

# Attracting new audiences to contemporary classical music

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This research was conducted by **Alex Turrini, Michael O'hare and Francesca Borgonovi** at **Bocconi University, Milan, Italy; University of California, Berkeley, USA and the London School of Economics**

## Summary

The paper outlines the difficulties associated with the programming of recently composed classical music. The paper highlights a need to better prepare audiences for the challenges of new music. Using innovative approaches, programmers can navigate the intrinsic conflict between satisfying audiences in the short term (by playing the 'usual suspects' – Mozart, Beethoven, etc.) and providing new music that may be of greater long-term value.

## Programming decision-makers at 10 Italian and American music institutions were asked about their work

The interviewees were influenced by the intrinsic quality of the music, audience reactions, the revenue anticipated from ticket sales and the preferences of their musician colleagues. However, beyond ticket sales and attendance, they had not developed sophisticated mechanisms for judging and incorporating the preferences and responses of their audiences into programming decisions.

## How to engage audiences in contemporary classical music

Broadly speaking, an increase in educational activities is the key to increasing the impact of performances. Practical suggestions include playing a piece more than once in each performance, or sending more detailed information, even

digital music files, to attendees in advance of the performance so that they have time to prepare themselves.

This summary was written by **Richard Mason, King's Knowledge Exchange Associate**

## Keywords

**audience** **music** **Classical Music**

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