switch back to the name of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra and not to cross out a very fine heritage and name which will never be restituted by the new one.⁴⁶⁴

There does not appear to be any evidence that the name change hurt marketing efforts, or that anyone actually believed that the Minnesota Orchestra was a student orchestra. But as late as 1982 the myth that the name change had diminished the orchestra’s reputation still existed. In an otherwise positive article celebrating Cisek’s twenty-fifth anniversary with the orchestra, *Minneapolis Star-Tribune* music critic

⁴⁶² Letter from Mrs. Garnet Lensegrav, to the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, September 26, 1968, Series 1.4, MOAA.

⁴⁶³ Author’s interview with Richard Cisek, June 23, 2017.

⁴⁶⁴ Memo from Stanislaw Skrowaczewski to Board of Directors, May 25, 1971, Series 1.3, MOAA.

Michael Anthony questioned Cisek on the name change: “Doesn’t this orchestra have a special problem in marketing itself outside the area? Didn’t the name change from Minneapolis Symphony—a name known throughout the United States and Europe via tours and recordings—to Minnesota Orchestra in the late ‘60s give the marketing a special handicap?” Cisek denied this claim: “We continue to be active in the same arenas as before.... I don’t think we slid back because of it. It’s a matter of getting the name of this orchestra out before the public.... As a name, the Minneapolis Symphony was never a match for the Boston or the Philadelphia, but the orchestra today is a finer one than the Minneapolis Symphony was.”⁴⁶⁵

Despite the misgivings, Cisek and the board worked hard to promote the new Minnesota Orchestra once the name was changed. A pamphlet from 1969 called “Music is Alive in Minnesota” is an example of the promotional materials the orchestra used to help small towns host the orchestra while on tour: “YOUR TOWN CAN BECOME one of many regional communities bringing the great Minnesota Orchestra for a special concert for all of its residents.”⁴⁶⁶ The pamphlet included guidance on potential venues: “High school auditoriums or gymnasiums, field houses, community theaters and outdoor recreations areas are often suitable,” as well as an offer to help with planning and promotion: “Minnesota Orchestra management staff will help you plan and promote your musical event.”⁴⁶⁷ Regarding repertoire, each town was given a list of four programs to choose from:

⁴⁶⁵ Michael Anthony, "Cisek, Orchestra Together 25 Years," *Minneapolis Star-Tribune*, 1982.

⁴⁶⁶ "Music is Alive in Minnesota," 1969, Series 5.2, MOAA.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid.

An Evening of Beethoven: A mighty experience! Music by one of the greatest composers in the history of Western civilization, presented in commemoration of the 200th anniversary of his birth.

Music of the Romantic Masters: Music by Berlioz, Tchaikovsky and other 18th and 19th century masters of melodic beauty and lyricism.

A Night in Vienna: The gaiety and romance of the waltz and the splendor of Viennese music, with music by such renowned composers as Mozart, Strauss, Schubert, and others.

The Orchestra Plays the Pops: A program of familiar, light classics and show tunes, performed by the full symphony orchestra, indoors or in a relaxed, informal outdoor setting.⁴⁶⁸

As a direct result of these promotional efforts, the Minnesota Orchestra toured extensively in the late 1960s and early 1970s. During the 1970–71 season, for example, the orchestra performed concerts in thirty-one communities in Minnesota, Wisconsin, North Dakota, and Iowa, in addition to national touring that brought the orchestra to Colorado, Illinois, Florida, South Carolina, Georgia, Louisiana, Alabama, West Virginia, Kansas, Nebraska, Ohio, Vermont, Connecticut, and New York. More than 100,000 people heard the Minnesota orchestra on tour during the 1970–71 season, several thousand more than the combined attendance for the regular subscription series.⁴⁶⁹ Furthermore, the orchestra maintained a strong commitment to educational concerts under the sponsorship of WAMSO, the Women's Association of the Minnesota Orchestra. Concerts for young audiences, which typically included

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁹ "Minnesota Orchestra: Annual Report 1970-71," Series 1.1, MOAA.

small ensembles in performances at elementary schools throughout the State, were heard by an additional 170,000 young people during the 1970–71 season.⁴⁷⁰

One of Cisek’s primary goals was to bring the orchestra more regularly to St. Paul. To this end a full twenty-concert Thursday night subscription series was created in St. Paul during the 1970–71 season, meaning that for the first time, subscription concerts were performed twice each week. Unlike today, where subscription concerts are typically performed on Friday and Saturday nights often with a Sunday matinee, up until the early 1970s, the Minnesota Orchestra’s subscription concerts were solely on Friday nights because its home, the University of Minnesota’s Northrup Auditorium, was large enough—with a capacity of nearly 5,000—to accommodate two nights’ worth of audience.

Although performing each concert only once offered various savings to the orchestra, Cisek believed that *not* performing more than once put the orchestra at an artistic disadvantage:

We could accommodate the audience in one concert but it was silly to rehearse all week and do one concert and then start all over again. Basically it was a one concert per week season, whereas other orchestras in the larger cities had two or sometimes three concerts and it helped the artistry of the orchestra because they played it once and then played it again, really getting it into their fiber, whereas for us every concert was like opening night.⁴⁷¹

Thus, starting in 1970, the orchestra performed each subscription concert twice: Thursday night at the newly constructed 1,800 seat O’Shaughnessy Auditorium at the College of St. Catherine in St. Paul, and then Friday night at

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁷¹ Author’s interview with Richard Cisek, June 23, 2017.

Northrup Auditorium. The orchestra's 1971 report to the Ford Foundation triumphantly makes note of the orchestra's reemergence in St. Paul: "The Orchestra thus took another dramatic step towards regional identification in extending its service to its neighboring city across the river. As a result of such expansion the orchestra now performs significantly more concerts outside of Minneapolis than it does in its city of origin."⁴⁷²

The embrace of St. Paul also earned plaudits nationwide. Donal Henahan of the *New York Times* noted:

For more than 120 years the Twin Cities have faced one another across the Mississippi River and nursed a sibling rivalry that today is still real and strong, though fading appreciably as the twins find themselves more and more entangled in each other's commercial, social and cultural lives.

Last night another strong strand in the alliance was woven—or rewoven, really—with the opening of the Minnesota Orchestra's first regular concert series in St. Paul in 40 years. Formerly called the Minneapolis Symphony, the orchestra changed its name and, to some extent, its purpose in life two years ago. With the change has come a more ecumenical approach to art and St. Paul, and the concert here in the new 1,800 seat O'Shaughnessy Auditorium on the College of St. Catherine campus made the symphonic embrace of the rival cities official.⁴⁷³

Thus, although the Minnesota Orchestra's continued practice of visiting small towns throughout the Midwest brought it popularity in its own backyard, it was its embrace of its "twin," St. Paul, that brought it plaudits on the national stage. This expansion, both to St. Paul and elsewhere in the upper Midwest, coupled the fuller embrace of a regional concept accomplished through its name change, involved a

⁴⁷² "Narrative Account of Activities Minnesota Orchestra, 1970-71 Season," Series 5.8, MOAA.

⁴⁷³ Donal Henahan, "Symphonic Embrace for Twin Cities," *New York Times*, October 10, 1970.

great deal of financial risk. The Ford expendable funds allowed for a degree of breathing room in the annual budget to take on new challenges, and the leaders of the Minnesota Orchestra were well positioned and prepared to capitalize on these funds.

Artistic and Administrative Leadership

The workings of the first half century of the Minneapolis Symphony were dominated by Elbert L. Carpenter, but no figure was as influential during the subsequent half century as Richard Cisek. A native of Buffalo, New York, Cisek joined the orchestra as public relations director in 1958, became assistant managing director in 1960, general manager in 1964, and finally president from 1978 until his retirement in 1990. His tenure spans an incredible period of growth not only for the Minnesota Orchestra, but also for the entire U.S. orchestra business.

In 1964, when Cisek became “the man with the big desk”—as he describes his ascendancy to the position of general manager—the orchestra was still performing one night per week at the University of Minnesota’s Northrup Auditorium, had an endowment of less than \$400,000, and guaranteed musicians a minimum of only \$4,805 (\$39,000 in 2018) per week for a thirty-one-week season.⁴⁷⁴ By the time of his retirement, orchestra members were guaranteed fifty-two-weeks of employment and \$60,000 in annual wages (\$118,000 in 2018); and the orchestra performed in

⁴⁷⁴ "Economic Ranking of Orchestras," December 1, 1964, Series 2.2, MOAA.; "Annual Report - June 30, 1965," Series 1.1, MOAA.

downtown Minneapolis's Orchestra Hall, a 2,000-seat auditorium purpose-built in 1974.⁴⁷⁵

One of Cisek's proudest early achievements was his first contract with the orchestra's musicians, negotiated in 1965. In addition to bolstering wages and guaranteed work weeks, and providing for a host of new workplace protections, the 1965 contract was noted for its length of five years, and was at that time the longest contract negotiated by a major U.S. orchestra.⁴⁷⁶ Over the course of this ambitious arrangement, weekly minimums rose \$10 each year from \$165 to \$205, the season grew from thirty-six to forty-five weeks, and the orchestra added twelve contracted musicians.⁴⁷⁷ The *New York Times* noted at the time of the contract's ratification that the increases in season length and weekly pay would mean a 92 percent increase in the minimum wage, and nearly double the orchestra's budget from \$1.1 million in 1964–65 to \$2 million in 1969–70.⁴⁷⁸

By locking in the musicians for five years, management could more accurately estimate personnel expenses and plan for future seasons more effectively. The musicians benefited by knowing that their wages would greatly increase over the next five years, without the possibility of dropping in an economic downturn or a similar unexpected event. A report prepared by the board's Personnel Committee in 1966 described the benefits of a longer-term deal:

In return for the manifest advantages in stability of a long-term contract, in reliance on which this Association could formulate a long-term program, this

⁴⁷⁵ "Comparative Growth in Orchestra Annual Salaries - 1952 - 2000," *Senza Sordino*, March, 2001.

⁴⁷⁶ Master Contract, July 21, 1965, Series 5.6, MOAA.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁸ "Minneapolis Symphony Signs a 5-Year Contract," *The New York Times*, August 5, 1965.

Association made substantial concessions to the musicians on minimum salaries, guaranteed total weeks of employment, and some incidental conditions of employment.⁴⁷⁹

Furthermore, this five-year contract, negotiated on the eve of the Ford program, insulated the Minnesota Orchestra from much of the labor unrest that plagued orchestras in the early years of the program. Nonetheless, the 1965 agreement dramatically increased the wages of the Minnesota musicians. Although the increase in base weekly scale from \$165 to \$205 over the five-year life of the contract constituted a 24 percent rise, the increase in season length—from thirty-six to forty-five weeks—accounted for a 55 percent rise in gross wages for a musician on minimum scale. In addition, a \$14 cost of living adjustment amounted to \$14 per musician during the last season of the contract, pushing the minimum annual salary in the 1969–70 season to \$9,855, up from \$5,940 in the first season of the contract, (1965–70) and \$4,805 in the season before the contract (1964–65).⁴⁸⁰

⁴⁷⁹ "The Personnel Front," October 23, 1966, Series 1.4, MOAA

⁴⁸⁰ Letter from Paul Christopherson to Board of Directors, August 28, 1970, Series 2.2.

Table 5.1: Historical Minnesota Orchestra Wage Data⁴⁸¹

Season	Minimum Weekly Wage	Total Weeks	Minimum Annual Wage	Minimum Annual Wage (Inflation Adjusted - 2018)	
1952-53			\$ 2,600	\$ 24,246	
1956-57	\$ 110	26	\$ 2,860	\$ 25,342	
1962-63			\$ 4,350	\$ 35,396	
1964-65	\$ 155	31	\$ 4,805	\$ 37,981	
<i>1965 Contract - 5 years</i>					
1965-66	\$ 165	36	\$ 5,940	\$ 45,684	
1966-67	\$ 175	38	\$ 6,650	\$ 49,575	
1967-68	\$ 185	39	\$ 7,215	\$ 51,623	
1968-69	\$ 195	41	\$ 7,995	\$ 54,242	
1969-70	\$ 205	45	\$ 9,225	\$ 59,200	
<i>1970 Contract - 3 years - First Labor Strike</i>					
1970-71	\$ 234	45	\$ 10,530	\$ 64,738	
1971-72	\$ 244	46	\$ 11,224	\$ 66,858	
1972-73	\$ 254	48	\$ 12,192	\$ 68,372	
<i>1973 Contract - 3 years</i>					
1973-74	\$ 280	46	\$ 12,880	\$ 65,051	
1974-75	\$ 295	48	\$ 14,160	\$ 65,534	
1975-76	\$ 320	50	\$ 16,000	\$ 70,015	
<i>1976 Contract - 3 years</i>					
1976-77	340/350*	50	\$ 17,250	\$ 70,876	
1977-78	365/380*	50	\$ 18,625	\$ 71,127	
1978-79	395/420*	52	\$ 21,190	\$ 72,674	
<i>1979 Contract - 3 years</i>					
1979-80	415/440*	52	;	23,530**	\$ 71,101
1980-81	465/495*	52	;	26,260**	\$ 71,931
1981-82	\$ 544	52	;	29,588**	\$ 76,343
1982-83		52	\$ 31,708	\$ 79,267	
1992-93		52	\$ 62,790	\$ 108,195	
2000-01		52	\$ 79,950	\$ 112,468	

* Three year contract with raises built in every six months

** Includes \$1,300 annual electronic media guarantee

⁴⁸¹ See "Comparative Growth in Orchestra Annual Salaries - 1952 - 2000," *Senza Sordino*, March, 2001; "Humanities and the Arts Staff Work--Interview with Boris Sokoloff, Jr., Manager, Minneapolis

In total, salary and benefit costs of orchestra members rose from \$570,708 in 1964–65 to \$1,319,700 in 1969–70, for an increase of 131 percent.⁴⁸² Salaries and benefits of orchestra members accounted for 52 percent of total costs in 1964–65, but 60 percent in 1969–70; gross revenue as a percentage of total expenses dropped correspondingly during the same span from 56 percent to 41 percent, leading to a dramatic jump in operating deficit from \$530,000 to \$1,300,000.⁴⁸³

The large increase in salary and benefit costs were largely due to an increase in work weeks. But as discussed in Chapter 1, orchestra expenditures have generally risen without a corresponding rise in performance revenues. Because the cost of orchestral labor has outpaced a growth in labor productivity in orchestras—a Beethoven symphony still “costs” the same amount of time and number of musicians as it did in 1850—rising wages in the Minnesota Orchestra widened the annual deficit.

In addition to these gains in wages, the musicians made ambitious demands when the next round of negotiations began in January 1970. Believing that they had been financially injured by the length of the five-year arrangement, they demanded a two-year contract with an immediate rise to fifty weeks (up from forty-five) in the first year and a full fifty-two weeks in the second. Furthermore, the musicians sought

Symphony Orchestra," July 12, 1957, box 30, WML; "The Minnesota Orchestral Association Minutes of the Executive Committee Held June 27 and 28, 1964," Series 1.4, MOAA; Master Contract, July 21, 1965, Series 5.6, MOAA; "Narrative Account of Activities: Minnesota Orchestra, 1970-71 Season," Series 5.8, MOAA; "Narrative Report of 1972–1973 Season," 1973, MOAA; "Minnesota Orchestra Association Annual Report 1974/75," Series 1.1, MOAA; "Minnesota Orchestra Settles," *Senza Sordino*, October 1976; "Minimum Salary Comparisons," 1982, Series 2.2, MOAA.

⁴⁸² Letter from Paul Christopherson to Board of Directors, August 28, 1970, Series 2.2.

⁴⁸³ *Ibid.*

a minimum weekly scale of \$275 in year 1 and \$300 in year 2, with a cost of living escalator to be determined in the second season. Finally, they argued for a dramatic expansion of benefits, including five weeks of paid vacation in the first year, and seven in the second, up from two weeks in the previous contract, as well as a bevy of new rules shortening the length of rehearsals, mandating on-stage temperatures for performances (68–85 degrees), and requiring all school concerts to be shorter than one hour.⁴⁸⁴

Initial demands—from both sides of the negotiating table—generally represent exaggerations of actual expectations. Although the musicians probably did not expect to get everything that they asked for, they clearly intended to continue the momentum achieved in the 1965 agreement. After nine months of negotiations, though, the musicians and management were still far apart on many contract provisions, leading to the first work stoppage in the orchestra’s history.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the labor turmoil of the late 1960s was a major concern for the Ford Foundation and the American Symphony Orchestra League. Many orchestras refused to complete negotiations until the Ford Foundation disclosed the exact amount it would give to each orchestra, and one major orchestra manager wrote to the ASOL’s Helen Thompson in 1966: “Our musicians are of the opinion that a huge pot of Ford Foundation gold is being hoarded someplace and that the

⁴⁸⁴ "Summary of Initial Demands," 1970, Series 5.6, MOAA.

orchestra association is simply refusing to give them the trust facts thereby denying the musicians benefit of sharing in the pot.”⁴⁸⁵

Part of the problem was the complex distribution structure of the Ford Program itself. If one of the main goals of the program was to raise musician salaries quickly and sustainably, it might have been better to grant only expendable funds annually at a graduated rate and over a longer period of time than five years. In actuality, though, the Ford Program granted only five equal expendable fund distributions, meaning that as salary costs grew, the Ford grant stayed the same size. Furthermore, the larger portion of the grant—the endowment funds—were not actually handed over to the orchestras for ten years. So although the Ford Foundation was distributing \$80 million dollars, it was doing so in a way where the bulk of the money wasn’t actually available to the orchestras until the late 1970s.

Lasting only one week, the Minnesota Orchestra’s first strike was part of a larger trend throughout the country of increasingly tense negotiations. Members of the New York Philharmonic and the Chicago Symphony both held out on agreeing to contracts until shortly before the beginning of their 1970–71 seasons and settled nearly identical contracts through a great deal of coordination between their negotiating committees and officials from The International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians (ICSOM). ICSOM Chairman Ralph Mendelson noted the importance of cooperation in the October 1970 edition of the ICSOM newsletter

⁴⁸⁵ Letter from Helen M. Thompson to Edward F. D’Arms, April 15, 1966, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Grants O–R, RAC.

Senza Sordino: “The course of both negotiations and the results obtained bear witness to the absolute necessity of not only continuing this degree of cooperation but improving it. Collective bargaining in the symphony field has become highly sophisticated. We must meet the challenge.”⁴⁸⁶ Although Chicago and New York avoided strikes, the Cleveland Orchestra was on strike for the first forty-one days of its 1970–71 season, after striking for a week before its 1967–68 season. The Cleveland musicians benefitted from the support of ICSOM’s newly formed strike fund.⁴⁸⁷

Central to the resolution of the Minnesota situation was Phil Sipser, ICSOM’s legal counsel, who helped several orchestras in the late 1960s and early 1970s. A savvy and respected labor lawyer, Sipser appears to have creatively solved the Minnesota crisis by restructuring the orchestra’s pension plan in favor of the musicians. In addition, perhaps to avoid any further bad blood, the musicians were compensated for the strike week in the form of paid vacation.⁴⁸⁸ Cisek recalls Sipser with a great deal of respect: “Tough but fair. I liked him. No pushover by any means, but he brought out the best in me and also gave the musicians the best representation they’d had.”⁴⁸⁹

The final 1970 agreement spanned three years, with minimums of \$234, \$244, and \$254 per week, as well as a gradual rise to forty-eight guaranteed weeks. Sipser’s work on the pension plan meant that not only would the association assume all

⁴⁸⁶ Ralph Mendelson, "Chairman's Message," *Senza Sordino*, October 1970.

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁸ Ralph Mendelson, "Chairman's Message," *Senza Sordino*, October 1970.

⁴⁸⁹ Author’s interview with Richard Cisek, June 23, 2017.

employer and employee contributions during the term of the agreement, but also that the previous employee contributions to the pension plan would be refunded over the following three years. In addition, the musicians also received the sought-after reduction in rehearsal length from 3 hours to 2.5.⁴⁹⁰

A graduate of the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce, the business school of the University of Pennsylvania, Cisek ably navigated the difficult role of manager—and later president—with an acute understanding of the lopsided balancing act of running a modern orchestra. Although many managers possess savvy business skills, few combine them with the necessary deference to the artistic side of the operation as successfully as Cisek, a balance he described to *Star-Tribune* critic Michael Anthony in 1982:

An orchestra is run in a businesslike way but not really like a business. The bottom line is not to show the highest return on investment. Actually, there are two bottom lines: an artistic one and an economic one, with the artistic one predominating. It's not too hard to achieve one or the other. But to keep them both in balance is where the risk and responsibility are—also the fun.⁴⁹¹

Orchestra leaders have the dual difficulty of justifying artistic decisions to donors and audiences, while simultaneously defending business decisions to musicians and audiences. A for-profit manager's purpose is to profit by shareholders; when shareholders are unhappy the chief executive is almost always removed. But for the non-profit orchestra manager, it is not entirely clear who the shareholders are, or if there are shareholders at all. Thus, the orchestra manager has many constituencies

⁴⁹⁰ "Narrative Account of Activities: Minnesota Orchestra, 1970-71 Season," Series 5.8, MOAA.

⁴⁹¹ Michael Anthony, "Cisek, Orchestra Together 25 Years," *Minneapolis Star-Tribune*, 1982.

to which s/he can potentially run afoul, including audience members, board members, musicians, conductor, etc. The length of Cisek's tenure is a testament to his ability to satisfy all of his various "shareholders."

In 1971, the Minnesota Orchestra appointed its first professional president, Donald L. Engle. Engle came to the orchestra after serving as director of the Martha Baird Rockefeller Foundation for Music from 1959 to 1971, and Manager of the Philadelphia Orchestra before that.⁴⁹² Whereas the Minnesota Orchestra had previously had a volunteer president elected from by the board who came from the local business community, Engle's hiring ushered in a greater degree of professionalism in the administrative arm of the organization.

The press release describing Engle's appointment in 1971 highlighted the orchestra's strong foundation, as well as its achievement as the top fundraiser during the Ford challenge:

In its 69-year history the Minnesota Orchestra has always been an innovative force in symphony orchestra development. Its Board of Directors feel that Mr. Engle's appointment will further expand the activities of the Association. The orchestras is one of the few in the United States to adopt a regional concept. The first five-year labor contract in the musical field was negotiated by the orchestra, and the Minnesota Orchestra has been recognized as the most successful participant in the Ford Foundation Matching Grant Program.⁴⁹³

⁴⁹² Martha Baird Rockefeller (1895–1971) was a professional pianist and the second wife and widow of John D. Rockefeller, Jr. When she married Rockefeller in 1951, she became a philanthropist with a focus on music, and in 1957 she established the Martha Baird Rockefeller Fund for Music, which was dissolved in 1982. See "Martha Baird Rockefeller, 1895-1971," The Rockefeller Archive Center, <http://rockarch.org/bio/marthabaird.php>.

⁴⁹³ "Draft: Donald Engle Appointed First Professional President of Minnesota Orchestra: Will Assume New Post in September, 1971," June 17, 1971, Series 2.1, MOAA.

Engle acted as the chief executive of the orchestra, and his role was largely to define fund raising and development policies; Cisek, in contrast, managed the day-to-day operations, including ticket sales, marketing, and labor relations. Thus, Engle's appointment—and the orchestra's willingness to create a new high-paying administrative role—encapsulated the increased emphasis placed on fundraising operations in top orchestras. Although by 1971 the Minnesota Orchestra had already successfully raised its Ford matching funds, the board rightly recognized that the Ford Program represented a stepping stone to a more secure financial future, not a panacea for all of the association's problems. By identifying and hiring a professional president, the Minnesota Orchestra acknowledged that in the wake of the Ford Program the entire orchestra business was changing, and that new administrative staff were essential to capitalize on these new opportunities.

Although Engle was not hired until 1971, the board's considerable foresight is evident in the minutes from the Executive Committee's formative meeting at the Lowell Inn in Stillwater Minnesota held in June 1964 at which Kenneth N. Dayton first articulated the need of a professional President. Dayton asked four prescient questions: who would work to attract new donors, who would direct and endowment campaign, who would work on a bequest program, and who would seek out innovative partnerships with local businesses, governmental organizations, and

nonprofits.⁴⁹⁴ Dayton argued that it would take more than a volunteer president to complete these tasks:

We have become big business, and we must organize like a big business.... I recommend that we hire a full-time President who will direct the affairs of the Orchestral Association all day, every day of the year.... I visualize this man as the prime mover and director of everything we do...he would be the one who would bear the primary responsibility for finding the ways and means of fulfilling the mission of the Orchestra.... Without such a man I doubt that we are up to it, but with such a man (provided we choose wisely) I am convinced that we can do great things.⁴⁹⁵

The Ford money made Dayton's dream of hiring a full-time president a reality; Engle's eventual hiring was a key point in the development and history of the Minnesota Orchestra. Upon Engle's retirement in 1978, Cisek ascended the presidency where he remained until 1990.

The Minnesota Orchestra's musical identity during the 1960s and 1970s was dominated by Music Director Stanislaw Skrowaczewski, who headed the orchestra from 1960 to 1979, and occasionally conducted it thereafter until his death in February 2017 at the age of 93. Born in 1923 in Lwów, Poland, Skrowaczewski headed several orchestras in Poland before succeeding Antal Dorati in Minneapolis in 1960. Incredibly, he conducted into his final year; his last concert was with the Minnesota Orchestra in October 2016, conducting Bruckner's 8th Symphony.

Although he never achieved the level of fame enjoyed by some of his contemporaries, Skrowaczewski was widely revered in Minnesota as an indefatigable

⁴⁹⁴ "The Minnesota Orchestral Association Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting Held June 27 and 28, 1964," Series 1.4, MOAA.

⁴⁹⁵ "The Minnesota Orchestral Association Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting Held June 27 and 28, 1964," Series 1.4, MOAA.

bridge between the old days of the Minneapolis Symphony and the modern Minnesota Orchestra; in addition to his concerts and recordings, he provided a spark for the fundraising and construction of Orchestra Hall. In many orchestras, the relationship between board, executive, and music director is most sensitive, and infighting can result in crippling disfunction, as exemplified by the Oakland Symphony's bankruptcy and the Minnesota Orchestra's lockout. But during the Skrowaczewski years, the Minnesota Orchestra appears to have avoided this unhealthy friction.

Skrowaczewski's successor in 1979 was Neville Marriner, who was by the late 1970s internationally renowned for his numerous recordings with the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, which he founded in London in 1959. His profile was further enhanced when he supervised the music for the 1984 film *Amadeus*. Alongside Marriner, the orchestra employed a particularly strong roster of assistant and guest conductors in the 1980s. Leonard Slatkin worked regularly with the orchestra in the 1970s and 1980s under the title of Principal Guest Conductor. In the mid 1970s, Slatkin—then in his early thirties—was known particularly for his “Rug Concerts,” a faddish concept pioneered by Pierre Boulez and the New York Philharmonic in 1973 in which auditorium seats were replaced by rugs for a more relaxed setting aimed at younger audiences. The music was eclectic to match the seating arrangement. A 1976 rug concert featured the “Melpomene” Overture by George Whitefield Chadwick, “The White Peacock” by Charles Tomlinson Griffes, an Intermezzo by Arthur Foote, “The Unanswered Question,” and “The Yale-

Princeton Football Game” by Charles Ives, and an arrangement for piano and narrator of “Napoleon’s Last Charge,” by E.T. Paull with Richard Cisek serving as the narrator.⁴⁹⁶

From 1971 to 1988 Henry Charles Smith served in various conducting roles, ending as Resident Conductor. Smith covered concerts when a regular conductor was sick, but also served ably in an educational capacity, conducting members of the orchestra in school concerts. In addition, Smith served as a capable occasional substitute on trombone; he had formerly served as the principal trombonist of the Philadelphia Orchestra.⁴⁹⁷

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the orchestra also employed the German conductor Klaus Tennstedt as a guest, who was noted for his enigmatic and effusive performances. In the words of Cisek, during his four-year tenure Tennstedt “set fire to the place every time, every week... He fired up the musicians and they looked forward to working with him.”⁴⁹⁸

Thus, in the years during and directly following the Ford Program, the Minnesota Orchestra enjoyed a stable administration, as well as stable but varied musical leadership. Cisek described the situation during his tenure succinctly: “We’ve been blessed by good people.”

Effective Long-Range Planning: The 1964 Stillwater Meeting and Orchestra Hall

⁴⁹⁶ John H. Harvey, "Rug Concert Looks Back Fondly," *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, June 23, 1976.

⁴⁹⁷ Author’s interview with Richard Cisek, June 23, 2017.

⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

A special meeting of the board's Executive Committee in the summer of 1964 at the Lowell Inn in Stillwater, Minnesota defined set the tone for the early years of Cisek's tenure. Although the Ford Program for Symphony Orchestras had not yet been announced, the Minneapolis Symphony was already thinking along the lines of Ford's broader goals, as articulated in the minutes of the Stillwater meeting; the effective long-range planning begun at Stillwater created a durable scaffold on which to build upon with the Ford money.

In addition to outlining the regional "opportunity" that would inform the name change in 1968, the Stillwater minutes note the importance of raising salaries, growing towards a fifty-two-week season, expanding the endowment, and hiring a full-time, professional president.⁴⁹⁹ Don Engle was hired as the first professional president in 1971, and the other goals were achieved by the end of the 1970s. Unlike the Oakland Symphony, which consistently failed to formulate realistic long-range plans, the Minnesota Orchestra, as evident by the Stillwater meeting minutes, carefully considered the long-term health of the organization and effectively executed its ambitious plans. In addition, the Stillwater minutes suggest an organization aware of the shifting tides in the orchestra business and cognizant of the opportunities and challenges that accompanied the greater sophistication of orchestra operations.

⁴⁹⁹ "The Minnesota Orchestral Association Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting Held June 27 and 28, 1964," Series 1.4, MOAA.

Board President Judson Bemis began the meeting by articulating a statement of mission and purpose for the gathering:

The mission of the Stillwater meeting is to launch a planning process of the Symphony's next 10 to 15 years. Intensive planning of this nature appears necessary because of various indications that we are arriving at one of the crossroads in the life of this organization, that to do better or more intensively that which has been done will not be enough to keep the orchestra moving ahead under current and prospective conditions.⁵⁰⁰

Bemis outlined a host of issues facing the orchestra, including competition with other orchestras regarding contracts and musicians' pay, as well as several opportunities, including a substantial population increase in the Twin Cities in the 1960s, and Minneapolis's relative distance from other top-flight orchestras, with the Chicago Symphony 400 miles away.⁵⁰¹

Cisek followed Bemis with a discussion titled "What Other Orchestras Are Doing" in terms of musician contracts. As discussed in Chapter 3, in the 1960s, there was considerable competition for quality orchestral musicians, particularly among the strings. Whereas today there is a glut of outstanding orchestral musicians graduating each year from conservatories, private colleges, and state universities, no such overabundance existed in the 1960s. Cisek recalls how difficult it was to find strong players in the 1960s: "I remember my first year of auditions, we were auditioning for violas and we just couldn't find enough who could meet the standard. It was very

⁵⁰⁰ "The Minnesota Orchestral Association Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting Held June 27 and 28, 1964," Series 1.4, MOAA.

⁵⁰¹ Ibid.

awkward. Same thing with cellos; strings were very, very precious and difficult to come by.”⁵⁰²

The difficulty finding string players was also noted by Stanislaw Skrowaczewski in a 1971 appeal to board members to add six string players to orchestra: “The string players could be hired within the next few years according to the possibility of.....finding them! There is, namely, a world-wide acute shortage of string players, and our Orchestra has been having an enormous problem finding the proper candidates.”⁵⁰³

Furthermore, the Minnesota Orchestra, which was highly regarded but not considered one of the “Big Five,” had to contend with poaching from higher paying orchestras. In the 1960s, the Cleveland Orchestra was considered the premier orchestra in the United States, and its conductor George Szell exercised a unique degree of autonomy in orchestra operations. Szell was popular among audiences, but not so much among administrators like Cisek: “Szell would guest conduct and keep his eyes and ears open.... He would want musicians.”

Rafael Druian (1923–2002) served as concertmaster in Minneapolis from 1949–60 before taking on the same role with Szell’s Cleveland Orchestra from 1960–69. In 1960, Szell also took the Minneapolis Symphony’s principal trumpet player Bernard F. Adelstein, who remained as principal in Cleveland from 1960 to 1988. Empowered by the largest endowment in the industry at his disposal—approximately

⁵⁰² Author’s interview with Richard Cisek, June 23, 2017.

⁵⁰³ Memo from Stanislaw Skrowaczewski to Board of Directors, May 25, 1971, Series 1.3, MOAA.

\$14 million in 1964—Szell was not limited by money when attempting to recruit musicians. Cisek recalls: “He could offer any amount of money it would take, in some cases twice what they were getting in the other orchestras, depending on what orchestra they were coming from.”⁵⁰⁴ Because of this competitive environment, Cisek provided notes to the Executive Committee describing how similar orchestras were faring:

⁵⁰⁴ Author’s interview with Richard Cisek, June 23, 2017.

Table 5.2: "What Other Orchestras are Doing"⁵⁰⁵

MINNEAPOLIS

1964-65 31-week season, no summer season
\$155 weekly minimum, \$14.50 tour per diem, 91 musicians under contract

CLEVELAND

1964-65 35 weeks winter, 10 summer, 1 week paid vacation, \$185 per week
1965-66 36 weeks winter, 10 summer, 2 weeks paid vacation, \$185 per week
1966-67 38 weeks winter, 10 summer, 3 weeks paid vacation, \$190 per week
\$18 per diem, 103 musicians under contract

DETROIT

1964-65 29 weeks at \$165 per week, plus 8 weeks summer at lower scale
1965-66 30 weeks at \$175 per week, plus 8 weeks summer at lower scale
\$15 per diem, 93 musicians under contract, growing to 96 in 1965 and 100 in 1966

LOS ANGELES

1964-65 34 weeks at \$157.50
1965-66 38 weeks at \$180
104 men under contract

DALLAS

1964-65 28 weeks at \$120 minimum
1965-66 30 weeks at \$125 minimum
1966-67 31 weeks at \$135 minimum
\$14 per diem, 90 musicians under contract

PHILADELPHIA

1964-65 36 weeks plus Robin Hood Dell at \$200 a week minimum
\$18 per diem, 52 weeks in 1966–1967, 4 weeks paid vacation, 105 under contract

SAN FRANCISCO

1964-65 26 weeks, plus opera season, at \$160 per week
1965-66 28 weeks, plus opera season, at \$170 per week
1966-67 30 weeks, plus opera season, at \$182.50 per week
98 men under contract

NATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

1964-65 34 weeks at \$160
\$15 per diem, 96 musicians under contract

CINCINNATI

1964-65 31 weeks at \$137.50, plus May Festival of Opera (6 weeks)
93 musicians under contract

⁵⁰⁵ "The Minnesota Orchestral Association Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting Held June 27 and 28, 1964," Series 1.4, MOAA.

With a thirty-one-week season, ninety-one contracted musicians, no paid vacation, and \$155 weekly minimum for the 1964–65 season, the Minnesota Orchestra trailed the Cleveland and Philadelphia Orchestras, but was comparable to Detroit, Los Angeles, Dallas, San Francisco, the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington D.C., and Cincinnati.⁵⁰⁶

Cisek continued by outlining the endowments of several competing orchestras, and noted that his orchestra lagged considerably behind not just Cleveland (\$14 million) and Chicago (\$12 million), but also Cincinnati (\$4.5 million) and Pittsburgh (\$5 million).⁵⁰⁷ With an endowment of less than \$400,000, the Minneapolis Symphony could expect to earn less than \$20,000 in annual endowment income—assuming an approximately 5 percent rate of return—when its annual deficit was \$500,000 in the 1964–65 season. By contrast, Szell’s \$14 million endowment earned his orchestra \$512,000 during the same season, which went a considerable length toward covering the Cleveland Orchestra’s nearly \$800,000 deficit. Even the Cincinnati Symphony—an orchestra considered a peer by Cisek—had a \$4.5 million endowment that earned it more than \$200,000 per year, which covered half of that orchestra’s \$400,000 deficit.⁵⁰⁸

Although the Minnesota Orchestra’s endowment grew steadily from \$80,000 in 1952 to nearly \$400,000 in 1964, it became clear at the Stillwater meeting that a

⁵⁰⁶ "The Minnesota Orchestral Association Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting Held June 27 and 28, 1964," Series 1.4, MOAA.

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid.

major endowment campaign was needed to ensure the stability of the organization. Nonetheless, *not* having a large endowment—and relying on annual maintenance fundraising to cover deficits—had forced the Minneapolis Symphony and WAMSO, its prolific women’s fundraising arm, to successfully fundraise year over year, relying predominantly on smaller donors. The maintenance fund drive of the 1963–64 season consisted of 1,460 contributions made by individuals or families, and 319 gifts by business organizations, foundations, and other organization. Of the total raised of \$391,855, 1,108 gifts were of less than \$100. The largest single gift, which was raised by WAMSO, was \$55,800.⁵⁰⁹

This fundraising ability proved important when the Ford Foundation’s endowment matching program was announced on July 6, 1966. In a confidential memo to board members sent one day before the public announcement of the Ford Program, board president Judson Bemis defined the Ford Program in terms of the goals established two years prior at Stillwater: “The Ford Foundation’s program provides major and most welcome assistance toward the objectives which were formulated at Stillwater and endorsed by the Board of Directors shortly thereafter.”⁵¹⁰ The opportunities and challenges of the Ford Program were more publicly noted by Bemis at a board meeting on July 15, 1966:

This grant presents the Association with a great opportunity and challenge. The opportunity is threefold: (1) it is a financial boost in the direction that the Association is trying to go; (2) It is an endorsement for the need of an Endowment Fund; and (3) By receiving the maximum amount that may be

⁵⁰⁹ "The Minnesota Orchestral Association Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting Held June 27 and 28, 1964," Series 1.4, MOAA.

⁵¹⁰ Memo from Judson Bemis to Board of Directors, July 5, 1966, Series 1.3, MOAA.

allocated to any orchestra in the Ford program, recognition is given to the quality of our Orchestra. There are some dangers that the program creates. False impressions may arise that financial support of the Association is now assured.... Every effort must be made to increase our efforts in all areas.⁵¹¹

Although the Ford Program did not explicitly align with the Minnesota Orchestra's name change and regional concept or the hiring of Don Engle as its first professional president, the expendable funds contributed from 1967 to 1971 created breathing room in the budget to service these objectives. Where the goals of the Ford Program and the Minnesota Orchestra truly resonated was in the pursuit of endowment.

The first gift to the orchestra dedicated to establishing a permanent endowment had been made by the Citizens' Aid Society of Minneapolis in December 1944, totaling \$50,000 in memory of George H. Christian, a Minneapolis mill tycoon and philanthropist who had died in 1918.⁵¹² The endowment gradually grew in the following years, and an organized endowment drive was discussed in the 1960 annual report.⁵¹³ But it was not until the Stillwater meeting, and then the Ford Program, that orchestra leaders took a large-scale endowment campaign seriously. Like other top orchestras, Minnesota was required to double the Ford endowment contributions; four million dollars would need to be raised to earn Ford's two.

Most participating orchestras used the Ford Foundation matching requirement as the goal for their endowment campaigns. The Minnesota Orchestra alternatively

⁵¹¹ "The Minnesota Orchestral Association Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting July 15, 1966," Series 1.3, MOAA.

⁵¹² "Annual Report - June 30, 1945," Series 1.1, MOAA.

⁵¹³ "Annual Report - June 30, 1960," Series 1.1, MOAA.

approached the Ford match as a means to an end; the board decided on a desired amount of income that was needed from the endowment each year and then backed into the amount of endowment required to earn the targeted income. In February 1966—several months before the Ford Program was announced to the board and the public—a consultant estimated that by the mid 1970s the orchestra would have an annual budget shortfall of around \$450,000, requiring a permanent capital fund of at least \$12.5 million.⁵¹⁴

Richard Cisek corroborated the existence of this approach when planning the Ford endowment drive:

I worked with board members to put together our strategy in regard to not only matching Ford...but going beyond that, because our plan showed that we needed more money.... So it [the \$12.5 million goal] was not pulled out of the air, or a nice round number, but what we felt we would need.⁵¹⁵

Upon the announcement of the Ford match, the Investment Committee consulted with several banks to conclude that an endowment of \$10 million raised by 1971—including Ford's \$2 million—would grow to the desired \$12.5 million figure by 1977 and meet the orchestra's income goal.⁵¹⁶

⁵¹⁴ Various Financial Figures for 1977-1978 Season, Series 4.1, MOAA.

⁵¹⁵ Author's interview with Richard Cisek, September 8, 2016.

⁵¹⁶ "Investment Committee of the Minnesota Orchestral Association Meeting July 11, 1966," Series 1.4, MOAA.

Table 5.3: Ten-Year Budget Projection 1965–74.⁵¹⁷

Season	Income	Expenses	Surplus (Deficit)	Guaranty Fund	Annual Shortfall	Capital Fund Required to Cover Estimated Annual Shortfall*
1965–66	\$ 743,900	\$1,320,200	\$ (576,300)	\$515,000	\$ (61,300)	\$ 1,702,778
1966–67	\$ 786,800	\$1,409,400	\$ (622,600)	\$550,000	\$ (72,600)	\$ 2,016,667
1967–68	\$ 806,500	\$1,450,500	\$ (644,000)	\$550,000	\$ (94,000)	\$ 2,611,111
1968–69	\$ 851,500	\$1,568,300	\$ (716,800)	\$550,000	\$ (166,800)	\$ 4,633,333
1969–70	\$ 891,000	\$1,714,000	\$ (823,000)	\$550,000	\$ (273,000)	\$ 7,583,333
1970–71	\$ 938,200	\$1,799,700	\$ (861,500)	\$560,000	\$ (301,500)	\$ 8,375,000
1971–72	\$ 987,900	\$1,889,700	\$ (901,800)	\$570,000	\$ (331,800)	\$ 9,216,667
1972–73	\$1,040,300	\$1,984,100	\$ (943,800)	\$575,000	\$ (368,800)	\$ 10,244,444
1973–74	\$1,095,400	\$2,083,400	\$ (988,000)	\$585,000	\$ (403,000)	\$ 11,194,444
1974–75	\$1,153,500	\$2,187,500	\$ (1,034,000)	\$590,000	\$ (444,000)	\$ 12,333,333

*Estimated 3.6% rate of return per Minnesota Orchestra Executive Committee

⁵¹⁷ “Minnesota Orchestral Association: 10-Year Budget Projection,” May 13, 1966, Series 1.3, MOAA.

The Endowment Campaign, titled “New Dimensions,” was formally launched on April 28, 1967; by September of the same year more than \$4 million had already been raised.⁵¹⁸ The orchestra generated interest by offering naming rights for the nineteen principal chairs in the orchestra; all chairs required a minimum contribution of \$250,000, with the concertmaster chair requiring \$500,000. The endowed chairs program gained approbation nationally, with *Time* magazine describing it as “the success formula of the former Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra.”⁵¹⁹ The concertmaster, principal cello, principal oboe, and principal harp chairs were endowed immediately, with a total of eleven chairs endowed by December 1968.⁵²⁰ By December 1968, the orchestra had met its goal of \$10 million (including Ford’s \$2 million) in pledges, with payments on pledges already at more than \$3 million.⁵²¹ The Ford endowment match was easily raised, and an endowment of more than \$10 million sustained the orchestra through more than \$600,000 in annual income upon the final distribution of the Ford Trust in 1977.⁵²²

Beyond spurring the \$10 million endowment drive, the Ford Program directly influenced the Minnesota orchestra’s next large project: the construction of Orchestra Hall in downtown Minneapolis. The old performing venue, the University of Minnesota’s Northrop Auditorium —across the Mississippi river from Downtown

⁵¹⁸ "The Minnesota Orchestral Association Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting April 28, 1967," Series 1.3, MOAA.; "The Minnesota Orchestral Association: Minutes of the Board of Directors' Meeting September 15, 1967," Series 1.3, MOAA.

⁵¹⁹ "Annual President's Report 1968 - 1969," Series 1.1, MOAA.

⁵²⁰ "The Minnesota Orchestral Association Minutes of Board of Directors Meeting," June 9, 1967, Series 1.3, MOAA.

⁵²¹ "Proposed New Dimensions Funds Report December 20, 1968," Series 1.2, MOAA.

⁵²² "Endowment and Investment Funds and Pension Trust February 28, 1977," Series 1.4, MOAA.

Minneapolis—had been completed in 1929 and thereafter served as the Minneapolis Symphony’s home until 1974. Seating nearly 5,000, Northrup’s considerable size prevented the orchestra from holding concerts on multiple nights of the week. In Cisek’s estimation, performing only one night per week prevented the orchestra from progressing artistically, whereas other orchestras would perform a concert of the same music two or three times a week and “really get it into their fiber.”⁵²³

Furthermore, beginning in the mid 1960s Music Director Stanislaw Skrowaczewski argued that Northrup was holding the orchestra back acoustically, and that a new hall could and should be built to house the orchestra. In a presentation to executive committee members in 1966, Skrowaczewski warned that Northrop was an acoustic liability: “The acoustic problem could be helped somewhat if we were to rehearse in another hall more suitable to rehearsing and then have a dress rehearsal and concert in Northrup. Many changes are noted as we play in other halls on tours.”⁵²⁴ Skrowaczewski emphatically pressed the issue in a memo to the board in 1971:

I am calling with my strongest plea to understand that the only way to provide the survival of this fine ensemble and to put the existence of the musical culture on the proper level both for the Orchestra and for the public is to end decades of having the Orchestra homeless on wheels and to organize a committee for the establishment of a new hall. There must be a way to appeal to the entire state of Minnesota to build such a hall once in this century. Because it is a community which defines its own aspirations. If a cultural institution is absolutely necessary but too expensive, then either it is not essential or it is not too expensive.⁵²⁵

⁵²³ Author’s interview with Richard Cisek, June 23, 2017.

⁵²⁴ "The Minnesota Orchestral Association Minutes of Meeting of the Executive Committee October 23, 1966," Series 1.3, MOAA.

⁵²⁵ Memo from Stanislaw Skrowaczewski to Board of Directors, May 25, 1971, Series 1.3, MOAA.

Skrowaczewski's goal of a permanent home for the orchestra was realized extraordinarily quickly through an innovative partnership with the City of Minneapolis. The orchestra bought the land and built the hall. Once complete, the city bought the land and the completed hall from the orchestra for \$9.2 million and leased it back to the orchestra for a term of twenty years. Once the twenty-year lease term was complete, the hall would revert to the Association's ownership. Of the \$9.2 million paid from the city to the orchestra in 1975, \$400,000 was applied to the debt acquired by the orchestra to build the hall, and \$1 million was used to construct Peavey Plaza adjacent to the hall. The remaining amount, \$7.8 million, was used to establish an investment fund which would provide enough annual income to pay the annual rent on the hall.⁵²⁶

The city funded the purchase of the hall by issuing \$9.2 million of municipal bonds, with the annual rent payments from the orchestra—ranging from \$460,000 to \$640,000 annually—covering the amount required to amortize the principal and interest of the bonds.⁵²⁷

The funds to build Orchestra Hall were acquired via a funding drive started in 1971, with nearly \$2 million left over after the construction used to create an Orchestra Hall Endowment fund for the annual maintenance and operations of the hall. By 1977—when the Ford Foundation trust fund was finally distributed to its

⁵²⁶ "Minnesota Orchestra Association Annual Report 1974/75," Series 1.1, MOAA.

⁵²⁷ "Resolution by the Executive Committee of the Minnesota Orchestral Association," 1973, Series 1.3, MOAA.

trustee orchestras—the Minnesota Orchestra enjoyed a total endowment of more than \$22 million separated into several restricted and non-restricted funds:

Table 5.4: Minnesota Orchestra Endowment as of February 28, 1977⁵²⁸

Fund	Market Value		Est. Annual Income*	
New Dimensions Endowment	\$	9,259,916	\$	682,574
Ford Foundation Trust	\$	2,498,401	\$	149,904
Orchestra Hall Endowment Fund	\$	2,166,007	\$	106,960
Orchestra Hall Investment Fund**	\$	7,545,006	\$	639,579
Pension Fund	\$	1,289,456	\$	87,662
Totals	\$	22,758,786	\$	1,666,679

*Estimated per Minnesota Orchestra Investment Committee

**Income restricted for rent payments on Orchestra Hall

Thus, during the ten years of the Ford Program, the Minnesota Orchestra grew its endowment from less than \$400,000 to more than \$22 million. Although much of the endowment income was restricted—including the Orchestra Hall funds and the pension trust fund—the annual income from the aggregate endowment far exceeded the executive committee’s 1966 ten-year estimate (Table 5.3). But the expenses of the orchestra also far exceeded the ten-year budget projection, and thus the annual shortfall also increased. In the 1973–74 and 1974–75 seasons expenses rose to \$3.16 million and \$4 million respectively, while concert revenues earned by the orchestra

⁵²⁸ "Endowment and Investment Funds and Pension Trust," February 28, 1977, Series 1.4, MOAA.

were only \$1.4 million and \$2.2 million, respectively, and annual fundraising from the Guaranty Fund and WAMSO, coupled with endowment income accounted for \$1.4 million in both seasons, leading to deficits of \$400,000 in both years.⁵²⁹

In the following two seasons, though, as a result of the Ford Foundation trust distribution, as well as rising revenues, the orchestra operated at a net surplus:

⁵²⁹ "Minnesota Orchestra Association Annual Report 1974/75," Series 1.1, MOAA.

Table 5.5: Minnesota Orchestra Income Statements for 1973–76:⁵³⁰

	1973–1974	1974–1975*	1975–1976	1976–1977
Program Revenue				
Concert Revenue/Presentations	\$ 1,051,335	\$ 1,789,450	\$ 2,169,972	\$ 2,451,450
Hall Rentals to Others	\$ -	\$ 99,365	\$ 134,433	\$ 115,821
Grants for Specified Purposes	\$ 279,892	\$ 215,225	\$ 241,690	\$ 367,826
Other Income	\$ 32,328	\$ 68,652	\$ 70,474	\$ 92,140
Total Program Revenue	\$ 1,363,555	\$ 2,172,692	\$ 2,616,569	\$ 3,027,237
Expenses				
Concert Expenses/Presentations	\$ 2,657,616	\$ 3,097,595	\$ 3,185,887	\$ 3,499,480
General/Admin	\$ 506,554	\$ 783,229	\$ 1,090,481	\$ 1,290,694
Building Operations/Utilities	\$ -	\$ 181,198	\$ 169,482	\$ 195,547
Interest	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 55,318	\$ 40,034
Total Expenses	\$ 3,164,170	\$ 4,062,022	\$ 4,501,168	\$ 5,025,755
Surplus (Deficit) from Operations	\$ (1,800,615)	\$ (1,889,330)	\$ (1,884,599)	\$ (1,998,518)
Contributions and Other Income				
Guaranty Fund	\$ 538,775	\$ 549,540	\$ 693,284	\$ 784,658
WAMSO	\$ 93,114	\$ 118,324	\$ 135,876	\$ 120,801
Endowment Fund Income	\$ 651,376	\$ 630,148	\$ 807,036	\$ 856,632
Investment Income	\$ -	\$ 29,271	\$ -	\$ -
General Support Grants	\$ 120,000	\$ 160,000	\$ 270,000	\$ 238,855
Total Contributions and Other Income	\$ 1,403,265	\$ 1,487,283	\$ 1,906,196	\$ 2,000,946
Net Surplus (Deficit)	\$ (397,350)	\$ (402,047)	\$ 21,597	\$ 2,428
Program Revenue as Percentage of Expenses	43%	53%	58%	60%

*First Season in Orchestra Hall

During the 1977–78 season, the Minnesota Orchestra was one of only eleven major orchestras (out of a total of thirty-four) to operate at a surplus, suggesting that the orchestra had navigated with aplomb the distribution of the Ford Foundation trust in 1977.⁵³¹

⁵³⁰ "Minnesota Orchestra Association Annual Report 1974/75," Series 1.1, MOAA; "Minnesota Orchestra Association Annual Report 1976–77," Series 1.1, MOAA.

⁵³¹ "The Net Surplus (Deficit) at End of Season," Series 4.1, MOAA.

The Ford Foundation Program formally concluded for the Minnesota Orchestra in early March 1977: on January 13 the Ford Foundation's 41,697 Ford Motor Company shares were distributed to the orchestra, and in March the shares were sold, for a total of \$2,498,401.14.⁵³² Upon the sale of the shares, Minnesota Orchestra President Donald Engle wrote to Program Officer Marcia Thompson:

As I reflect on the impact of the Foundation's belief in the merit of the nation's symphony orchestras and the justification for such a tremendous investment toward assuring their futures, I can only commend you and your associates most sincerely for your faith and your generosity. I hope the results as they are being reported to you will give all of you a sense of deep satisfaction.⁵³³

Conclusion

After the end of the 2012–14 lockout, longtime Minnesota Opera leader Kevin Smith replaced besieged CEO Michael Henson and returned to the key principles that had helped the Minnesota Orchestra function smoothly in the past. Not long after assuming leadership of the orchestra, Smith began reforming the orchestra's inner workings where "Board, staff, musicians, and oftentimes other community members really work together in terms of planning, fundraising, and execution."⁵³⁴

⁵³² "Executive Committee of the Minnesota Orchestral Association 28 March 1977," Series 1.3, MOAA.

⁵³³ Letter from Donald L. Engle to Marcia Thompson, March 28, 1977, Ford Foundation records, Grants Them-Tw, RAC.

⁵³⁴ Author's interview with Kevin Smith, March 2, 2018.

Smith's approach was codified in a strategic plan for the years 2017–2020 called "Building the Minnesota Model."⁵³⁵ Formulated during strategic planning sessions in the fall of 2015 with board members, musicians, and staff, "Building the Minnesota Model" describes a sense of shared ownership that has defined the organization during its rapid rebound: "This approach constitutes a unique organizational model for the American orchestral field, empowering every stakeholder to take ownership to ensure the joyful relationship between artists and audiences."⁵³⁶

The strategic plan continues by outlining five components:

1. A Great Virtuoso Orchestra
2. An Electric Connection to Community
3. Targeted Audience Engagement and Expansion
4. An Outstanding, Integrated Organization
5. A Strong Financial Foundation

Although none of these five considerations is particularly revolutionary in terms of orchestra strategic planning, Smith and his team began by getting people back to talking to one another. Smith recalls that when he took over the orchestra:

A lot of the turnaround had to do with just building the dynamics, and the culture and trust within the organization, and getting people to not only talk to one another, but actually get them to *know* one another.... There was a lot of bitterness...and just a lot of antagonism in the organization. People literally didn't interact, board members didn't go to concerts, and it was just an odd, dysfunctional culture.⁵³⁷

⁵³⁵ "Building the Minnesota Model: Strategic Plan Summary 2017–2020," The Minnesota Orchestra, 2016.

⁵³⁶ Ibid.

⁵³⁷ Ibid.

Post-lockout, musicians have been given the opportunity to serve on board committees and are featured more prominently in promotional materials. During the lockout the musicians incorporated as a nonprofit and produced their own concerts. In Smith's estimation, this process made the musicians come away from the lockout with a better appreciation of their roles within the community.⁵³⁸

Upon the resolution of the lockout, as a sign of good faith, the musicians donated the proceeds from their nonprofit—about \$250,000—to the revived Minnesota Orchestra. Kathryn Nettleman, a member of the bass section who served as president of the musicians' lockout organization, said that the donation represented “our committed ongoing investment in the mighty Minnesota Orchestra.... Collaborating as a team, in concert with our greater community...we know that our orchestra will continue to shine brightly far into the future.”⁵³⁹

Whereas Henson approached the financial downturn from a cost cutting perspective, Smith, like Richard Cisek, approaches financial issues primarily as a revenue challenge: “The result of the lockout was that there's still a five or six million dollar gap each season but we raise the money to pay those bills, and we view it as a revenue and fundraising challenge, instead of trying to right-size the organization for the community, which was the previous plan...the board accepted the responsibility to fund this orchestra to scale.”⁵⁴⁰

⁵³⁸ Author's interview with Kevin Smith, March 2, 2018.

⁵³⁹ Michael Cooper, "Minnesota Orchestra is Getting \$250,000 From Musicians," *The New York Times*, December 3, 2015.

⁵⁴⁰ Author's interview with Kevin Smith, March 2, 2018.

The true test of Smith’s “Minnesota Model” began in fall 2018—when Smith retired and ceded his post to Michelle Miller Burns, formerly an executive vice president of the Dallas Symphony. Assuming the stock market stays strong, the post-lockout reforms should continue unabated. But if there is an economic downturn, as there inevitably will be at some point, the organization’s fragile new balance will be tested. According to Smith: “As long as everyone works together and continues to share we’ll be great. There is going to be some time when the heat is on financially and then that’s really going to be the big stress test.” Smith understands that his successor could be the one to navigate the next financial crisis: “We’ve had a couple really strong years and we’ve pushed the organization in all kinds of ways, and we’re in relatively excellent shape, but that could change in a minute.”⁵⁴¹

The Ford Program for Symphony Orchestras did not create the strong leadership or effective long-term planning that characterized the Minnesota Orchestra in the 1960s or 1970. In addition, many of the key successes of the orchestra during this period—the name change in 1968, the hiring of Don Engle in 1971, and the construction of Orchestra Hall in 1974—were ideated years before the Ford Foundation’s involvement began.

It is possible that all of these improvements would have come to fruition without the Ford Foundation’s intervention. Nonetheless, as in the case of the Oakland Symphony, this study of the Minnesota Orchestra illustrates how the Ford Foundation’s Program for Symphony Orchestras hastened the direction in which the

⁵⁴¹ Author’s interview with Kevin Smith, March 2, 2018.

orchestra was already oriented. For Minnesota, Ford's involvement tipped the scale in the positive direction in which the orchestra—through effective long-range planning and stable artistic and administrative leadership—was oriented. By contrast, for Oakland, the foundation's grant reinforced a self-destructive direction and actually hastened the orchestra's demise.

When asked about the impact of the Ford Foundation's Program on the Minnesota Orchestra, Richard Cisek initially demurred, suggesting that the program had little influence on the successes of the orchestra in the late 1960s and early 1970s. But when pressed about the concurrence of the Ford money and the orchestra's specific successes, Cisek noted that the Ford Foundation's intervention gave orchestras a new degree of legitimacy, particularly regarding fundraising. Ultimately, for Cisek, the foundation's action was a galvanizing one: "It gave us the courage to try other big fund drives because we knew how well we'd done in the previous one."⁵⁴²

⁵⁴² Author's interview with Richard Cisek, June 23, 2017.

CONCLUSION

On May 16, 1987, at the Cleveland Institute of Music's graduation ceremony, longtime Los Angeles Philharmonic manager Ernest Fleischmann made an unusual and provocative request:

I really need to ask you to commit a crime. I want you to become arsonists, to join me and lots of musicians, administrators, and trustees in setting the symphony orchestra ablaze. If the music we care about so deeply is to survive, we must accept that the orchestra is burnt out, but from its ashes something infinitely richer, more varied, more satisfying can arise if we all work together to create it – ladies and gentlemen, the symphony orchestra is dead – long live the Community of Musicians!⁵⁴³

In his famous 1987 address, Fleischmann argued that the symphony orchestra in its enduring form was dead, and that everything about orchestras, including their structures, schedules, and repertoires needed to be re-evaluated. What he proposed was local “communities of musicians” embodying both generalist and specialist musicians who would be called to perform varying repertoire and styles, including “ethnic music, folk music, jazz” in different settings, depending on the wants and needs of the local community.⁵⁴⁴ This arrangement, Fleischmann argued, would break apart the monotony of a career in the symphony orchestra experienced by musicians, and embed the orchestral organizations more firmly in the local community through more responsive and diverse programming.⁵⁴⁵

⁵⁴³ Ernest Fleischman, “The Orchestra is Dead. Long Live the Community of Musicians,” commencement address given at the Cleveland Institute of Music, May 16, 1987.

⁵⁴⁴ Fleischman, “The Orchestra is Dead.”

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid.

Fleischmann's call to arms must have been a bit dismaying to the Cleveland Institute's graduates, many of whom, presumably, were more interested in winning a job in an orchestra than burning the orchestral firmament to the ground. But Fleischmann was not the first, and certainly not the last to argue that symphony orchestras would disappear without radical change. In fact, Fleischmann's concept of a "community of musicians"—a flexible body of musicians—was preceded by two decades by composer and teacher Walter Piston, who said in the 1960s that

a flexibility in the symphony orchestra would be helpful in many ways. It would be very beneficial to the orchestra because the single players would be drawn from all the ranks: they would have the responsibility of being soloists in a chamber-music sense; and they would also have the opportunity to get acquainted with the newest music in all forms and would thus increase their musical knowledge as well as their technique.⁵⁴⁶

The concept articulated by Piston and then by Fleischmann is a compelling one, in which musicians and audiences are stimulated by a diversity of repertoire. On an amateur level, I can attest to the satisfaction of this kind of arrangement; as an undergraduate at Arizona State University in the late 2000s I enjoyed a transformation of the instrumental music program in which the orchestras and bands were changed from a tiered, meritocratic system that gathered the best musicians permanently into the best large ensembles, into one where musicians were ranked and then placed into "projects" of various size and scope with varying schedules throughout the year. As a result of this change, I went from sitting in one ensemble all year, playing the same role, to moving from ensemble to ensemble, sometimes in

⁵⁴⁶ Henry Swoboda, *The American Symphony Orchestra* (New York: Basic Books, 1967), 18.

traditional large ensemble settings, sometimes in very small chamber settings. It was a thrilling artistic experience, because it put me in the position to play different roles in different ensembles, with a constantly changing roster of musicians, conductors, performance venues, and repertoire.

But student ensembles and conservatories have very different goals, and a different set of stakeholders, than professional symphony orchestras. Reorganizing the instrumental music program at a state university is a much simpler task than disassembling the Boston Symphony. My fellow students and I were not being paid, we weren't represented by a union, and as a state-funded university, we weren't beholden to ticket sales, or, more importantly, wealthy donors.

As of 2018, the symphony orchestra model criticized by Piston, Fleischmann, and my undergraduate instructors has not changed much since the 1960s, when the Ford Foundation began its Program for Symphony Orchestras. In fact, criticisms of orchestras, and calls for orchestras to change, have continued essentially without interruption since before the 1960s to the present day. One example, during the Ford Program, when there should have been at least some optimism about the future of orchestras, came from Amyas Ames, Chairman of the New York Philharmonic. In 1970 Ames invoked Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* in an essay in the *Saturday*

Review:

There is more than one way to kill. A lake or a river can be killed by the outpouring of our wastes; birds—the singing of the oriole—can be stilled by our enthusiastic use of DDT; we can kill music by starving our orchestras, leaving our cities dreary places indeed.... The silent spring came

inadvertently. In the same way, music and dance can be stilled without intent.⁵⁴⁷

Apocalyptic warnings in this vein are too frequent to cite, with shifting bogeymen ready to eliminate orchestras attributed to a variety of diagnoses: musician dissatisfaction (Fleischmann 1987), the cost disease (Baumol and Bowen 1966), subscription marketing (Knight Foundation 2002), administrative bloat (Lipman 1987), and lack of diversity (Anne Midgette, *Washington Post* 2016).⁵⁴⁸

Amid this nearly constant stream of pessimism regarding the prospects of symphony orchestras in the United States, it may appear evident that the Program for Symphony Orchestras had at best no effect on the orchestras business, or at worst a negative overall effect. But as shown in my case studies of the Oakland Symphony and the Minnesota Orchestra, the Ford Foundation's impact has been much more nuanced than one may think. This conclusion is an attempt to evaluate the effects of the Ford Foundation's Program for Symphony Orchestras, and a search for reverberations of the program, now more than fifty years old, in the modern orchestra scene. I begin by evaluating the success of the Program based on McNeil Lowry's original four main goals for the Program in 1964, and conclude with ruminations on the broader impact of the Ford Foundation and philanthropy in general. In closing, I

⁵⁴⁷ Cited in George Seltzer, *The Professional Symphony Orchestra in the United States* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1975), 380.

⁵⁴⁸ See Fleischmann, "The Orchestra is dead;" William J. Baumol and William G. Bowen, *Performing Arts: The Economic Dilemma; a Study of Problems Common to Theater, Opera, Music, and Dance* (New York: Twentieth Century Fund, 1966); Audience Insight LLC, "Classical Music Consumer Segmentation Study: How American Relate to Classical Music and Their Local Orchestras," Johns S. and James L. Knight Foundation, 2002; Samuel Lipman, "Is the Symphony Orchestra Dead," *The New Criterion*, September 1987; Anne Midgette, "Desperately Seeking Relevance, Orchestras Grapple with Existential Questions," *The Washington Post*, June 13, 2016.

seek to address one of the questions I am asked most often when presenting and discussing this research: could a program like the Ford Foundation's Program for Symphony Orchestras be repeated today?

Lowry's Goals

In Chapter 3 I listed McNeil Lowry's four main goals for the Symphony Orchestra Program:

1) To maintain and improve the quality of performance of fine music by the leading orchestras in the country; 2) to increase the amount of quality music played by these orchestras; 3) to improve the financial situation of orchestral musicians and so to ensure an adequate supply of fine players both now and in the future; and 4) to stabilize the financial position of the leading American orchestras.⁵⁴⁹

To evaluate the overall efficacy of the Program, I will examine each of Lowry's goals individually.

1. "To Maintain and Improve the Quality of Performance of Fine Music by the Leading Orchestras in the Country"

Lowry's first goal is difficult to assess, since it is challenging to compare the quality of orchestras in the 1960s to orchestras in 2018. By the late 1940s, the top American orchestras were widely considered among the finest in the world. In 1949,

⁵⁴⁹ "Humanities and the Arts Program Discussion Paper: Program for Symphony Orchestras," September 24–25, 1964, box 63, Ford Foundation records, Education and Public Policy Program (EPP), Office of the Arts, Program Files, RAC.

fresh from a European tour with his Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell told the *Chicago Daily Tribune* that “no European orchestra today can equal the leading American orchestras. The orchestras in Vienna and Amsterdam are the two leading ones in Europe, and although they have fine qualities they cannot compare with the best American orchestras.”⁵⁵⁰ Leading European orchestras, principally the Vienna and Berlin Philharmonic Orchestras and the Amsterdam Concertgebouw visited the United States regularly, and reviews from the 1950s and 1960s suggest that the best American orchestras had developed distinctive identities like their European peers. In 1956, on the occasion of a visit from the Vienna Philharmonic, *New York Times* critic Howard Taubman compared American orchestras favorably to the Austrian orchestra: “Indeed, American orchestras at their best have made profound impressions on the most experienced, knowing and sensitive listeners abroad. They deserved such success. Brilliance of execution backed up by valid conceptions added a fresh and stimulating dimension to listening.”⁵⁵¹

In 1955, the conductor Georg Solti, then in his early 40s, remarked to *The Los Angeles Times* that “none of the German orchestras except the Berlin Philharmonic has strings equal to the best American orchestras,” and that “Europeans think American orchestras are excellent technically but cold, but I do not find it so.”⁵⁵² Solti ascribed European feelings of musical superiority to be unfounded:

⁵⁵⁰ “George Szell Lauds American Orchestras as the World’s Best,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 13, 1949.

⁵⁵¹ Howard Taubman, “No Two Alike: Visit of Vienna Philharmonic Points Up Differences in Orchestral Styles,” *The New York Times*, November 18, 1956.

⁵⁵² Albert Goldberg, “The Sounding Board: Solti Ranks L.A. Philharmonic Among World’s 10 Best Orchestras, Likes the American Spirit,” *The Los Angeles Times*, December 25, 1955.

Some European orchestras have a long tradition and they get to think they discovered Beethoven and Mozart. The Vienna Philharmonic, for example, thinks it knows Mozart better than Mozart. American musicians have a more naïve, childlike feeling toward music. They are unspoiled and it is a good thing. I prefer the spirit of the American orchestras.⁵⁵³

Furthermore, orchestras were widely distributed throughout the United States, and there were already many fine orchestras outside of the traditional coastal centers. In 1950, Chauncey Kelley, a young professional American conductor who had worked with orchestras in England, France, and Italy, wrote to *The New York Times* to offer some comparisons between American and European orchestras. Kelley noted major disparities between continental European orchestras:

In most of the continental orchestras the artistic standards are considerably lower than in America. Nearly always, the tuning and intonation (except in the strings) is a hit or miss affair. An otherwise excellent brass section may be embarrassed by an unbelievably bad trombone. A first oboe of artistic stature may feel compelled to apologize for the rhythmic understanding (or rather, misunderstanding) of the rest of his section. The conductor is often faced with a deficiency in the instruments themselves; it is rare to discover a completely equipped percussion section.⁵⁵⁴

Thus, based on press reports, it is clear that U.S. orchestras were generally well regarded when compared to their European rivals. But the Ford Foundation was not just interested in improving the quality of leading American orchestras; it was concerned with improving the *perception* of U.S. orchestras, particularly among international audiences. Lowry's 1955 memo, described in Chapter 2, noting "a very distorted picture of American culture, and even in some quarters a disbelief that an

⁵⁵³ Goldberg, "The Sounding Board."

⁵⁵⁴ Chauncey Kelley, "Comparing Orchestras: U.S. Conductor Contrasts Ours With Europe's," *The New York Times*, September 3, 1950.

American culture in fact existed,” identified a particularly European elitism in regard to U.S. orchestras.⁵⁵⁵ This belief, of a general disrespect for American culture in Europe, tracks with Chauncey Kelley’s observation that “Most of the European orchestras seem to be unaware of the development of musical culture in America. Naturally, they know of the achievements of our older generation of transplanted conductors. But they do not seem to realize the excellence of American orchestras.”⁵⁵⁶

In her 2006 book *New Music, New Allies: American Experimental Music in West Germany from the Zero Hour to Reunification* musicologist Amy Beal describes the overarching German opinion of U.S. culture in the wake of the end of World War II:

Most depictions of the United States, Americans, and American culture were still based on century-old views.... Germans tended to characterize American music as young, innocent, and fresh, but also naïve, second-rate, and historically ignorant. The United States was seen as free from tradition while Europe was burdened by it.... Such descriptions haunt reviews of American music even today.⁵⁵⁷

Although it is incredibly difficult to objectively compare many orchestras at any given point in time—a critic can only be in one place at once—a ranking of the top twenty orchestras worldwide compiled in 2008 by *Grammophone* suggests that the perception of top U.S. orchestras has changed very little over the decades. With input from critics from the United Kingdom, the United States (Alex Ross of the *New*

⁵⁵⁵ "A Program of Philanthropic Support of Cultural Affairs Through Institutions in the Humanities and Creative Arts," W. McNeil Lowry, November 11, 1955, box 5, WML.

⁵⁵⁶ Kelley, "Comparing Orchestras."

⁵⁵⁷ Amy C. Beal, *New Music, New Allies: American Experimental Music in West Germany from the Zero Hour to Reunification* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 48.

Yorker and Mark Swed of the *Los Angeles Times*), Austria, France, Germany, the Netherlands, China, and Korea, the *Grammophone* list serves not necessarily as a rank of actual quality, but as one of perceived quality. Seven of the top twenty come from the United States: The Metropolitan Opera Orchestra (18), San Francisco Symphony Orchestra (13), New York Philharmonic (12), Boston Symphony Orchestra (11), Los Angeles Philharmonic (8), Cleveland Orchestra (7), and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (5). Topping the list are the London Symphony (4), Vienna Philharmonic (3), Berlin Philharmonic (2), and Royal Concertgebouw of Amsterdam (1). Notably missing is the Philadelphia Orchestra, the only of the original “Big Five” not included.⁵⁵⁸

It is a dubious task to ask critics to rank the top twenty orchestras in the world because it is unlikely that all the critics surveyed even *heard* all twenty of the orchestras ranked, let alone the many other fine orchestras around the world that didn’t make the top twenty, like the Philadelphia Orchestra. Even if Alex Ross or Mark Swed did hear all twenty of these orchestras, it is unlikely that they heard them all in their home auditoria, and more likely that they heard the orchestras on tour or in recent recordings.

In addition, because orchestras—and musical culture in general—are bound so closely with patriotism and national identity, it is difficult to separate objective observation from biased criticism. There is so much subjectivity enveloping the

⁵⁵⁸ “The World’s Leading Critics Rank the World’s 20 Greatest Orchestras,” *Grammophone*, December 2008.

aforementioned comparisons between American and European orchestras that it is difficult to take them seriously. After all, what does a naïve orchestra sound like, and conversely what does an orchestra with a long tradition sound like? These adjectives do little to describe actual sounds or performances. Instead, they vigorously repurpose and reinforce nationalistic stereotypes ingrained on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

Thus, lists like this one should only be taken as a measure of perception and not of actual quality. But the *Grammophone* list, flawed as it necessarily is, does suggest that top American orchestras are considered on par with top European orchestras, and that this general opinion has not changed drastically since the 1960s.

2. “To Increase the Amount of Quality Music Played by These Orchestras”

Lowry’s second goal was to lengthen symphony orchestra seasons, and therein increase the amount of “quality music” accessible to U.S. listeners. When the Ford Foundation intensified its research into symphony orchestras in the early 1960s, there were no U.S. orchestras with full fifty-two-week season. But by the end of the 1970s, when the Ford Foundation Program for Symphony Orchestras formally came to an end, sixteen U.S. orchestras enjoyed full-year seasons:

Table 6.1: Weeks of Guaranteed Employment in U.S. Symphony Orchestras⁵⁵⁹

	62-63	64-65	65-66	66-67	67-68	68-69	69-70	70-71	71-72	72-73	73-74	74-75	75-76	76-77	77-78	78-79	79-80	84-85	89-90	94-95	99-00
<i>Atlanta Symphony Orchestra</i>		22	22	30	36	38	39	39	40	41	42	44	46	48	48	48	48	52	52	52	52
<i>Baltimore Symphony Orchestra</i>	26	29	30	34	35	34*	38	38	31*	42	42	44	44	45	45	45	45	52	52	52	52
<i>Boston Symphony Orchestra</i>	48	50	50	50	50	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52
<i>Buffalo Philharmonic</i>	28	29	30	34	35	35	36	36	39	42	42	43	44	46	44	47	48	42	46	37	37
<i>Chicago Symphony Orchestra</i>	39	47	50	50	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52
<i>Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra</i>	34	32	33	45	43	48*	50	52	47*	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52
<i>Cleveland Orchestra</i>	40	48	45	49	51	52	52	46*	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52
<i>Dallas Symphony Orchestra</i>	37	28	29	32	35	35	36	37	40*	45	45	33*	46	49	52	52	52	52	52	52	52
<i>Denver/Colorado Symphony Orchestra</i>		21	24	28	29	31	33	34	34	40	42	42	44	46	42	52	38	41	?	37	42
<i>Detroit Symphony Orchestra</i>	40	29	30	47	47	48	46	49	49	49	50	21	52*	52	52	52	52	52	48	44	52
<i>Honolulu/Hawaii Symphony Orchestra</i>		30	30	30	30	30	32	32	32	32	34	35	36	33	36	38	38	41	42	33	
<i>Houston Symphony Orchestra</i>	37	28	28	30	40	41	41	45	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52
<i>Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra</i>	25	27	28	31*	33	34	35	36	24*	38	40	42	43	43	43	43	44	48	52	52	52
<i>Kansas City Symphony Orchestra</i>	34	24	26	30	30	30	20*	34	23*	26	32	38	28	35	36	37	?	?	?	42	
<i>Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra</i>	34	34	37	42*	44	46	47	48	50	51	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52
<i>Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra</i>		31	32	38	39	41	42	42	44	44	46	47	48	49	49	49	50	46	50	42	44
<i>Minnesota Orchestra</i>	30	31	32	38	39	41	45	45	46	48	48	48	50	50	50	52	52	52	52	52	52
<i>New Orleans Symphony Orchestra</i>	31	27	30	32	33	35	?	36	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	39	40	37	34	?	?
<i>New York Philharmonic Orchestra</i>	47	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52
<i>Oakland Symphony Orchestra</i>													72**	72**	80**	86**	93**	148**	?	?	?
<i>Philadelphia Orchestra</i>	42	47	52	44*	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52
<i>Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra</i>	36	30	30	40	42	44	47	48	49	50	51	51	51	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52
<i>Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra</i>	30	32	32	32	34	36	36*	36	41	41*	38	38	38	42	42	45	46	48	49	41	40
<i>San Antonio Symphony Orchestra</i>				29	30	32	32	32	32	32	33	33	33	34	52	35	38	39	39	39	39
<i>San Francisco Symphony Orchestra</i>	24	26	28	30	30*	36	37	44	49	49	50	52	52	52	52	?	52	52	52	52	52
<i>St. Louis Symphony Orchestra</i>	37	30	28	36	37	44	47	49	49	51	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52
<i>Seattle Symphony Orchestra</i>	30	28	28	29	29	32	32	32	34	34	38	40	40	40	40	?	43	44	?	?	?
<i>Syracuse Symphony Orchestra</i>								30	31	33	34	35	37	37	38	39	41	44	44	36	38
<i>Utah Symphony Orchestra</i>														42	46	46	52	52	52	52	52
<i>Washington (National) Symphony Orchestra</i>	32	34	36	40	42	45	40*	47	50	50	51	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52
Number of Orchestras at 52 Weeks	0	1	2	1	3	5	5	5	6	7	9	11	11	13	14	16	16	18	18	18	19

*Work Stoppage
 **Annual Services

⁵⁵⁹ Wage Charts: 1962 – 2000, *Senza Sordino*, accessed January 29, 2019, <https://www.icsom.org/senza/>.

Although there is a clear correlation between the beginning of the Ford Program and the expansion of orchestra season length, it is difficult to assume a causal relationship because there was momentum towards fifty-two-week seasons before the Ford Foundation announced its intentions. The New York Philharmonic was the first U.S. orchestra to enjoy a full-year season, including four weeks of paid vacation, during the 1964–65 season. But in September 1963, the Philadelphia Orchestra was the first to negotiate a fifty-two-week contract, to begin in the 1965–66 season.⁵⁶⁰

In 1963, the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians (ICSOM) began publishing its quarterly journal *Senza Sordino*, with detailed wage charts describing individual orchestras' contracts. The publication and distribution of these wage charts, coupled with *Senza Sordino's* editorials on bargaining around the country, contributed greatly to a heightened awareness among musicians of what musicians in peer orchestras were doing. Undoubtedly, the sharing of information contributed to orchestras' growing leverage in collective bargaining; because elite musicians, especially string players, were in such short supply, administrators like Dick Cisek in Minnesota were under great pressure to ratify musician-friendly agreements. Thus, the infusion of Ford Foundation cash, coupled with resources like *Senza Sordino*, created the conditions that led to a dramatic increase in season length.

⁵⁶⁰ "Orchestras Given Year-Round Work: Musicians Winning more Pay and Extended Seasons," *New York Times*, September 12, 1965.

3. “To Improve the Financial Situation of Orchestral Musicians and so to Ensure an Adequate Supply of Fine Players both Now and in the Future”

The Ford Foundation’s goal to improve the financial situation of orchestral musicians was, in concert with the goal of extending seasons, intended to increase musician wages, and in turn help rectify the lack of quality musicians entering the field of orchestral playing. As with the extended season lengths, it is clear that wages were on the rise in the 1960s and through the 1970s. Again, though, it appears that a multitude of factors, not just the Ford Foundation’s intervention, contributed to this change:

Table 6.2: Historical Growth in Minimum Annual Salaries in Current Dollars⁵⁶¹

	1952–53	1962–63	1972–73	1982–83	1992–93	2000–01
<i>Atlanta Symphony Orchestra</i>	1,210	-	9,553	26,027	52,000	62,504
<i>Baltimore Symphony Orchestra</i>	1,400	3,185	9,660	22,340	53,560	62,400
<i>Boston Symphony Orchestra</i>	4,830	8,880	16,640	37,068	63,960	88,920
<i>Buffalo Philharmonic</i>	1,882	3,388	9,975	18,039	33,000	31,650
<i>Chicago Symphony Orchestra</i>	4,505	7,500	16,640	37,108	65,000	88,400
<i>Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra</i>	2,660	4,185	11,960	31,697	57,250	78,910
<i>Cleveland Orchestra</i>	3,270	6,120	14,820	34,016	66,144	85,280
<i>Dallas Symphony Orchestra</i>	1,600	4,500	11,700	28,346	54,600	71,760
<i>Denver/Colorado Symphony Orchestra</i>	1,660	-	8,600	21,002	25,350	34,356
<i>Detroit Symphony Orchestra</i>	3,040	4,940	12,855	32,212	61,672	80,834
<i>Honolulu/Hawaii Symphony Orchestra</i>	-	-	5,280	12,974	27,616	25,740
<i>Houston Symphony Orchestra</i>	2,560	3,998	11,180	28,346	51,480	69,940
<i>Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra</i>	1,400	2,250	7,980	20,858	43,290	61,872
<i>Kansas City Symphony Orchestra</i>	1,560	3,474	5,300	11,894	-	29,805
<i>Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra</i>	3,050	5,011	14,790	38,020	66,480	89,880
<i>Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra</i>	-	-	9,020	21,899	46,080	52,008
<i>Minnesota Orchestra</i>	2,600	4,350	12,192	32,418	62,790	79,950
<i>New Orleans Symphony Orchestra</i>	1,300	2,830	7,828	20,312	-	-
<i>New York Philharmonic Orchestra</i>	4,200	8,720	17,160	39,961	63,960	88,920
<i>Oakland Symphony Orchestra</i>				7,826	-	-
<i>Philadelphia Orchestra</i>	4,995	7,770	17,180	38,594	65,980	88,400
<i>Phoenix Symphony Orchestra</i>				10,997	24,500	31,210
<i>Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra</i>	2,500	5,230	13,500	32,856	65,260	82,940
<i>Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra</i>	2,640	4,125	9,225	23,311	35,210	32,400
<i>San Antonio Symphony Orchestra</i>	1,470		5,760	14,877	22,698	28,548
<i>San Diego Symphony Orchestra</i>				13,217	26,730	25,200
<i>San Francisco Symphony Orchestra</i>	2,200	4,010	13,720	35,304	65,780	88,400
<i>St. Louis Symphony Orchestra</i>	2,214	4,380	10,965	28,346	53,560	72,280
<i>Seattle Symphony Orchestra</i>	-	-	6,800	19,406	-	-
<i>Syracuse Symphony Orchestra</i>		-	3,960	12,572	21,715	24,659
<i>Utah Symphony Orchestra</i>	892	-	-	23,193	31,980	42,380
<i>Washington (National) Symphony Orchestra</i>	2,080	4,480	13,500	29,575	58,240	79,690

⁵⁶¹ "Comparative Growth in Orchestra Annual Salaries: 1952–2000," *Senza Sordino*, March, 2001.

Table 6.3: Historical Growth in Minimum Annual Salaries in Real Dollars (Inflation-Adjusted for 2018)⁵⁶²

	1952–53	1962–63	1972–73	1982–83	1992–93	2000–01
<i>Atlanta Symphony Orchestra</i>	11,314	-	57,605	68,451	93,080	91,881
<i>Baltimore Symphony Orchestra</i>	13,090	26,308	58,250	58,754	95,872	91,728
<i>Boston Symphony Orchestra</i>	45,161	73,349	100,339	97,489	114,488	130,712
<i>Buffalo Philharmonic</i>	17,597	27,985	60,149	47,441	59,070	46,526
<i>Chicago Symphony Orchestra</i>	42,122	61,950	100,339	97,594	116,350	129,948
<i>Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra</i>	24,871	34,568	72,119	83,362	102,478	115,998
<i>Cleveland Orchestra</i>	30,575	50,551	89,365	89,461	118,398	125,362
<i>Dallas Symphony Orchestra</i>	14,960	37,170	70,551	74,551	97,734	105,487
<i>Denver/Colorado Symphony Orchestra</i>	15,521	-	51,858	55,236	45,377	50,503
<i>Detroit Symphony Orchestra</i>	28,424	40,804	77,516	84,717	110,393	118,826
<i>Honolulu/Hawaii Symphony Orchestra</i>	-	-	31,838	34,121	49,433	37,838
<i>Houston Symphony Orchestra</i>	23,936	33,023	67,415	74,551	92,149	102,812
<i>Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra</i>	13,090	18,585	48,119	54,857	77,489	90,952
<i>Kansas City Symphony Orchestra</i>	14,586	28,695	31,959	31,281	-	43,813
<i>Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra</i>	28,518	41,391	89,184	99,991	118,999	132,124
<i>Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra</i>	-	-	54,391	57,594	82,483	76,452
<i>Minnesota Orchestra</i>	24,310	35,931	73,518	85,259	112,394	117,527
<i>New Orleans Symphony Orchestra</i>	12,155	23,376	47,203	53,421	-	-
<i>New York Philharmonic Orchestra</i>	39,270	72,027	103,475	105,099	114,488	130,712
<i>Oakland Symphony Orchestra</i>	-	-	-	20,583	-	-
<i>Philadelphia Orchestra</i>	46,703	64,180	103,595	101,503	118,104	129,948
<i>Phoenix Symphony Orchestra</i>	-	-	-	28,921	43,855	45,879
<i>Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra</i>	23,375	43,200	81,405	86,411	116,815	121,922
<i>Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra</i>	24,684	34,073	55,627	61,308	63,026	47,628
<i>San Antonio Symphony Orchestra</i>	13,745	-	34,733	39,127	40,629	41,966
<i>San Diego Symphony Orchestra</i>	-	-	-	34,760	47,847	37,044
<i>San Francisco Symphony Orchestra</i>	20,570	33,123	82,732	92,849	117,746	129,948
<i>St. Louis Symphony Orchestra</i>	20,701	36,179	66,119	74,551	95,872	106,252
<i>Seattle Symphony Orchestra</i>	-	-	41,004	51,038	-	-
<i>Syracuse Symphony Orchestra</i>	-	-	23,879	33,063	38,870	36,249
<i>Utah Symphony Orchestra</i>	8,340	-	-	60,997	57,244	62,299
<i>Washington (National) Symphony Orchestra</i>	19,448	37,005	81,405	77,783	104,250	117,144

⁵⁶² "Comparative Growth in Orchestra Annual Salaries: 1952–2000," *Senza Sordino*, March, 2001.

Tables 2 and 3 suggest a dramatic overall increase in musician salaries in both current and real (inflation adjusted dollars) during the second half of the twentieth century. Among the top twenty-four U.S. symphony orchestras, real minimum annual wages have more than quadrupled, from \$23,696 during the 1952–53 season to \$100,773 in 2000–01. The largest ten-year jump occurred during the years 1962–63 and 1972–73, when the average real minimum annual wage for the top twenty-four orchestras jumped 103% from \$35,561 to \$72,220.

This increase is related at least partly to the increase in work weeks during the same period, in addition to the increased pressure placed on managers and boards because of ICSOM's influence. But salaries were also greatly on the rise during the span 1952–53 to 1962–63; during this period the average real minimum annual wage for the top twenty-four orchestras increased 50%, and this was before both the founding of ICSOM and the implementation Ford Foundation's Program for Symphony Orchestras.

Although it is difficult to pin down a clear causal relationship between the intervention of the Ford Foundation and the rise in both guaranteed work weeks and salaries, it is nonetheless clear that musicians in leading symphony orchestras, and not just in the "Big Five," experienced tremendous gains in compensation during the second half of the twentieth century. And these gains greatly outpaced those of public-school teachers, a group of professionals cited regularly in the 1950s and 1960s when discussing orchestra compensation.

As discussed in Chapter 3, many orchestra managers expressed concern that musicians were choosing careers as public-school teachers instead of pursuing careers in orchestras. The Ford Foundation's 1966 press release announcing the Program for Symphony Orchestras noted the benefits of public-school teaching over orchestra playing: "Any player in a major symphony has had to spend at least as much time, money, and effort on his education as a teacher. Furthermore, the conditions of employment are more favorable to schoolteachers than to orchestra musicians."⁵⁶³

Orchestral administrators explicitly targeted teacher salaries as a target for orchestra musicians. In California, for example, the average public school teacher's annual salary during the 1969–70 school year was just over \$10,000 (\$73,000 in 2018 dollars).⁵⁶⁴ The Los Angeles Philharmonic's average salary rose dramatically during the early years of the Symphony Orchestra Program from \$10,086 in 1966–67 to \$12,742 in 1968–69.⁵⁶⁵ By 1972, the orchestra's *minimum* salary had risen to nearly \$15,000, by 1982 \$38,500, by 1992 \$66,480, and by 2000 \$89,880.⁵⁶⁶ By the 2014–15 season, the musicians of the Los Angeles Philharmonic were guaranteed the highest base salary of any orchestral musicians in the United States, with an annual minimum of \$150,124, outpacing even the traditional "Big Five" orchestras of

⁵⁶³ "News from the Ford Foundation: Ford Foundation Program for Symphony Orchestras," July 6, 1966, Box 3, Series 1.3, MOAA.

⁵⁶⁴ "Estimated Average Annual Salary of Teachers in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools, by State or Jurisdiction: Selected Years, 1969-70 through 2009-10," *National Center for Education Statistics*, March 2010, accessed December 2018, https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d10/tables/dt10_083.asp.

⁵⁶⁵ "Symphony Orchestra Program Questionnaire: 1966-1969," July 29, 1970, Los Angeles Philharmonic Archives.

⁵⁶⁶ "Comparative Salaries—1952-2002," *Senza Sordino*, March 2001, 8.

Chicago, New York, Boston, Cleveland, and Philadelphia.⁵⁶⁷ By contrast, a certified music teacher beginning her career in the Los Angeles Unified School District during the 2014–15 school year could expect a minimum salary of just over \$47,000.⁵⁶⁸

In his 1972 oral history, McNeil Lowry recalled that “the average wage of symphony orchestra musicians in the year in which we made the grant [1967] equaled the average wage of secondary school teachers only in seven cities of the United States, and most orchestra players were moonlighting to beat hell.”⁵⁶⁹ During the 1965–66 season, only in the “Big Five” orchestras were average musician salaries higher than those of public-school teachers.⁵⁷⁰ But by the early seventies—when the Ford Foundation completed its distribution of expendable funds—salaries in many orchestras matched or exceeded local teacher salaries. Today, teacher salaries serve as an altogether ineffectual yardstick for the salaries of musicians in top orchestras; in none of the school districts containing the eight highest paying U.S. orchestras do the base public-school teacher’s salary approach the minimum salary enjoyed by orchestra members:

⁵⁶⁷ Jeffrey Fleishman, “Tales of Obsession and Perfection: The Musicians of the L.A. Phil,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 12, 2015, accessed July 2016, <http://graphics.latimes.com/la-phil-2/> LA Times, *Tales of Obsession and Perfection: The Musicians of the L.A. Phil*.

⁵⁶⁸ “Salary Tables – Archive,” Los Angeles Unified School District, accessed September 2016, <http://achieve.lausd.net/Page/8569>.

⁵⁶⁹ Charles T. Morrissey, “Interview with W. McNeil Lowry for the Ford Foundation Oral History Project,” January 14, 1972, box 3, Ford Foundation Records, Oral History Project, RAC, 532.

⁵⁷⁰ “The Ford Foundation: Millions for Music—Music for Millions,” *Music Educators Journal*, Vol. 53, No. 1 (Sep., 1966), 84.

Table 6.4: Base Salaries of Eight Highest Paid Symphony Orchestras Compared to Base Salaries of Local Public School District Teachers⁵⁷¹

	2017–18		2017–18
<i>Boston Symphony</i>	\$ 153,400	<i>Boston Public School District</i>	\$ 55,295
<i>Chicago Symphony</i>	\$ 159,016	<i>Chicago Public Schools</i>	\$ 51,666
<i>Cleveland Orchestra</i>	\$ 135,096	<i>Cleveland Metro School District</i>	\$ 44,686
<i>Los Angeles Philharmonic</i>	\$ 164,476	<i>Los Angeles Unified School District</i>	\$ 50,368
<i>National Symphony</i>	\$ 143,208	<i>DC Public Schools</i>	\$ 55,209
<i>New York Philharmonic</i>	\$ 147,550	<i>NYC Department of Education</i>	\$ 54,000
<i>Philadelphia Orchestra</i>	\$ 134,420	<i>School District of Philadelphia</i>	\$ 46,267
<i>San Francisco Symphony</i>	\$ 166,400	<i>San Francisco Unified School District</i>	\$ 53,328

These data are not intended to compare the work done by orchestra musicians or public-school teachers, but instead to illustrate how dramatically orchestral salaries have risen since the 1960s, when the Ford Foundation as well as orchestra executives cited comparisons between musician and teacher salaries. Concerning this dramatic increase in musician salaries, it is clear that the situation of top orchestral musicians

⁵⁷¹ See Drew McManus, “Top-Tier Musicians Compensation 2018,” *Adaptistration*, May 25, 2018, <https://adaptistration.com/2018/05/25/top-tier-musician-compensation-2018>; Boston Public Schools, Biweekly Pay Schedule: 09/02/17 – 8/31/18, accessed January 28, 2019, https://btu.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/BTU_Teacher_Salary_Grids_16-18_CBA_no_highlights.pdf; Chicago Teachers Union, “2017–18 School Year: Salary Schedule for Full-Time Appointed Teachers in 208-day Positions,” accessed January 28, 2019, https://ctulocal1.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/CTU_Contract_2015-19_Appendices_Only.pdf; Cleveland Teachers Union, “2017–2018: Teacher’s Differentiated Compensation Salary Schedule,” accessed January 28, 2019, https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/Cleveland_16-19_tentative; Los Angeles Unified School District, “2017–2018 Salaries for Teachers with Regular Credentials (T) C Basis,” accessed January 28, 2019, <https://achieve.lausd.net/cms/lib/CA01000043/Centricity/Domain/280/Salary%20Tables/salary%2017-18/T%20Table%20Annual.pdf>; Washington Teachers’ Union, “FY 2017–2018 ET 15 Salary Schedule,” accessed January 29, 2019, <https://dcps.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dcps/publication/attachments/WTU-DCPS%20Contract%202016-2019.pdf>; United Federation of Teachers, “Teacher Salary Schedule: May 1, 2017,” accessed January 29, 2019, <http://www.uft.org/files/attachments/secure/teacher-schedule-2009-2018.pdf>; The School District of Philadelphia, “Salary Schedule,” accessed January 29, 2019, <https://jobs.philasd.org/opportunities/teachers/salary-schedule/>; San Francisco Public Schools, “2017–2018 Salary Schedule,” accessed January 29, 2019, <http://www.sfusd.edu/en/assets/sfusd-staff/contract%20and%20salary%20schedules/2017-18%20Teachers%20Salary%20Schedules.pdf>.

benefitted dramatically—in terms of salary increases—during and after the Symphony Orchestra Program.

Beyond just public-school teachers, a famously low-paid cohort of college educated professionals, orchestral salaries have also outgrown other non-supervisory employees throughout the labor market. Table 6.3 shows how in real dollars orchestral salaries generally doubled from the early 1960s to the early 2000s. During the same span, according to the Pew Research Center, average hourly wages for non-supervisory employees on private non-farm payrolls have increased only about 10% in real dollars from 1964 to 2018, suggesting that orchestral musicians have enjoyed salary gains out of step with typical workers.⁵⁷² And these gains have continued through the first two decades of the twenty-first century; as Table 6.4 shows, salaries in the top eight orchestras have grown dramatically since 2000, despite major economic crises like the early 2000s dot-com crash and the financial crisis of 2007 to 2008.

It is clear that orchestral musicians enjoyed growing wages during the 1960s and 1970s as the Ford Foundation spread millions to orchestras around the country. But in raising salaries the foundation intended not only to help individual musicians, but also to present a more compelling argument for young musicians to pursue careers in orchestras.

⁵⁷² DeSilver, Drew, “For Most U.S. Workers, Real Wages have Barely Budged in Decades,” *Pew Research Center*, August 7, 2018, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/08/07/for-most-us-workers-real-wages-have-barely-budged-for-decades/>.

By extending seasons and raising salaries, this argument has been made effectively; today, there is no shortage of qualified musicians graduating from conservatories and music schools auditioning for seats in professional orchestras. The situation is now reversed. Whereas in the 1950s and 1960s many musicians eschewed orchestral auditions and became teachers, now the audition process is so competitive and grueling that many outstanding musicians end up as teachers because they cannot succeed in an audition.

In 2015 the *Cincinnati Enquirer* published an article about the ordeal of a violist auditioning for a section (non-principal) role with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. The applicant, a member of two smaller Ohio professional orchestras, was one of 140 applicants. Through a pre-screening process the orchestra invited fewer than half of the applicants to formally audition, and forty-nine total violists came to Cincinnati for the audition. Although he made the final four, the violist highlighted by the *Enquirer* was not chosen, and as of 2018, according to his personal website, he still has not landed a role with a major orchestra.⁵⁷³

Accounts like these, suggesting the sheer volume of qualified people auditioning for section roles in major, but not top tier, orchestras like the Cincinnati Symphony suggest that there is no longer a shortage of qualified string players looking for jobs in top orchestras. For this reason, many professional musicians freelance with multiple orchestras to earn a living. The 2008 documentary film “Freeway Philharmonic,” broadcast nationally by the Public Broadcasting Service,

⁵⁷³ Janelle Gelfand, “Inside a Symphony Audition,” *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, November 24, 2015.

documents several of these musicians who drive throughout the San Francisco Bay Area piecing together their livings from many part-time gigs. Without full-time jobs in an orchestra like the San Francisco Symphony, “Freeway Philharmonic” musicians are paid per service, without the paid vacation, pensions, and other fringe benefits of employment in a major orchestra.⁵⁷⁴

The scarcity of auditions in major orchestras leads many fine musicians, like those in freeway philharmonics around the country, to bide their time waiting for the rare openings in larger orchestras. Although this surplus leaves many of these musicians without the personal satisfaction and remuneration of joining a major orchestra, their collective labor results in a collection of fine smaller orchestras in smaller towns and distant suburbs. Of the development of this new wealth of talent, former Minnesota Orchestra President Richard Cisek remarked to me about one of the positive consequences of the Ford Program: “America’s rich tradition of high-quality symphony orchestras in almost any city of any size blossomed.... Now you have professionals filling the ranks of orchestras in cities of all sizes. And that makes a significant difference in the talent pools that exist in all cities.”⁵⁷⁵

4. “To Stabilize the Financial Position of the Leading American Orchestras”

⁵⁷⁴ Tal Skloot, dir, *Freeway Philharmonic: The Classical Road Warriors* (El Sobrante, CA: Tritone Films, 2007).

⁵⁷⁵ Author’s interview with Richard Cisek, September 8, 2016.

The Ford Foundation's final goal—to “stabilize the financial position of the leading American Orchestras”—is the most vague of the four, and thus the most difficult one to evaluate. Although it is clear that the salaries in the top twenty to thirty orchestras have increased dramatically since the early 1960s, it is hard to judge whether the orchestra business is in aggregate on more stable financial footing than it was fifty years ago. During the late 1980s, many smaller orchestras experienced great instability; because of factors explored in Chapter Four, the Oakland Symphony became the first major orchestra to declare bankruptcy in 1986.

Although the period in the late 1980s when the Oakland Symphony went bankrupt was jarring, the financial crisis of 2007 and 2008 had wider reaching implications. In April 2011 the Philadelphia Orchestra filed for bankruptcy under Chapter 11 to negotiate with creditors and reduce its debts. The Philadelphia Orchestra did not cease operations—unlike the Oakland Symphony which filed Chapter 7 bankruptcy, the more draconian form—but its bankruptcy was nonetheless an example of how even top orchestras are vulnerable to economic realities. Furthermore, the Minnesota Orchestra's unprecedented work stoppage from 2012 to 2014 demonstrates how decades of harmonious operations can be soured by economic recession.

Thus, the impact of the Ford Foundation's Program for Symphony Orchestras is somewhat mixed; although wages have increased, the foundation's reliance on endowments and success in building fundraising mechanisms has tightened the link between orchestras and the performance of the economy and the stock market. As of

mid 2019, the U.S. stock market is basically healthy, endowments are growing, and orchestras are generally expanding operations and paying musicians more than ever before. In addition, the 2017 U.S. tax reform further incentivizes charitable giving for wealthy Americans by raising the charitable deduction limit from 50% of adjusted gross income to 60% and eliminating the Pease phaseout on itemized deductions for taxpayers with high adjusted gross incomes. This tax reform, coupled with a bullish stock market, should trickle down to orchestra and musicians in the form of growing salaries, more experimental programming, and extraordinary touring opportunities.

Inevitably, though, the U.S. will enter another recession, endowments will shrink, and orchestras will have to make hard decisions. Donors will have less to donate, and concertgoers will have less expendable income to buy tickets. Symphony orchestras have shifted toward greater reliance on wealthy donors, and they have not succeeded in diversifying their audiences or widening their appeal. The high salaries enjoyed by top orchestral players have risen without a corresponding market-driven mandate, and orchestral musicians are especially vulnerable to recessions because they depend so greatly on wealthy donors rather than ticket sales. Unless orchestras succeed in expanding their audiences, it is likely that the next major recession will negate the meteoric wage gains of the last five years.

“Towards a New Gospel of Wealth:” A Symphony Orchestra Program Today

There is still a great deal of foundation support for symphony orchestras in the United States, but for many of the biggest foundations symphony orchestras are no longer a priority. Instead, many of the largest foundations, like Rockefeller, Carnegie, and Gates, are focusing on basic needs, like medical research and education availability, particularly in Africa and elsewhere outside the United States. The Ford Foundation is involved in these issues as well, but Ford's current president, Darren Walker, has taken dramatic steps to re-orient the Ford Foundation towards the singular issue of income inequality.

In 2015 Walker, then in his third year as Ford Foundation President, wrote an essay entitled "Toward a New Gospel of Wealth," in reference to Andrew Carnegie's oft-cited 1889 "Wealth." Without explicitly repudiating Carnegie, and thus by extension the inequalities of the gilded-age that produced the conditions for the creation of the Ford Foundation, Walker deftly argued that it was time for philanthropy to evolve in its thinking:

Where Carnegie might have identified illiteracy as a source of inequality, for example, we now understand that the reverse is true—or, at the very least, that a complex symbiosis is at work. We understand, in a way he did not, that social, cultural, political, and economic inequalities set in place reinforcing conditions from the very start of life—in homes, in neighborhoods, and in schools—that create cycles of poverty, illiteracy, and lack of opportunity.⁵⁷⁶

Walker argues that it is time to bring new voices and perspectives into the fold to re-imagine the role of endowments, particularly those of legacy foundations like Ford, and cites Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as the ideological root of his philosophy:

⁵⁷⁶ Darren Walker, "Toward a New Gospel of Wealth," The Ford Foundation, 2015.

“My thinking on this issue has been shaped by the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who made a profound statement not long before his death: ‘Philanthropy is commendable,’ he wrote, ‘but it must not cause the philanthropist to overlook the circumstances of economic injustice which make philanthropy necessary.’”⁵⁷⁷

Walker’s concern coincides with a growing popular interest in income inequality, epitomized by French economist Thomas Piketty’s 2013 book *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, published in English translation in April 2014. An unlikely *New York Times* No. 1 best seller in the hardcover nonfiction category, Piketty’s central thesis in *Capital* is that the private rate of return of capital has outpaced the rate of growth of income and output, resulting in an increasingly large concentration of capital in the hands of the wealthy, and a widening gap between rich and poor: “Once constituted, capital reproduces itself faster than output increases. The past devours the future.”⁵⁷⁸

For legacy foundations like Ford, in which the founder is long dead, the specter of the past devouring the future can loom large, and radical introspection in the vein of Walker and his Ford Foundation is rare. But several recent books, in the wake of Piketty’s *Capital* and Walker’s “New Gospel” question the problematic relationship between private charitable foundations and inequality. This relationship is girded by the charitable tax deduction, which incentivizes charitable giving to not-for-profit corporations, as defined by the Internal Revenue Service. As discussed in

⁵⁷⁷ Darren Walker, “Toward a New Gospel of Wealth,” The Ford Foundation, 2015.

⁵⁷⁸ Thomas Piketty, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2014), 571.

Chapter 1, Stanford Political Scientist Rob Reich, in his 2018 book *Just Giving: Why Philanthropy is Failing Democracy and How it Can Do Better*, argues that the charitable deduction introduces a “plutocratic” element into society because it allows for money that would otherwise be subject to democratic preference to be directed for the private purposes of individuals. Because the wealthy pay taxes at a higher marginal income tax rate than the poor, they have more to gain in charitable deductions. Thus, the charitable donations of the wealthy—those who itemize their deductions and are in the top marginal income tax brackets—are *cheaper* than the donations of those who are in lower tax brackets and do not itemize. Reich considers this fact a fundamental inequality of the U.S. tax code. If the purpose of the charitable deduction is to provide subsidy to noble causes, as is the conventional wisdom, then “why should two donors who make identical donations to identical organizations, ostensibly producing the identical social good, be treated differently by the tax code?”⁵⁷⁹

In addition, Reich interrogates the public praise offered philanthropists—exemplified by the December 26, 2005 cover of *Time Magazine* naming “the good Samaritans” Bill and Melinda Gates, and U2 singer Bono as persons of the year—in relation to the general subsidies that voters (we) offer them:

In many countries philanthropy is a tax-subsidized activity, partly paid for by all taxpayers. Strictly speaking, then, donors are not exercising a liberty to give their money away; they are subsidized to exercise a liberty they already possess.⁵⁸⁰

⁵⁷⁹ Rob Reich, *Just Giving: Why Philanthropy is Failing Democracy and How It Can Do Better* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University, 2018), 120.

⁵⁸⁰ Reich, *Just Giving*, 8.

In fact, as Reich describes, there once was greater public opposition to philanthropists and industrial alms-givers like Carnegie, Ford, and Rockefeller. When John D. Rockefeller began his eponymous foundation in 1911, he was met with staunch opposition in Washington because his charitable efforts were considered an attempt to launder his ill-gotten Standard Oil gains. Former president Theodore Roosevelt remarked that “no amount of charities in spending such fortunes can compensate in any way for the misconduct in acquiring them,” while sitting president William Taft derided the effort as an attempt to “incorporate Mr. Rockefeller.”⁵⁸¹ Although some of this animus was residual anger from the lengthy, and ultimately successful, federal effort to breakup Standard Oil in 1911 under the Sherman Antitrust Act, Reich argues that opposition to Rockefeller’s charitable endeavors were also principled in nature:

For many Americans, foundations were troubling not because they represented the wealth, possibly ill-gotten, of Gilded Age robber barons. They were troubling because they were considered a deeply and fundamentally *antidemocratic* institution, an entity that would undermine political equality, convert private wealth into the donor’s preferred public policies, could exist in perpetuity, and be unaccountable except to a handpicked assemblage of trustees.⁵⁸²

A public mistrust of private foundations re-emerged forcefully in the 1960s, when the enlarged wealth and influence of the Ford Foundation—as a result of the public offering of Ford Stock as described in Chapter 2—spurred congressional interest. In 1965, at the joint request of the Senate Committee on Finance and the

⁵⁸¹ Ibid., 4.

⁵⁸² Reich, *Just Giving*, 5.

House Committee on Ways and Means, the U.S. Treasury Department produced a report examining the activities of private foundations. Based on a survey of more than a thousand U.S. foundations, the Treasury Report noted three broad criticisms: “It has been contended that the interposition of the foundation between the donor and active charitable pursuits entails undue delay in the transmission of the benefits which society should derive from charitable contributions; that foundations are becoming a disproportionately large segment of our national economy; and that foundations represent dangerous concentrations of economic and social power.”⁵⁸³

The Treasury Report led to a wider Congressional investigation of foundations, resulting in a 1969 hearing in which Ford Foundation President McGeorge Bundy testified before the House Ways and Means Committee concerning the foundation’s political biases, specifically grants to former aides of Robert Kennedy after his assassination in 1968. The Congressional investigation, coupled with Bundy’s arrogant demeanor during his hearing, subsequently led to major regulations in the Tax Act of 1969 limiting the activities of foundations.⁵⁸⁴

The 1969 Tax Act created several requirements limiting the operations of private foundations. First, it imposed a 4 percent excise tax on the investment income. This levy yielded more than \$76 million in tax year 1974, but the rate has subsequently been lowered to 2 percent, although many foundations actually pay

⁵⁸³ *Treasury Department Report on Private Foundations* (Washington, D.C.: Committee on Ways and Means, U.S. House of Representatives, 1965), 5.

⁵⁸⁴ Patricia Rosenfield and Rachel Wimpee, “The Ford Foundation: Constant Themes, Historical Variations” (Tarrytown, N.Y.: Rockefeller Archive Center, 2015), 23.

less.⁵⁸⁵ Second, the Act established a minimum annual payout amount of 5 percent investment assets. Third, the Act put restrictions on grants to individuals, making it the responsibility of the foundation to assume oversight of program development and accounting by individual grantees. Finally, the Act established a new penalty scheme to sanction noncomplying foundations.⁵⁸⁶

Despite this modest congressional oversight, private foundations have only grown in wealth and influence since the 1960s. David Callahan, founder and editor of the website insidephilanthropy.com and author of the 2017 book *The Givers: Wealth, Power, and Philanthropy in a New Gilded Age*, writes that nonprofits have changed greatly in the hundred years since the charitable deduction was created in 1917. Callahan argues that nonprofits are increasingly involved in activities resembling partisan politics, and that because the money is flowing to causes on both sides of the political aisle, there is little incentive for either side to reform the system:

When donors hold views we detest, we tend to see them as unfairly tilting policy debates with their money. Yet when we like their causes, we often view them as heroically stepping forward to level the playing field against powerful special interests or backward public majorities. These sorts of a la carte reactions don't make a lot of sense. Really, the question should be whether we think it's okay overall for *any* philanthropists to have so much power to advance their own vision of a better society?⁵⁸⁷

⁵⁸⁵ Internal Revenue Service, "Tax on Net Investment Income," accessed January 27, 2019, <https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/private-foundations/tax-on-net-investment-income>.

⁵⁸⁶ Homer C. Wadsworth, "Private Foundation and the Tax Reform Act of 1969," *Law and Contemporary Problems* 39, no. 4 (Autumn 1975): 255-262.

⁵⁸⁷ David Callahan, *The Givers: Wealth, Power, and Philanthropy in a New Gilded Age* (New York: Knopf, 2017), 166.

Journalist Anand Giridharadas, a former analyst at international consulting firm McKinsey and Co., contends in his 2018 book *Winners Take All: The Elite Charade of Changing the World* that philanthropists see in Carnegie’s “Wealth” the kernel of the dangerous idea that “after-the-fact benevolence justifies anything-goes capitalism.... That generosity is a substitute for and a means of avoiding the necessity of a more just and equitable system and a fairer distribution of power.”⁵⁸⁸

Income inequality appears to be playing a major role in growing populist and anti-elite sentiments in the United States and Europe. Because the Ford Foundation does not accept donations—it only spends income generated from its endowment—and Walker doesn’t need to fundraise, he can take programmatic risks. But part of his role as the leader of one of the most prestigious charitable organizations in the world is to evangelize on behalf of his foundation’s mission and convince other philanthropic leaders to follow suit. One might think that battling economic inequities wouldn’t be a hard sell for philanthropists. But alleviating poverty and thwarting income inequality are two very different concepts; the former euphemistically isolates the poor as a problem population to be fixed, without allusion to the sources of poverty. By contrast, the very concept of income inequality puts the wealthy (philanthropists) squarely in the equation as agents of imbalance.

For this reason, Walker’s crusade against income inequality places him at odds with many philanthropists who seek to apply the methods that made them

⁵⁸⁸ Anand Giridharadas, *Winners Take All: The Elite Charade of Changing the World* (New York: Knopf, 2018), 166.

wealthy to solve intractable problems like poverty and global health. But as with Andrew Carnegie, it is unlikely that current titans of industry—such as Mark Zuckerberg, Charles Koch, George Soros, Bill Gates, etc.—will see a reason to radically reform our increasingly unequal system, because it was this very system that made them so spectacularly rich in the first place. Giridharadas writes that “the people with the most to lose from genuine social change have placed themselves in charge of social changes, often with the passive assent of those most in need of it.”⁵⁸⁹

Furthermore, Giridharadas suggests that the public can sense that elites are wielding domineering influence over society, and that the 2016 presidential election, in which the populist outsider Donald Trump defeated centrist insider Hillary Clinton, is a product of this growing dissatisfaction:

It is no wonder that the American voting public—like other publics around the world—has turned more resentful and suspicious in recent years, embracing populist movements on the left and right, bringing socialism and nationalism into the center of political life in a way that once seemed unthinkable, and succumbing to all manner of conspiracy theory and fake news. There is a spreading recognition, on both sides of the ideological divide, that the system is broken and has to change.⁵⁹⁰

Darren Walker and the Ford Foundation’s recognition of this fissure is evident by the Ford Foundation’s re-assessment of its grantmaking around seven thematic areas: civic engagement and government; creativity and free expression; gender, racial, and ethnic justice; internet freedom; natural resources and climate change; just cities and regions; and the future of work. Under this rubric it is difficult to see how a

⁵⁸⁹ Giridharadas, *Winners Take All*, 9.

⁵⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

large endowment program like the Program for Symphony Orchestras would be possible within the Ford Foundation's current mission. A program for symphony orchestras would need to be justified in relation to the problem of income inequality. But orchestras have done very little to transcend their aristocratic roots; the courtly orchestras of Europe were patronized by unelected elites (monarchs), and the modern orchestras of the United States are supported by a similarly privileged, unelected class of wealthy philanthropists. The artistic quality of the top American orchestras is undisputed, but as instruments for equity and social justice, their utility is less apparent.

Thus, the question of whether or not a program of the scope and scale like the Program for Symphony Orchestras *could* happen today is perhaps not the one that needs to be asked. There is still great financial instability among even the top U.S. orchestras, but maybe the correct question to ask is *should* a program like this one, which would cost more than \$600 million in 2019, happen today? If we accept the thesis that income inequality is the root problem causing wider disfunction in our society, then we must consider whether or not symphony orchestras can diminish income inequality, or—to repurpose Darren Walker's argument that it is not illiteracy that creates inequality but vice versa—is inequality a fundamental barrier preventing greater interest in symphony orchestras?

In conclusion, as part of a broader discussion about the role of arts philanthropy in an age of rising inequality, Henry Ford II's comment during the Ford Foundation board's discussion of the Program for Symphony Orchestra—"why

should we decide that we should give eighty-million to the symphony and not the same amount to the Beatles?"—becomes an interesting question. Although it is difficult to know if Ford II was being flippant or profound, this question, uttered among a cloistered group of elites, highlights the undemocratic nature of the Ford Foundation's proceedings; a small group, through no openly democratic process, was endowed with the funds to shape American culture.

But the Program for Symphony Orchestras should be considered in the environment in which it was born: the dynamic and optimistic period following the Second World War. In this context the efforts of the Ford Foundation to raise the salaries of orchestral musicians, a chronically underpaid group of professionals, and to endow symphony orchestras as bedrock cultural institutions, was a noble cause. Although the Ford program had its limitations and was not a panacea for all the ills plaguing orchestras and orchestra musicians, it is an artifact of a time when it seemed like anything was possible in America.

APPENDIX 1.

Financial Position of the Ford Foundation, 1952 to 1981 (all values in millions)⁵⁹¹

<i>Year End</i>	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961
<i>Investment Income</i>	\$ 32.56	\$ 48.13	\$ 19.57	\$ 133.53	\$ 165.89	\$ 102.86	\$ 92.45	\$ 84.48	\$ 127.57	\$ 130.83
<i>Other</i>	\$ 0.05	\$ 0.12	\$ 0.39	\$ 0.04	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.05	\$ 0.12	\$ 0.14	\$ -	\$ -
<i>Total Income</i>	\$ 32.61	\$ 48.25	\$ 19.96	\$ 133.58	\$ 165.89	\$ 102.91	\$ 92.57	\$ 84.62	\$ 127.57	\$ 130.83
<i>Grant Expense</i>	\$ 37.87	\$ 58.91	\$ 49.44	\$ 64.96	\$ 557.78	\$ 153.39	\$ 79.03	\$ 110.84	\$ 160.75	\$ 144.55
<i>Other Expense</i>	\$ 3.41	\$ 4.71	\$ 4.07	\$ 5.17	\$ 5.68	\$ 6.24	\$ 5.88	\$ 5.11	\$ 7.48	\$ 8.44
<i>Total Expenses</i>	\$ 41.27	\$ 63.62	\$ 53.51	\$ 70.12	\$ 563.46	\$ 159.63	\$ 84.91	\$ 115.94	\$ 168.24	\$ 152.99
<i>Excess of Income over Expenses</i>	\$ (8.66)	\$ (15.37)	\$ (33.55)	\$ 63.45	\$ (397.57)	\$ (56.72)	\$ 7.66	\$ (31.32)	\$ (40.66)	\$ (22.16)
<i>Ford Securities</i>										
<i>Number of Shares</i>	3.09	3.09	3.09	3.09	36.13	36.13	36.13	34.07	31.91	29.00
<i>Book Value</i>	\$ 417.14	\$ 417.14	\$ 417.14	\$ 417.14	\$ 325.19	\$ 325.19	\$ 325.19	\$ 1,328.88	\$ 1,499.78	\$ 1,507.74
<i>Per Share Valuation</i>	\$ 135.04	\$ 135.00	\$ 135.00	\$ 135.00	\$ 9.00	\$ 9.00	\$ 9.00	\$ 39.00	\$ 47.00	\$ 52.00
<i>Other Securities/Bonds</i>	\$ 95.83	\$ 97.39	\$ 39.14	\$ 132.37	\$ 658.96	\$ 415.28	\$ 434.16	\$ 522.17	\$ 683.75	\$ 897.08
<i>Other Assets</i>	\$ 5.46	\$ 5.71	\$ 36.94	\$ 31.41	\$ 14.95	\$ 7.70	\$ 8.12	\$ 8.16	\$ 11.98	\$ 17.95
<i>Total Assets</i>	\$ 518.42	\$ 520.23	\$ 493.21	\$ 580.92	\$ 999.11	\$ 748.17	\$ 767.47	\$ 1,859.20	\$ 2,195.51	\$ 2,422.77
<i>Change in Assets over Prior Year</i>	n/a	\$ 1.81	\$ (27.02)	\$ 87.70	\$ 418.19	\$ (250.93)	\$ 19.30	\$ 1,091.73	\$ 336.31	\$ 227.26
<i>Percent Change</i>	n/a	0.35%	-5.19%	17.78%	71.99%	-25.12%	2.58%	142.25%	18.09%	10.35%
<i>Ford IPO</i>										

⁵⁹¹ All figures are derived from the Ford Foundation's Annual Reports, <https://www.fordfoundation.org/about/library/?filter=Annual%20Report>, accessed January 14, 2019.

<i>Year End</i>	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
<i>Investment Income</i>	\$ 136.87	\$ 140.61	\$ 147.21	\$ 145.69	\$ 157.83	\$ 158.50	\$ 155.51	\$ 149.82	\$ 106.91	\$ 195.31
<i>Other</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<i>Total Income</i>	\$ 136.87	\$ 140.61	\$ 147.21	\$ 145.69	\$ 157.83	\$ 158.50	\$ 155.51	\$ 149.82	\$ 106.91	\$ 195.31
<i>Grant Expense</i>	\$ 223.26	\$ 212.29	\$ 225.14	\$ 281.59	\$ 341.63	\$ 234.08	\$ 175.73	\$ 198.97	\$ 199.39	\$ 185.16
<i>Other Expense</i>	\$ 10.44	\$ 14.57	\$ 16.67	\$ 18.25	\$ 20.92	\$ 29.00	\$ 35.43	\$ 39.13	\$ 38.85	\$ 52.02
<i>Total Expenses</i>	\$ 233.69	\$ 226.86	\$ 241.81	\$ 299.84	\$ 362.55	\$ 263.08	\$ 211.16	\$ 238.10	\$ 238.24	\$ 237.19
<i>Excess of Income over Expenses</i>	\$ (96.83)	\$ (86.24)	\$ (94.60)	\$ (154.16)	\$ (204.72)	\$ (104.58)	\$ (55.64)	\$ (88.28)	\$ (131.33)	\$ (41.87)
<i>Ford Securities</i>										
<i>Number of Shares</i>	50.638	50.436	46.283756	39.361465	34.673	32.530936	30	27	23.7	18
<i>Book Value</i>	\$ 1,417.87	\$ 1,513.08	\$ 1,527.36	\$ 1,417.01	\$ 1,386.94	\$ 1,398.83	\$ 1,231.34	\$ 1,217.19	\$ 1,226.25	\$ 1,231.48
<i>Per Share Valuation</i>	\$ 28.00	\$ 30.00	\$ 33.00	\$ 36.00	\$ 40.00	\$ 43.00	\$ 41.04	\$ 45.08	\$ 51.74	\$ 68.42
<i>Other Securities/Bonds</i>	\$ 1,220.61	\$ 1,194.00	\$ 1,332.01	\$ 1,574.01	\$ 1,616.42	\$ 1,663.93	\$ 1,685.04	\$ 1,705.44	\$ 1,607.24	\$ 2,028.49
<i>Other Assets</i>	\$ 17.55	\$ 18.51	\$ 22.84	\$ 24.03	\$ 30.19	\$ 61.23	\$ 59.04	\$ 54.97	\$ 68.05	\$ 110.55
<i>Total Assets</i>	\$ 2,656.02	\$ 2,725.59	\$ 2,882.21	\$ 3,015.06	\$ 3,033.55	\$ 3,124.00	\$ 2,975.42	\$ 2,977.61	\$ 2,901.55	\$ 3,370.52
<i>Change in Assets over Prior Year</i>	\$ 233.25	\$ 69.57	\$ 156.63	\$ 132.84	\$ 18.49	\$ 90.45	\$ (148.58)	\$ 2.19	\$ (76.06)	\$ 468.97
<i>Percent Change</i>	9.63%	2.62%	5.75%	4.61%	0.61%	2.98%	-4.76%	0.07%	-2.55%	16.16%
	<i>2 for 1 Stock Split</i>									

<i>Year End</i>	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981
<i>Investment Income</i>	\$ 125.46	\$ 113.72	\$ 110.72	\$ 94.51	\$ 96.55	\$ 98.01	\$ 103.35	\$ 124.84	\$ 164.93	\$ 196.74
<i>Other</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<i>Total Income</i>	\$ 125.46	\$ 113.72	\$ 110.72	\$ 94.51	\$ 96.55	\$ 98.01	\$ 103.35	\$ 124.84	\$ 164.93	\$ 196.74
<i>Grant Expense</i>	\$ 176.05	\$ 197.10	\$ 210.70	\$ 167.73	\$ 127.37	\$ 92.23	\$ 97.51	\$ 70.05	\$ 78.28	\$ 91.82
<i>Other Expense</i>	\$ 57.51	\$ 49.68	\$ 50.38	\$ 46.24	\$ 42.17	\$ 41.80	\$ 41.13	\$ 48.31	\$ 47.60	\$ 37.37
<i>Total Expenses</i>	\$ 233.56	\$ 246.77	\$ 261.08	\$ 213.97	\$ 169.54	\$ 134.03	\$ 138.64	\$ 118.36	\$ 125.88	\$ 129.19
<i>Excess of Income over Expenses</i>	\$ (108.10)	\$ (133.05)	\$ (150.36)	\$ (119.46)	\$ (72.99)	\$ (36.03)	\$ (35.28)	\$ 6.49	\$ 39.05	\$ 67.56
<i>Ford Securities</i>										
<i>Number of Shares</i>	11	6.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Book Value</i>	\$ 722.33	\$ 401.37	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<i>Per Share Valuation</i>	\$ 65.67	\$ 59.02	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<i>Other Securities/Bonds</i>	\$ 2,557.47	\$ 2,647.69	\$ 1,698.97	\$ 2,003.92	\$ 2,289.25	\$ 2,091.10	\$ 2,211.87	\$ 2,346.90	\$ 2,583.03	\$ 2,445.50
<i>Other Assets</i>	\$ 143.46	\$ 96.53	\$ 131.11	\$ 66.81	\$ 64.90	\$ 68.34	\$ 79.61	\$ 88.18	\$ 199.91	\$ 120.07
<i>Total Assets</i>	\$ 3,423.26	\$ 3,145.58	\$ 1,830.08	\$ 2,070.73	\$ 2,354.15	\$ 2,159.44	\$ 2,291.48	\$ 2,435.08	\$ 2,782.94	\$ 2,565.57
<i>Change in Assets over Prior Year</i>	\$ 52.74	\$ (277.68)	\$ (1,315.50)	\$ 240.65	\$ 283.42	\$ (194.71)	\$ 132.04	\$ 143.60	\$ 347.86	\$ (217.37)
<i>Percent Change</i>	1.56%	-8.11%	-41.82%	13.15%	13.69%	-8.27%	6.11%	6.27%	14.29%	-7.81%
<i>OPEC Oil Crisis</i>										

APPENDIX 2.

Works Performed by Gerhard Samuel as Music Director of the Oakland Symphony, 1959 to 1971⁵⁹²

Allanbrook, Douglas

Four Orchestra Landscapes (Symphony No. 3)

Aldrovandini, Giuseppe

Sinfonia con Trombe

Austin, Larry

Improvisations for Orchestra and Jazz Soloists
"Catharsis and Open Form"

Bach, C.P.E.

Cello Concerto No. 3

Bach, J.C.

Sinfonia in B flat
Sinfonia for Double Orchestra, Op. 18, No. 3

Bach, J.S.

Brandenburg Concertos No. 4 and No. 5
Piano Concerto in F. Minor
Magnificat
Passion According to St. John
Passion According to ST. Matthew
Suite for Orchestra No. 3
Violin Concerto No. 1
Sinfonia in D, Op. 18, No. 4
Suite No. 2

Barber, Samuel

Adagio for Strings

Bartók, Béla

Piano Concerto No. 3
Violin Concerto No. 2
Concerto for Orchestra (1944)
Suite No. 2, Op. 4
Two Portraits for Orchestra, Op. 5
Hungarian Sketches, Op. 77
Divertimento for String Orchestra

Beethoven, Ludwig van

Piano Concertos No. 1 (Op. 15), No. 3 (Op. 37), No. 5 (Op. 73)

Violin Concerto, Op. 61
Triple Concerto, Op. 56
Symphony No. 2 (Op. 36), No. 3 (Op. 55), No. 4 (Op. 60),
No. 5 (Op. 67), No. 7 (Op. 92), No. 8 (Op. 93), No. 9 (Op. 125)
Overture to "Fidelio," Op. 72b
Overture to "Egmont," Op. 84
"NAMEDAY" Overture, Op. 115
"Consecration of the House" Overture, Op. 124

⁵⁹² This repertoire list was compiled from Oakland Symphony Orchestra concert calendars from 1959 to 1971 held at the Museum of Performance and Design in San Francisco, CA.

"Leonore" Overture No. 1, Op. 138
"Leonore" Overture No. 3, Op. 72A
Missa Solemnis, Op. 123

Berg, Alban

Violin Concerto
Drei Orchesterstücke, Op. 6 (1929 Revision)
Symphonic Pieces from the Opera "Lulu"
Three Fragments from "Wozzeck," Op. 7

Berger, Arthur

Polyphony for Orchestra

Berio, Luciano

Sinfonia

Berlioz, Hector

Symphonie Fantastique, Op. 14
"Romeo and Juliet," Part II, Op. 17
Overtures to "Roman Carnival" (Op. 9), "Corsaire" (Op. 21), "Benvenuto Cellini" (Op. 23), and "Béatrice et Bénédict"
"The Damnation of Faust"

Bizet, Georges

"L'Arlesienne" Suite No. 2

Bloch, Ernest

Violin Concerto
"Schelomo"

Boccherini, Luigi

Symphony in C Minor

Boone, Charles

Matrix II: "The Edge of the Land"
Starfish

Brahms, Johannes

Piano Concertos No. 1 (Op. 15) and No. 2 (Op. 83)
Violin Concerto, Op. 77
Concerto for Violin and Cello, Op. 102
Tragic Overture, Op. 81
Symphony No. 1 (Op. 68), No. 2 (Op. 75), No. 3 (Op. 90)
and No. 4 (Op. 98)

Brant, Henry

"Kingdom Come"

Britten, Benjamin

Nocturne for Tenor, Strings and Solo Instruments
Three Sea Interludes from "Peter Grimes"

Bruckner, Anton

Symphony No. 4
Te Deum

Chávez, Carlos

"El Sol"

Chopin, Frédéric

Piano Concerto No. 1, (Op. 11), and No. 2 (Op. 21)

Christou, Jani

Enantiodromia

Cilea, Francesco

"Lo son L'umile" from "Adriana Lecouvreur"

Copland, Aaron

Orchestral Variations
Statements (1934)
Short Symphony (No. 2)
Music for the Theater
A Lincoln Portrait

Corelli, Arcangelo

Concerto Grosso, Op. 6, No. 6

Dahl, Ingolf

Aria Sinfonica

Debussy, Claude

Jeux

La Mer

Le Martyre de St. Sebastien (Symphonic Fragments)

Nocturnes

Prelude a L'Apres-midi d'Un Faune

De Falla, Manuel

Suite from "The Three-Cornered Hat"

Dvořák, Antonín

Slavonic Dances, Op. 46, Nos. 5,6,7,8

Violin Concerto, Op 53

Cello Concerto, OP. 104

Ellston, Arnold

"Great Age Behold Us," Cantata for Mixed Chorus and Orchestra

Felciano, Richard

Mutations for Orchestra

Foss, Lukas

The Song of Songs, Cantata for Soprano and Orchestra

Glinka, Mikhail

Overture to "Russlan and Ludmilla"

Gounod, Charles

Petite Symphonie

Gutche, Gene

Holofernes Overture, Op. 27, No. 1

Handel, George Frideric

Judas Maccabaeus

"Awake Saturnia" from "Semele"

"Defend Her Heaven" from "Theodora"

"Di ad Irene" from "Atalanta"

"No, oh Dio" from "Calpurnia"

Suite from the Water Music

Concerto Grosso, Op. 6 No. 1

Harbison, John

Sinfonia for Violin and Double Orchestra

Harrison, Lou

Cello Concerto in C Major

Concerto in D for Harpsichord

Miss Solemnis

"The Seasons"

Symphonies No. 44, 86, 88, 95, and 101

Seven Pastorales

Haydn, Joseph

Symphonies No. 22, 24, and 52

Henze, Hans Werner

Symphony No. 4

Hindemith, Paul

Mathis der Maler

Nobilissima Visione

Herodiade

Violin Concerto No. 3

Hoffman, Richard

Orchestra Piece 1961

Imbrie, Andrew

Drum Taps
Little Concerto for Piano Four Hands and Orchestra

Ives, Charles

Symphony No. 4
The Unanswered Question

Kennedy, John Brodwin

Symphonic Fantasy

Kirchner, Leon

Toccata for Strings, Solo Winds and Percussion

Kodály, Zoltán

Budavári Te Deum

Kohn, Karl

Episodes for Piano and Orchestra

Krenek, Ernest

Symphonic Elegy for Strings

Lalo, Édouard

Symphonie Espagnole, Op. 21

Lazarof, Henri

"Mutazione"

Liszt, Franz

Piano Concerto No. 1

Lutoslawski, Witold

Jeux Venitiens

Mahler, Gustav

Das Lied von der Erde
Kindertotenlieder
Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen
Symphonies No. 1, 2, 3, and 4
Blumine

Martinů, Bohuslav

String Quartet with Orchestra
Concerto da Camera

Mascagni, Pietro

"Assio" from Cavalleria Rusticana

Massenet, Jules

Gavotte from "Manon"
Final Scene from "Don Quixotte"

Mendelssohn, Felix

Incidental Music to Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's
Dream," Op. 61
Violin Concerto, Op. 64
Symphony No. 4, Op. 90

Menotti, Gian Carlo

"The Unicorn, the Gorgon, and the Manticore"

Milhaud, Darius

Aubade
Cortege Funebre
Murder of a Great Chief of State
Serenade
Three Rag Caprices
Les Charmes de la Vie

Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus

Piano Concertos No. 9 (K.271), No. 14 (K. 449), No. 17 (K. 453), No. 21 (K. 467), No. 24 (K. 491), No. 25 (K. 503), No. 27 (K. 595)

Concerto for Two Pianos, K. 364

Symphonies No. 1 (K. 16), No. 25 (K. 183), No. 28 (K. 200), No. 29 (K. 201), No. 31 (K. 297), No. 33 (K. 319), No. 35 (K. 385), No. 36 (K. 425), No. 39 (K. 543), No. 40 (K. 550), No. 41 (K. 551)

Motet Exultante, Jubilate, K. 165

Sinfonia Concertante, K. 165

Serenade for 13 Wind Instruments, K. 361

Mass in C Minor, K. 427

Masonic Funeral Music, (K. 477)

Adagio and Fugue for String Orchestra, (K. 546)

Requiem Mass, (K. 626)

"The Marriage of Figaro" (Concert Version)

"Il mio tesoro in tanto" from "Don Giovanni"

"Non piu di fiore" from "La Clemenza di Tito"

Violin Concerto No. 5, (K. 219)

Symphony No 38, (K. 504)

Overtures to "Titus," (K. 621), and "The Magic Flute" (K. 620)

Myrow, Fredric

Symphony Variations

Music for Orchestra 1-11

Nono, Luigi

Memento—Epitaph No. 3

Orff, Carl

Carmina Burana

Paganini, Niccolò

Violin Concerto No. 1

Penderecki, Krzysztof

Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima
"Dies Irae"

Pergolesi, Giovanni Battista

Violin Concerto in B Flat Major

Perry, Julia

Stabat Mater

Peterson, Wayne

Exaltation—Dithyramb and Caprice

Prokofiev, Sergei

Piano Concerto No. 3, Op. 26

Violin Concerto, Op. 19

Puccini, Giacomo

"Vissi d'Arte" from "Tosca"

Purcell, Henry

Trumpet Voluntary

Quantz, Johann Joachim

Concerto in E Minor for Flute, String Orchestra and Continuo

Rachmaninoff, Sergei

Piano Concerto No. 3, Op. 30

Rameau, Jean-Philippe

Music from "Hippolyte et Aricie"

Ravel, Maurice

Tzigane

Alborada del Gracioso

"Daphnis et Chloe" Suite

"Ma Mere et Chloe"

Pavane pour une Infante Defunte
Piano Concerto in D Major for the Left Hand
Rapsodie Espagnole
Sheherazade
Le Tombeau de Couperin

Ricciotti, Carlo
Concertino in F Minor

Riley, Terry
"In C"

Rossini, Gioachino
Overture to "La Scala di Seta"
Stabat Mater

Saint-Saëns, Camille
Piano Concerto No. 2, Op. 22

Sammartini, Giovanni Battista
"Io, di celemenza e pace" from "Tre Angeli Che Cantano"

Samuel, Gerhard
"Looking at Orpheus Looking"

Scheinfeld, David
"Confrontation"

Schoenberg, Arnold
Music for a Film Scene, Op. 34

Schubert, Franz
Symphonies No. 2, 5 and 7
Mass in G
Rondo for Violin and Orchestra in A Major

Schumann, Robert

Piano Concerto, Op. 54
Concerto for Violoncello, Op. 129
Symphonies No. 2, No. 3, and No. 4
Overture to "Genoveva"

Schuman, William
New England Triptych

Scriabin, Alexander
Symphony No. 3 ("Divine Poem")

Shapero, Harold
Adagietto

Sheinkman, Mordecai
"Passi"

Shifrin, Seymour
Three Pieces for Orchestra

Sibelius, Jean
Violin Concerto, Op. 47

Stockhausen, Karlheinz
Mixtur

Strauss, Richard
Don Juan, Op. 20
Till Eulenspiegel, Op. 28
Salome's Dance, Op. 54
Rosenkavalier Suite, Op. 59

Stravinsky, Igor
Feu d'Artifice, Op. 4
Oedipus Rex
Requiem Canticles
Scherzo a la Russe

Symphony in Three Movements
Suite from "The Firebird"
"Suite de Pulcinella"
Orpheus
Persephone
Petrouchka
The Rite of Spring
Symphony of Psalms
"Le Rossignol" in concert form

Subotnick, Morton
Play No. 2

Swift, Richard
"Tristia"

Takahashi, Motoyuki
Aspen Concertante

Torelli, Giuseppe
"Sinfonia con Trombe, oboe et altre strumenti per
l'accademia del 1707"

Tchaikovsky, Pyotr Ilyich
Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 23
Symphonies No. 3 (Op. 29), No. 4 (Op. 36), No. 5 (Op. 64),
and No. 6 (Op. 74)
Suite No. 3 (Op. 55)
Overture Fantasy, "Romeo and Juliet"
Rococo Variations for Violoncello and Orchestra

Varèse, Edgard
Arcana

Verdi, Giuseppe
Requiem
Te Deum

"Quando le sere al Placido" from "Luisa Miller"
Overtures to "La Forza del Destino" and "The Sicilian
Vespers"

Vieuxtemps, Henri
Violin Concerto No. 4, Op. 31

Villa-Lobos, Heitor
Choros No. 10

Vivaldi, Antonio
Concerto in F Minor for Violin
Gloria for Chorus and Orchestra

Weber, Carl Maria Von
Overtures to "Euryanthe," "Der Freischutz" and "Oberon"
Konzertstück for Piano, Op. 79

Webern, Anton Von
Im Sommerwind
Six Orchestra Pieces, Op. 6
Fuga Ricercata a 6 Voci

Wagner, Richard
Songs for Mathilde Wesendonck
Overture to "Die Meistersinger"
Good Friday Spell from "Parsifal"
Prelude and Love Death from "Tristan und Isolde"
Siegfried Idyll
Siegfried's Rhine Journey and Siegfried's Funeral March
from "Götterdämmerung"
Entrance of the Gods into Valhalla from "Das Rheingold"

Yun, Isang
Fluctuations for Orchestra

APPENDIX 3.

Ford Foundation Press Release Announcing the Program for Symphony Orchestras⁵⁹³

News from the Ford Foundation
477 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022
Office of Reports Plaza 1-2900

For Release Wednesday, P.M., July 1966
For further information: Richard Magat or Robert Seaver

New York, July 6 – The recipients of grants in the Ford Foundation's national program to aid symphony orchestras were announced today. Grants totaling \$80.2 million are being made to sixty-one orchestras in thirty-three states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

The program seeks to consolidate the nation's rich orchestral resources, advance the quality of orchestras by enabling more musicians to devote their major energies to orchestral performance, attract more young people of talent to professional careers in orchestras by raising the income and prestige of symphony musicians, and extend the range of orchestras' services to larger and more diversified audiences.

⁵⁹³ This press release was shared with all participating orchestras and the public. "News from the Ford Foundation: Ford Foundation Program for Symphony Orchestras," July 6, 1966, Box 3, Series 1.3, MOAA.

About three-fourths of the funds—\$58,750,000—is in the form of endowments that the orchestras must match within five years with funds raised from other sources. The rest of the funds do not require matching.

The non-matching funds will be distributed in five annual installments beginning this month. Interest on the endowment portion will be paid over the next ten years. The principal of the endowment will be distributed in 1976.

The required matching funds total \$76,750,000, and, together with the grants and interest on the endowment, bring the expected total of new support for American symphonic development to at least \$195 million over the next ten years.

The grants range from \$2.5 million each for fourteen of the major* orchestras to \$325,000 each for seven of the smaller orchestras.

The allocations reflect detailed analysis of orchestras' artistic quality, volume and diversity of activities, future plans, stability and continuity of operations, and other characteristics.

The proportions by which orchestras must match the endowment portion of their grants range from two dollars to one Foundation dollar to one-to-one.

With the exception of the grant to the Symphony Orchestra of Puerto Rico, the grant to each orchestra will comprise an endowment portion, and a smaller supplemental fund that does not require matching. The supplemental funds (totaling \$17.3 million) are intended to relieve the orchestras from the necessity of increasing

* There are twenty-five major orchestras, so classified by the American Symphony Orchestra League on the basis of engaging their players on seasonal contracts and having annual budgets of \$250,000 or more.

their annual fund-raising drives in the period during which they are conducting capital drives to raise matching funds. Orchestras will be expected, however, to continue their annual maintenance campaigns at current levels.

A second category of funds (totaling \$4,150,000) that do not require matching – called “developmental funds” – will be granted to **twenty-five** orchestras that evidenced special potentialities or opportunities for advances in quality, each on the basis of a particular plan for upgrading.

Studies leading to the design of the program had been carried out for several years by the Humanities and the Arts staff of the foundation. The director was W. McNeil Lowry, now a vice president of the Foundation. Edward F. D’Arms, associate director, said today, “After announcement of the program last October 22, the Foundation engaged in further explorations to determine the eligibility of orchestras and the exact allocation funds. Interviews were conducted with hundreds of orchestra representatives, and many orchestras were asked to submit ten-year plans.

“This extensive examination both confirmed the assumptions on which the program was designed and afforded a detailed vision of a promising future the nation’s musical enterprise.

“As our preliminary analyses suggested, the financial condition of most American orchestras contrasts sharply with their rich artistic quality. As a result, orchestra players are underpaid and too many must work at other, often nonmusical, jobs for most of their income. This, in turn, tends to discourage talented young people from undertaking professional symphonic careers. The fact that orchestras—the

oldest and best supported of our noncommercial institutions in the performing arts—are in great need dramatizes the plight of other artistic institutions. This program, therefore, highlights the massive requirements of all of the arts in our society.

“At the same time, exciting prospects were disclosed. More musicians will be employed for longer seasons. Many smaller orchestras plan to achieve major status over the next decade. Dramatic changes in the quality and diversity, as well as quantity of musical activity are likely. Orchestras will expand their programs for children and young people. They will be able to reach more people in the communities and regions they serve. They will collaborate more extensively with ballet companies and choral groups and participate in more operas, both in concert form and in association with full-scale productions. And—in a variety of special programs—they will provide more training, not only by auditioning and teaching young musicians but also by affording them rehearsal and performance opportunities.

“Though the Foundation program (including the anticipated matching funds and interest) will work towards these ends, their attainment will depend far more on increasing support of orchestras by their communities.”

Outside the category of “major” orchestras, thirty-six orchestras were selected. Important among the criteria of their eligibility were: the quality of performance and repertoire; the degree of professionalism as indicated by the players’ training and the proportion of their time spent in orchestral performance; the volume and scope of an orchestra’s services to its community, especially to young audiences;

proximity to other orchestras; and the qualities of vision and realism shown in the orchestra’s plan for the coming decade.

When the Foundation announced the program last October, it is estimated that some two dozen “metropolitan” orchestras might be selected in addition to major orchestras. (The American Symphony Orchestra League classifies metropolitan orchestras as those with annual budgets of at least \$100,000.) The further inquiry into individual orchestras’ needs, capabilities, and plans, however, made it clear that a total of thirty-six orchestras beyond the major qualified for participation. Though the \$100,000 budget minimum was only one of the criteria for qualification, it correlated well with the variety of other bases for selection.

The Foundation emphasized that the scale of grants should not be interpreted as its ranking of the status of American orchestras. Since a variety of factors in addition to artistic quality entered in to the allocations, such a conclusion would be unwarranted. Orchestra X, for example, which may objectively outrank orchestra Y in sheer artistic quality, may have received a smaller allocation because it is located in a community with less promising prospects for assimilating or supporting any marked expansion of its services, or because it is one of several good orchestras in its region competing for audience and financial support.

The participating orchestras, and the grants they are to receive, are as follows:

	Total Grant	Endowment (share of trust fund)	Nonmatching Grant Funds
<u>ALABAMA</u>			
Birmingham Symphony Orchestra	\$800,000	\$600,000	\$200,000
<u>ARIZONA</u>			

Phoenix Symphony	850,000	600,000	250,000*
<u>CALIFORNIA</u>			
Los Angeles Philharmonic	2,500,000	2,000,000	500,000
Oakland Symphony Orchestra	1,350,000	1,000,000	350,000
Sacramento Symphony Orchestra	700,000	500,000	200,000
San Diego Symphony Orchestra	600,000	500,000	200,000
San Francisco Symphony Orchestra	1,750,000	1,000,000	750,000*
<u>COLORADO</u>			
Denver Symphony Orchestra	1,750,000	1,000,000	750,000*
<u>CONNECTICUT</u>			
Hartford Symphony Orchestra	1,350,000	1,000,000	350,000*
New Haven Symphony Orchestra	600,000	500,000	100,000
<u>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</u>			
National Symphony	2,500,000	2,000,000	500,000
<u>FLORIDA</u>			
Florida Symphony Orchestra (Orlando)	600,000	500,000	100,000
Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra	325,000	250,000	75,000
<u>GEORGIA</u>			
Atlanta Symphony Orchestra	1,750,000	1,000,000	750,000*
<u>HAWAII</u>			
Honolulu Symphony	1,100,000	750,000	350,000*
<u>ILLINOIS</u>			
Chicago Symphony Orchestra	2,500,000	2,000,000	500,000
<u>INDIANA</u>			
Fort Wayne Philharmonic Orchestra	325,000	250,000	75,000
Indianapolis Symphony	2,500,000	2,000,000	500,000
<u>KANSAS</u>			
Wichita Symphony Orchestra	700,000	500,000	200,000*
<u>LOUISIANA</u>			
New Orleans Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra	1,750,000	1,000,000	750,000*
Shreveport Symphony Orchestra	425,000	350,000	75,000
<u>MARYLAND</u>			
Baltimore Symphony Orchestra	1,750,000	1,000,000	750,000*
<u>MASSACHUSETTS</u>			
Boston Symphony Orchestra	2,500,000	2,000,000	500,000
<u>MICHIGAN</u>			

Detroit Symphony Orchestra	1,500,000#	1,000,000	500,000
Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra	600,000	500,000	100,000
<u>MINNESOTA</u>			
Minneapolis Symphony	2,500,000	2,000,000	500,000
<u>MISSOURI</u>			
Kansas City Philharmonic	1,750,000	1,000,000	750,000*
St. Louis Symphony Orchestra	2,500,000	2,000,000	500,000
<u>NEBRASKA</u>			
Omaha Symphony Orchestra	500,000	400,000	100,000
<u>NEW JERSEY</u>			
New Jersey Symphony (Newark)	650,000	500,000	150,000*
<u>NEW YORK</u>			
American Symphony Orchestra (New York City)	1,500,000	1,000,000	500,000*
Brooklyn Philharmonic	325,000	250,000	75,000
Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra	1,750,000	1,000,000	750,000*
Festival Orchestra of New York City	425,000	350,000	75,000
Hudson Valley Philharmonic Orchestra (Poughkeepsie)	325,000	250,000	75,000
Little Orchestra (New York City)	425,000	350,000	75,000
New York Philharmonic (New York City)	1,500,000#	1,000,000	500,000
Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra	1,750,000	1,000,000	750,000*
Syracuse Symphony Orchestra	1,000,000	750,000	250,000
<u>NORTH CAROLINA</u>			
North Carolina Symphony Orchestra (Chapel Hill)	1,000,000	750,000	250,000
<u>OHIO</u>			
Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra	2,500,000	2,000,000	500,000
Cleveland Orchestra	2,500,000	2,000,000	500,000
Columbus Symphony Orchestra	650,000	500,000	150,000*
<u>OKLAHOMA</u>			
Oklahoma City Symphony Orchestra	750,000	600,000	150,000
Tulsa Philharmonic Orchestra	600,000	500,000	100,000
<u>OREGON</u>			
Portland Symphony Orchestra	1,250,000	1,000,000	250,000
<u>PENNSYLVANIA</u>			
Philadelphia Orchestra	2,500,000	2,000,000	500,000
Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra	2,500,000	2,000,000	500,000

Supplements a previous Ford Foundation grant.

<u>PUERTO RICO</u>			
Symphony Orchestra of Puerto Rico	375,000	None	375,000*
<u>RHODE ISLAND</u>			
Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra (Providence)	500,000	350,000	150,000*
<u>TENNESSEE</u>			
Memphis Symphony Orchestra	500,000	400,000	100,000
Nashville Symphony	700,000	500,000	200,000*
<u>TEXAS</u>			
Dallas Symphony Orchestra	2,500,000	2,000,000	500,000
Houston Symphony Orchestra	2,500,000	2,000,000	500,000
San Antonio Orchestra	1,750,000	1,000,000	750,000*
<u>UTAH</u>			
Utah Symphony Orchestra (Salt Lake City)	1,500,000	1,000,000	500,000*
<u>VIRGINIA</u>			
Richmond Symphony	650,000	500,000	150,000*
<u>WASHINGTON</u>			
Seattle Symphony Orchestra	1,750,000	1,000,000	750,000*
<u>WISCONSIN</u>			
Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra	1,250,000	1,000,000	250,000

* Includes developmental funds. See explanation below.

**Ford Foundation
Program for Symphony Orchestras**

Background

FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY, P.M., JULY 6, 1966

For further information: Richard Maget or Robert Seaver, Plaza 1-2900

NOTE: This is a revised version of a background paper released October 22, 1965, when the program for symphony orchestras was initially announced.

I. Setting

The Ford Foundation has been studying the place of the symphony orchestra in the arts since it began a program in the Humanities and the Arts in 1957. By 1964 – against a backdrop of growing interest in orchestras and changing conditions in the musical world – a plan for a national program to support symphonic development had reached an advanced stage.

Burgeoning artistic activity around the country was placing heavier demands upon symphony orchestras to lengthen their season and to diversify their activities. Attendance at symphony concerts given by the twenty-five major* orchestras grew from 5,714,206 in 1962–63 to 6,752,617 in 1964–65. In demand as well for opera, ballet, and choral concerts, symphony orchestras were central to the expanding cultural life of the United States.

Efforts to bring serious music to the children and youth of the country had also increased. Nearly every major and metropolitan* orchestra either brought young people to their own halls, or visited their schools or (in small ensembles) classrooms.

Meanwhile, the quality of musical instruction and performance in the schools had reached a level far beyond that of pre-World War II days. The school repertory also reflected rising tastes. While facing these numerous demands for expanded services, orchestras were confronted with the problem of raising 20 to 70 per cent of their annual budgets through private contributions in their communities. Only two of the largest had endowments of sufficient size to provide any guarantee of stability. All orchestras were under pressure to expand their seasons and to pay their musicians more.

II. Characteristics of Symphony Orchestras in the United States

The American symphony orchestra is surprisingly pre-eminent in terms of age, numbers of concerts, and ubiquity. The New York Philharmonic was founded in 1842, the same year as the Vienna Philharmonic. The Boston Symphony came into existence in 1881, a year before the Berlin Philharmonic. The St. Louis Symphony was founded in 1885, before the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, and the Chicago and

* Classifications of the American Symphony Orchestra League, based on size of budget.

Cincinnati orchestras before the London Symphony. The average age of the twenty-five major orchestras in the United States is fifty and one-half years.

Most European orchestras are connected with, or are outgrowths of, opera houses. The number of concerts of symphonic music they play is limited. The Vienna Philharmonic gives twenty-three concerts in a year. The London Symphony performed sixty-six concerts in 1963–64. In the same year the Boston Symphony gave 121 concerts; the Philadelphia Orchestra, 159; the New York Philharmonic, 183.

Furthermore, the thirty-three largest cities of the United States and almost as many smaller ones have symphony orchestras of some stature. In France, there are only two professional symphony orchestras outside Paris; in England there are five outside London.

Aside from the orchestras maintained by the Italian state radio, there is only one symphony orchestra in Italy.

American symphony orchestras are unique in that they are all private, nonprofit organizations that depend primarily on private contributions. The twenty-five major orchestras showed total expenditures for 1965–66 of \$31,375,000. In the same year, these orchestras received \$7.4 million in contributions to annual maintenance campaigns, or approximately 23.6 per cent of their budgets. Even these figures are somewhat misleading, since two orchestras received more than 50 per cent of their total expenditures from their annual maintenance drives; four other received more than 40 per cent, and seven received 30 per cent to 40 per cent.

The amount of governmental support received is small in comparison. The total income from tax sources to the twenty-five major orchestras (a large part of which is for the performance of specific services, usually concerts given for schoolchildren) amounted to \$1,564,000 for 1965–66, or approximately 4.9 per cent of their total budgets. Five of the twenty-five receive no public money.

In contrast, professional orchestras in Britain, France, Italy, and Germany receive virtually all their support from governmental sources.

Thirty years ago most players in the great American orchestras came to the United States after receiving their musical training in their native countries. Today this is no longer true.

Even in the much-discussed area of conducting personnel, seven of the conductors of the twenty-five major orchestras mentioned above are native Americans and ten are naturalized Americans.

III. The Economic Status of the Symphony Orchestra Player

Orchestra musicians are one of the most underpaid professional groups in American society.

The five leading orchestras paid an average annual salary of approximately \$11,600 in 1965–66. The remaining twenty major orchestras paid an average of approximately \$4,900, and the next thirty-six orchestras paid an average annual salary of less than \$1,500.

As recently as 1964–65, the average length of season for the twenty-five major orchestras was 30.4 weeks. Only seven orchestras offered employment for forty or more weeks per year, as compared with twelve which provided less than thirty weeks.

A comparison of the average salaries of orchestra players in the twenty-five major symphonies with the median salaries paid to public school teachers for 1963–64 shows that in five cities the musicians were better paid than the classroom teachers. These cities are Boston, Philadelphia, New York, Chicago, and Cleveland, the so-called Big Five of the orchestral world. In Los Angeles, the salaries of both groups were almost identical; in the remaining nineteen cities the classroom teachers received larger annual salaries than the orchestra players.

Any player in a major symphony has had to spend at least as much time, money, and effort on his education as a teacher. Furthermore, the conditions of employment are more favorable to school teachers than to orchestra musicians. The New York Philharmonic, for example, has discontinued its Sunday afternoon concerts in the 1965–66 season to give the players one day off per week; the players had not objected to their schedules until they moved to a fifty-two week season, but then they found it too exhausting to play, or to be on call to play, every day in the year. Most major symphonies go on tour for periods ranging from three to nine weeks; and this travel is not only tiring but takes the musician away from teaching or other extra jobs he may have.

Fortunately, most symphony musicians love music and love playing in an orchestra even though many endure penalties due to their meager salaries. As a genuine professional, the orchestra player is willing to do his best under less than ideal conditions of salary, rehearsal time, or acoustics, but he wants the opportunity to show himself and his orchestra at their best. A musician with a metropolitan orchestra, commenting recently on the loss of players to major orchestras said, “I think what draws the people away is not so much that they can make more money, but that they can play; they can play music and not work at other jobs. We are losing fine string players for that reason.”

Even on a short vacation, a symphony player must practice his instrument regularly every day to maintain and improve his proficiency. This is one of the reasons a long break between the end of one season and the beginning of the next is so hard on players.

The present movement to extend the seasons of orchestras stems largely from the economic needs of the players. The boards of trustees of orchestras are sympathetic to the players’ need for larger incomes and better living conditions. To make this possible, however, orchestra boards and managers face formidable problems.

IV. The Financial Situation of Orchestras

The financing of symphony orchestras in the United States has always been difficult. In the early days there were a few well-known benefactors who either paid the annual deficit personally, as Henry L. Higginson did for many years in Boston, or who formed part of a group like the supporters of Walter Damrosch in New York. Efforts to make an orchestra self-sustaining have been frequent but unsuccessful.

As noted above, government support of symphony orchestras in the United States has always been small – in 1965–66 4.9 per cent of the annual expenditures of the twenty-five major orchestras, and 9.5 per cent for thirty-six other orchestras, a total of some \$2.3 million in all.

The bulk of the deficits of American orchestras is met from the private sector. The twenty-five major symphonies report total income from endowment in 1965–66 as \$2,432,000 or approximately 7.7 per cent of their total expenditures. But three of these orchestras have no endowment income at all, and another eleven receive \$10,000 or less from this source. The picture for the thirty-six orchestras of “metropolitan” scale is even bleaker – a total of \$45,000, or less than 1 per cent of their total expenditures.

Current studies show there has been a steady increase of approximately 5 per cent in annual total expenditures of a sample of major orchestras over a twenty-seven-year period since 1937, and annual increases of more than 6 per cent per year during the whole period, with a consequent widening of the gap between balanced books and the constant scramble to meet rising costs.

Within the last three years there has been a strong movement on the part of musicians to press for full employment. Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, New York, and Philadelphia have moved to year-round contracts with paid vacations of several weeks. Other orchestras are taking large steps in the direction of full employment.

All of this will require more money, but first activities for the orchestras must be developed. No orchestra could find audiences for only pairs of subscription concerts fifty-two or even forty-eight weeks in the year. (That is, the same program twice a week.) Nor could the conductor and the orchestra prepare programs for such a long series.

In order to find different kinds of engagements and audiences, it is necessary to have flexibility in the use of the orchestra. For example, breaking the orchestra into halves, or thirds, or other groupings, makes it possible to play in auditoriums which could not seat the full orchestra; to form chamber orchestras; or to include opera seasons in the annual contract, provided work can be found for the half or third or the orchestra which cannot be fitted into the opera pit.

Great ingenuity and energy are being shown by managers in developing new activities and audiences. The New York Philharmonic has not only added pops concerts but free summer concerts in the city parks. The outdoor concerts at Oakland have added five weeks to the season of the Detroit orchestra. Minneapolis will emphasize touring in Minnesota and nearby states. San Francisco established a series of five concerts per season in a college town about seventy-five miles from its base. Seattle has plans to tour in Washington, Idaho, and Montana.

It will take several years to develop these and similar programs to the point of maximum financial return to the orchestras. Meantime, they are faced with meeting the increased weekly salaries over a longer season. Many of them are turning their thoughts to capital fund drives – either for endowment or for major expenditures to make possible a summer season.

The general atmosphere is one of excitement and optimism. Great efforts will be needed, but significant assistance at this particular juncture in orchestral history might prove decisive in stabilizing or raising the levels of most of the nation's professional orchestras. That is the basis of the Ford Foundation program.

V. The Ford Foundation Program

A. Objectives

- To advance quality by enabling more musicians to devote their major energies to orchestral performance.
- To strengthen symphonic organizations and enlarge the audience for orchestral music by permitting the orchestras to increase their seasons. This increase may include more tours and more school, neighborhood, and suburban concerts.
- To attract more young people of talent to professional careers by raising the income and prestige of orchestra members.

The Foundation hopes the general improvement of the conditions of the symphony

player will serve as an inducements to the many fine musicians now in training to go into this field, rather than to turn to music teaching or to leave music altogether.

B. Schedule

The Foundation staff broached the national program for symphony orchestras to the Foundation's board of trustees in 1964. On October 1, 1965, the trustees approved an appropriation of \$85 million, which was publicly announced October 22.

The appropriation was set as an order of magnitude for the program. The final allocation of \$80.2 million reflects the more intensive gathering of data and individual orchestra profiles that became feasible once the program was publicly known. The Foundation does not anticipate the participation of additional orchestras in the program.

Final selections and allocations were made on the basis of questionnaires and interviews late in 1965 and early in 1966. The grants are effective as of July 1966.

C. Terms

Sixty-one American orchestras have been granted \$80.2 million as follows:

1. Expendable and developmental funds totaling \$21,450,000 that the orchestras are not required to match.

2. Endowment funds based on a \$58,750,000 trust established by the Foundation, which the orchestras are required to match from other sources.

The selection of each orchestra and the amount it received reflected its artistic quality, the character of its musical program, the level of its operations, and its managerial stability. Criteria were used that sought to respond to these factors in such a way as to achieve a balance between the needs of each organization and its capacity for growth.

All but one of the orchestras has been assigned a proportional participation in the trust fund, which it will be required to match in ratios varying from \$1 to \$2 for each dollar of its trust fund participation. At the end of ten years, the principal of the trust fund will be shared proportionately by the orchestras, to be used as an endowment. In addition, each orchestra will receive its proportional share of the annual income earned by the trust fund.

The nonmatching funds (\$21,450,000), which will be paid in annual installments over five years beginning July 1966, are intended to lessen the strain on the orchestras during that period, when they are required to match their portion of the trust fund.

The orchestras will be expected to continue their annual maintenance campaigns while they are engaged in their fund drives to meet the matching requirements. Orchestra managers believe that it would be fatal for them to give up their annual maintenance campaigns even for a year or two and try to revive them

later. Furthermore, the income from the endowment funds cannot meet the needs now covered by the maintenance campaigns. In fact, there will be a need constantly to augment the annual maintenance campaigns over the years, as costs of all kinds are likely to increase.

D. Design

In formulating its program, the Foundation studied, and ruled out, a number of alternatives. If the Foundation had limited its assistance to the four or five leading orchestras, for example, it would have worked to the hardship of many more orchestras than it would have helped. The next rank of orchestras would be likely to lose their best players to the grant recipients because they could not compete in salaries. Quality and morale would suffer.

Had assistance been limited to orchestras just below the so-called "Big Five," the top orchestras would have been deprived of assistance they need at this time when they are moving to full employment; and the orchestras just below the second rank would suffer from loss of their finest players.

If the Foundation confined its grants only to the twenty-five major orchestras, whole sections of the country might be left without good symphonic music. Other orchestras have appreciable artistic merit, and American musical life would lose much of its richness and diversity without them. The statewide touring of the Utah and Honolulu orchestras, the extensive commissioning series of Louisville, the

programming of Oakland, and the cultural leadership of the Phoenix and Portland (Oregon) orchestras are all significant contributions to the musical scene. Furthermore, the smaller orchestras are important sources of recruiting for the majors.

E. Developmental Funds

In the allocations, there is a fixed ratio of endowment to free funds – three-to-one, four-to-one, or five-to-one. In addition, however, twenty-five orchestras (marked with an asterisk on the list in the Foundation news release) were allocated additional, “developmental” funds.

The award of developmental funds reflects a variety of circumstances pointing to special potentialities or opportunities for qualitative advance.

In the case of major orchestras, it is designed mainly to improve the situation of players in orchestras with the shortest seasons and the weakest financial resources. Nine of the major orchestras were each allocated an additional \$250,000. These orchestras frequently lose personnel to the larger and more affluent orchestras. In some cases a player might prefer to remain with a small orchestra if his salary could be increased even modestly. Occasionally it will be possible to engage a good local musician for orchestra work if his salary is made sufficient to enable him to give up a public-school position or other job that now prevents him from attending daytime rehearsals. The developmental funds may also be used to pay the players for extra

rehearsal time, which in turn may make it possible for the orchestra to expand its repertory and perfect its performances of difficult works.

Developmental funds for selected non-major orchestras reflect differences in the potentials of groups falling into roughly similar classes. Sixteen non-major orchestras were allocated developmental funds ranging from \$50,000 to \$250,000 each. The awards were made mainly on the basis of ten-year plans for expansion that appeared to warrant additional funds.

F. Total Needs

The Foundations' program, despite its size, will hardly solve all the problems of the orchestra. Nor does it mean anything like affluence to the orchestra musician.

The sixty-one orchestras will be required to raise at least as much in the future as the \$39,391,000 they spent in 1965–66. At an estimated 6 per cent rate of increase, total expenditures are expected to reach approximately \$53 million within five years and \$70 million within ten years. The income from endowment funds (estimated at 4 per cent) will provide approximately \$2,350,000 annually toward these goals, and the income from matching funds is expected to provide an additional \$3,070,000, after the matching fund campaigns have been completed. (five years hence.) Thus the Foundation program would contribute annually after five years \$5,420,000 toward total budgets of approximately \$53 million, and the same amount after ten years toward total budgets of the order of \$70 million. In short, the total annual income

provided by the Foundation program and the matching funds would be hardly more than 7 per cent of the projected figure for ten years hence.

If all the income from the endowment funds were applied exclusively to the annual salaries of the players in the major orchestras, the average increase would amount to approximately \$1,050, thus bringing their total salary to approximately \$7,600, which is hardly an inflated salary for one of the most gifted groups in our society. If it were possible to think of providing every player in major orchestras with an average annual salary of \$15,000 and every player in the metropolitan orchestras with an average salary of \$5,000, the cost would amount to approximately \$18.5 million per year over and above the cost of present salaries. To endow this increase would require a capital sum of approximately \$463 million – that is, nearly six times greater than the Foundation's total orchestra program. And this would make no provision for such other operating expense of the orchestras as travel, programs, music, halls, and administration, to say nothing of conductors and soloists.

G. Effects

For the orchestras with largest budgets, the Foundation believes its program will provide a fair test of the principle of full employment. It is important that these orchestras be able to demonstrate successfully the possibility of full annual employment, not only for their own sakes but for the effect it will have on other orchestras.

For an intermediate group among the majors, the Foundation program can provide the practical means to enable them to raise their salaries within sign of competing with the top orchestras. They may hold top players who might otherwise be attracted to the Big Five. Furthermore, first-desk men from the Big Five who may not wish to play for forty-eight or fifty-two weeks may prefer to play with other orchestras; such a trend could bring these orchestras to new heights of artistry.

For the few major orchestras that have been engaged in a battle for survival a respite provided by the program should enable them to solidify their present financial structure and to work toward artistic improvement.

As for the other grant recipients, the majority can look forward only to a modest increase of salaries, but the attention focused upon the orchestras through the local campaigns to raise matching funds and through their selection to participate in the Foundation program might help to improve their local prestige and stability.

On the basis of intimate explorations of the orchestras over the last several months, the Foundation anticipates the following other likely effects:

- Increases in the salaries of orchestra members, though probably below expectation raised by announcement of the program. Increased income will reflect in part lengthened seasons among almost all orchestras.
- Addition of players by many orchestras, particularly through use of the developmental funds.

- Increases in the budgets of orchestras. In the last three years respectively, the total budgets of the orchestras increased 7, 15, and 9.4 per cent. The projected increase in 1966–67 is 16.8 per cent.
- Dramatic increases in the volume of orchestral activity, particularly among smaller orchestras. Many of the metropolitan orchestras expect, over the next ten years, to join the ranks of the majors. All the non-major orchestras plan at least to double present levels of activities.
- Equally impressive changes in the quality and diversity of activity. One area will be expanded programs for children and young people, including the use of quartets, quintets, and chamber orchestras in school concerts. Many orchestras will diversify by increasing joint ventures with ballet companies, choral groups, and opera companies. Many orchestras also plan to become more active in training musicians, not only through instruction but also by providing them with rehearsal and performance opportunities with the regular orchestra and with youth orchestras.

VI. Conclusion

American symphony orchestras are an established landmark on the American scene and are often the artistic leaders in their community. At this particular time, it is

especially important that standards of artistic quality be recognized. The symphony orchestra can give support to choral groups, opera companies, and dance companies.

There is a dawning recognition that orchestras of artistic quality are not a monopoly of the Big Five or of the Eastern Seaboard. The New York reviews which orchestras from Cincinnati, Dallas, Detroit, Houston, Indianapolis, Minneapolis, and New Orleans have received show that these orchestras measure up to high criteria.

All this has been made possible largely through the devotion and self-sacrifice of players who have received less than a dignified wage for their talents. The present movement to upgrade the economic status of orchestra musicians is important not only for the well-being of the players concerned but for the health and quality of artistic activity throughout the United States.

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