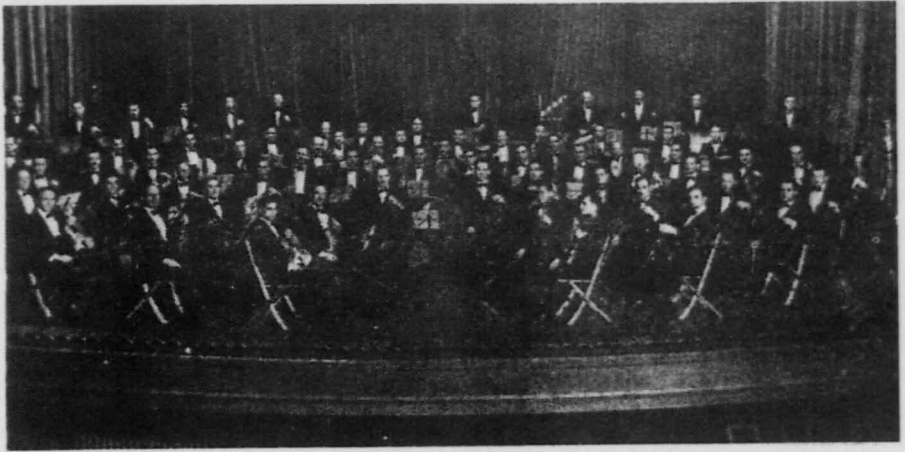


Philadelphia's Depression Orchestras: Contrasts Between the WPA Civic Symphony Orchestra and the Philadelphia Orchestra, 1935-1942

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FORMAL POSE OF PHILADELPHIA CIVIC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA. *Advertisement for a concert held in Hershey, Pennsylvania, December 7, 1937. "1937, September - December, Press Clippings" folder, Box 77, Entry 371, Record Group 69, Records of the Work Projects Administration, Pennsylvania National Archives, Washington, D.C.*

From the late 1930s into the early forties, Philadelphia experienced a musical contrast between two major orchestras, the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Civic Symphony Orchestra of the Works Progress Administration's (WPA) Federal Music Project (FMP). Although they never shared the same stage, in several musical categories, such as premieres of new music and audience education, the Civic Symphony, a collection of unemployed musicians brought together in a relief project, was temporarily superior to the renowned Philadelphia Orchestra.

The combined effects of radio music, synchronized film sound tracks, and the Great Depression of the thirties had a devastating effect on professional musicians. According to one estimate, between 20,000 and 22,000 professional theater musicians lost jobs across the country between 1928 and 1930.¹ The American Federation of Musicians estimated that seventy percent of all musicians were unemployed and many others could not live on their musical income.² In Philadelphia, Local 77 of the Musicians' Union had con-

tracts with 133 theaters to employ 486 musicians in orchestras and 104 organists in 1927.³ The advent of sound by Warner Brothers Studios diminished the need for live music in Philadelphia's Stanley chain of theaters, which were owned by the studio, as well as other independent theater chains that installed the new sound equipment. When the orchestra contract ran out in 1929, the Stanley Company tried to reduce its house musicians from 256 down to 75.⁴ After a lengthy strike, a compromise settlement maintained employment in the chain for 181 musicians, but there were twenty applications for each vacancy and corporate pressure continued in an effort to reduce the number of live musicians.⁵ Philadelphia, like most major cities in the country, faced a serious musical employment problem and no local answer was readily available.

WPA Federal Project Number One, the WPA umbrella funding category for national relief programs in the arts, began in mid-1935. It included programs for artists, writers, theatre people, and musicians. Dr. Thaddeus Rich was the regional director of the music project that included Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware, the District of Columbia, and West Virginia.⁶ Musicians were required to demonstrate their skill before audition boards to qualify for FMP work.⁷ As they were accustomed to auditioning for positions in bands and orchestras, the requirement caused no controversy. Auditions ended by November 1935, and the 232 musicians that qualified were divided into orchestras and bands so they could practice in an old school auditorium at 17th and Plum Streets.⁸ Eventually thirteen FMP performing units existed at one time or another, including a full orchestra, a smaller chamber orchestra, symphonic bands, dance bands, and a small ensemble.⁹ Of these performing units the one that received the greatest local attention and acclaim was the Civic Symphony Orchestra.¹⁰ The Civic joined thirty-three other symphony orchestras organized by the Federal Music Project. Among the cities that enjoyed such a program were San Francisco, Oakland and Pasadena in California; Jacksonville, Florida; Detroit and Grand Rapids in Michigan; Cincinnati and Cleveland in Ohio; Buffalo, Syracuse, and New York City (2) in New York; San Antonio and Dallas in Texas; and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.¹¹

During its seven years of operations the Civic Symphony Orchestra ranged in size from sixty to one hundred musicians with a variety of backgrounds. Before the Depression different members had been with the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and several other major American orchestras. Some were naturalized Americans who had earlier careers in Europe. Others came from Philadelphia opera houses, theatres, and motion picture pit orchestras. Finally, a small group of young musicians graduated from city music conservatories during the Depression and found their first job with the Civic Symphony.¹² This diversity of experience provided the relief orchestra with great flexibility. The Civic Sym-

phony consistently demonstrated unique versatility with programs that ranged from traditional standards to numerous premieres.

During the late thirties and early forties the Philadelphia Orchestra underwent a difficult leadership transition from Leopold Stokowski to Eugene Ormandy. In Philadelphia, Stokowski's showmanship, good looks, and flamboyant public life focused attention on the conductor as the personal embodiment of musical leadership.¹³ Stokowski, who had been the conductor since 1912, announced in 1934 that he intended to resign, but the board of directors encouraged him to remain by creating the new post of music director. That led to a gradual withdrawal of his services instead of an abrupt departure. Between 1939 and 1941, Stokowski and Eugene Ormandy, who began as a relatively unknown conductor with the Minneapolis Symphony, shared principal conducting duties with infrequent guest conductors visiting for individual concerts.¹⁴ Combined with the continuing effects of the Depression, the transition inhibited the experimentation and innovation that had made the Philadelphia Orchestra famous. Such an inhibition opened the door for a temporary transition of musical leadership in areas of contemporary music to the FMP and its Philadelphia showpiece, the Civic Symphony Orchestra.

J. W. F. Leman, a native Philadelphian, became the resident conductor of the Civic Symphony at its first rehearsals in November 1935. Leman was an experienced violinist who had played with the Philadelphia Orchestra under Stokowski.¹⁵ During much of the Depression Leman conducted both the Civic Symphony Orchestra and the Women's Symphony Orchestra of Philadelphia, a private organization that appeared infrequently. In 1939, Leman had a minor stroke, forcing him to curtail much of his conducting. His replacement at the Civic Symphony, Guglielmo Sabatini, a naturalized American citizen, remained with the orchestra until its last school concerts in January 1943.¹⁶ Unfortunately neither of these conductors were of the same quality as Stokowski or Ormandy. Leman was described as "run-of-the-mill," a "time-beater" whose "career flourished in summer concerts in the seaside resorts." Sabatini was a better conductor, but had narrow limits in terms of repertoire.¹⁷

Leman and Sabatini conducted most Civic concerts, but they also encouraged visiting and neophyte leaders. Guest-conducting peaked early with twenty-five visiting maestros during the second full season, 1936-1937.¹⁸ In subsequent seasons there were fewer guest conductors. Fifty-nine men led the orchestra before it dissolved in 1943, and forty-six were Americans. This American emphasis was unusual. The vast majority of resident conductors and music directors for established symphony orchestras came from Europe. Stokowski was born and educated in England, Ormandy was from Hungary. The international origins of these conductors underscored the decidedly American leadership of the Civic Symphony.

The Philadelphia Orchestra also had guest conductors, but the emphasis was different. Instead of being a training ground for neophytes or ambitious musicians, it featured a few established leaders such as José Iturbi, Arturo Toscanini, and Sir Thomas Beecham, and a yearly appearance by long-time assistant conductor, Saul Caston.¹⁹ During two seasons, from 1936 through 1938, there were no guest conductors, reflecting the economic straits forced upon the organization by the Depression. The conservative musical taste of the Philadelphia audience had resisted Stokowski's musical experiments but supported the orchestra throughout the twenties. Without his leadership and facing severe income problems by the mid-thirties, the circumstances mandated the appearance of known conductors with established reputations who could draw a capacity audience.

Another area where The Philadelphia Orchestra had a decided advantage was the Academy of Music, a historic landmark. Most Civic concerts were held at either Irvine Auditorium of The University of Pennsylvania or the Grand Court of Mitten Hall at Temple University. Neither was an ideal location for symphony concerts. Temple University was a subway ride up Broad Street from center city theaters and restaurants. One had to be a dedicated aficionado of classical music to search out the Civic in northern Philadelphia. Barnlike Irvine Auditorium had acoustical problems with reverberations that sometimes lasted for three seconds. These echoes interfered with orchestral precision and affected musical quality. One conductor described the problem as "ghastly, but there was nothing you could do about it because they had to book the orchestra where they could without paying a fee. They had no money for halls."²⁰

Philadelphia's WPA Civic Symphony, its soloists, conductors, and programs emphasized American music as did similar units in other communities. This was a mandate from Washington from the start of the Federal Music Project. According to Dr. Kenneth Bindas, author of the only monograph about the Federal Music Project, project administrators realized that few compositions by American composers would have lasting value, but they also believed that the introduction might lead to a wider appreciation of American music.²¹ Forty-three percent of each year's concerts between 1935 and 1941 included music by American composers. Encouragement of national composers and native American music was official FMP policy.²² In the same period the Philadelphia Orchestra presented music by American composers in less than twenty-seven percent of its programs.²³ During the early war years of 1941-1943, performances of American music skyrocketed. Seventy-five percent of Civic wartime concerts had at least one work by an American composer.²⁴

The Civic Symphony frequently presented entire programs of American music for special occasions. For example, during the FMP-sponsored National

Festival of Music Week in both 1938 and 1939, programs included works by renowned American composers Henry K. Hadley, W. W. Gilchrist, and Edward MacDowell as well as Philadelphians James Francis Cooke and Otto Mueller.²⁵ On December 5, 1941, only two days before Pearl Harbor, the Civic was featured at a "You Can Defend America" concert presented by the Philadelphia Council for Defense at the Academy of Music. Playing in the Academy of Music was a rare experience for the Civic. Unfortunately the newspapers did not review the concert in detail and no mention was made about sound differences caused by the change of location. It was the only Civic appearance at the Academy and was conducted by Eugene Ormandy in a public demonstration of support for FMP relief efforts. Ormandy praised the Civic by stating that the performance "sometimes made me feel that I was in front of The Philadelphia Orchestra."²⁶ In June 1942, the Civic participated in a War Production Rally. One month later it furnished music for a community Aid Raid Protection and Bomb Demonstration rally of over 6000 people.²⁷ During the last year of FMP operations, almost any occasion served as a reason to use music by American composers. These programs appealed to audience patriotism during the difficult early months of World War II. They created encouragement when unfavorable national war news tested the local character.

Much of the music in Civic programs was composed by Philadelphians. Among them were Samuel L. Lacier, music critic for the Philadelphia *Evening Ledger*; the previously mentioned Dr. Arthur Cohn; Dr. Harl McDonald, Professor of Music at the University of Pennsylvania; and Otto Mueller, a member of the Civic Symphony and frequent guest conductor, particularly when his own compositions were scheduled. Following a concert that featured Mueller's compositions a reviewer for the *Evening Bulletin* claimed that the works "were agreeable compositions, conventional in melodic and harmonic material and often tastefully orchestrated." The reviewer went on to say that some of Mueller's shorter works "had the instrumental style and jollity of lesser music of the German lyric theatre of the past century."²⁸ Other Philadelphia composers included N. Lindsay Norden, James Francis Cooke, and Luigi Carnevale, all of whom were guest-conductors of the Civic Symphony. After Guglielmo Sabatini became the Civic conductor he frequently scheduled his own compositions, including the Prelude to "Il Mare" and "Poemetto Autunnale" for concerts.

The Philadelphia Orchestra remained fairly consistent in its use of American music throughout the Depression. The principal difference in presentations was that the Civic Symphony repeated a composer's works both during a season and from year-to-year, while the Philadelphia Orchestra rarely repeated new works. Compositions presented by the Philadelphia Orchestra were frequently commissioned. Those presented by the Civic Symphony were

approved by a panel of musical judges prior to public performances, but the composers were not paid for the music. The program simply did not have the necessary funding. A host of noted American composers appear in the Philadelphia Orchestra programs, including Aaron Copland, Virgil Thomson, George Gershwin, and Ferde Grofé, but relatively few were fixtures on the local scene. Dr. Harl McDonald was one. A professor of music at the University of Pennsylvania, McDonald heard at least one of his works played by the orchestra every year between 1935 and 1942, including the world premiere of "Bataan."²⁹ One of the more interesting presentations by the Philadelphia Orchestra, however, came from Horace Johnson, director of the New York City WPA music project, whose composition, "Streets of Florence," was introduced by the local private orchestra rather than the federal organization that employed him.³⁰ The FMP always encouraged its participants to seek private outlets for their talent and this was a clear example of that policy.

How large were the Civic Symphony's audiences? How did they respond to the music? People attend concerts for a variety of reasons. Great public support developed in Philadelphia when people realized that local performance and composition talent was being recognized and encouraged. The FMP not only provided employment, but filled a pressing need in Philadelphia for live music. This resulted in constant audience growth as well as more concerts each year. The Civic benefited from this musical interest. Record numbers turned out to see and hear the concerts.

From 1936 through 1942, attendance at Civic concerts averaged 1136 people.³¹ Each of the first three years exceeded this average. In 1939, the average reached 1531 per concert. Unfortunately this was immediately followed by the poorest average attendance for one season, 920. This aberration was particularly noticeable because 1940 was the peak attendance year for other Philadelphia FMP units. More than 1,600,000 people attended concerts by the different units that year, a turnout that almost equaled the population of the city.³²

Civic Symphony attendance in 1940 was poor because several self-defeating changes were made. Outdoor concerts, which always increased audience totals, did not start that year until July because the Civic held a series of concerts in Irvine Auditorium during June that shortened the summer outdoor season. A change of location compounded the problem. Usually the Civic held concerts on the steps of the Philadelphia Museum of Art during summer months. A well-known location near center city, the Art Museum was easily accessible by public transportation.³³ Furthermore, the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, the large street between City Hall and the Museum, had ample parking for people who drove in from nearby communities. These summer concerts frequently attracted audiences of four to six thousand people and were the most heavily attended programs of the year. In 1940, however, outdoor

concerts were scheduled for Fisher Park in the city's Olney section. Olney is in Northwest Philadelphia, more than six miles from the Art Museum and far from the theatres, nightclubs, and entertainment centers of mid-city. Severely limited parking forced much of the audience to take subways and public transportation through several connections to reach the isolated location. Although the new location conformed to FMP requirements of taking music to the people, in this case it also militated against large audiences, particularly when the return home had to be made after dark, through strange neighborhoods, on public transportation.

Another reason for the 1940 attendance decline was competition with Philadelphia's local music organizations, such as the police and firemen's bands. Finally, 1940 was the only year when eight FMP units provided music in the city, including the Rittenhouse Chamber Orchestra, the Sylvania Concert Band, the Penn Concert Band, four different dance bands, and the City Concert Ensemble. People probably did not want to travel to Fisher Park when other music organizations were within walking distance of their own neighborhood.

In six years the Civic Symphony drew a total audience of more than 575,000 people.³⁴ Attendance records indicate that, as performances improved and program selection became more diverse, the audience grew. Even in 1941-42, the last complete season of FMP operations, with the city's attention diverted by World War II, the Civic audience did not decline.

Guglielmo Sabatini, Conductor of the Philadelphia Civic Symphony Orchestra, 1939 until 1943, Frankford Gazette, October 3, 1941. "Pennsylvania clippings - 1941" folder, Minnesota - Pennsylvania, newspaper clippings, programs and press releases, Box 85, Entry 373, Record Group 69, Federal Music Project, National Archives, Washington, D.C.



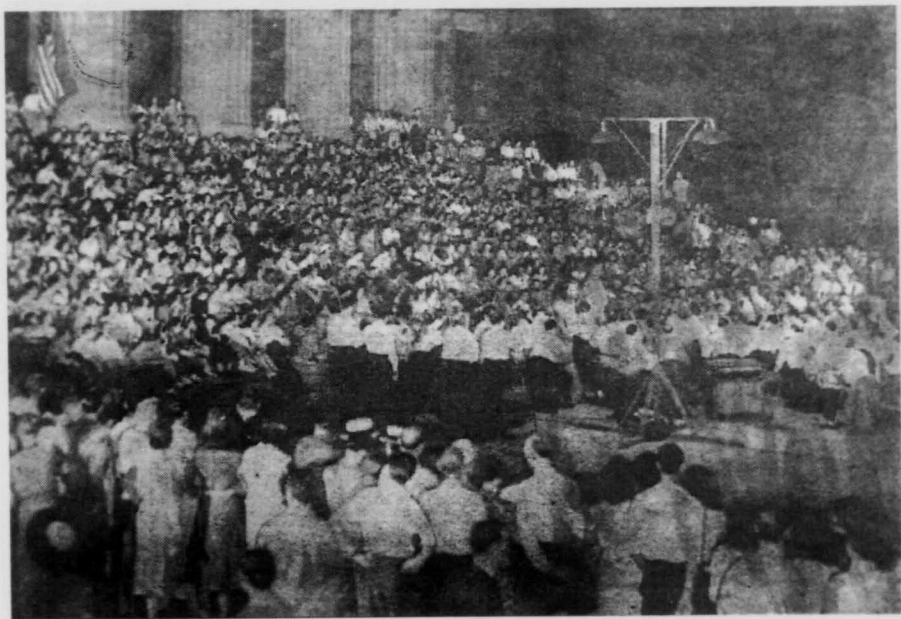
How did the Philadelphia Orchestra do in the same time period? Music reviews in local newspapers suggest that concert quality was never impaired

during the Depression. The Philadelphia Orchestra underscored its American pre-eminence by providing the sound track for Walt Disney's *Fantasia*, which was released in November 1940.³⁵ Despite this achievement financial problems plagued the group throughout the thirties. The entire personnel was retained, but everyone associated with the organization accepted pay cuts and two shortened seasons. As late as 1938, the Philadelphia Orchestra reported serious shortfalls in ticket sales.³⁶ These financial problems may not have hurt the sound of the Philadelphia Orchestra but they did hurt its quality programming.

The fame of the Philadelphia Orchestra emerged from Stokowski's constant experimentation. Premieres of new music, orchestra seating changes to vary the sound, lighting effects to create mood, lectures to the audience during the concerts, and public scoldings of latecomers made headlines, but the financial exigencies of the Depression severely curtailed innovations. Orchestra management could no longer afford to try expensive new ideas when it had to put paying customers in seats or face extinction. Neither could it afford to commission many original musical compositions. Patrons wanted to hear familiar works.

With experimentation reduced at the Academy of Music, the Civic Symphony provided a unique opportunity for composers. It was able to try new music that Stokowski and Ormandy could not schedule, or simply ignored. The FMP actively solicited new scores from the beginning of the relief effort. In early September 1941, the acquisition of new music became a public effort when notices appeared in Philadelphia newspapers inviting local composers to submit new works. All music was welcome, from symphonies, tone poems, and concertos for the orchestra to dances and marches for the other FMP units.³⁷ This active use of new American music led to the Civic Symphony's leadership in premieres during the late thirties, when they frequently doubled and tripled the number of musical premieres by the Philadelphia Orchestra. From 1935 until 1943, the Civic Symphony had seventy-eight world premieres while the Philadelphia Orchestra only offered twenty.³⁸ Sixty-eight percent of the Civic's world premieres were composed by Philadelphians and many of the titles suggested that they thought in terms of American sights, sounds, events and people. These included "Under the Elm Tree," by Otto Mueller; "County Fair," by Evelyn Berchman; "New Sweden on the Delaware," by Dr. Harvey Gaul; "Negro Lament," by Martin Muscaro; "Negro Parade," by Lamar Stringfield; and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow Suite," by Robert H. Elmore.³⁹ These titles suggest that social customs, Pennsylvania history, ethnic origins, and literary themes inspired the composers. Reviewed in the Philadelphia *Bulletin*, "Negro Parade" was described as "an expression of a contemporary scene in the modern idiom. In substance of material and orchestration it is one of the most effective works of this composer. . . ."⁴⁰

Local premieres were almost as prevalent as world premieres. Seventy-six musical works had Philadelphia debuts between 1935 and 1943. Among the more prominent Civic introductions was Aaron Copland's "An Outdoor Adventure," which was heard at the first concert of the 1941-42 season.⁴¹ While works by American composers dominated the premieres, numerous European works were also played for the first time in the city. These included Franz Liszt's "Ungarische Sturm Marsch," Giuseppe Verdi's "Manzoni Requiem," and Gioacchino Rossini's "Il Viaggio a Reims."⁴²



"MUSIC OUT-OF-DOORS. Popular with Philadelphians, as this picture shows, are the WPA Music Project concerts given frequently in the evenings on the steps of the Art Museum on the Parkway. . . ." Philadelphia Inquirer, July 28, 1939. "July to December 1939 - Pennsylvania" folder, Press Clippings, 1936-1940, Pennsylvania-Rhode Island, Box 78, Entry 371, Record Group 69, Records of the Works Projects Administration, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

American music that premiered at Civic concerts vastly exceeded similar music introduced by the Philadelphia Orchestra. From the initial abbreviated season through the final, full war season, the Civic was consistently more receptive to new music. Part of this can be credited to its non-dependence on ticket sales for operating funds while the Philadelphia Orchestra needed paying customers. When experimental or unfamiliar music was programmed, the Philadelphia Orchestra ran the risk of customers refusing to buy tickets to hear music in which they had no interest.⁴³ On the other hand, as long as the government funded WPA operations, the FMP continued musical experimentation. No private musical organization could compete with the program-

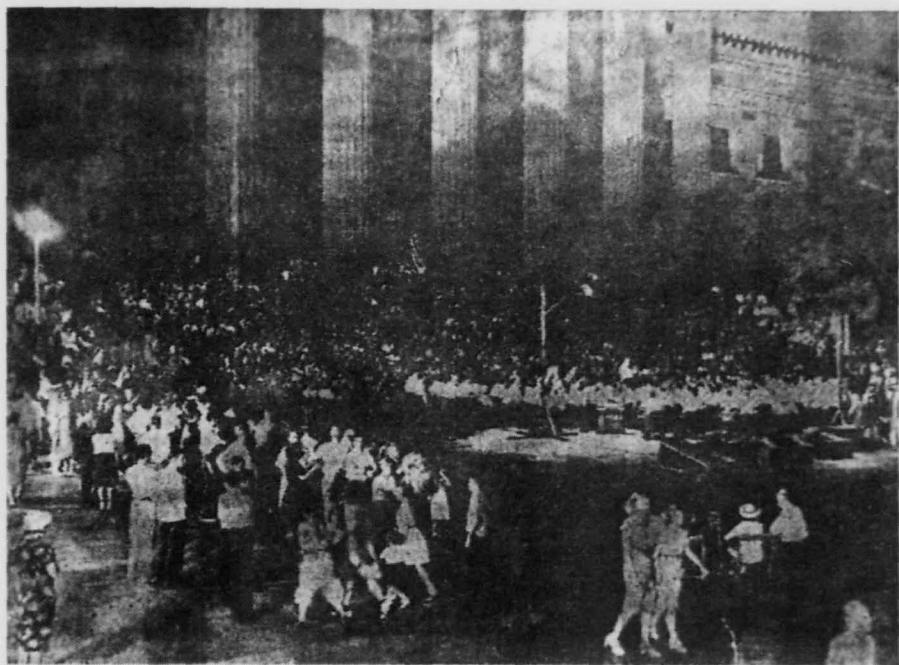
ming flexibility this permitted. While the Philadelphia Orchestra premiered forty-five American musical pieces, the Civic Symphony introduced 125 American works.

Although premieres of new music by both orchestras were important activities, many concerts featured works by familiar classical composers. The opening programs on October 3, 1937, for both orchestras, included works by Bach and Brahms. The Civic Symphony played the "Egmont Overture," by Beethoven while The Philadelphia Orchestra performed excerpts from Wagner's *"Siegfried."*⁴⁴ In the middle of the 1939-40 season, the Philadelphia Orchestra presented an all-Beethoven concert while the Civic Symphony held a three-B's concert, Bach, Beethoven and Brahms.⁴⁵ Near the end of the 1941-42 season the Civic Symphony hosted an all-Brahms program while the Philadelphia Orchestra program included works by Vivaldi, Haydn, and Strauss.⁴⁶

The Civic Symphony encouraged the creation of new American music, largely by Philadelphians, because FMP leadership realized the nation's musical future rested upon the encouragement of new composers and the cultivation of a new audience. Composers drew encouragement from hearing their work before an audience. The Civic began to develop a new clientele from its first season. Radio programs that featured nationally famous orchestras and films based on light operas such as those featuring Nelson Eddy and Jeannette McDonald by MGM had created enormous interest in classical music.⁴⁷ The live concerts of the Civic and other FMP units took full advantage of this to encourage a new audience that could not afford seats at the Academy to attend its concerts. Fees for admission to concerts at Irvine Auditorium and Mitten Hall were kept low. Librarians, social workers, public school students, nurses in training, and music students were admitted free.⁴⁸ Large blocks of tickets to the indoor concerts were heavily discounted at less than fifty cents. Summer outdoor concerts were always free. FMP local headquarters sent letters to school administrators and music conservatories throughout Philadelphia to encourage attendance.⁴⁹ This was not an elite audience, for it was composed of clerks, blue-collar workers, laborers, salesmen, secretaries, the unemployed, and students, people who had heard the radio broadcasts and had seen the movies who wanted to attend a live concert. Free summer outdoor concerts offered a unique opportunity to meet friends, develop social relationships, and expand cultural interests. People who enjoyed good music and wanted to hear live concerts had the opportunity to hear professional musicians play both familiar melodies and feature new sounds at a high level of performance with the Civic Symphony.

Not only did the Civic reach out to an audience that already existed, it also endeavored to create a musical public for the future. From 1936 to 1939, FMP bands had been frequently booked into junior and senior high schools for music appreciation assemblies. At first the Civic did not operate the same

way. It offered discounted tickets to encourage attendance by student groups from all over the city, but the concerts were the regular performances at Irvine Auditorium and Mitten Hall. Under the sponsorship program initiated by the FMP in late 1939, however, Civic educational presentations changed dramatically.



"SYMPHONY CONCERT IN COURT OF ART MUSEUM. Every Wednesday evening throughout the summer, the Philadelphia Federal Symphony Orchestra gives a free outdoor concert in the Grand Court of the Art Museum, at 25th St. and the Parkway." Philadelphia Record, August 10, 1939. "July to December 1939 - Pennsylvania" folder, Pennsylvania Press Clippings, 1936-1940, Box 78, Entry 371, Records of the Works Projects Administration, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

When the Emergency Relief Act funding WPA activities was continued in 1939, cultural projects were required to find sponsors who would pay twenty-five percent of the operational costs. Earlier relief legislation had not mandated this local support. Furthermore, post-1939 federal support only covered the cost of relief pay for the musicians. Hall rentals, instrument transportation, and music fees had to come from outside sources.⁵⁰ These costs were covered by the Philadelphia Board of Education, the new sponsor of the music program. In return it required that the number of music assemblies in city schools be increased to provide cultural enrichment for students at minimum cost. No longer were students expected to travel to the Civic concerts but the concerts were taken directly to the schools. While maintaining its regular schedule

of concerts at Penn and Temple, the Civic began to appear far more frequently at public school assemblies.⁵¹

The Philadelphia Orchestra also held children's concerts, but a comparison of the education programs indicated that the Civic held far more concerts for students, cultivating a vast future audience. Each year the Philadelphia Orchestra presented four to nine youth concerts. Both orchestras increased educational efforts during the 1939-40 season, but the Civic Symphony continued to reach out to the young audience by expanding their educational efforts while the Philadelphian Orchestra leveled off at nine concerts per year. By 1941-42, the FMP educational program had expanded to sixty-two concerts a year.⁵² Almost all Civic educational concerts were music appreciation assemblies in local junior and senior high schools, but the Philadelphia Orchestra youth concerts continued to be held only at the Academy of Music. Thus the FMP maintained its policy of taking the music to the audience while the Philadelphia Orchestra made no attempt to adjust its concerts. Its youth and education concerts remained roughly the same and students had to travel to the Academy of Music if they wanted to see the city's premiere musical organization.

Despite evidence suggesting that the Civic Symphony may have been better at introducing new music and cultivating the audience compared to the Philadelphia Orchestra, which orchestra survived was a foregone conclusion. The Philadelphia Orchestra continued while the Civic Symphony was disbanded in 1943.⁵³ As a relief organization created to alleviate unemployment problems during the Depression, the Civic performed only as long as those problems continued. When World War II began to reopen factories and absorb men into the armed forces, including musicians for army and navy bands, unemployment began to drop. Temporary work relief agencies such as the Works Progress Administration were no longer necessary, and neither was the Federal Music Project. The Civic's last concert was a music appreciation assembly at Furness Junior High School, January 26, 1943.⁵⁴

Public concerts by the Civic Symphony helped people temporarily forget their daily troubles and relax during a period of crisis. With the high social tension caused by the Depression and fears of international chaos at the outset of World War II, before Pearl Harbor, Civic concerts served as a diversion for public frustration. They provided an uplifting experience that aided public morale when it was greatly needed. Furthermore, as the city moved from economic recovery to defense preparation, the Civic also changed. Instead of playing only in schools and public parks, it appeared more frequently at defense rallies, bond sales campaigns, and servicemen's programs. The enormous popularity of the program was clearly demonstrated near its termination. When work relief operations were winding down and public projects no longer necessary for unemployment relief, requests for concerts and inspirational sup-

port poured into local FMP headquarters, and Civic emphasis on American compositions increased.

Education was vital for the Philadelphia FMP. Although much of the Philadelphia public was familiar with the Philadelphia Orchestra through radio broadcasts, feature films, and recordings, relatively few actually visited the Academy of Music.⁵⁵ That boded ill for the Philadelphia Orchestra's future because few of the city's children were familiar with any orchestra. Only a small number attended its youth concerts. Unless the audience was greatly expanded by creating new support for classical music among the city youth, the local institutions would wither and die. The Civic Symphony worked ceaselessly to provide that education with the assemblies it held in the city's public and parochial schools. Conductors and instrument section leaders clarified performances with explanations about the music and demonstrations of string, brass, woodwind, and percussion sections. Musical studies were encouraged by including outstanding student performers in school concerts. FMP leaders realized that these concerts were training sessions for the future, for unless students enjoyed the experience the city's musical future would be in danger.

By advertising at military bases and factories, by actively developing new audiences with music appreciation assemblies, and by providing low-cost admission to the working class, the Civic encouraged the cultural democratization of classical music. Free public concerts on the steps of the Art Museum, in city parks, and schools greatly expanded the audience for classical music. Open-air summer concerts and school assemblies underscored the accessibility of the program. Finally, local Civic radio broadcasts demonstrated that the relief unit was capable of performing at the same level as the nationally famous orchestras that also had programs.

Of the four cultural projects in WPA Federal Project Number One, which also included theatre, writers and art, the most successful program in Philadelphia was the Federal Music Project. Although the principal purpose of the FMP was relief for unemployed musicians, the secondary goal of community service became the orchestra's guiding principle. The most significant achievement of Philadelphia's Civic Symphony was not that it provided music for large audiences, but that it placed the music in a local context by creating opportunities for local composers and musicians. By expanding the repertoire and by revealing the vast talent pool that existed in the city, the Civic confirmed local opinion of the city as a regional musical center.

Between 1936 and 1942, the long-established Philadelphia Orchestra undoubtedly had better leadership and location, but the temporary Civic Symphony surpassed it in four other categories. Through premieres it took the decided lead in experimentation and demonstrated local works that had been ignored. By holding concerts in schools, parks, military bases, and universi-

ties, the relief orchestra made itself far more locally accessible than Philadelphia's musical bastion. Numerous concerts in public schools trained the unsophisticated new audience to appreciate classical music and encouraged musical talents that might have been lost during the Depression. Finally, the Civic emphasized Philadelphia's musical heritage, a heritage that deserved to be heard, recognized, and respected.

Notes

1. William F. McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts: The Origins and Administrative History of the Arts Projects of the Works Progress Administration* (Columbus: Ohio University Press, 1969), 586.
2. *Ibid.*, 587.
3. Elizabeth Fones-Wolf, "Sound Comes to the Movies: The Philadelphia Musicians' Struggle Against Recorded Music," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* CXVII:1/2 (January/April 1994): 17.
4. *Ibid.*, 18.
5. *Ibid.*, 20 and 23.
6. McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, 606-607.
7. Harry Hopkins to Dr. Thaddeus Rich, October 28, 1935, WPA serial telegrams folder, 1935-1938. Harry Hopkins papers, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York.
8. Philadelphia *Evening Bulletin*, undated. Bulletin microfiche file, Urban Archives, William Paley Library, Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
9. Generally a "full" orchestra included 80 to 100 trained musicians. The Civic was slightly smaller than this. A chamber orchestra was about forty to sixty people. The chamber orchestra may include all the sections (string, woodwind, brass, and percussion) that a full orchestra has, but instead of twenty violins it may have had only eight.
10. *Report on the Purposes and Activity of the Civic Symphony Orchestra*, Works Progress Administration, Federal Music Project, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The report covers January 1, 1936, to August 31, 1937. WPA Federal music project files, Music Department, Free Library of Philadelphia.
11. McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, 619.
12. *Report on the Purposes and Activity of the Civic Symphony Orchestra*, 2. Major cities were able to draw from a deep pool of talented and experienced unemployed musicians for their FMP units, but small cities and rural organizations did not have that luxury. McDonald, *Federal Relief and the Arts*, 611.
13. Hope Stoddard, *Symphony Conductors of the U.S.A.* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1957), 222-223.
14. David Ewen, *Dictator of the Baton* (Chicago: Alliance Book Company, 1943), 82-83 and 200-204. Also see Herbert Kupferberg, *Those Fabulous Philadelphians, The Life and Times of a Great Orchestra* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969), 121-129.
15. Dr. Nicolai Sokoloff, Leopold Stokowski, Thaddeus Rich, and J. W. F. Leman were all violinists. So was Eugene Ormandy. See Michael Hurd, *The Orchestra* (Secaucus: Chartwell Books, 1981), 34.
16. *Report on the Purposes and Activity of the Civic Symphony Orchestra*, 4. See also Stoddard, *Symphony Conductors of the U.S.A.*, 368.
17. Interview with Dr. Arthur Cohn, December 12, 1992, New York City. Dr. Cohn was a guest conductor of the Civic Symphony and became the first curator of the Fleisher Collection of Music in the Free Library of Philadelphia.
18. Music seasons usually run from October until April or May of the following year. That schedule is still followed by most major orchestras, but the Civic indoor concert season was longer. It usually started in September and ran until June.

19. The Philadelphia *Inquirer*, concert announcements, 1935-1943. In 1935-1936, the season that Stokowski announced his withdrawal from full-time conducting duties in Philadelphia the orchestra used nine different conductors for fifteen weeks of their season.
20. Arthur Cohn interview, December 12, 1992.
21. Kenneth J. Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation: The WPA's Federal Music Project and American Society* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1995), 63-64.
22. Dr. Nikolai Sokoloff, *The Federal Music Project*, publication of the Division of Women's and Professional Projects, Works Progress Administration, 1939. Copy in folder 1.5.44, Box #30, Federal Theatre Project Collection, Library of Congress, held at George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia. Unlike the Federal Theatre, Writers', or Art Projects, the Federal Music Project seems to have operated without a manual of operations. In this report that Sokoloff, national director of the music project, wrote before resigning in 1939, however, it was clearly indicated that this American emphasis was a mandate.
23. The Philadelphia *Inquirer*, 1935-1943. The percentage was determined by evaluating all the regular season concerts announced in the Sunday "Arts and Entertainment" section each week.
24. WPA Federal Music Project Collection of Posted Concert Notices, Music Room, Free Library of Philadelphia. Also see The Philadelphia *Inquirer*, 1936-1943.
25. The Philadelphia *Inquirer*, February 20, 1938 and February 19, 1939.
26. Pennsylvania Narrative Report for December 1941, undated letter, Box 2441, RG 69, Records of the WPA FMP.
27. Pennsylvania Narrative Reports for June 1942 and July 13, 1942. Pennsylvania Narrative Reports for July 1942 and August 13, 1942, Box 2339, RG 69, Records of the WPA FMP.
28. Philadelphia *Evening Bulletin*, March 19, 1936.
29. The Philadelphia *Inquirer*, October 4, 1942.
30. *Ibid.*, November 30, 1941.
31. Pennsylvania Narrative Report for June 1940, Box 12, Entry 353, RG 69, Records of the WPA FMP. These averages were skewed high by large summer outdoor concerts where audiences were usually three to five times the size of indoor concerts that had a modest fee.
32. The figures were calculated by adding the reported attendance figures provided by the monthly narrative reports submitted to national FMP headquarters by Philadelphia and Pennsylvania. See RG 69, WPA FMP.
33. The Museum of Art is probably more familiar now than it was in 1940, and it has nothing to do with its art collection. The steps where FMP Civic Symphony concerts were held are the same steps Sylvester Stallone ran up in the film *Rocky*.
34. Monthly narrative Reports, 1936-1940, Boxes 3, 5, 10, 12, 2439, RG 69, WPA FMP. Audience totals from the 1935-36 season were not included because they were not classified by unit. Scanty and incomplete records for 1937 made its figures abnormally low. The only figures available for the year were those of August, September, and December. Other months were apparently not reported to Washington. The total is the best estimate based upon attendance figures provided by the reports.
35. Christopher Finch, *The Art of Walt Disney: From Mickey Mouse to the Magic Kingdoms* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1973), 227.
36. The Philadelphia *Inquirer*, October 16, 1938.
37. *Ibid.*, September 7, 1941.
38. The Philadelphia *Inquirer*, October 1935 - January 1943. A complete record of all concerts was compiled for notices in the *Inquirer* and the results were compared.
39. Titles listed in the Monthly Narrative Reports, RG 69, WPA FMP, 1936-1942.
40. Philadelphia Bulletin, December 30, 1937.
41. Pennsylvania Narrative Report for October 1941, Box #2441, RG 69, WPA FMP.
42. The Philadelphia *Inquirer*, Sunday music notices, 1935-1943; Philadelphia and Pennsylvania State Monthly Narrative Reports, Pennsylvania Music Project, 1937-1942, Record Group 69, Records of the WPA, National Archives, Washington, D.C.
43. Kupferberg, *Those Fabulous Philadelphians*, 88-89.
44. The Philadelphia *Inquirer*, October 3, 1937.
45. *Ibid.*, February 11, 1940.
46. *Ibid.*, March 1, 1942.
47. Each Sunday the Philadelphia *Inquirer* and other local newspapers listed upcoming classical radio broadcasts for the week. In the *In-*

quirer they appeared in the "Symphonic Music on Air This Week" column. It showed that many major symphony orchestras had radio programs during the Depression. This opportunity to hear the classics has declined to the point where very few major orchestras broadcast on a regular basis. The Philadelphia Orchestra did not have a broadcast contract for 1994-1995, a lack of exposure that was one of several causes for a musicians strike that lasted for sixty-four days in late 1996. See *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, November 24, 1996.

48. Philadelphia Narrative Report, September 1937, Box 3, Entry 352, RG 69, Records of the WPA FMP.

49. Philadelphia Narrative Report, October 1937, Box 5, Entry 352, RG 69, Records of the WPA FMP.

50. The Civic Symphony was fortunate because it did not pay for the use of either Mitten Hall or Irvine Auditorium, and Arthur Cohn obtained permission from the Fleisher Collection at the Free Library to use its music for concerts. Therefore the principal cost picked up by the Board of Education was instrument transportation.

51. WPA Federal Music Collection of Posted Notices, Music Room, Free Library of Philadelphia, undated.

52. Information accumulated from *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 1935-1943; the WPA FMP Collection of Posted Notices at the Free Library of Philadelphia; and the Philadelphia and Pennsylvania Narrative Reports, 1936-1942, RG 69, WPA FMP collection, National Archives.

53. Disbanding performance units was not a national rule. Some FMP orchestras had enough local support to continue their existence after federal funding was discontinued. Among them are the Oklahoma City Symphony Orchestra, the Utah State Symphony Orchestra, and the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra. See McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, 620-621.

54. *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 24, 1943.

55. Before Disney's *Fantasia*, Stokowski and The Philadelphia Orchestra appeared in the Deanna Durbin film, *One Hundred Men and a Girl*, produced by Universal Studios. See Ted Sennett, *Hollywood Musicals* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1981), 146.

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