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# Managing a Symphony Orchestra in Times of Change: Behind the Curtains

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## Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the symphony orchestra as a living organism in a perpetual interaction with the volatility of the nowadays environment, as a symbiosis between the goods and the services provided by a symphony orchestra's activity. A description of the symphony orchestra's activity, with emphasize upon German orchestras (Kulturorchester), as dominators on the classical symphony orchestras' market. This paper aims to present some of the mission statements, the goals, the good practices identified in symphony orchestras' management, mostly German, the typical and well-known pattern that characterizes a musician, member of an orchestra, and to describe the characteristics of today's management. There is a special emphasis placed on the interdisciplinary activity and the collaboration with the educational institutions. The results consist of the identification of the multiple stakeholders, the opportunities and the threats, the best practices and the innovative aspects in today's management of a symphony orchestra. "Tradition is not the worship of ashes, but the preservation of fire" Gustav Mahler

*Key words:* Symphony orchestra, living organism, management, stakeholders, good practices

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## 1. Introduction

"There is no other activity in which forty, eighty or one hundred twenty people are doing the same thing together, with a precision of a tenth of a second, starting and finishing together" (Turkov, 1998). Although the component parts of a symphony orchestra were affected by some modifications over the last 200 years, its existence is explained as a result of gradual adaptation to the requirements of the historical, political, social, educational, and cultural changes.

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Assuming that, the symphony orchestra is a cultural service providing organization, and a living organism, in constant interaction with the environment, being subject to internal and external pressures, which are the characteristics of their current management in order to maximize the satisfaction of all its stakeholders? The threats that generate an impact upon the symphony orchestra come mostly from outside, for example the demographic changes, the musical educational background of the population, the financing methods, global megatrends and the training and developing of the modern society. In the current world context, the existence of a symphony orchestra cannot represent a self-evident fact anymore, because it faces a number of challenges. A quick, effective and efficient response from its management system helps to increase its performance and to ensure a better future. What are the methods that facilitate the effective and efficient delivery of the cultural service provided by the symphony orchestra to adapt to contemporary society and to survive under the influence of such a volatile environment?

## 2. Literature review

According to the statement that "in the performing arts, crisis is apparently a way of life" (Baumol and Bowen, 1966) it is known since the middle of last century that a new musical work, a new composition, a new composer, conductor or a new performer is not enough. Innovations and original ways that awake and nurture the public's interest, and at the same time satisfy the work, the long hours of practice and the dedication of the musicians are needed. Numerous studies, in the United States and in Europe in the last years, addressed the interest of identifying new strategies of modern management for administrating an orchestra and highlighting the significant role that management plays in order to harmonize with the environment, as reactive response to stimuli and current conditions. In America such studies are known since the middle of last century. European researchers started showing a greater concern for the management of a symphony orchestra, during the 1990s.

Although art in general is always facing a certain crisis state, symphony orchestras were caught somehow unprepared by the major political changes that occurred after the revolutions in the former communist countries, in Central and Eastern Europe. We have focused our research on Germany, because Germany has a large number of professional classical orchestras (Kulturorchester) namely 131. They are classified as it follows: 111 are *Philharmonie und Theaterorchester* (Philharmonic and Theater orchestras), 12 *Rundfunkorchester* (Radio orchestras) and 8 *Kammerorchester* (Chamber orchestras).

Among the first researches is the study presented by *Heinrichs, Werner (1997)*, regarding the patterns and strategies that support the new orientation policy in financing culture, in the conditions of the new political, economic, social climate. What does a symphony orchestra and what measures does it take in relation to environmental challenges, to the external / internal threats, in order to ensure the tomorrow's success, is one of the questions arising from the study sign by the same author, nine years later (Heinrichs, 2006). Although the goals of German orchestras' managers were and are largely the same, it is interesting to investigate what characteristics define their managerial style in relation to demographic changes in the orchestra, in the public, in social and political life, according to new megatrends. Besides the subtlety of the idea of preserving "the old German sound" ("der alte deutsche Klang"), these objectives are synthesized by Mertens, Gerald (2010), as: a) Concerts and musical productions of high artistic quality, b) Sold concerts, c) Satisfied public and d) satisfied orchestras' members

Brezinka, Thomas (2005), adds other indicators that contribute to a successful management, namely a positive change in the public, a better motivation of the musicians, the increase joy generated by the performance and the interpretation of a well-designed program-repertoire. The new forms of presentation of classical music are studied and tested under the guidance of the symphony orchestra's management, in order to preserve the musical heritage, in symbiosis with the contemporary ambient, to the supply and demand (Tröndler, 2011)

Recent studies were published in the United States of America, analyzing the fact many symphony orchestras are shutting down, after declaring bankruptcy. The situation of symphony orchestras in America arouses the desire for research because of the discrepancies that are found, which are placing some orchestras at the lowest of their existence, while others are thriving and enjoying a real success and a secure future. Yale University has proposed the analysis of the two perspectives, and comes with viable solutions, including for Europe, by promoting strategies for successful business in America, focusing on the increase of revenue from performances, reducing the costs involved in organizing a concert / show and, at the same time, increasing revenues from nonperformance income

(Flanagan, 2012). "With respect to those factors controlled by symphony managers, a high-quality symphony is likely to increase market penetration through increased per capita attendance rates. These factors may include local traditions and attitudes toward the regional orchestras, the music selection and marketing of the performances, or the presence of a well-known guest conductor or guest musicians." (Toma and Meads, 2007). Together with the "universalization" of management and the awareness of its importance and its contribution to the smooth-running process of a symphony orchestra, one of the goals is to identify the winning combination of technology, people and profit, in a state of harmony and balance. We consider that for symphonic orchestra long-term success "What is required is not a little tweak to the traditional planning process, but a new philosophical foundation: strategy is revolution; everything else is tactics" (Hamel, 1996b).

### 3. The research's goals

"Learn how to be contemporary with yourself", is the advice given by Maestro Remus Georgescu, a world renowned Romanian musician, composer, conductor and former manager of a philharmonic orchestra. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the particularities of a symphony orchestra, as a cultural musical service providing organization, in the context of nowadays changes in social, political, economic, technological, educational, cultural and contemporary music environment.

The classical professional orchestra is one of the oldest organizations. It represents a group of people motivated by their talent, inclination and love for music, united by the desire to express their work through sound and interpretation knowledge acquired in dozens of years, thousands and thousands of hours of practice, characterized by perseverance and dedication. Professional musicians, members of a classical orchestra, always face the challenge of maintaining the balance between the legacy format of the artistic act, and its adaptation to the requirements and expectations of rapidly changes in nowadays society. Does the management system intervene in the work of a professional orchestra, and how? Are there any changes, or it is going by the aphorism "if it works, don't fix it"? In a world where robots are replacing people's work, and the competition for satisfying the leisure time is fierce, the artistic/cultural manifestation as diverse and different as possible, we consider that in order to meet the expectations of stakeholders we need both, the artists' professionalism and excellency, and management's craftsmanship that lies behind the artistic act.

German classical orchestras dominate the world's professional orchestras market with *Berliner Philharmoniker* in second place, *Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks* place 6, and *Staatskapelle Dresden* on place 10, according to Gramophone, the world's leading classical music magazine. It is intriguing to identify good management practices among symphony orchestras, theater and chamber orchestras in Germany. The *Kulturorchester* (german classical professional orchestras) depending on the number of musicians, are divided in four categories: A - from 99 members and up, B - 66 members and up, C - 50 to 65 members and D - under 50 members.

Success in art is, on one hand, the ability of adapting to the demands of the contemporary society, regardless if we are talking about the performance of a composition written centuries ago, or a contemporary musical work, ensuring its present and future. Music has a wide range of manifestations, where the human talent is combined with the hard work and long hours of practice. However, they wither and lose their value and content if they are not shared with the public, who enhances their meaning, as a result of the phenomenon of catharsis, and magnifies the importance of the artistic act.

On the other hand, to have a large and well-trained orchestra is not enough nowadays to be successful and satisfy all stakeholders, internal and external. It cannot be just about a "perpetuum-mobile" *composer-performer-audience*, without any interference. Our assumptions are that it is requiring a good knowledge and awareness of all stakeholders and all the elements that play an important role in preparing, promoting and carrying out an artistic performance. The service offered by a symphony orchestra can be translated as a cultural musical action (stage performance, concert, and show) provided against a monetary value (tickets, subscriptions).

The symphony orchestra's performance creates a symbiosis of goods and services: the work written/composed long before it is presented represents the "goods" but the concert/representation (the service) it did not exist before with the same audience, same orchestra, same conductor and/or soloist. The performance is incumbent to the artist, but the forwarding of the artistic act is shared with the consumers (public) who later passes on the quality of the

service that they have received.

The provider masters to a significant extent the result, the elements of the performance, after individual practice hours, group rehearsals, department rehearsals, and general rehearsal, but a contribution to the outcome belongs to the public/the consumer because of the feedback received from thereof. The orchestra offers an intangible service that cannot be shown upfront, but the conductor, the orchestra, the composer, the soloists, the hall, the sponsors etc. may be presented in brochures and concert programs. An analysis of the service provided by a symphony orchestra can be conducted according to the form of ownership: public, private or mixed associative. Based on the appearance that the service cannot be felt, tasted, heard, saw, smelled, etc. before being purchased, the customer's opinion is formed on the service's reputation, and the reputation of the organization. In case of symphony orchestras, the state intervenes and categorizes orchestras as type A, B, C, D in some countries, or 0, 1, 2 or 3 in other countries.

Another feature offered by the symphony orchestra is the inseparability of this service, which translates in it being provided and consumed simultaneously. A regular concert is about two hours; during this time, the audience's requirement is satisfied. The variability of service is very important because it brings the uniqueness to the interpretive act. Although the 9<sup>th</sup> Symphony by Beethoven was presented millions of times to the public after it was composed, although the same orchestra performed it possibly 10 times in 10 years, there were different conductors, a different choir, different soloists; and even if they (absurdly) are the same and given that (hypothetically) the orchestra is composed of the same members, the audience varies, there is certainly not the same consumer.

Perishability of the services provided by a symphony orchestra can be translated into: an empty seat equals to a lost service because the same event, in the same context, will not happen again. What are the possibilities for a manager of a symphony orchestra to prevent, to respond effectively to the tendency of perishability? Does the recording of the concert/performance make the difference?

The technology enables real-time listening of concert by the use of live-streams in different parts of the world. It looks and sounds interesting, but it doesn't create a "revolutionary effect". Participation in public at a concert generates a unique sense of communion with the performers, enhances the feeling of being "closer" to the music, which is a *sine qua nonelement* in the interpretation act. There is also something ritualic in regard of getting ready to attend a concert, like clearing your schedule, buying the ticket, a certain dress code, followed by mingling with people "like you", driven by the same desires and expectations. All this cannot be achieved when you listen and watch the concert "live" in your own living room. In our opinion, it is not so relevant that you have access to the concert concomitant with the one held in a famous concert hall, unless we talk about important competitions, such as *George Enescu International Competition, Frederich Chopin or Leeds International Piano Competition*, or other event in which case the comparison between orchestras or soloists generates the desire to be closer to the actual time of manifestation and the "live-stream" becomes appropriate. It is like watching a football game. To obtain the satisfaction of the game, you must watch it in real time. Video recordings of the game, after you already know the score, are not so stimulating. Not the same can be said in relation to famous recordings of important orchestras and musicians. Depending on your own mood, you can decide when to listen to a recording performed by a well-known orchestra, that you might otherwise not have the opportunity to listen *live*. In this case, the technology of today is particularly useful. Online music platforms bring satisfaction to both sides, the public and the musicians/performers.

According to Peter Gartiser, a strategic consultant for Münchener Strategy Institute, in *Rosu, Stefan's book Zukunftsstrategien für Orchester. Kompetenzen und Kräfte mobilisieren*, life expectancy increases by 8 to 12 weeks annually, in parallel with an increase in world's population. Greater care for physical and mental health leads to a longer life, and hence increases the request for the cultural service offered by a symphony orchestra. According to the same Institute of Statistics, by 2030, 59% of the population will live in towns, 8.5% more than today. Does urbanization affect the audience in concert halls? People's participation in public at concerts may be considered a dependent variable and can be influenced by the distance they must travel for attending a concert.

There is a special emphasis placed on the interdisciplinary, collaboration with the educational institutions. The audience of tomorrow and the desire for the service provided by the symphony orchestra is one of the biggest challenges for orchestras' managers. The change in German society in the last twenty years, the new multicultural scenery, the loss of interest for music, for learning an instrument, is a reality that affects the business of a symphony orchestra. If twenty years ago, almost every child took music classes, learned how to play at least one instrument, and the traditional German family was under the slogan "*last uns zusammen musizieren*" (*let us make music together*), today there are fewer and fewer solicitants for early musical education. This situation represents a threat for the future of an organization that provides a cultural-musical service, like the symphony orchestra.

As a counter balance, there is the danger of educational populism, so well presented by Holbrook, Morris B. (1998) who discusses how far would a professional musician, a school teacher will go, in order to increase the interest for the classical music among the younger generation? How can aesthetic value be explained to a student, and how can we combat the lie that “musical popularity is somehow the equivalent of aesthetic excellency”? The public ages every year, so that the age average of the subscribers is over 60, and one of the managers’ special assignment is finding innovative ways to attract the young public to classical concerts without losing the integrity and cheapen the cultural musical service provided by a symphony orchestra.

Public’s musical training and the musical knowledge previously acquired, can lead to increased satisfaction of the musical service provided by an orchestra. In Germany, music education is possible and affordable to everyone since kindergarten through participation in special programs such as "*Musikalische Früherziehung*" under the guidance of qualified personnel. Also, German orchestras provide educational music programs for all ages and regardless of previous training. The knowledge acquired and assimilated over time can generate the premises for the interest in the activity of a symphony orchestra. The requirement for concerts can be determined by the musical training and background of the public.

For example, by organizing and planning concerts’ lessons, open to the public rehearsals, family workshops, creative-stimulating-educational projects, supported by renowned artists, such as pianist Lang Lang, Berliner Philharmoniker has made possible the opening of this cultural institution to people from various backgrounds, different nationalities and ethnicities, different ages and different education. More solicitants, more public, sold tickets, can be consequences of this program and can produce a causal chain: more population’s education through new musical training programs determines more solicitors for service and leads to increased satisfaction of public, musicians, other stakeholders.

The symphony orchestra has a significant role in promoting young musicians at the beginning of their careers. The contact between a young soloist and a renowned conductor, with the support of a well-known orchestra, with an informed public and subsequently specialized press, could generate future commitments, invitations and it can be a launching opportunity in a young musician’s career.

Highly trained musicians from all over the world, part of the symphony orchestra under the baton of a conductor, put their competency at work in order to achieve an artistic act. Multiculturalism, as a result of recruiting staff not only from Germany but also elsewhere in Europe and in Asia, is a known and familiar fact in German symphony orchestras. The selection of the orchestra’s members, the importance of their competency and capability, the repertoire analysis proposed by a symphony orchestra throughout a season, depending on certain factors and the importance of establishing a diverse cultural agenda to please a large number of spectators, and to bring new elements, including logistics, are the current preoccupations of the managers in order to create a profitable organization. Upon all of the above, there is the impact of the megatrends: globalization, urbanization, demographic changes and "the new elite" (Rosu, 2014). It aims to show the importance of the mission-statement, the global vision, but also the detail. There are known cases where effective communication between orchestra’s members and management has been made easier by using various methods, for example WorldCafe for the Orchestra of Luxembourg.

Artists/musicians by definition, members of a symphony orchestra, are built according to a pattern well established: they developed a disciplined conduct, perseverance and hardworking skills since early childhood. They keep a good balance emotionally and mentally to respond to the stress caused by stage appearances in front of the audience, they are creative and have a good team-work skill, they adapt to working weekly with a new conductor, a new guest soloist and his/her requirements. The vision of the symphony orchestra musicians upon their activity is directed to the idea of building a career, and not just having a job.

Consequently, according to these attributes of orchestra members and to meeting their expectations, does it outline the behavior and the management style adopted by the symphony orchestra managers? Can they be compared with the characteristic feature of an orchestra, namely: absolute precision in the execution of a musical work, intertwined with freedom of artistic interpretation - according to certain parameters, which starts from the tip of the conductor’s baton and disseminates to all the members of the orchestra? Is there an emphasis on people’s development, on their transformation from simple employees to investors? Does the management aim the empowerment of the musicians and staff hired for the good of the organization?

The influences of the social-political environment, the everyday events are reflected in the art of music



compositions and the art of interpretation, and they get to play an important role in the artistic-specific manifestations of an orchestra and have an impact on the management of a symphony orchestra. A pertinent example is that of the composer John Adams, following the September 11, 2001 attacks on the American metropole New York. John Adams was asked by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra to compose a work of remembrance for the victims of that day. The result was a magnificent contemporary orchestra and choir work, "On the Transmigration of Souls", which earned him a Pulitzer Prize, and which, according to him, will not be another narrative recall in a dramatization that lacks refinement, but will focus on the "loss and grief expressed by those left behind", starting from one word: "missing". The function of motivation in this case was exerted on both the composer and the orchestra members, and shared to the public.

#### 4. Research methodology and discussion of case studies

Discovering nowadays threats and opportunities related to the activity of a symphony orchestra, identifying new aspects and best management practices used in this field require the use of research methods such as observation, interview, survey and analysis of documents. Attending many concerts and rehearsals of classical orchestras in Germany can lead to a better observation of the phenomenon. Interviews with managers of philharmonics, theaters and chamber orchestras can reveal several best management practices currently addressed, as a result of awareness of the threats and opportunities of the environment. The survey conducted with the help of the public can generate a result on the current state of its interest and satisfaction vis-a-vis the musical service provided by a professional classical orchestra. A few questions are raising, among which: is it possible for an A category orchestra (over 99 members, high-quality musicians) to generate more satisfaction among public? How does the concert hall influence the satisfaction, or if the level of public's satisfaction is determined by its musical education? The programs offered by the symphony orchestras have an effect on growth satisfaction, but also age determines the interest in a service provided by an orchestra. Besides the technical features of the musical service, a few functional factors can be used with following indicators to describe complexity of the activity of a symphony orchestra: tangible issues like the concert hall, the printed programs, the instruments professionalism and orchestra members' competency, punctuality, respect for the public, the level of communication, access to the music service offered by a classical orchestra, understanding the needs, requirements of the audience, etc.

Although in the German culture "music is the art of the German soul" ("Musik ist Kunst der deutsche Seele"), there is a constant concern for the awareness of innovation that needs to be brought up by the management of symphony orchestras. Good management practices used in Germany may be subject to analysis according to economic and social conditions, types of financing (public-for example Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz, and orchestras financed exclusively from private sponsors, such as Mannheimer Philharmoniker, or the uniqueness of the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen "Das Unternehmer-Orchester" case ("a company orchestra"), in the manner of fundraising related activities, the records, concert tours, etc., and in reference to the type of orchestra: "philharmonic orchestras", "radio orchestras" and "chamber orchestras".

In countries like Germany, where there is a particular emphasis on the value of cultural heritage, on the responsibility vis-a-vis cultural musical heritage acquired in hundreds of years of musical creation, what strategies and best management practices are used by symphony orchestras' managers? Also, does the volatile environment generates innovations in the systems of management, informational, recruiting, promotion and reward changes, and in its functions of planning, organizing, leading and controlling?

Besides a stable income, a musicians' motivation derives from outstanding working conditions. A concert hall with a special acoustic increases the performer's, the musician's and the audience's satisfaction. Current example is the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, whose newly built concert hall was inaugurated on January 11, 2017, and who is intended to dethrone the famous Carnegie Hall. The acoustician Toyota Ysuhisa with his impressive resume, Sydney Opera House, Australia, Mariinsky Concert Hall in St.-Theater Petersburg, Russia, Concert Hall Fukushima in Japan, the Philharmonic Hall in Berlin and the Walt Disney Concert in Los Angeles, said that besides the musicians' audible satisfaction, his aim was that from the first row of seats to the last, the audience should enjoy the same sound quality. With the first sound test done on September 2, 2016, under the baton of conductor Thomas Hengelbrock, with parts of Johannes Brahms 1<sup>st</sup> Symphony, Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy "Jupiter" Symphony, and 4<sup>th</sup> Symphony by L.van Beethoven, orchestra members were very happy, excited, and they were looking forward to

begin their performances in the new concert hall, and concluded for *ZeitOnline* in Hanssen, Frederick's article *Der Helle Wanhsin*: "Wir wollen hier nie wieder raus" ("we don't want to ever leave this hall"). 10 000 boards of gypsum milling that are reminiscent of fish scales, each one being unique and weighing 70 kilograms, give the hall a special acoustic.

Although the construction of the new concert hall has lasted over ten years, and has been the reason for many disputes because of the costs, over 800 million euros, there was a happy ending. 2000 seats capacity, built like a honeycomb, the hall gives each person in the public the possibility to sit at a maximum distance of 30 meters from the orchestra. The windows are fitted with a new system that captures the reflections of the light, changing colors after the sun and the clouds. Superior conditions enhance the quality of the artistic service, alongside with increasing the satisfaction of the professional musicians of the Hamburg Philharmonic Orchestra.

Nuremberg Philharmonic Orchestra, *Nurnberger Symphoniker* presents itself with a challenging mission statement: "We wish to make you relive the uniqueness of the music." The goals of the Nurnberg orchestra reflect the need to meet a rich a colorful pallet of local, national and international interests.

"We want:

- To keep the music alive in our concerts, with high interpretative quality
  - To provide an added value to the cultural heritage of Nurnberg, and of the region, and to enrich people's lives through music
  - To present to the todays and the future public the diversity of the classical music
  - To attract and to enthuse the children and the young generation for the classical music, with new concepts according to their age
  - To bring the know-how and our competency for the good of the society
  - To act like Nurnberg city's ambassadors outside the city and the region
- Therefore, we commit ourselves:
- To concentrate our power in order to achieve those goals
  - To treat with respect and responsibility the financial support that we have received
  - To work with dedication for our public"

The mission statement of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, *Berliner Philharmoniker* is short and very pertinent: "128 virtuous - one orchestra", illustrating thus highly trained musicians (virtuous, not just musicians - performers), the homogeny of the organization and the common interest to serve the achievement of common goals. The conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Simon Rattle, said in an interview: "For me, the most important thing that music can do, is bring people together".

Among external stakeholders of the symphony orchestra, are students and teachers of the music schools and music universities. Berlin Philharmonic is considered a "pioneer" of implementing with success an educational program. "The education program should remind us that music is not a luxury, but a basic need" (Sir Simon Rattle). By organizing and planning concerts' lessons, rehearsals open to the public, family workshops, projects to stimulate creativity in education, supported and conducted by well-known artists, such as the famous pianist Lang Lang, the management of *Berliner Philharmoniker* made it possible to open this cultural institution's doors to people of diverse social background, different nationalities and ethnicities, different ages and different training. Although is enjoying a great success, the educational program has taken the members of the orchestra out of their comfort zone. An informed, knowledgeable and well-trained public that responds appropriately to the artistic structure of a concert (normally two parts, with an intermission in between) represents the comfort zone for both sides, musicians and public. *Berliner Philharmoniker* goes beyond the line of comfort, and according to the mission-statement, constitutes itself as a common body, ready to face challenges and threats from the environment, ensuring their existence through openness to diverse audiences.

The opening toward a new vision of the symphony orchestra as a musical service providing organization, brings new management strategies. Eloquent is the example of *Kammerphilharmonie Bremen*, "a Company Orchestra" transformed from organization type GbR, *Gesellschaft BürgerlichenRechts (Society of Civil Law)* in gGmbH, *Gemeinnützigen Gesellschaft mitbeschränkter Haftung (Non-profit organization, with limited liability)* and in which the orchestra members' are shareholders. This created change in the organizational structure and procedural. GGmbH type structure allows the orchestra to belong to the musicians, who are responsible for the

artistic and the economic success. Inspired by the idea of the democratic movement of 1968, Kammerphilharmonie Bremen has proven over the years to be a success, and was able to pay of its debt in 2001, a debt equivalent to 1.5 million euros reached in 1992. Highly trained musicians, combined with professionalism and management competence, and orientation towards a market economy, have made it possible to assure the sale of season tickets until 2020.

An interview with the Deputy Manager of *Kurpfälzisches Kammerorchester Mannheim*, Gabriele Gefäller, revealed some important aspects in modern orchestra management. The "Mannheim School", as a concept, style and an orchestra, was established in 1741-1742 by Johann Stamitz. "Mannheim School" can be considered a "new turn" in the world music history, especially in the history of professional classical orchestras. In the middle of the eighteenth century, the members of an orchestra were between 20 and 25 musicians. After the famous orchestra led by Joseph Haydn in Eszterhaza, the Mannheim orchestra was considered the largest and totaled 50 musicians. Initially headed by Stamitz and then Cannabich, the Mannheim orchestra was described as an "orchestra of generals" and, among many interesting new interpretative principles, most notable features were for example the "crescendo of the entire orchestras", the well-known "Mannheim crescendo" with a large opening from ppp (piano pianissimo) to fff (forte fortissimo) and a greater independence among woodwind instruments. Christian Schubart, composer and critic, made a remark about the Mannheim orchestra: "it is a strong thunder, a cataract crescendo, diminuendo is like a crystalline stream murmur in the distance, piano is a spring breeze".

*Kurpfälzisches Kammerorchester Mannheim* was founded 65 years ago, and is one of the 8 chamber orchestras in Germany, and one of its missions is caring, protecting and promoting the legacy of the famous "School of Mannheim" symphony orchestra. Although the movement was particularly important in the development of professional orchestras, between 1800 and 1900 occurred the decline that subsequently resulted in abandonment and oblivion of the *School of Mannheim*. Was brought back to life in the twentieth century and many manuscripts were discovered in the old library, and transcribed by the conductors and the musicians. As soon as the music was printed and the musicians could practice it, a very important aspect was the collaboration with the local radio station SWR, which facilitated the recording of the pieces as soon as they have been restored and studied by the chamber orchestra. Instrumentalists and conductors worked together not only as performers, but as archaeologists, and rediscovered the old music sheets of the *Mannheimer Schule*, and they redistributed its musical heritage.

The essence of this orchestra is setting in motion the wave of the school of Mannheim, promoting and harnessing this historical movement, in cooperation with Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, and the Vorschungstelle Sudwestdeutsche Hofmusik Schwetzingen. The deputy manager of the orchestra *Kurpfälzisches Kammerorchester Mannheim* clarified that bringing back to life the *School of Mannheim* is done on today's instruments, not on historical instruments, and repertoire palette includes romantic and modern composers, baroque and classical époques, all treated according to interpretative principles promoted by "The School of Mannheim".

*Kurpfälzisches Kammerorchester Mannheim* is characterized by two lines of activity: preserving, cultivating and promoting the values of cultural-musical-historical related to "The School of Mannheim", and searching, identifying and capitalizing on new ways of presenting music. "We don't have to change the music, but we need to make it successful", said Mrs Gabriele Gefäller. Family-educational climate has changed in the last 20 years in Germany and the professional orchestras' managers had to readjust to this change. "People alone cannot find their way to us, but we must go to them; we as an orchestra have to get out in the world and not to expect like in the past, that people will come to us." The management department of the chamber orchestra considers an extremely important mission in finding and educating potential customers. Current customers, today's public is old, over 60 years. The public is opposite represented to the world trend of population growth: older people are loyal customers. Lately there is an increase in those seeking season tickets, which is something gratifying because, as in other activities that provide subscriptions, the young generation is resilient to the idea of commitment. 85% of the subscribers are over 60 years old. The changing society is considered an important megatrend and a serious issue. The lack of structure in the lives of younger German generations, a society without values, characterized by ignorance and unawareness, represent major challenges for the management of a cultural musical institutions. "Without pointing the finger, new roads, new paths and ways must be found to show and to present classical music", affirms Gabriele Gefäller.

A symphony orchestra is a splendid example of tolerance, respect between multiple cultures and nationalities, especially in Germany, where in every orchestra there are dozens of nationalities that play music together, work and contribute together to create an artistic act, for a so-called "greater good". There are orchestras still living in so



called "ivory towers", accessible only to their audiences and not open to changes, but the audience will still be lower, since the number of intellectual elite who attended the concerts was larger a few years ago. "We have to justify our existence, and not just to play for a certain part of the intellectual elite" (Gabriele Gefäller). There is a lack of flexibility among musicians, especially permanent members of a symphony orchestra, maybe because of the rigidity of the structure that characterizes the activity of a symphony orchestra. Freelance artists or soloists are more open, according to *Kurpfälzisches Kammerorchester Mannheim*'s manager. After spending about two years in an orchestra, the musician develops a static and inflexible attitude, in some cases a "dormant attitude". In Germany, the permanent members of symphony orchestras are very well represented and protected by the employment contracts, which are very clear. These work contracts specify in a detailed and precise manner: how long the rehearsals should be, for example, without room for interpretation. New formats or new concepts of the musical act cannot be presented without orchestra members to agree, by their participation depending the success of the interpretive act. *Kurpfälzisches Kammerorchester Mannheim* has a project in collaboration with schools in the region and this project has been ranked as very bold: "we respond to the invitation of a school and present ourselves as an entire chamber orchestra, especially to schools labeled as *problem schools* where the cultural education is very low, even catastrophic. This project is not easy for orchestra members, they are not in their comfort zone, it is very noisy, they are worried and concerned about the safety of the instruments, but, as most of them have children, our musicians show greater tolerance, from this point of view, and awareness of the need for *getting out of the ivory tower*."

A certain separation / distance between employer and employee must be, so that everyone can do their job, but the management department aims to meet the requirements and expectations of the musicians, to listening to their ideas and offer them job satisfaction on one hand, and a safe future, on the other hand.

Most members of the *Kurpfälzisches Kammerorchester Mannheim* have a second job, as teachers at the Mannheim School of Music, or Mannheim University of Arts, and the management department adapts the rehearsal schedule according to the school schedule.

Although is governmentally funded, 80% of the *Kurpfälzisches Kammerorchester Mannheim* concerts are organized by different cultural organizations, or NGOs, and 20% represent their own concerts. They play all over Germany, and internationally. During these trips, under the management department's responsibly falls covering the transportation conditions, accommodation, rehearsals, and all the comfort for the musicians. It is a very important and carefully treated aspect the collaboration between management and musicians, the permanent seek of agreement between the two structures, and even if not every time new directions, new projects or proposals are immediately embraced by the musicians, step by step explanations during meetings and discussions can lead to the desired response. "*Denk doch mit* (think with us) and if you have an idea, share it with us, and we will see how we can put it into practice."

From the USA, there is an interesting study regarding the strategic plan for the next five years, developed and presented by the League of American Orchestras, *League of American Orchestras' Creativity, Engagement, and Impact - Strategic Plan 2016-2020*. The new plan, a statement which emphasizes the idea of change, transformation, innovation – "*Because we believe in the transformational power of orchestral music*", suggests five strategies for the next five years, which are based on the transformation of the threats of this volatile environment into opportunities. In compilation of this *Strategic Plan*, there is to be seen an orientation rather towards a multi-stream management (Dyck and Neubert, 2009), in order to increase multiple stakeholder's satisfaction and to emphasize the importance of different forms of well-being satisfaction, in contemporary society:

- "Advance the Orchestral Experience – Increase orchestra's capacity to be relevant and responsive to the civic and artistic needs of their diverse communities
- Develop the Field – Help orchestras develop inspiring and effective leadership, healthy cultures, and robust and sustainable business models
- Better Serve Members – Become a stewardship-focused and a knowledge-driven organisation
- Strengthen the League's Business Model – Build the capital structure and revenue base to support the League's mission delivery
- Grow the League's Capacity – Develop staff structure, expertise, organizational culture, and technology to ensure excellence in management and operations"

## 5. Conclusions

"We do not use the same strategies we did yesterday, to fight our battle today", said US Air Force Colonel Michael McManus (Retirement Ceremony Speech, Ramstein, Germany. June 2016). Innovation management by enhancing its strategic nature for long term, improving the quality of individual and collective actions on creating a favorable environment to enhance human creativity, positive and sustainable oriented-performance of a symphony orchestra, proved essential, not only for to increase its performance, but also to ensure its future. We have identified a number of best practices used by managers of important German and American orchestras, used in order to meet current challenges and the stakeholders' expectations. These include: permanently tracking the assertion of the role played by a symphony orchestra in nowadays life, aiming for the constant confirmation of its importance, its high quality and valuable service provided by the musicians, motivating the musicians by proving secure and long term jobs, stable incomes, strengthening the existence of the symphony orchestra in today's society, reaffirming the role of close interdisciplinary relationship with the educational system, creating good working conditions, meeting the public's expectations by hiring highly trained, virtuous, professional musicians, offering modern concert halls, best acoustic, for all categories of audience, to maximize the satisfaction of all stakeholders.

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