

THE CROSSOVER CONFLICT:
CREATING A FRAMEWORK
FOR COMBINING CLASSICAL AND
POPULAR MUSIC IN THE 21st CENTURY

By

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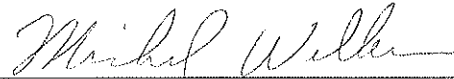
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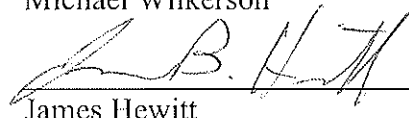
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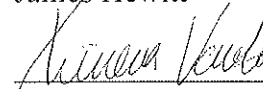
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ABSTRACT

Given that most musical compositions are often influenced by other works, it is no surprise that classical and popular music should at times overlap, causing one of these genres to crossover into the other, thereby creating a whole new genre conveniently declared “crossover.” Crossover is most commonly defined as when a mainstream pop artist decides to broaden his or her artistry by including elements of classical music, or a classically trained musician experiments with so-called lighter fare. Such a notion can be expanded, however, if crossover is examined more closely and assigned to different genres. Creating an advanced classification system for certain types of Classical Crossover can enhance the music education experience, allowing new generations to appreciate, and experiment with, classical music in new forms.

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Introduction

In June of 2010, more than 400 sixth grade students from the New York boroughs of Queens, Brooklyn, and Manhattan traveled to the American Museum of Natural History on the city's Upper West Side. All had come together to participate in Silk Road Connect, an endeavor of famed cellist Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Project, an organization whose overall mission is to encourage "passion-driven learning by empowering students and educators to seek connections across all areas of study and to follow their interests from the familiar to the foreign."¹ With an emphasis on inspiring low-income, high-risk youth to become excited about learning many academic subjects through music, the goal of Silk Road Connect is to ensure that the arts transcend barriers, strengthening a new generation's overall education by motivating them through participation in the arts.

On this particular day, throughout the presentation of this particular Silk Road Connect performance, Ma kept hinting to his young audience that he had a surprise in store for them, and the suspense and excitement were palpable when he announced that it was finally about to be revealed. "Here is the surprise, because we are all joined together in a number of things," he explained to the crowd of antsy, chattering sixth graders, emphasizing that the most important thing bringing them together on this day was learning. Before sitting down to play, he encouraged the students to join in as soon the music inspired them to do so, as everything about Silk Road Connect is based on making the entire experience interactive for the children involved.

The second he began the opening strains on his cello, a hush fell over the room—quite a feat when faced with an audience of several hundred 11-12 year-olds. An obvious collective

¹ The Silk Road Project, "The Silk Road Project – Silk Road Connect," <http://www.silkroadproject.org/Education/SilkRoadConnect/tabid/455/Default.aspx>

shift in mood occurred, inspired by curiosity. Then, a Silk Road Ensemble violinist joined in with a tune that sounded familiar but still could not quite be placed.

It was when another member of the Silk Road Ensemble approached the microphone that everything fell into place. Strapped with a bass guitar, he began to chant the lyrics to New York City's most recently adopted anthem, "Empire State of Mind." The collective group of children leapt to their feet, screaming, clapping, and singing along. At times their excitement was so intense one might think that the song's original creators, Rapper/Hip Hop artist Jay-Z and R&B/Soul singer-songwriter Alicia Keys, had just walked on stage for a surprise guest appearance. But no, it remained Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble as the sixth graders from across New York, some joining hands or putting their arms around each other, sung along about the city they call home: "*concrete jungles where dreams are made of, there's nothing you can't do.*"²

Mike Block, the lead singer on this piece who also happens to be a cellist, and the person to be credited with arranging this classical take on the contemporary, is obviously a gifted musician given that he regularly performs with Yo-Yo Ma. However, while he did not possess the most stellar singing voice, that was not of any importance to the audience. What was important was that this crowd of young people was enormously moved by a combination of musical genres that meshed classical, rap, and R&B: a crossover of multiple musical worlds into one. All of this excitement and all of this joy were brought together by combining elements of classical music and popular culture, and as Ma said, the ultimate goal was for everyone to learn.³

² Jay-Z, & Keys, Alicia, "Empire State of Mind," *The Blueprint 3*, performed by the Silk Road Ensemble, <http://www.amazon.com/The-Blueprint-3-Explicit/dp/B002OGU4W2>.

³ The Silk Road Project, "We're in an 'Empire State of Mind'," <http://www.silkroadproject.org/News/Newsletter/Oct10TourMain/Oct10EmpireStateofMind/tabid/486/Default.aspx>.

If Yo-Yo Ma, one of the most sought after classical musicians in the world—multiple Grammy Winner, Kennedy Center Honoree, and perhaps arguably the most famous classical musician alive today—understands that bringing classical music together with a popular song, or “crossing over” from one genre in to another, is a significant tool in helping people appreciate music (and in this case, stimulating a love for learning across many subjects), why should there be any dispute in the matter whatsoever?

And yet there is. The debate rages on as music critics and fans often question the motive of a classical artist’s crossover into popular music, and conversely a pop star’s crossing over into the classical genre. Not all endeavors in classical crossover are created as educational tools; many (and perhaps most) are generated for profit or self-fulfillment. Yo-Yo Ma himself has collaborated with other pop musicians for reasons that are anything but instructive. While some view such acts as selling out or making a mockery of the elite classical genre, others believe that anything that draws attention to classical music’s ever shrinking audience is a valuable marketing strategy.

While not a new concept, crossover artists and their musical efforts or products have garnered much more attention since the turn of the 21st century as marketing models adjust to keep up with the demands of how audiences consume their music. Through changing attitudes, times, technology, and marketing strategies, the discussion continues as to what music is considered acceptable in popular culture/classical crossover, if any at all.

But what is classical crossover exactly? Is it as simple as a pop star performing something more classical, or a classical artist recording something more contemporary? And if so, is one type of classical crossover more prestigious than another? Perhaps Yo-Yo Ma’s Silk Road cause is noble while the rest is just an exercise crass commercialism. Or perhaps it is all

just a waste of time and talent. But if we have no basis for differentiating one artist's venture into a different genre, where is the bar set?

This paper presents both sides of the classical crossover debate while assigning different areas of classical crossover to varying genres, some which have already been established and some that are of this author's creation. While there are convincing cases for both promoters and critics of crossover, the goal here is not to judge anyone's musical taste or rally one side against the other. The point of this research is that, maybe if different genres of classical crossover were officially established, the arts managers, arts marketers, music archivists and librarians, musicologists, music critics, music makers, and music fans of the world could begin to make sense of the classical crossover conflict.

Classical Crossover: History and Contention

The term “crossover” first came into the English-speaking lexicon in the late 1980s. However, crossover has been with us for generations. In the 19th century, Swedish opera singer Jenny Lind’s famous tour in America made her a sensation as she not only sang classical works, but also traditional and popular songs from her homeland. Several years later, Irish tenor John McCormack would take the scene, expertly trained in a classical style and famous for his opera career. He soon found himself enjoying giving concerts and recording more contemporary works, many of which are now famous Irish folk songs. More recently, the 20th century saw the rise of Eileen Farrell who could seamlessly transition between her operatic soprano and popular concert performances.

There is very little to suggest that the art of being able to perform both classical and contemporary music was taboo in the 19th and early 20th centuries; in fact, at that time doing so was revered and admired. It meant that an artist was versatile, and mixing up genres was never looked down upon as unrefined or a matter of selling out. If the audience wanted a mix of both classical and pop, that is what the artist gave them. Paul F. Driscoll, writer of “Crossover Fire” writes, “When did it become a crime?” He cites all of the above artists as prime examples who could crossover and back again with ease, all for the benefit of their adoring public and personal enjoyment, without any backlash:

“What changed? Why are classical singers now expected to 'know their place' and not mix in the arena of popular appeal? Has classical singing become so specialized that its practitioners have lost the common touch completely? Profit-hungry recording companies are giving the nod to crossover projects with increasing eagerness, but all too often the results sound like mimicry rather than the real thing.”⁴

⁴ Paul F. Driscoll, "Crossover Fire," *Opera News*, 69, no. 4 (2004): 6.

In the case of classical music, many things have changed, particularly how music is introduced to and consumed by the public. Today many musical acts and singles are debuted through popular television and radio programs, not to mention what the Internet has done for popular music marketing. And it is notable that Driscoll's article focuses largely on a time before the musical landscape was forever changed by rock n' roll.

In "Rock Me, Verdi," Dorian Lynskey talks of a shift that occurred in the 1960s until the 1990s, when primarily rock musicians used elements of classical music in their compositions, though other popular artists had largely abandoned such innovations. Bands from the Beatles to Led Zeppelin to Pink Floyd to Guns N' Roses used string and orchestral accompaniments to complement their hard rock beats, and the trend was usually seen as innovative by critics. Often these bands would follow a pattern: release a few albums using the traditional rock n' roll method before supposedly getting serious and incorporating classical touches in their work. For example, Guns N' Roses' debut album *Appetite for Destruction* was pure hard rock, with much of the instrumental focus being Slash's intricate guitar solos. By the time they released their third album, *Use Your Illusion I*, the rock element was still dominant but also backed by a full orchestra in the nine-minute epic *November Rain* (much of which was orchestrated by rock rebel Axl Rose himself). Such experimentation was met with positive criticism, as bands such as Guns N' Roses and the like had not managed to lose their rock n' roll roots while successfully embracing another form that was traditional in every sense of the word, except for their genre.

However, Lynskey points out that this changed at the turn of the 21st century when the idea of classical artists trying their hand at pop really took off, and pop artists plunging straight into classical was even considered. In 2001, new wave crooner Elvis Costello (born Declan McManus) teamed up with Swedish mezzo-soprano Anne Sophie von Otter for the album *For*

the Stars. Roughly half of the songs on the album are composed Costello, with the other half being covers of hits by Lennon/McCartney, the Beach Boys, and ABBA, (all of whom are innovators in combining classical and contemporary music). The experiment was met with positive reviews from certain classical music critics with the musicianship of both Costello and von Otter receiving equally glowing praise from many corners of the critical music industry.

However, some classical music critics such as Norman Lebrecht were chagrined that the “toneless” Costello would pair up with von Otter. Lebrecht also compares such exercises to that of the fame of Russell Watson, the English tenor who rose in popularity after singing his country’s National Anthem before a rugby game in 1999. Despite the fact that many could identify with an artist to the point they would name him the “People’s Tenor,” Lebrecht finds it abysmal that he would become famous simply as someone “who assaults football terraces with pop ballads and ice-cream arias in marshmallowy, Mantovani-like settings” (Lebrecht, 2001) (the late Mantovani being one of the most recognized conductors of orchestral pops). In his article “How to kill classical music,” Lebrecht takes a decidedly opposing stance on the matter of classical crossover.

With best-selling books such as *Who Killed Classical Music*, *The Maestro Myth*, and *The Life and Death of Classical Music*, Lebrecht is considered a leading authority in the classical music industry today. He is also one of the most outspoken figures against Classical Crossover. He laments how Billy Joel, whom he refers to as a “faded rock star” (Lebrecht, 2001), had an album of his own classical compositions that was number one on the Classical Billboard Chart at the turn of the 21st century, a chart that has often been made up of crossover fare since that time, if not sooner: duets by Placido Domingo and Tony Bennett; violinist Joshua Bell collaborating with movie score legend John Williams and an unnamed banjo player; and the previously

mentioned Yo-Yo Ma playing light with his cello on tangos, country songs, and movie themes are just some of what dominate the classical music charts today.

None of the aforementioned is high art, Lebrecht contends, and is therefore not acceptable to the music-consuming public. He believes that none of these albums and/or pop artists deserve a place in the classical music genre, as they detract from the “real” classical music:

“What the Billy Joels and Russell Watsons do is burn up the marketing budgets of the so-called classical labels on which they appear, starving serious music of the oxygen of publicity, space on the shelf and room in the charts. Crossover is not an aid to classical renewal, rather an act of classical euthanasia. Billy Joel, for all his love of good music, is driving a mighty nail into the coffin of classical recording” (Lebrecht 2001).

He concludes that, while such acts are not a crime in a free market and in no way deviant, they are ultimately undermining valid art and classical music.

While some (or many) may disagree with Lebrecht, his writing is extremely convincing, especially given its narrative and sardonic qualities. Therefore, even the most discerning critic of his work must consider his logic when it is presented in such a manner. His knowledge and astute observance of this so-called cultural crisis that has hit our modern classical music culture is a phenomenon he refers to as the “sexpot soloists” (Lebrecht 1996). Although the sexualization of classical music is nothing new, it is most often seen in crossover artists whose background is in classical music—those who play classical instruments or sing classical pieces but are looking to achieve the likeness (and popularity) of a pop star. Electric violinist Vanessa Mae, vocal and instrumental ensemble Celtic Woman, and string quartet Bond often draw upon their good looks as a part of their packaging. Being pleasing to the eyes is not limited to female

crossover artists, however. Male crossover artists are often held to a similar standard as evidenced by what some might call the charming good looks of crossover singer Josh Groban; or Il Divo, the debonair men who make up reality television mogul Simon Cowell's pet project apart from cultural *Idol* variations and *The X-Factor*.

In "The Crossover Craze," *The Washington Post* classical music critic Anne Midgette discusses the crossover phenomenon and shows some leaning toward Lebrecht that perhaps crossover is not consistently high art, but veers away from his opinions when she suggests that it is not necessarily something to be feared either. She makes the point that people today are accustomed to having entire libraries of music at their fingertips thanks technology that has changed how we will listen to music. In a time when music has become so accessible, it is only natural that consumers be influenced by many different musical genres than ever before. This is particularly true with young people. This group also happens to be the next generation of rising stars—classical, pop, or otherwise—and therefore they are going to be influenced by the many different types of music that they grew up with.

Where the line is blurred is when amateur singers are packaged specifically for a pop-classical genre, as is the case with the aforementioned Il Divo, who perform popular music in an operatic style. Much of their work has sold very well but has been universally panned by critics for "having the aesthetic of a Hallmark card" (Midgette, 2005). Such groups "are assembled by savvy producers in search of the increasingly elusive blockbuster" (Midgette, 2005). That said, she believes that they should not be lumped together with established artists such as Costello, being of a popular genre and also obviously a very astute musician based on the genre barriers he has broken with much of his music, the collaboration with von Otter being just one example (and an album that she praised). Nor should the classically trained and consummate Three Tenors be

ridiculed for their part in likely making Puccini's "Nessun Dorma" from the opera *Turandot*, possibly the most popular aria of all time after performing it during a break at the World Cup (a moment in classical music history that Lebrecht abhors). Purists cry foul on all counts, but they are usually the ones categorizing all of these artists together in a single genre when Midgette believes that there is a clear difference between these different artists. Regardless, all art is influenced by other work and classical music in particular needs to experiment with new ideas in order to endure such rapidly changing ideals. That which is worthy will last and influence further generations; anything less (i.e., Il Divo) will eventually, and rightfully, be forgotten (Midgette, 2005).

One of the ways to solve this crossover conundrum that Midgette presents might be to classify classical crossover into even more specific subcategories, allowing the public to judge for itself what type of crossover it prefers by giving these subgenres a name. No music librarian or archivist has yet classified crossover into other genres or subgenres, at least not to the extent that defines and differentiates classical crossover from other forms of music. Besides keeping it away from the "classical" scores and parts, it is all usually confined to its own shelf as "pop" in music libraries, waiting for the next outdoor summer concert or until Steven Reineke or Marvin Hamlisch come along to program it into an orchestra's "Pops" season.

Meanwhile, record companies that specialize in popular music are largely cataloguing the various genres that they come to possess. When recording artists are selling their product to a label, they pitch their work to a specific division of a recording company. MP3 conglomerates such as iTunes and Rhapsody have developed a highly sophisticated method of categorizing each piece of music that is acquired as a part of their databases. If similar methods were put in place to define Classical Crossover, there would be less contention as to some of its authenticity,

particularly since it is becoming the mainstream method of the masses to connect with classical music.

The goal of this work is to transform Classical Crossover so that it is not a bad word to critics and highly selective music listeners. Classical Crossover could be a learning tool for educators and a source of playing opportunities for classical musicians. Music educators should not shy away from allowing their students to experiment with popular forms of music. That does not mean that they need to steer away from the classical curriculum—classical music still plays a vital role in music education and our society as a whole. But it does not need to be so rigidly controlled as the only means of musical expression by those who play traditionally classical instruments.

Orchestra administrators could also utilize certain crossover to appeal to wider audiences and as a learning tool for education concerts. There is still something to be said for the pure classical music, but there is a way to bring in the popular form correctly. That is by classifying different forms of classical crossover into several genres created by this author as well as two previously established terms so that the entire classification of Classical Crossover can be broadened.

Genre Classification in Music

“There are two types of music: good and bad.” Fabian Holt brings up this popular saying when arguing the importance of music categorization in his book *Genre in Popular Music*. Without said categorization, he says, we do not have “a way of recognizing its existence and distinguishing it from other musics.”⁵ Musicologist Franco Fabbri has studied various methods in classifying popular music, and following such protocol ensures that a musicologist is creating a point of reference for future research. Things get complicated, however, with the volume of music available in today’s culture, not to mention its easy accessibility. There is also the problem of when the boundaries of style and genre begin to blur. Fabbri states:

“With all this scientific confusion one cannot expect common sense to be more precise and in fact these terms are easily interchanged in daily use. It must be said, however, that a record buying adolescent of today has clearer ideas on musical genres than the majority of musicologists who have made such a fuss about them.”⁶

Because of such permissive rules, music often gets relegated to the genre that is most convenient, and according to librarian and archivist Sally Roberts, it is up to its cataloger to determine where a particular work fits, whether it be literature, art, or music.

One of the most important reasons for defining different types of music as far as style analysis is concerned “is pursued not for general evidence about an era, but for contextual evidence about the artistic individuality of a particular piece.”⁷ Critical insight of a musical work is difficult to define, but with that comes a sense of urgency because “criticism has a way of

⁵ Fabian Holt, *Genre in Popular Music*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 7.

⁶ Franco Fabbri, "A Theory Of Musical Genres: Two Applications," *Popular Music Perspectives* (1981): 52-81, <http://www.tagg.org/others/ffabbri81a.html> (accessed November 5, 2011).

⁷ Joseph Kerman, *Write All These Down: Essays on Music*, (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, Ltd., 1994), 4.

looking at art that tries to take into account the meaning conveys, the pleasure it initiates, and the value it assumes, for us today.”⁸ Therefore, there is nothing wrong with being critical of music; in fact, it helps us to determine why we like or dislike a certain musical work:

“Criticism deals with pieces of music and men listening, with fact and feeling, with the life of the past in the present, with the composer’s private image in the public mirror of an audience. At worst criticism is on man’s impressionism—like bad art—and at best it is an uneasy dialectic. Allen Tate says that criticism is a perpetual impossibility and a perpetual necessity; and he adds stonily that in this it resembles all our other ultimate pursuits.”⁹

Two librarians were interviewed for this study, one who has worked for the National Archives and currently works for the National Institute of Standards and Technology (Roberts) and the other the assistant principal librarian to the New York Philharmonic (Griffin). They were asked how they go about deciding what music fits in to what genre and how they catalog music or other works in their respective libraries. It was assumed that a definitive, specific way of doing this has been established. Certainly people do not go to school to study library science without there being an authoritative set of rules establishing where everything goes.

Well, yes and no. Of course library systems are very complex and do follow a certain protocol, but when it comes to examining each individual work of literature or music that is introduced to a catalog, it is up to that librarian who was assigned to catalog that piece to determine under what genre it fits. That is what they go to school to study: how to examine and evaluate works properly. However, in the end, they have the ultimate power to decide where something fits. Sometimes works can fit into two or more genres, and that is when the expertise

⁸ Kerman, 5.

⁹ Kerman, 5.

of knowing the subject material well becomes effective: the librarian becomes the authority and decides the best genre for each work, even if it could potentially fit into several different genres. When asked why a librarian chose a certain genre over another, he or she can and should validate many points that led to their decision and be able to defend their choice but ultimately, it was up to that librarian's awareness and understanding to choose the best fit.

While not a librarian, this author has studied the crossover genre very carefully for this project and has decided to become a cataloger of classical crossover music so that arts managers and the music industry might start defining it with more authority.

Classical Crossover Defined: Easy-Listening Crossover

Classical Crossover has several broad definitions: when a classical musician decides to do something more popular, or pop musicians decide to get serious and do something with classical elements are two of the most extensive explanations. There is also an organic sense of Crossover, a word that conjures up clichéd images of attractive, prepackaged singers (in the vein of the aforementioned Il Divo) singing traditional folk songs, show tunes, or popular opera arias. Certainly these broad definitions are a big part of the crossover market, but they are not the only form of crossover available, at least according to this research. While it is not this author's intention to demean anyone's musical tastes, if the music-consuming public frees itself from these narrow definitions of crossover, we can start to have a discussion about how it can help benefit the current state of classical music as it is perceived today.

According to Classical-Crossover, a fan page for all things crossover, Classical Crossover is defined as “a term used to describe artists that adopt strong classical influences in their music, but ultimately they have an accessible and popular sound or a marketable image to reach out to a wider audience.”¹⁰ Within their website, they give seven distinct guidelines as to what makes an artist fall into the category of classical crossover, although without giving these categories distinct names, as they are more “convention” than category:

1. Adapting or remaking a classical work so that it has a more contemporary feel.
2. Remaking pop songs in order to give them a more classical feel, or arranging them in a more classical style.
3. Adding synthesized drum machines to various versions of classical works.

¹⁰ Jarvis, <http://www.classical-crossover.co.uk>

4. Making an album that consists of various standards, show tunes, film music, and pop pieces that does not stick to one particular type of music.
5. Pop artists who challenge their repertoire by performing operatic arias.
6. A Classical Crossover artist who develops his or her own original repertoire that is then often made even more popular as it is covered by other classical crossover artists.
7. A record that is mostly remakes of other works with little original content.¹¹

This list is a reliable starting point in making more specific genres and subgenres, but there is plenty of room for growth. Furthermore, the point of this research is to emphasize how classically trained musicians, with all of their dedicated training, can earn work in an ever increasing job market, and how long established classical works can be reworked to appeal to broader audiences. Simply adding synthesizers to a work as the third convention suggests may not breathe new life into an old work if not done without some measure of original creativity by an artist.

This list also mainly describes much of which shall now be known as “Easy-Listening Crossover.” Sarah Brightman, Charlotte Church, Josh Groban, Andrea Bocelli, and the like, are most commonly in this category. Other characteristics used to describe these artists often include their collaborating with each other in addition to having their own solo careers, creating something of a Crossover Team. They are also considered very nonthreatening personalities and safe artists for people with conservative musical tastes, likely the type of Classical Crossover to be given its own special on Public Broadcast Television. These artists will also often release their albums close to major holidays such as Christmas and Mother’s Day with the hope that

¹¹ Jarvis, <http://www.classical-crossover.co.uk>

their work may be purchased as gifts to their key demographic, reflecting the belief (or stereotype) that these artists are most popular among middle class, middle-aged women.¹²

¹² Jarvis, <http://www.classicalcrossover.co.uk>

Popera

Popera would fall under convention number 5 of Classical-Crossover's list, and this is not a new term. It also has some overlap with Easy Listening Crossover because the aforementioned artists are known for their renditions of popular arias such as selections from Puccini, Mozart, or Bizet's *Carmen*. However, Popera is usually only used in the sense as was previously described: arias sung by pop musicians. There could be further subgenres of Popera based on current trends, particularly classical arias that have been around for quite some time that are suddenly made popular by a momentous or highly publicized event. The most famous example of this would be when the Three Tenors sang Puccini's "Nessun Dorma" for a live and televised crowd at the 1990 FIFA World Cup in Italy. While always a beloved classic among opera lovers, the exposure skyrocketed the aria to chart-topping status, earning a recording of the piece a number 2 spot on the UK Billboard Charts the next week.

Contestant Crossover

Becoming famous through opera is not just reserved for professionals, as evidenced by another type of crossover named “Contestant Crossover,” which also has some Popera and Easy-Listening Crossover overlap. This is often the result of a reality television competition and in such cases results in a contestant’s overnight success, instantaneous fame, and immediate popularity. Susan Boyle, a 2009 contestant on *Britain’s Got Talent*, and Jackie Evancho, a 2010 contestant on the U.S. counterpart *America’s Got Talent*, are two of the most famous examples of the phenomenon—both took the world by storm after performing traditional pieces on their respective shows. However, much of the popularity of “Contestant Crossover” could be chalked up to something of a shock factor: when both appeared onstage, no one expected a matronly Scottish woman or a girl just barely ten years old to perform at the level that they did. There were even doubts about Evancho’s vocal authenticity. While obviously extremely talented, perhaps neither possessed the skill level at the time of their discovery to warrant recording or touring contracts. However, it was what audiences wanted, as evidenced by the millions of hits both received in online outlets and in subsequent media coverage and sales. Undoubtedly, Boyle and Evancho can certainly be considered two of the biggest contributors to Contestant Crossover.

The beauty, or perhaps the curse, of Contestant Crossover is that seemingly ordinary people who would normally not have the chance to showcase their talent are now given the opportunity to do so. And, of all people, Aretha Franklin has something to say about the state of classical music today and intends to do something about it through a Contestant Crossover occurrence she has created of her own accord. “Some of the older classical singers like Jessye Norman, Leontyne [Price] and Barbara Hendricks are retiring,” Franklin said in an interview with NPR. “They’re not singing anymore, and I’d like to see some younger singers come along

and take their place."¹³ (The NPR blog Deceptive Cadence is quick to note that Price actually retired from the stage in 1985). Ms. Franklin has been known to sing opera from time to time, most notably when she stood in for an ailing Luciano Pavarotti at the 1998 Grammy Awards singing a rendition of his “hit,” for lack of a better term, “Nessun Dorma,” keeping it in his key and providing a new perspective from fans of both R&B and opera. Such an example would likely fall under the category of the previously mentioned “Popera.”

In the vein of so many popular televised singing competitions, the Queen of Soul has created her own sing off. But instead of sticking to the rhythm and blues genre for which she is most famous and looking for an heir to her own throne, she has created a competition to crown the next great opera singer. Rather than making it an overblown televised event, the process is much less ceremonious: aspiring opera singers are to make their own recording of themselves singing an operatic aria and send it directly to Ms. Franklin for review, along with resumes and headshots. If she hears something she likes, she will sign that person to her label as the next big thing to take opera by storm. While it is presumed that most who apply have a classical background, this fits crossover in general because it is being spearheaded by someone mainly famous for performing R&B. It also might be considered one of the most unprecedented crossover moves to date.

Caroline Kearney, 31, has been waiting for just such an opportunity. A classically trained mezzo-soprano who studied voice at the acclaimed Westminster Choir College in Princeton, NJ, Kearney spent her post graduate years like many other music majors: burnout after a stint of teaching, followed by a string of administrative jobs in everything from the arts to managing the office of an architecture firm. Not wanting to ever lose her dream of becoming a

¹³ *All Things Considered*. NPR, January 3, 2012.

successful singer, however, she still looks for performing work as much as she can; but, as is common in many areas of the performing arts, opportunities are limited. Therefore, the idea of submitting an audition to Franklin's competition was appealing and had Kearney's overall support, although she does understand the voice of its detractors:

“[Franklin] thinks that classical music is beautiful, and should be appreciated by all. The competition is definitely about crossover, and actually there has been some static on both sides, classical and pop, about whether or not Aretha Franklin is qualified to jury and produce the next great classical singer or whether she is looking for a voice that is interesting to record in place of a more strictly defined classical singer.”¹⁴

Certainly people are wary of Franklin's ability to keep her pop background from influencing her choice, and these people hope that she will have others advising her in the selection process. However, there is no telling what Franklin's influence in the music industry overall will have on her selection of her next great opera star.

Another unprecedented example of Contestant Crossover that is unlike the previous examples comes from another reality show out of Great Britain. In 2010, a new show premiered on Britain's ITV entitled *Popstar to Operastar*. Pop singers who already possess a certain level of fame, such as the bassist from Blur or a member of the Pussycat Dolls, are presented with the challenge to learn how to sing opera. They master a new aria every week and perform it on live television. Similar to *Pop Idol*, *American Idol*, or any of its other worldly counterparts, fans vote for their favorites and a contestant is eliminated each week until a single *Popstar* is crowned an *Operastar*, wins a cash prize (along with a generous donation toward the charity of their choice), and a deal in a future opera production.

¹⁴ Caroline Kearney, interview with author, February 7, 2012.

Tenor Ian Storey believes the hit show portraying pop stars as classically trained artists does more harm than good:

What offends singers most about this show is that the programme-makers are trying to turn a lifetime of training and studying into something that diminishes singers' real efforts and hardships. It took me 16 years to get to the level I'm at. Obviously people defend to the death what is dear and hard-earned when they see it 'profaned' and made banal.¹⁵

Furthermore, he believes the producers missed an opportunity to show what the life of an opera performer or classical musician is really like. Rather than enlist singers who have already gained notoriety, why not show the daily life of a struggling or up-and-coming singer as he or she strives to get a part or pushes him or herself to unknowable limits in performance?¹⁶

Storey adds that this show is not about opera but simply another exercise in crass commercialism. It is hiding behind a facade of pretending to be a trailblazer for advocating for performing arts, assuring the public that they are breaking down the barriers of cultural elitism and bringing opera to the masses; in reality it just delegitimizes the art. In his eyes, this type of crossover is pure entertainment and cannot be taken seriously (Storey, 2010).

To others, *Popstar to Operastar* might be considered the greatest publicity machine for the arts in Britain at the moment. In "Ripe for Growth," Andrew Stewart writes how the show has garnered positive attention for the classical music recording industry. Similar to *Glee* and *American Idol*, fans are downloading music performed on the show in record numbers following each airing. When *Popstar to Operastar* made its series premiere, 24 opera arias made by established opera singers (and not the covers featured on the television program) made landslide

¹⁵ Ian Storey, interview by Emma Pomfret, "Call themselves opera stars?," *The Times*, January 22, 2010: T1: 7.

¹⁶ Storey, 2010.

moves to the top 100 downloaded singles list on UK iTunes overnight. While many have predicted the death of classical music, it is figures such as these that point to the contrary.¹⁷

Stewart also interviews Eric Dingman, president of EMI Classics, who says the industry is in desperate need of finding innovative ways such as *Popstar to Operastar* in order to bring a new relevance to music that is often hundreds of years old and has already been recorded the same way dozens of times. Such programs breathe new life into in to an aging format (Stewart 2010).

Stewart is a staunch believer that popular mediums such as broadcast television through shows such as *Popstar to Operastar* can further boost classical music's popularity and thereby save it from becoming entertainment of the past. In another article, "Bridging the Classical Divide,"¹⁸ he also cites the BBC Music Magazine Awards as being crucial to this cause as its broadcast gives quality airtime to classical artists. In his opinion, the many nominees and awards given in classical music each year further proves that classical music is not on its way out.

Many of those nominated are crossover artists (and many fall under the Easy Listening Crossover genre): Thomas Ades, Anna Netrebko, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Andre Rieu, and Hayley Westenra, to name a few from the long list of 2010 nominees. Stewart admits the awards show "projects a strong crossover flavour" (Stewart 2010) but does not see anything wrong with this. Such appearances on national television could boost ticket sales to local performing arts organizations and online downloads.

A flaw in this system that he mentions is the way in which iTunes presents its classical music offerings to buyers. For many of the classical selections available, the entire album must be downloaded; symphonies part of a multi-work album, or sometimes even individual

¹⁷ Andrew Stewart, "Ripe for Growth," *Music Week*: 13.

¹⁸ Andrew Stewart, "Bridging the Classical Divide," 2010.

movements, often times cannot be downloaded separately. Many consumers might decline to buy a whole album when they only want a certain section of music because of price, and subsequently not buy any classical music at all. This is something the classical music recording industry, crossover or not, needs to adapt to in order to keep up with the market (Stewart 2010). Despite these technological setbacks, Stewart is still very optimistic that classical music is seeing an upturn thanks to crossover artists, particularly through downloadable mp3s. A major question that is now raised is, what does this mean for those who do not rely on television or recordings to present their musical work? A prime example of how we currently view our entertainment as it differs from the past, as well as current trends within media, can be seen in the continuous decline of symphony orchestra audiences year after year. Now that consumers today have more vast means of entertainment with which to occupy themselves than they did in the past, the need to go out to the opera or symphony regularly can seem like a chore, especially in the fast pace in which we live.

Classical Crossover Remix

The first convention listed in Classical-Crossover's definitions could fall under the new crossover category now known as "Classical Crossover Remix." This category would mainly include modern disc jockeys who remix classical works for mass appeal, particularly on the dance floor. For example, Rossini's famous aria "Largo al factotum" from *The Barber of Seville* was recently remixed by an obscure DJ called Mustard Pimp in order to promote the fourth season of the popular MTV reality show (and network cash cow) *Jersey Shore*. It subsequently became an Internet sensation available for mass download on MTV's website. Further examples include rap and/or hip hop artists who sample famous classical works in their own compositions, such as Kelis using the "Queen of the Night" aria from *The Magic Flute* in her song "Like You," or rapper Ludacris experimenting with both Mozart's famously unfinished *Requiem* and Dvořák's Symphony No. 9 in E Minor "From the New World," Op. 95 for his famous anthem "Coming to America."

Classical Remix, and remixing general, is often at the center of controversy. This phenomenon, sometimes known as "participatory culture," has existed since the dawn of creativity: most creative works are influenced by other creative works. The current technological era has allowed for even more of a participatory culture than ever before thanks to the Internet, which has offered an abundance of public websites that can provide anyone with an audience of hundreds, thousands, or more. Wikipedia, Facebook, flickr, YouTube, Twitter, and many other websites that allow for personal blogging, give us the ability to create, publish, and share our creative work freely. In his book "Remix," Lawrence Lessig argues that we were once a Read-Write, or a R/W culture. This meant that ordinary citizens at the turn of the 20th century "read" their culture by reading it, or listening to it, as in listening to music and following along with a

score. They took this one step further, however, by “creating and recreating the culture around them.” They did not feel that just taking in the culture was enough. They used the same instruments as professional musicians to do so and mimic what they were hearing.

Lessig says that once the phonograph, radio, and TV evolved in the last century, we became a Read Only, or R/O culture. This means that we are content to just sit back and allow ourselves to be entertained without being actively involved. It appears society is back in a R/W culture thanks to the Internet, technology, and what it is allowing people to create, particularly young people. The influx our culture has seen in sampling is due to the fact that many more people today are accustomed to having a wealth of information at their fingertips, fully available for the taking. While there are sometimes legal complications related to people mixing and remixing material that does not belong to them, it is another creative outlet among tech-savvy music makers, and when done with classical music, creates that form of Classical Crossover.

Classical-Crossover.co.uk cites Hayley Westenra’s setting Vivaldi’s “Winter” from *Four Seasons* to lyrics and renaming it “River of Dreams” for her album *Pure* as an example for their first convention, which in its purest form would appear to conform to Classical Crossover Remix. While it does fit their description, it does not qualify as Classical Crossover Remix as defined above. Such a work as Westenra’s would best be described as the aforementioned Easy-Listening Crossover. While Classical Crossover Remix would most likely appeal to a younger generation, Easy-Listening Crossover would probably be more popular among their parents. Classical Crossover Remix is commendable in that it uses classical music to appeal to younger generations that might be more likely to shy away from classical music in its purest form.

Classical Crossover Cover

Much of Easy-Listening Crossover could fall under the second convention of the fan page's list but would most likely be released under "Classical Crossover Cover." This is where classically trained artists will often do a cover of a popular song while sticking to their classical roots. It is also where someone like Sarah Brightman could then crossover to another classical crossover genre, as she covered Celine Dion's pop phenomenon "My Heart Will Go On" from the film *Titanic* in a more classical style: translated into Italian and subsequently renamed "Il Mio Cuore Va."

This would likely be of more interest to the older generation who would also be more attracted to Easy-Listening Crossover, but Classical Crossover Cover is unique in that other areas of this genre could also appeal to the younger set. An example of an artist who could successfully do that is 2Cellos, a cello duo who have achieved fame by covering renowned pop songs such as Michael Jackson's "Smooth Criminal" and Guns N' Roses' "Welcome to the Jungle" on their string instruments.

Even more exceptional would be Scala and Kolacny Brothers as they could appeal to young and old alike. A Belgian all-girls choir and brainchild of the two musical brothers Kolacny, the group covers their own arrangements of pop hits in addition to performing classical works. Some of their most famous Classical Crossover Covers include Nirvana's "Smells Like Teen Spirit," U2's "With or Without You," Weatus' "Teenage Dirtbag," and Kylie Minogue's "Can't Get You Outta My Head." Possibly the most famous of their endeavors, Radiohead's "Creep," was featured in the highly anticipated trailer for the film *The Social Network* in 2010.¹⁹ They also went on to perform at the famed South by Southwest Festival in 2011.

¹⁹ *Morning Edition*, NPR, March 31, 2011.

Classical Crossover Cover continues to gain momentum. A bassoon quartet out of Eastman School of Music amusingly dubbed “The Breaking Winds” posted a video several years ago that went viral when it featured all four female members dressed up like Lady GaGa and performing a medley of her tunes, complete with dance moves. They have since transcribed many more pop hits and have gone on to tour schools with this act teaching about classical music through this innovative and highly entertaining way that is relatable to younger audiences. This and all of the above are examples of where classical musicians get to use more of their personal creativity and skill in arranging these pieces, not to mention also have fun with it.

Such creative outlets and endeavors are important for musicians in finding opportunities beyond the conservatory, and this is especially vital for a school as competitive as Eastman. Reasons for this can often be found in the 2005 Blair Tindall memoir *Mozart in the Jungle: Sex, Drugs, and Classical Music*, a book that is often credited for exposing what really goes on backstage in the classical music world as it details the exploits of the classical music scene in 1980s, mainly in New York. By her account, nepotism is the best way to get jobs in the orchestra world, and she managed to use that to her advantage to get the high paying work despite there being many more qualified oboists than she to substitute with the elite New York Philharmonic or Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. Despite her success in playing the system, she claims this to be a major flaw in the hiring of classical musicians today.

One of the main problems she attests to is that conservatories are so adept at finding the talent to bring to their schools but consequently inept at revealing to them that there are very few jobs available in our country’s orchestras once they graduate. Most vacancies in a full time orchestra bring hundreds of applicants who are only given minutes behind a screen to show their years of training to a committee of their peers that quickly grows tired of hearing the same

excerpts over and over again for hours at a time. The odds are not good, and often the luck of having a good day playing-wise is a major factor in getting a call back over someone else who may be just as or even more qualified who perhaps just was not at their best on that particular day; further proof that the judgment of music can be completely subjective. And because the conservatory education is only focused on music, these students are not prepared or trained to do any other type of work. Furthermore, it is even harder to bring non-classical music listeners into the classical music fold once it is time to build an audience for classical concerts, and the popular music world has the advantage:

“My experience...is that when people see live musicians wearing clothes that they wear, who look like them” (i.e., popular artists), “they’re mesmerized by it. But when it’s presented as something very highfalutin” (classical, in the standard all black concert uniform for women and tuxedo and tails for men), “it’s frightening. The wall comes down right away.”²⁰

This leads to the aforementioned moment with Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble performing “Empire State of Mind,” one of the biggest cases for why Classical Crossover Cover is so important for arts managers and music educators. Many who work in the orchestra world can attest that they have never seen a crowd react to a music education concert the way that those children did.

To make the claim that young people at music education concerts around the country are never highly captivated by the classical music being presented to them in a more traditional setting would be absurd. In fact, most children are attentive when such concerts are executed with care and precision. But to witness a reaction to classical music such as that seen on the

²⁰ Bonanos, Christopher, "Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark, " *New York Magazine*, July 25, 2005, 71.

scale of the Silk Road Ensemble's influence is overwhelming. Glenn Donnellan, who is in the second violin section of the National Symphony Orchestra (NSO), once performed Van Halen on electric violin at every NSO education concert for an entire orchestral season, and every young audience's reaction was similar to that of the Silk Road Ensemble's. Donnellan said that he has never heard anyone react that way than at those concerts where he played the electric violin, and it was thrilling.

It is worth noting that Donnellan is also famous for fashioning an electric violin out of a baseball bat in his garage and he is now often a regular at Washington Nationals games using it to play the National Anthem. Dubbed the "Electric Slugger" or "Bat-o-lin," he has also been featured on a special for ESPN because of his invention. He sees much value in playing these events because it has gained the Electric Slugger a lot of publicity and therefore many questions from people about the violin in general. There is no evidence that people have come to an NSO concert because they saw him at a Nationals game, but there are definitely people who recognize him while attending NSO concerts, which Donnellan attributes to the Bat-o-lin's mass appeal, which in turn should be considered beneficial to classical music's overall appeal. Such a feat is directly contrary to Lebrecht's assessment that sports and classical music do not mix.

Collaborative Crossover

While people may enjoy a variety of classical music or opera, those who make their living performing live must now compete with these modern mediums, such as television and easy access to music on the Internet. Therefore, many marketing teams for symphony orchestras have turned to crossover concerts, also referred to as Pops programming, to reach an ever-fickle public and boost ticket sales. Named Collaborative Crossover in this research, it has been used by orchestras throughout the decades. For example, Frank Zappa recorded his music with the London Symphony Orchestra for release on two separate albums in 1983 and 1987.

The original artist is not even required to be a part of the performance; many songbooks are transcribed for just for orchestra with the same show being rented by symphonies worldwide. Led Zeppelin, The Beatles, and Pink Floyd arrangements are among the most popular for orchestras to perform as part of Pops or outdoor concert seasons. Sara Griffin, assistant principal librarian of the New York Philharmonic, says that such prepackaged shows are often of benefit to orchestras; while they can vary by way of expense, a certain show “puts the onus on the artist to negotiate permissions of the songs they are performing,”²¹ thereby making them more accessible to orchestras as a performing outlet over time.

Classical Collaboration is something that a lot of orchestras turn to when they are looking to have a concert that is going to bring a wider and maybe younger audience into its concert halls. A more expensive, but overall lucrative, way for orchestras to utilize Classical Collaboration is to actually invite these pop musicians to perform as part of their concerts. A popular artist will then play their original music with a symphony orchestra for usually one special concert, with the orchestra as accompaniment to the famous artist. Rapper Mos Def, now

²¹ Sara Griffin, email message to author, April 16, 2012.

working under the name Yasiin, did a concert with the Brooklyn Philharmonic in the fall of 2011. Metallica performed two nights with the San Francisco Symphony in 1999, and Ben Folds tours and does concerts with many orchestras around the country. John Legend is also doing this now, and when Jimmy Fallon took his late night show to Indianapolis for the 2012 Super Bowl, his house band the Roots collaborated with the Indianapolis Symphony for that week of televised shows.

Such work is something that classically trained, conservatory-produced musicians are accustomed to when performing with a symphony, despite the fact that they may not like it, warns David Schiff. These collective groups of musicians often feel stifled by performing lighter fare, which is often unchallenging and makes them feel as though they are just the accompaniment rather than the main act. It is also not what they were trained to perform, as conservatories tend to mold classical musicians rather than contemporary ones.²²

James B. Hewitt, personnel manager of the National Symphony Orchestra, explains that while classical musicians may not like performing Pops, most understand that it is a necessary programming element of being a paid member of an orchestra, mainly for financial reasons as these shows can bring in larger crowds and further revenue that some classical concerts may not. It also often depends on the type of instrument the classical musician plays that determines exactly how that individual feels about playing such fare. Strings and woodwinds are “more sensitive” to the loud raucous such Pops shows create, while brass and percussion can usually have more fun with it. A musician’s age also plays a factor: if anyone actually likes a Disney Pops show or an evening of Rodgers and Hammerstein, it will probably be the older generation of musicians. On the other hand, most from that group consider a Pops show with Ben Folds or

²² David Schiff, “Classical Appeal,” 1997.

John Legend to be “just another concert” while the younger musicians tend to get more excited about sharing the stage with pop superstars, even if the parts they play are not very interesting or challenging.²³

On the other side of the stage, audience members feel duped when lured in under false pretenses, which marketers sometimes tend to think is acceptable. In certain situations, especially when the pop artist is testing a new sound, the concert is marketed as crossover or pops when really it is an experiment by the visiting guest artist to present new work that no one, not even the musicians, are familiar with. “The orchestra crosses down, and the audience crosses up. It's an attitude that insults both players and listeners. The orchestra is made to feel that the kind of music it plays best is unsellable, and the audience soon figures out that the ads are a bait-and-switch ploy” (Schiff, 1997).

Here we have an example of when crossover can become a serious burden if not executed properly. Musicians in an orchestra are very different from soloists who choose to make crossover their latest project. Orchestra members are part of a team and under contract to play what is placed before them. They have no say in the marketing process, and “marketing is where the tension between supply and demand cultures becomes visible” (Schiff, 1997). In these cases, it can be an apparent and serious marketing flaw that hurts both sides. It could also eventually affect the future of the orchestra if patrons do not feel the symphony is worth their time because the marketing flawed (Schiff, 1997). Schiff warns that orchestra managers need to be cautious and honest with their audience and musicians when entering the crossover world.

There is also the issue of orchestra playing agreements and how that factors in to the length of a performance. The National Symphony Orchestra cannot perform for longer than one

²³ James Hewitt, interview with author, March 28, 2012.

hour and fifteen minutes without taking a break due to the rules in their Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). When Ben Folds performed with them in 2009, he made the artistic decision not to have an intermission, and because of the above statute could only do a set that was just over an hour. Thus, that was the entire evening's performance. Performing for one night only to a sold out crowd who normally would not attend an orchestra concert, an audible disappointment could be heard throughout the Kennedy Center Concert Hall that evening, not to mention the unpleasant emails from ticket buyers that appeared in the orchestra management's email inboxes over the next week. Simply put, the ticket-buying audience for this particular show felt slighted.

If Mr. Folds was so against coming back out after an intermission, perhaps the NSO could have performed a set alone, had an intermission, and then brought him out for his act. However, the decision was made late and the orchestra did not have anything planned to fill another hour. Plus, what exactly does an orchestra play for that long to appease a sold-out crowd of over 1,000 hipsters who are only there to hear classic Ben Folds hits such as "One Angry Dwarf and 200 Solemn Faces" or "Bitch Went Nuts?" (And, if they are lucky, Folds' rendition of rapper Eazy-E's "Bitches Ain't Shit." Sadly, this crowd was not so fortunate.)

Optimists and purists might say, "have the orchestra play from their regular repertoire and force these kids to listen to some real classical music—maybe they'll learn something!" Orchestra programming specialists know it is not that easy. Creating the ideal concert, classical or Pops, takes special planning and requires an expert balance between the musical selections being performed. Perhaps Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* on the first half of the NSO's Ben Folds program would have been an innovative turn in the history of orchestral programming. There is a greater chance that it would have been a disaster, resulting in a riot not seen at a classical concert since *The Rite of Spring* first premiered in 1913 as over 1,000 solemn faces turn angry

waiting for Ben Folds to appear.

Classical Incorporation

Probably the most common type of crossover would be Classical Incorporation. Many of today's popular artists are a part of this genre and likely do not even realize it. This is when a popular musician incorporates elements of classical music into his or her modern works. There are many examples of this, too many to be named in this, or perhaps any, single report. Because Classical Incorporation is so vast, one might wonder if an artist's one-time use of a single classical instrument really qualifies that piece to be deemed Classical Crossover. The argument for this comes back to music education. For example, when someone who is learning an instrument hears that instrument in a popular piece of music he or she may enjoy, this could be considered a vital learning tool. Now the further pursuit of perfecting his or her skill on that musical instrument becomes that much more enjoyable and valuable to that musical scholar who has only known popular music up until this point. Music educators and private music instructors can use such examples to their advantage in teaching; the chord structures, intervals, and techniques (glissandos, pizzicatos, trills, crescendos, etc.) can also be highlighted. It all confirms that Classical Crossover can be used as an effective educational tool.

While one can argue that many other artists before the Beatles used Collaborative Crossover, because of their iconic status they can be easily credited with bringing it forward in an international spotlight. It started as early as Paul McCartney's use of a string ensemble for "Yesterday" (in a piece that some classify as "baroque pop") in 1965 that progressed into much of their later and most critically acclaimed work. 1967's "A Day in the Life" contains the infamous improvised glissando by full orchestra, which was actually a 40-piece orchestra overdubbed several times to create a fuller sound. This innovation was a suggestion by Ringo

Starr when John Lennon and McCartney insisted on a full 90-piece orchestra but the studio balked at the cost.²⁴

From an arts administration perspective, the Beatles' choice not to go with a full orchestra and simply re-record what they already had several times over is disheartening, almost along the lines of a ballet or musical firing its pit orchestra and having the ensemble perform along to a recording night after night as an underhanded method to cut costs. It should be noted, however, that the idea of combining classical musicians with legendary rock stars was fairly novel on the large scale Lennon and McCartney envisioned. Classical music was also not facing the same challenges in terms of reach during this period, especially in Europe. The idea that they could even get 40 classical musicians for a recording session is notable and should be praised for opening the door to rock bands who would go on to use full orchestras in their music which some could argue led to the progressive rock movement. Therefore, the Beatles should not be chastised for not realizing the future implications of trying to cut corners on getting a full sound but rather as pioneers in utilizing classical musicians innovatively. One could argue that this is just another example of the Beatles being leaders in the music industry.

Some famous, as well as obscure, examples of Classical Incorporation include the following songs and artists, the genre into which that artist would typically fit, with the traditionally classical instrument or instruments also listed. The year indicates when the song was released as a single (assuming it was a single) and not the date of the album release. It also only includes original songs by the artists and not remakes or covers, unless they are covers by the original artists (i.e., Nirvana redoing their own music for the live album *MTV Unplugged in New York*):

²⁴ Geoff Emerick, and Howard Massey, *Here, There, Everywhere: My Life Recording the Music of the Beatles*, (New York: Gotham Books, 2006), 153.

Classical Incorporation Chart

Year	Artist	Conventional genre (not Crossover)	Song (s)	Album	Classical instruments used
1966	Simon and Garfunkel	Folk rock	"Hazy Shade of Winter"	<i>Bookends</i>	Oboe, trumpet
1966	The Velvet Underground	Experimental rock	"Sunday Morning"	<i>The Velvet Underground & Nico</i>	Viola, celeste
1967	P.P. Arnold	Rock/soul	"The First Cut Is the Deepest"*	Single LP	Horn, strings, harp, harpsichord
1969	Simon and Garfunkel	Folk rock	"The Boxer"	<i>Bridge Over Troubled Water</i>	Piccolo trumpet, strings
1969	The Rolling Stones	Rock	"You Can't Always Get What You Want"	<i>Let It Bleed</i>	French horn, choir
1970	Neil Young	Folk rock	"After the Gold Rush"	<i>After the Gold Rush</i>	French horn
1970	Elton John	Rock, easy-listening	"Your Song"	<i>Elton John</i>	Flute, strings
1973	The Main Ingredient	Soul	"Everybody Plays the Fool"	<i>Bittersweet</i>	Flute, strings
1973	David Bowie	Glam rock	"Life on Mars?"	<i>Hunky Dory</i>	Strings
1976	Kiss	Glam rock	"Beth"	<i>Destroyer</i>	Woodwinds, brass, strings
1978	Gloria Gaynor	Disco	"I Will Survive"	<i>Love Tracks</i>	Brass, strings, harp
1982	Dexys Midnight Runners	Pop	"Come On Eileen"	<i>Too-Rye-Ay</i>	Strings
1984	Prince	Funk/pop	"Purple Rain"	<i>Purple Rain</i>	Strings, organ
1992	The Pixies	Alt-rock	"Monkey Gone to Heaven"	<i>Doolittle</i>	Strings
1992	Guns N' Roses	Hard rock	"November Rain"	<i>Use Your Illusion</i>	Full orchestra
1993	R.E.M.	Alt-rock	"Everybody Hurts"	<i>Automatic for the People</i>	Strings

1993	R.E.M.	Alt-rock	“Nightswimming”	<i>Automatic for the People</i>	Oboe, strings
1993	Nirvana	Grunge	“All Apologies	<i>In Utero</i>	Cello
1994	Alice in Chains	Rock, grunge	“Whale & Wasp”	<i>Jar of Flies</i>	Viola
1994	Smashing Pumpkins	Alt-rock, grunge	“Disarm”	<i>Siamese Dream</i>	Strings, percussion
1994	Nirvana	Grunge	“Dumb” “Polly” “On A Plain” “Something In The Way” “All Apologies”	<i>MTV Unplugged in New York</i>	Cello
1995	Collective Soul	Grunge	“The World I Know”	<i>Collective Soul</i>	Strings
1996	Smashing Pumpkins	Alt-rock/grunge	“Tonight, Tonight”	<i>Mellon Collie and the Infinite Sadness</i>	Strings, percussion
1997	Green Day	Post-punk/grunge	“Good Riddance (Time of Your Life)”	<i>Nimrod</i>	Strings
1998	Pulp	Alt-rock	“TV Movie”	<i>This is Hardcore</i>	Strings
1999	Travis	Indie rock	“Why Does It Always Rain On Me?”	<i>The Man Who</i>	Strings
2000	Guided By Voices	Indie rock	“Hold on Hope”	<i>Hold on Hope</i>	Strings
2000	Guster	Indie rock	“Fa Fa”	<i>Lost and Gone Forever</i>	Flute
2006	Gnarls Barkley	Neo-soul	“Crazy”	<i>St. Elsewhere</i>	Strings
2010	Lady GaGa and Beyoncé	Pop	“Telephone”	<i>The Fame Monster</i>	Harp
2011	Kanye West featuring Rihanna and Kid Cudi	Rap/Hip-Hop	“All of the Lights”	<i>My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy</i>	Flute, French horn, trumpet, trombone, strings

*While written and initially recorded by Cat Stevens, he sold the rights early on and Arnold's version was released several months prior to Stevens releasing his album; his was never released as a single. Hers was the more commercially successful of the two and Stevens even considered it superior to his own. Therefore it is not considered a cover.

In examining this as far back as the 1960s, it is interesting to see how much of Classical Incorporation originated within folk rock. Simon and Garfunkel are considered one of the most influential musical acts of all time. There is no question that much of this has to do with their talent, and one should also take into consideration that much of it could also be attributed to their innovation in bringing classical musical instruments into their compositions that are uncommon to popular music but now considered common to the Simon and Garfunkel sound. To continue with the 1960s, the Velvet Underground is also often considered "experimental" rock, the experimental being their somewhat frequent use of classical instruments, most notably band member John Cale's viola, sometimes electrified (an uncommon amplified instrument even fifty years later). It would be wrong to not also commend the contribution made by soul artists of the 1960s as evidenced by P.P. Arnold's celebrated rendition "The First Cut is the Deepest" and the Main Ingredient's "Everybody Plays the Fool" as the 1970s took over.

While not heavily covered in the above chart, disco was a popular movement of the 1970s that also utilized strings, horns, and other orchestral instruments. Rock saw similar use of classical conventions. The 1980s did not see as much Classical Incorporation in popular music as decades previous or future. Many bands did incorporate the saxophone at this time, an instrument that can sometimes be found in traditional orchestration, but such sightings are rare and usually reserved for French compositions. Therefore, any saxophone used in popular music cannot be considered Classical Incorporation, as the definitive lines would then begin to blur since the saxophone has never been considered a traditionally classical instrument.

However, an underground independent rock music movement that was directly influenced by the art world could be found in clubs and art galleries throughout New York during the 1980s, much of it inspired by the elite New York orchestral composers Rhys Chatham, Steve Reich, Glenn Branda, and Philip Glass.²⁵ Unarguably the most significant of these contributors was Sonic Youth, champions of the “no-wave” movement of this time. However, they mainly stuck to a guitar-bass-drum sound (which was innovative in its own unique way through their use of an alternative tuning system and incorporating everyday objects such as screwdrivers and erasers into their guitar frets and drumsticks). But they did not use any classical instruments until their 2006 album *Murray Street*, featuring horns that are almost unrecognizable in a cacophonous finale on “Radical Adults Like Godhead Style.” So while influenced by modern classical composers and significant in their own right, Sonic Youth and most other underground, no-wave indies from the 1980s do not fit into any Classical Crossover category.

String arrangements can often be heard in music of the eighties but these were often synthesized (e.g., most everything by the Pet Shop Boys, which even contained orchestral “hits” but was nothing more than two men and a keyboard). While such innovations were a popular musical element that defined the music of that generation, unless the music contained living, breathing musicians playing the actual instruments, it cannot be considered Classical Incorporation as defined by the parameters laid out in this paper. One of the main goals of defining crossover genres is so that they may benefit classical musicians today, either through creative outlet, inspiring others to take up a classical instrument (particularly youth), or in helping musicians earn a living. This is in no way meant to diminish synthesizers as a ground-

²⁵ Azerrad, 232.

breaking element of the eighties sound nor the skill it takes to operate such machines; it is simply an emphatically firm guideline in furthering the categorization of Classical Crossover.

What is interesting in examining this chart chronologically is that it seems there was a major surge in using classical instruments within a rock setting in the early to mid-nineties, when grunge was the popular music movement of that generation. It is also seen in musicians who rose to fame in the grunge era but perhaps did not start experimenting with classical instruments until after the movement had faded, such as Beck. Classical elements are seen as far back as his *Mellow Gold* years but gained momentum, along with his career, and can be seen in much heavier use in later albums starting with 1998's *Mutations*. Pearl Jam stuck to their grunge roots in making their influential albums *Ten* and *Vs.* but went for a softer feel more than a decade later in their 2009 album *Backspacer*, employing violin, viola, cello, and horn. Nirvana, grunge's poster child, never moved much past its guitar, bass, and drum trio before hiring a cellist for 1993's *In Utero* and their *MTV Unplugged in New York* album of 1994, recorded only months before front man Kurt Cobain's untimely death. One can only predict how else their sound would have evolved were it not for this tragic event.

It is almost as if popular musicians go through creative shifts and phases in their careers, following a garage band persona that evolves into a serious artist mentality. What is interesting is that while the innovation may sound new to the fans, it may not be new to the artists as many studied classical instruments when they were young before moving on to rock or pop. Even more enlightening is that what someone may refer as a "new" sound for a band suddenly using classical elements is the fact that classical instruments have been present in many types of music for centuries.

Progressive Rock and Progressive Rock: The Next Wave

A previous established genre, the phenomenon of mainstream artists taking a more classical approach to their craft has often been referred to as *Progressive Rock*. In his book *Listening to the Future: the Time of Progressive Rock*, Bill Martin actually defines progressive rock as rock bands or musicians who have always made classical elements a part of their sound rather than it being a gradual evolution of their creative process like certain bands of the Classical Incorporation genres previously mentioned. Bands such as Jethro Tull, King Crimson, and the Moody Blues are most often cited as the most influential bands of this genre. More contemporary examples include Badly Drawn Boy, Eels, Sufjan Stevens, and Rufus Wainwright, who sometimes use a large orchestral sound but will also frequently implement smaller classical ensembles into their compositions. This qualifies them to sometimes also fall under Progressive Rock: The Next Wave. Some have dubbed this type of experimentation as “Chamber Pop,” but this name does not refer to the Progressive Rock roots from which it was likely influenced. Therefore, such innovations shall now be referred to as Progressive Rock: The Next Wave.

While the concept of Progressive Rock seems to have faded over the past few decades, Progressive Rock: The Next Wave proves that it has simply taken a new life in the form of indie rock artists and bands who have always made classical elements a part of their natural sound, although in a much more subdued way. While the traditional Progressive Rock bands that started in the 1970s used full orchestras, artists of Progressive Rock: The Next Wave use smaller ensembles, almost as if in a chamber setting. In some instances (i.e. groups such as Arcade Fire and Ra Ra Riot), the core classical musicians have a say in the creative process of the band’s artistic product. Such innovations are crucial in allowing experimentation for musicians who enjoy creating all types of music, play more than one instruments (at least one being classical)

and do not limit themselves to any formal rules of music education.

The Case for Crossover

Most certainly, many of the aforementioned acts fit into more than one of these categories. However, the examples here have been assigned to the category which most pertains to their most predominant traits as Classical Crossover. Below is a table that lists the crossover type and their main feature in what makes them fall into that category as well as several examples:

CROSSOVER TYPE	PROMINENT FEATURE	EXAMPLES
Classical Crossover Cover	Musicians who cover popular songs on classical instruments or in a traditional setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scala and Kolacny Brothers• 2Cellos• The Breaking Winds
Classical Incorporation	Popular artists who use classical elements in their music on occasion	Abundant in many areas of popular music
Classical Remix	Classical music remixed using modern technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mustard Pimp• Kelis• Ludacris
Collaborative Crossover	Popular artists who collaborate with classical musicians on new or contemporary works	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ben Folds, Metallica, Mos Def/Yasiin, The Roots, etc. performing with orchestras• Elvis Costello collaborating with Anne Sophie Von Otter
Contestant Crossover	Someone who becomes famous (usually quickly) in the classical music world via a contest or reality show	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>From Popstar to Opera Star</i>• Aretha Franklin's Next Great Opera Star
Easy-Listening Crossover	Vocal driven, soothing music either by artists who are strictly crossover but were classically trained	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sarah Brightman• Josh Groban• Andrea Bocelli

Popera	Easy Listening Crossover Artists, or popular artists, performing popular arias etc. as part of their albums, recordings, and performances; Established arias suddenly made popular by a momentous or highly publicized event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy Listening Crossover artists performing arias • Aretha Franklin performing arias • The surge in popularity of “Nessun Dorma” after a Three Tenors performance at the World Cup
Progressive Rock	Rock bands that have always used classical elements in their music, usually in a very large and grand display	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jethro Tull • King Crimson • The Moody Blues
Progressive Rock: The Next Wave (sometimes referred to as “Chamber Pop”)	Rock bands or artists that have always used classical elements in their popular compositions, but on a smaller scale than Progressive Rock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arcade Fire • Badly Draw Boy • Eels • Ra Ra Riot • Rufus Wainwright • Sufjan Stevens

As demonstrated by these examples, a pop act’s experimentation with classical elements does not confine or define them as classical musicians from that point forward; Costello has gone back to his rock roots since his work with Otter, the Roots went back to New York to work on *Late Night with Jimmy Fallon* sans the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, etc. So while these artists may not stay within crossover permanently, they have created a product that is worth examining and defining for future reference.

Conclusion

Classical Crossover does not show any signs of going away quietly any time in the near future. Debates rage on as purists refuse to become more lenient in their views, and innovators think up even more commercialized ways to market classical music in a new, pop-heavy era. What some call creative others call a defamation of classical work. However, for any artistic endeavor, marketing, technology, and attitudes all need to be examined, as proven by research and experience.

As a music enjoying population, there is no rule that says we are only allowed to enjoy just one type of music. Furthermore, there is more to the equation than classical music and everything else. While some forms of Classical Crossover may be more helpful than others in the certain functions discussed, all are important to classical music education today because certain examples can help people identify classical music in their lives more readily than they would have previously realized. For example, Classical Incorporation could help music students learning a new instrument identify not only that instrument but certain chord structures and intervals in more of the every day music that they hear, and not just in these education concerts they may only attend only once or twice in their lifetime. The same can be said for classical music remix: when those operatic pieces are present in rap and dance songs, a person is a step closer to learning exactly where that music came from.

The argument has been made that kids are smarter about classical music than we think, and this is agreeable. The problem with just making that your final argument is that try as we might, the younger masses are not going to be as interested in classical music as we classical music lovers would like, often because of lack of exposure. Plus, the majority are more responsive to popular music. If the arts and music industry could let them know that they are

being exposed to classical music elements on a regular basis, it is taking a step in the right direction toward introducing these young scholars to classical music. In no way should the arts administrators and educators try to unobtrusively incorporate classical music into the musical palette of an unsuspecting public; by being up front with their audience and showing them how much classical music influences their current musical tastes, the classical music industry is showing them that there is more to classical music in this world than what the stereotype of it being a stodgy, stuffy affair would have them believe.

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