

Great Work Happening in Australian Orchestral Concert Halls through Pedagogies of Listening

Studies have demonstrated that for many people, the concert hall, theatre and orchestra present intangible barriers that unknowingly deter people from engaging in wonderful Arts events. For potential new and younger audiences, being unsure of etiquette and unspoken 'rules' of being an audience, having no or limited prior experience, or a lack of cultural capital frequently elicit responses such as "that isn't for me" and "I don't belong there". Often this is addressed as part of audience development efforts, of which education plays a part. However, relatively little is known about the education work of orchestras outside of 'teaching concerts' despite a wealth of practice. Specifically, the education work of community orchestras is underrepresented.

This project highlights and substantiates with empirical research the great education work happening in Australian orchestral concert halls and the difference they are making to people's listening experience. By investigating and working alongside professional and community orchestras in both metropolitan and regional settings, this research project investigated the ways that Australian Arts organisations embed education within regular concert programming.

By listening to the lifeworld accounts of audience members and Arts professionals, the project has sought to understand how people listen at orchestral concerts, what makes a difference in their meaning making of music, and how they learn and deepen their relationship with the Arts. The findings of the project distil four qualities that contribute to audience education and pedagogies of listening – relationality, balancing tensions, differentiated pedagogy and listening practices, and the ways the concert going experience can enhance learning through listening. The practices of the orchestras included in the project suggest new ways of considering learning within Arts spaces and how orchestral concert experiences can be 'curated' to enhance the listener's learning.

It calls for Arts organisations to re-think how they see education within concert halls and conceptualise their listeners as learners.

By working alongside

By raising awareness of the great work happening in these concert halls and substantiating their claims through research, we highlight practices and pedagogies that are effective.

Increasingly, classical music organisations are becoming aware for the need to draw in new audiences.

The increasing need to engage and draw new audiences into classical music concerts is an issue that must be addressed and frequently these reports conclude that something must be done to give them a voice within the concert hall. Studies have demonstrated that for many people, the concert hall, theatre and orchestra present intangible barriers that unknowingly deter people from engaging in wonderful Arts events. For potential new and younger audiences, being unsure of etiquette and unspoken 'rules' of being an audience, having no or limited prior experience, or a

lack of cultural capital frequently elicit responses such as “that isn’t for me” and “I don’t belong there”.