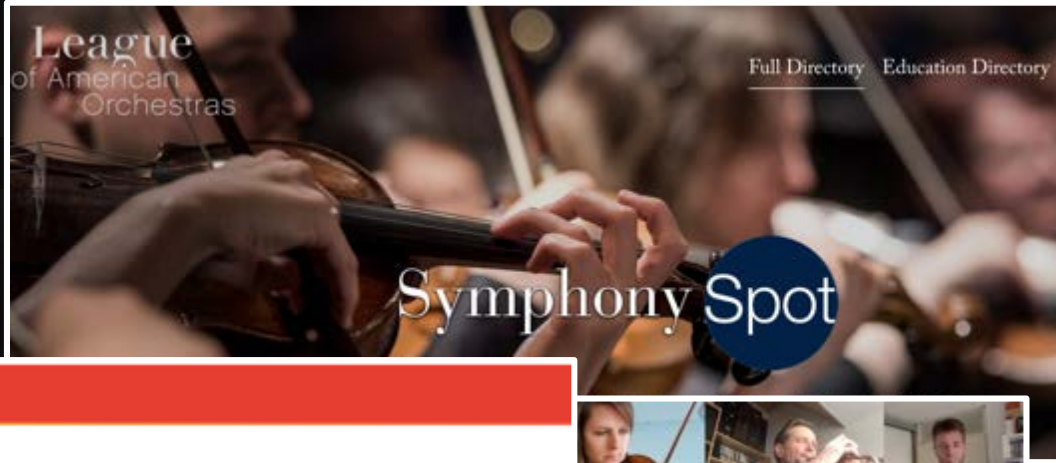


AUDIENCE BUILDING WHILE OUR DOORS ARE CLOSED



BOB HARLOW
Research and Consulting, LLC

Staying visible and relevant



Can we think more intentionally about

- Who your content is reaching?
- Its impact on that audience?

Can we focus efforts toward specific audience-building objectives?

- Strengthening bonds with current supporters
- Generating leads for our return

The BSO Pivots To Connect With Audiences Virtually After Coronavirus Cancellations

March 24, 2020 By Andrea Shea



What I Do

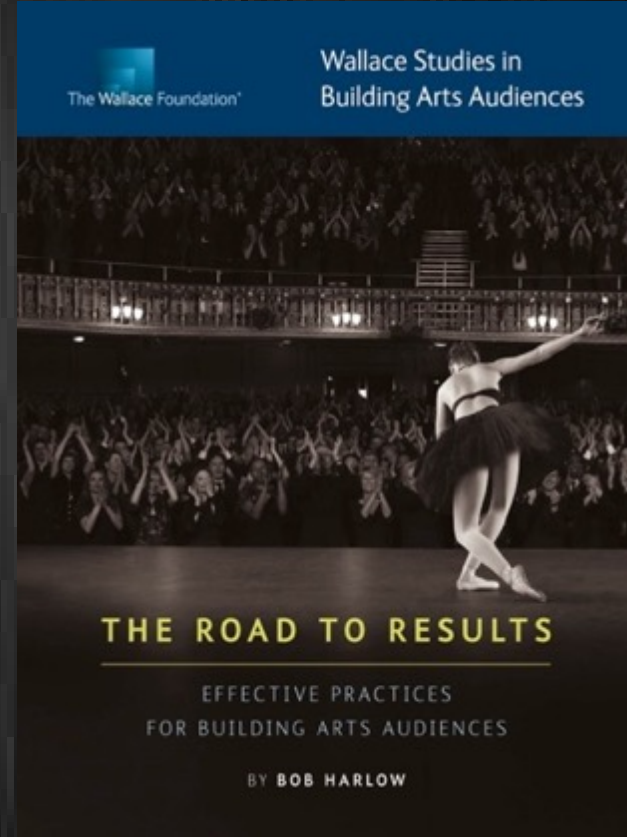
- 20+ years conducting market research to help organizations understand and move audiences
- Surveys and focus groups with audiences and other stakeholders
- Program evaluation (formative and summative)
 - Results and impact
 - Effective practices





- 54 organizations funded 2006-2014
- For subset, measurement and reporting through 2020
- What practices deliver sustained audience growth?
 - Provide evidence-based guidance (not hunches)
 - Focus today: engaging audiences outside performance halls

Nine Effective Audience-Building Practices



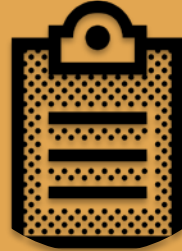
Strategic: specific target audience and objective that made sense for the organization



Identify target audience (s) important to organization



Determine barriers to (deeper) engagement



Research to learn more about audience



Develop tactics to address barriers
(that also reflect values, mission)

Identify audience (s) important to organization

- Leaders agree this is an important audience to pursue.
- While our doors are closed, likely to include
 - **Long-term supporters** (donors, subscribers, single-ticket buyers)
 - **New, but infrequent attendees** we'd like to see more of
 - **Completely new**, a group we see in town, but not in our halls



Identify target audience (s) important to organization



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Determine barriers to (deeper) engagement

Audience mindset determines which barriers to target

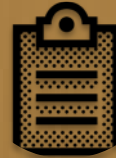
Audience	What's the Hurdle?	Build Greater Engagement by:
Current audiences (e.g. subscribers, > 2 year single-ticket buyers)	Is it satisfying?	Enhancing their experience with us



Identify target audience (s) important to organization



Determine barriers to (deeper) engagement



Research to learn more about audience



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Current audiences (e.g. subscribers, > 2 year single-ticket buyers)	Is it satisfying?	Enhancing their experience with us
Inclined (interested, willing to, or sporadically attend)	Will it fit my budget/schedule? Do I have the right information to make a decision?	Removing practical barriers such as price, opening times, or lack of knowledge

Determine barriers to (deeper) engagement

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Disinclined (not interested)	Is this for people like me?	Changing perceptions

Which of these can we impact now?

Audience	What's the Hurdle?	Build Greater Engagement By:
Current audiences (e.g. subscribers, > 2 year single-ticket buyers)	Is it satisfying?	Enhancing their experience with us
Inclined (interested, willing to, or sporadically attend)	Will it fit my budget/schedule? Do I have the right information to make a decision?	Removing practical barriers such as price, opening times, or lack of knowledge
Disinclined (not interested)	Is this for people like me?	Changing perceptions

Act on Facts, Not Hunches

- **Pin down the barriers (to dismantle them)**
- **Identify how to build interest (not always what you think)**



Identify target audience (s)
important to organization



Determine barriers to (deeper) engagement



Research to learn more about audience

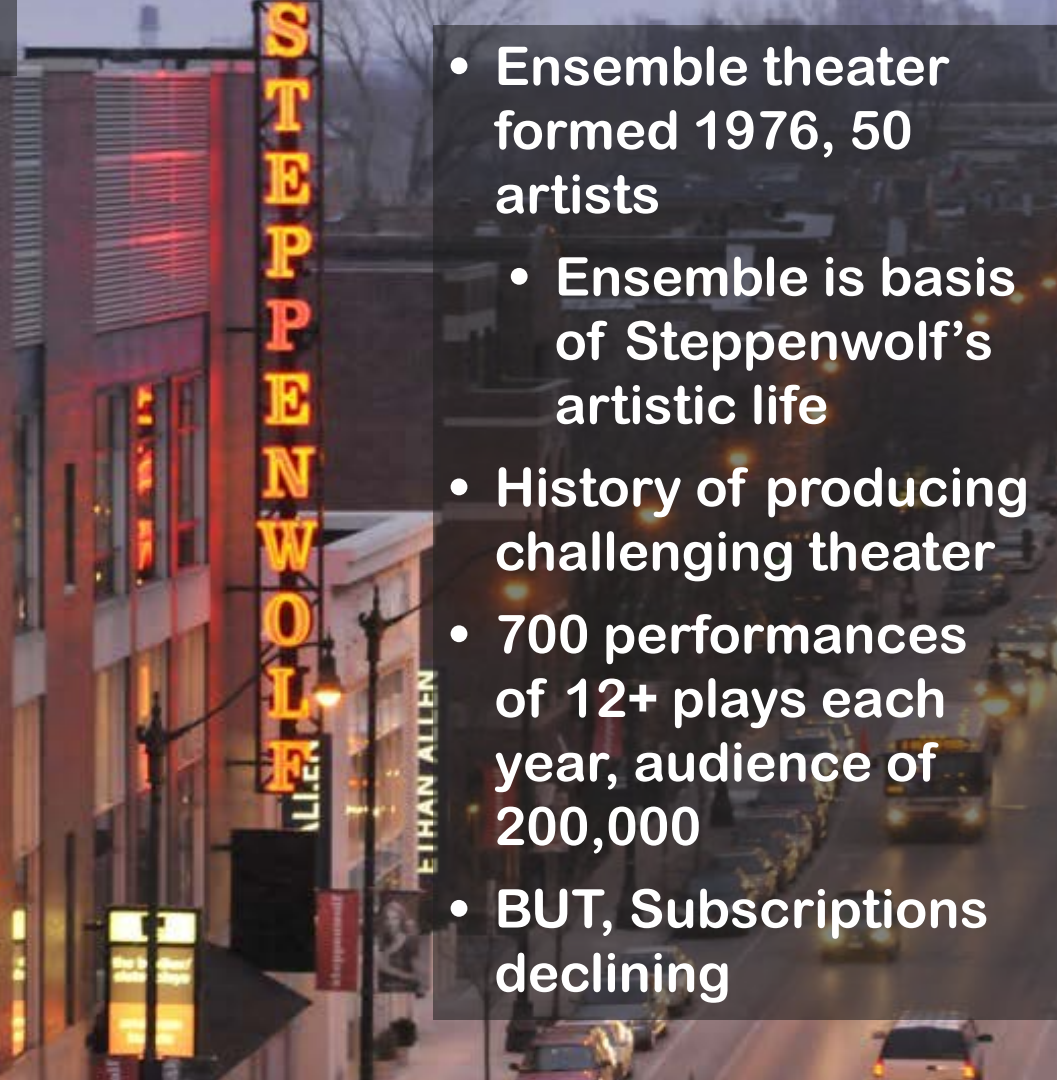


Develop tactics to address barriers
(that also reflect values, mission)

Steppenwolf Theatre Company



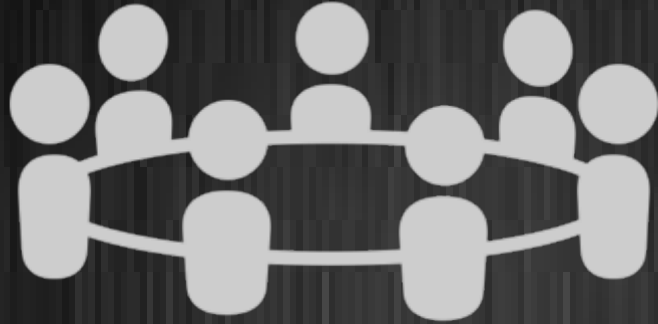
- Ensemble theater formed 1976, 50 artists
 - Ensemble is basis of Steppenwolf's artistic life
- History of producing challenging theater
- 700 performances of 12+ plays each year, audience of 200,000
- BUT, Subscriptions declining





- **What does loyalty look like in a non-subscription world? → Redefine the relationship with current audiences**
- **Can single-ticket buyers be encouraged to come more often? – Maybe, if we can deepen their connection to us.**

Focus Groups With Single Ticket Buyers



- STBs who attend at least once every 2 years, but do not subscribe
- What they heard:
 - Lifelong learners: seek intellectual stimulation/critical thinking, take risks
 - Attend Steppenwolf in particular to be challenged and explore meaning → *How can we enhance that experience to build deeper connections?*

Provide more opportunities to explore work

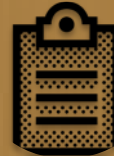
- Online: ensemble members share meaning-making process
 - Videos featuring artist conversations
 - Podcasts
 - Blogs



Identify target audience (s)
important to organization



Determine barriers to (deeper) engagement

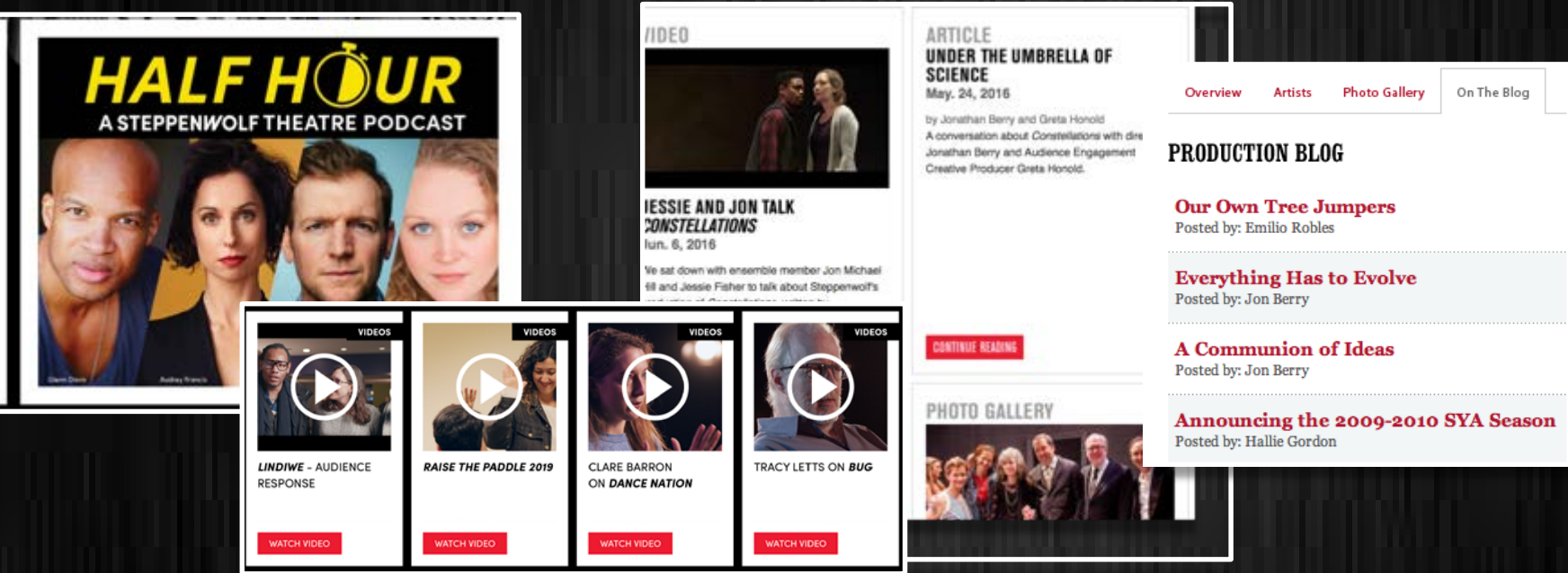


Research to learn more about audience



Develop tactics to address barriers
(that also reflect values, mission)

Designed to Deliver on the Mission: Encourage Conversation, Meaning Making



Steppenwolf began as a conversation among artists. ... The ensemble members envisioned their role as speaking from a platform to an audience. There has been an evolution over the past number of years [to] where it now feels like a conversation with a community, where our role is the activation of a public discourse.

-Artistic Director Martha Lavey

Guiding principle : The artists talk to the audience about the work

DIRECTOR ROBIN WITT ON A DOLL'S HOUSE, PART 2

Edited by Greta Honold

What was your first reaction upon reading the play? What jumped out at you? I was struck by the tension between the 21st century, anachronistic dialogue and the depiction of 19th century gender roles. And by how sympathetic all the

is the same place in 1894, if we want Nora to walk back through the same door she walked out of, which I find terribly exciting. Hnath also suggests that the costumes are "Period, more or less." With the setting being "quite spare"

is a complete opposite of Ibsen's home full of knick-knacks and trappings of the middle class. Importantly—you are so right—anachronistic dialogue in Part 2 is dropped upon occasion in a middle-class home, something not seen in 1894). The contemporary is in high relief against the thing—reminding the audience are ongoing battles, that can change time and place. The story we go through these elements is what in theatre would be "realism" or "naturalism." Theological space, that can be seen in this rich play. The room is a sparsely empty domestic space, as has not seen a mother's love

Will us a bit about why the audience seating are designed as it is? The playwright's setting description from the text gave the design team and I the idea of audience seating onstage. His suggestion for "The Space" is: *The play takes place in a room. ...it ought to feel a*

the storytelling of the play? Hnath is specific about the "when" of the play: it is "15 years since Nora left Torvald." And since Ibsen set his play in Christiania (currently Oslo), Norway in 1879, we might be able to assume ADHP2's setting

touch like a forum. I wouldn't be sad at all if the play were played in the round. Our task then: how do we transform the beautiful proscenium theatre downstairs at Steppenwolf into an arena-like forum while still maintaining the sense of the enormity of the ideas being contested within the play? We felt we needed epic walls in which to house ADHP2's epic argument. So, Courtney O'Neill, our scenic designer, found a graceful solution with a forum-like configuration. Our hope is that the audience onstage and the audience in the house (regular seating) will have a slightly different relationship with the play because they will be able to see each other witness the play—not unlike the way an audience for a boxing match would watch fighters sparring in a ring.

I'm going to ask you the question that has been asked many times of the original play—is this play making a feminist statement? Is Nora a feminist hero? Greta, full warning. I'm not an Ibsen scholar and there are a million smarter people than I who have tackled these questions. I do know that Ibsen was initially surprised by Nora's "feminist" tag. In his *Notes for the Modern Tragedy*, Ibsen negated the Nora-as-feminist-hero idea, describing her, at the end of the play, as "at a loss, not knowing what was right or wrong" because women are ill-equipped for living under judgement "according to the law of men." I also know that for many feminists, critics, and historians, Nora's

exit, her slamming of the door at the end of *A Doll's House*, was an extraordinary, radical, proto-feminist moment unlike any other in modern literature.

I'm more confident addressing this question in terms of Nora in Lucas Hnath's ADHP2. Yes, Nora is a feminist, of course yes, if we define feminism as the advocacy for the equal rights of women to those of men. And yes she is a hero if we define a hero as one who shows great courage in the face

"IT IS THIS DISPARITY THAT CONSPIRES TO KEEP US FROM TRUE INTIMACY"

of extreme adversity. However, I think the questions that ADHP2 ask aren't necessarily about whether Nora is a feminist hero. But rather, how do we take care of each other when self-care and familial/social responsibilities are at odds? And, when will we see the harm caused by laws and social rules that are laid out differently for men and for women (and I'll add transgender and non-binary to this list), all the time knowing that it is this disparity that conspires to keep us from true intimacy?

Now that you are heading into rehearsals, what are the questions and ideas that are launching you into the process? I can plan and plan and plan for rehearsal, but until the actors show up, I'm living in a hypothetical world of research, images, and text analysis. I gather as much knowledge as possible, pre-production, and then wait for the actors to help sort it all out. There is nothing quite like this kind of collaboration. I get chills just thinking about it.

ABOUT US | PLAN YOUR VISIT

CART | LOGIN

THE STEPPENWOLF ENSEMBLE ON TRUE WEST

STEPPENWOLF | TICKETS & EVENTS | ENSEMBLE | MEMBERSHIPS | WATCH & LISTEN | EDUCATION | SUPPORT US | CAMPUS EXPANSION

NEWS & ARTICLES

THE STEPPENWOLF ENSEMBLE ON TRUE WEST

Edited by Patrick Zakem

In 1992, Steppenwolf exploded onto the American Theatre scene with its now legendary production of Sam Shepard's *True West*. Now, 37 years later, ensemble members Randall Arney, Francis Gulan, Jon Michael Hill, Laurie Metcalf, Jeff Perry, and Gary Sinise, along with Artistic Producer Jonathan Berry, share reflections on Shepard's play.

WHAT IS YOUR EARLIEST MEMORY OF ENCOUNTERING TRUE WEST?

Creating conversations about the work on stage



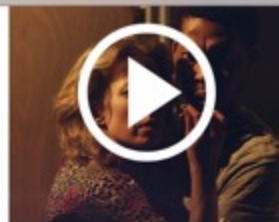
20/21 SEASON
ANNOUNCE

WATCH VIDEO



RAJIV JOSEPH ON *KING
JAMES*

WATCH VIDEO



BUG - TEASER

WATCH VIDEO



*I AM NOT YOUR
PERFECT MEXICAN
DAUGHTER* -
REHEARSAL PHOTOS

VIEW GALLERY



BUG - AUDIENCE
RESPONSE



ISAAC GÓMEZ ON *I AM
NOT YOUR PERFECT
MEXICAN DAUGHTER*



JAMES IJAMES ON *THE
MOST SPECTACULARLY
LAMENTABLE TRIAL OF
MIZ MARTHA*



BUG - PRODUCTION
PHOTOS

*“There will
be duds”*

WATCH & LISTEN

Closed-door engagement is around exploring, conversations

STEPENWOLF

TICKETS & EVENTS

ENSEMBLE

MEMBERSHIPS

WATCH & LISTEN

EDUCATION

SUPPORT US

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TYPE

All

SEASON

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PRODUCTION

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CAST MEMBER

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STEPENWOLF EDUCATION
VIRTUAL WORKSHOP
#virtualStepEd

STEPED VIRTUAL WORKSHOP: EXPLORING AND EXPERIMENTING WITH LIT LIVE 2

May 20, 2020

WATCH VIDEO

VIDEOS



STEPED VIRTUAL WORKSHOP: EXPLORING AND EXPERIMENTING WITH

WATCH VIDEO

VIDEOS



STEPED VIRTUAL WORKSHOP: WHAT'S NEXT WITH JEFF PERRY

WATCH VIDEO

Strategic: specific target audience and objective that made sense for the organization



Identify target audience (s)
important to organization



Determine barriers to (deeper) engagement



Research to learn more about audience



Develop tactics to address barriers
(that also reflect values, mission)

Single-ticket buyers	The experience	STBs want to explore meaning	Content: artists discuss meaning-making
----------------------	----------------	------------------------------	---

Audience-centered Talkbacks



- After every performance
- Not artist Q&A: Member of artistic staff moderates discussion of audience reactions to thematic elements and ideas
- Moderator coaches a dialog not as an expert, but as a catalyst for helping audience members find their voice

Non-subscribing multi-ticket buyers up 61%

Subscription
Renewal:

78%

79%

85%

1416

1844

2281

+61%

Baseline

Year 1

Year 2



Keys to Success—Satisfies Audience, Satisfies Organization

- Relationship vision comes from:
 - Audience research – in some cases informal
 - Organization’s values: *“If it was not authentically a part of who the theater was, it never would have lasted”*
- Result: Satisfying experiences for audiences, broad support across organization
 - Not a stretch for the organization
 - Steppenwolf staff and artists already passionate about it
 - Without these, the initiative will fail or success will be fleeting

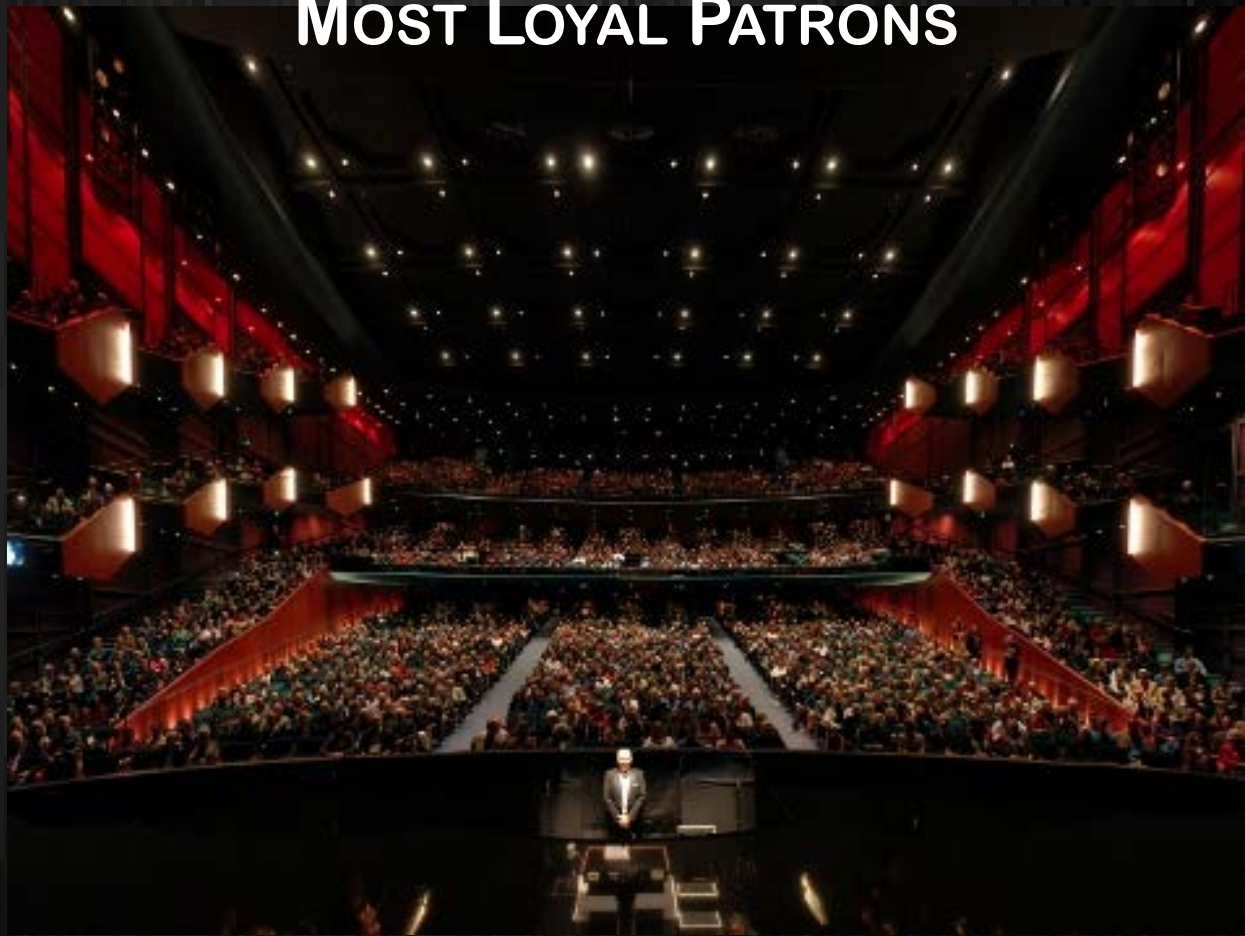
These new relationships create emotional bonds that drive development

- Unique, branded experience: only available at Steppenwolf, and hard to duplicate. *Important in a world where there is a glut of digital content.*
- Steppenwolf looking to single-ticket buyers as future supporters
 - Traditional path: single-ticket buyer → subscriber → donor; but STBs can play a part
 - *“Subscribers donate to the theater not because they are subscribers per se, but because they have a long-standing relationship with the theater”*

SEATTLE OPERA.

DEEPENING ENGAGEMENT WITH MOST LOYAL PATRONS

- Founded 1963
- Annually produces 5 operas of 8 to 9 performances each in 2,900-seat McCaw Hall
- Total annual audience over 100,000



What Role Can Content Play

- To connect more deeply with current audience?
- To build excitement around new work?
- Task force of marketing and creative staff, musicians and board members recommended two-years of online storytelling
 - Year 1: To enhance experience for Ring devotees
 - Online survey revealed *Ring* patrons were active online, and interested in seeing how opera was prepared

Strategic: specific target audience and objective that made sense for the organization



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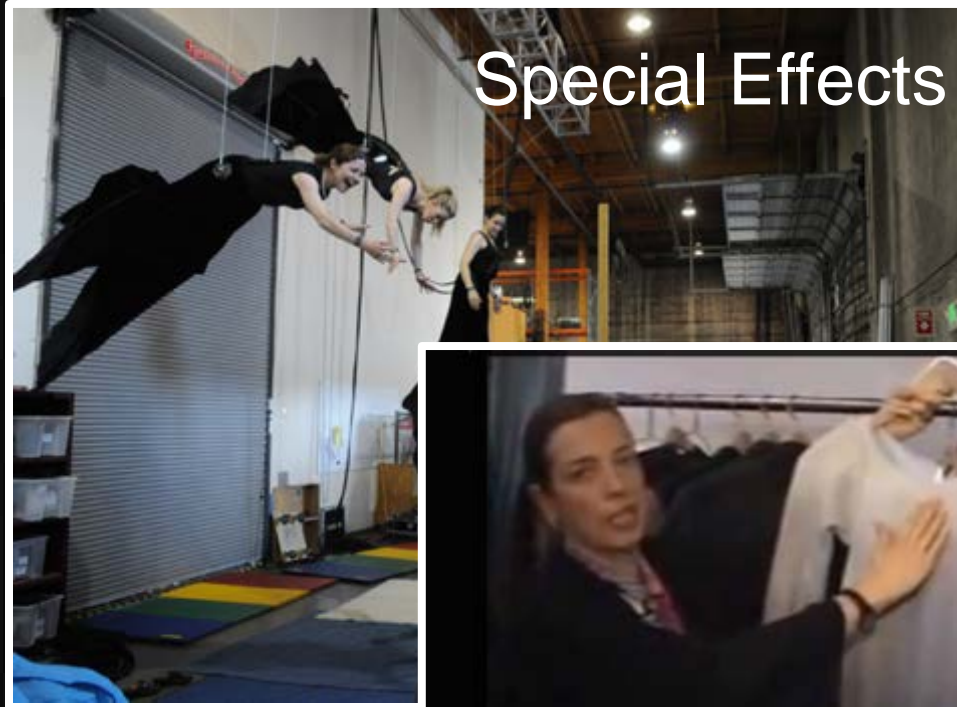
Research to learn more about audience



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Steppenwolf: Single-ticket buyers	The experience	STBs want to explore meaning	Content: artists discuss meaning-making
Seattle Opera: <i>Ring</i> devotees	The experience	Want to see how opera's produced	Content: "behind-the-scenes" tours

Road to Valhalla Behind-The-Scenes Series



Special Effects



Rehearsals & Artists



Costumes

Also:

- Orchestra and Chorus
- Sets and Props

Blog

Audio Introduction to GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG



And here, last but far from least, the audio trailer for my *Götterdämmerung* pre-performance lecture. This opera is my favorite of Wagner's four *Ring* operas; the journey through its vast sweep and scale, taking in its intricate beauties and complexities, has become a beloved part of my life, like an annual trip to a favorite vacation

Confessions of a first-time operagoer video series



Caption Contest

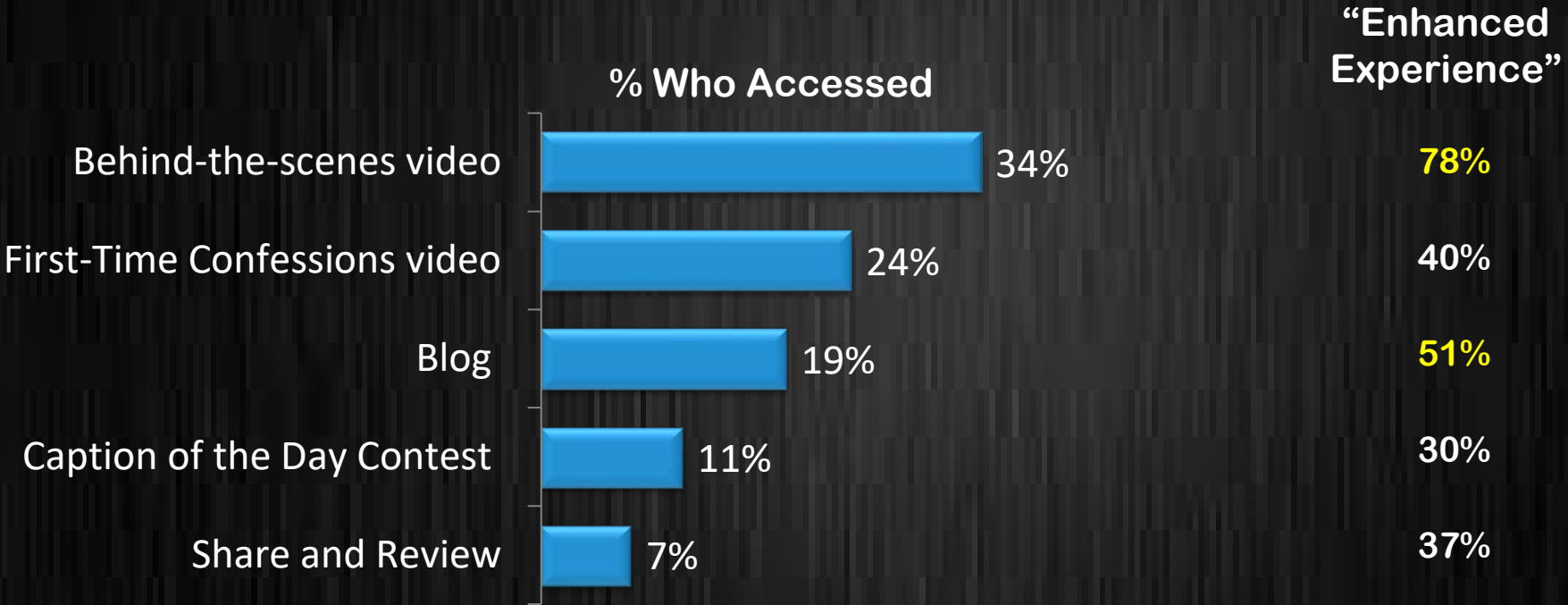
Photo-of-the-Day Caption Contest

Cycle II is now in full swing, and the hilarious captions keep pouring in! The winning caption from [yesterday](#) is courtesy of **Linda Jane** (contact us to learn how to claim your "Ho Jo To Ho" t-shirt) for her comment, "...and when I pull THIS string, it makes his eyebrows go up and down!"

The new daily snapshot is here; let the caption-writing commence!



Showing a New Side of Opera Heightens Experience



(audience survey, $n = 900+$ *Ring* patrons)



**More
behind-
the-
scenes
videos**

Making of Amelia video series to build interest for a new opera

1. Costume Research and Design
2. Working with a New Score, showing technology-driven in score preparation
3. A Set Designer's Vision, design sketches and models
4. Creating a Village Scene (sets)
5. Taking Flight: construction of full-scale-size aircraft for the set
6. The Rehearsal Process, scene staging effort, rehearsal clips
7. All Coming Together, showing production's evolution



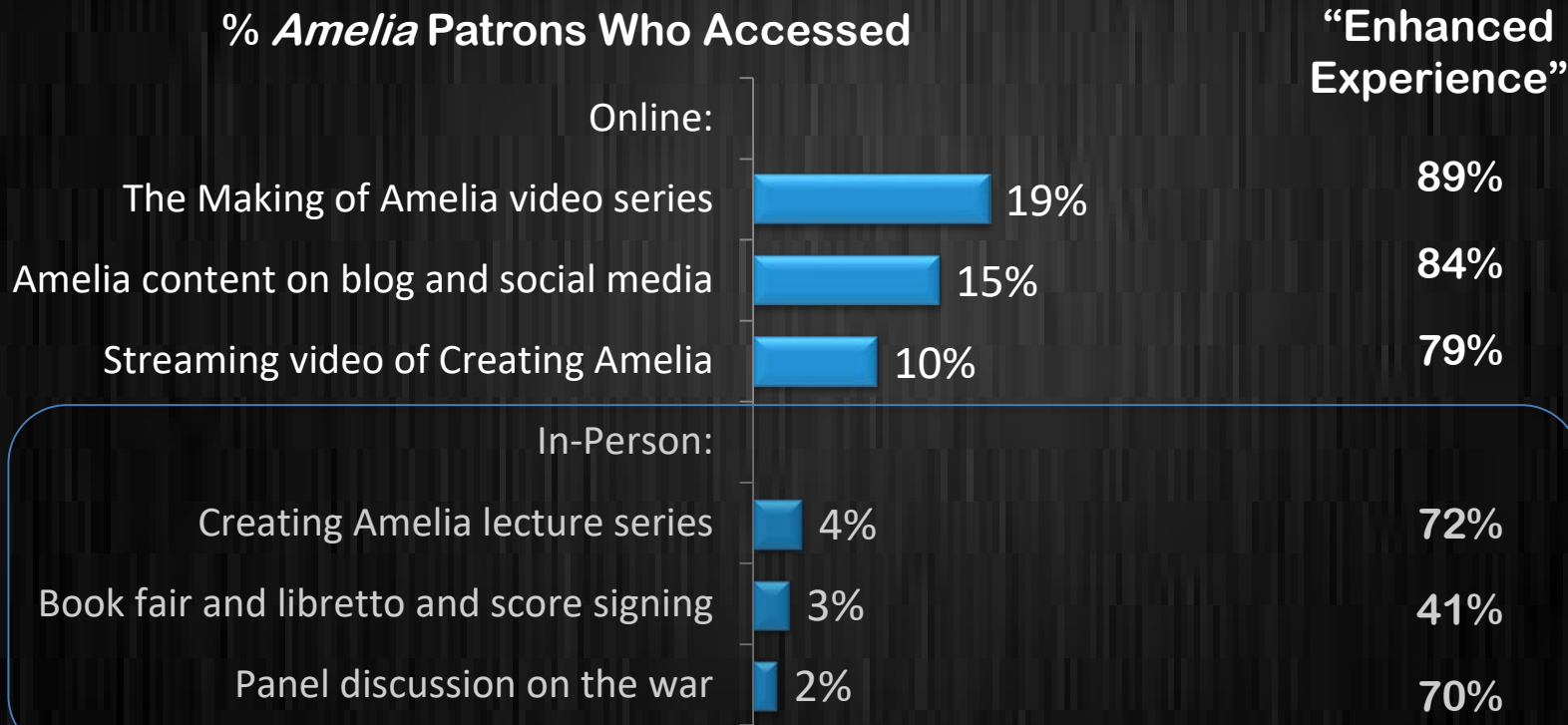
The Making of Amelia Part 3: A Set Designers Vision

© 2015 YouTube



Making of Amelia Part 6: The Rehearsal Process

Videos more impactful second time around



(audience survey, $n = 1,200+$ *Amelia* patrons)



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[TICKETS](#) [ON STAGE](#) [AT HOME](#) [GIVE](#) [PLAN YOUR VISIT](#) [CLASSES, CAMPS, & MORE](#)

YOUR BACKSTAGE PASS TO SEATTLE OPERA

Go behind the curtain with this series of online content ranging from interviews with Seattle Opera production staff to new videos from our Costume Shop. There is always something exciting happening backstage at the opera!

The video recording of this week's #SOConnected: Warming up for Verdi with Sondra Radvanovsky is now available as part of our #SOConnected: Screentime with Seattle Opera series below.

- + PERFORMANCES IN PLACE
- + ZOOM VIDEO BACKGROUNDS
- + FROM OUR COSTUME SHOP AND HAIR/MAKEUP STUDIO
- #SOCONNECTED: SCREENTIME WITH SEATTLE OPERA

Get to know the people of Seattle Opera with our series Screentime with Seattle Opera. Each video features an interview with a different member of the SO team including Costume Director, Susan Davis; Chorus Master, John Keene; and more! To see the list and jump to your favorite, click or tap the icon in the top right corner of the video.



+ BEHIND-THE-SCENES PLAYLIST

If you are enjoying our digital opera offerings, please make a donation to support the artists and staff that are collaborating to bring you opera in new ways.

OPERA TALKS

[RECOMMENDS ON KING FM](#)
[ARTIST PROFILES](#)

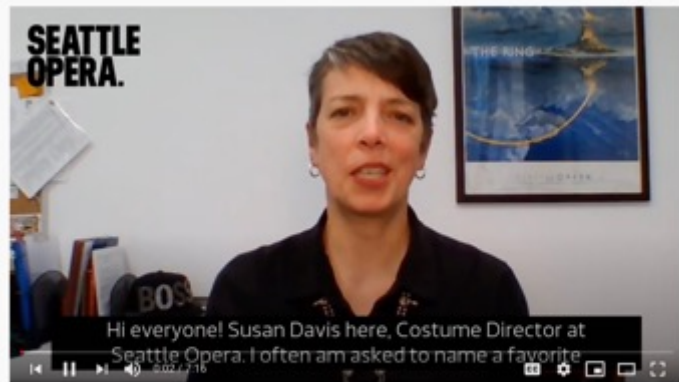
DEEPEN YOUR KNOWLEDGE

SEATTLE OPERA. FABRICS WITH HEIDI ZAMORA

FEATURING:
 HEIDI ZAMORA, COSTUME SHOW MANAGER

#SOConnected #OperaAtHome
 Fabrics with Heidi Zamora
 88 views • May 12, 2020

SEATTLE OPERA.



#SOConnected #OperaAtHome
 Susan Davis's Favorite Costumes

42 views • Apr 21, 2020

[Like](#) 2 [Comment](#) 0 [Share](#) [Save](#)



Sharing Upcoming Work With Long-Term Supporters



”What makes people want to stay with us is the idea that something really exciting is coming down the pike. ... What’s the amazing art you’d like to bring a year or two from now? Let’s make people excited about what we’re going to bring to the community. The arts education we plan to do moving forward ... and let people ask questions and interact in a way that they usually don’t get to do.”

Michael Kaiser, chairman DeVos Institute of Arts Management

Source: musicalamerica.com “One to One” video series



“They feel ballet is more for their grandparents. They care about hearing a musical group. They care about certain films. I want ballet to be in that category.”

“My darkest fear is that in 80 years, we won’t have ballet”

Relevance Barrier among Non-Attendees

Teens and Young Adults...

- ... think they won't understand ballet, so stay away
- ... were not sure they were welcome
- ... only go to performances when they know the performers or can easily find them online—but PNB is hard to get to know

"I feel like I have to know something about it to appreciate it"

"It's like sitting with someone else's parents"

"It's a closed society and when I get there I'll feel like I don't fit in"

Become easier to know:

“Lots of ways in to see what we do every day”



PNB's Company Class-Jumping



PNB performs George Balanchine's JEWELS



Pacific Northwest Ballet Summer Course



PACIFIC NORTHWEST BALLET
Swan Lake - Pas de Quatre (Dance of the Cygnets Act 2)...
2,126,862 views



PACIFIC NORTHWEST BALLET
Young Dancers Audition for Nutcracker (Pacific Northwest...)
869,927 views



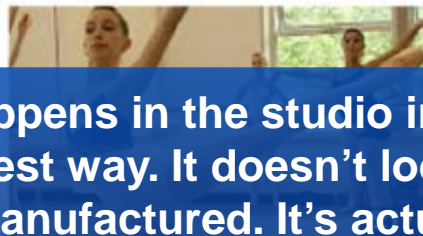
PACIFIC NORTHWEST BALLET
Swan Lake - Act 3 Coda Fouettes with Carrie Imler
857,707 views



PACIFIC NORTHWEST BALLET
PNB's Company Class-Jumping (Pacific Northwest Ballet)
708,821 views



PACIFIC NORTHWEST BALLET
Peasant Pas de Deux Variation (Giselle) - Margaret Mullin
420,227 views



PACIFIC NORTHWEST BALLET
Summer Course
361,853 views



PACIFIC NORTHWEST BALLET
Don Quixote Act 3 - Kitri Variation ft. Carrie Imler (Pacific Northw...)
360,481 views



PACIFIC NORTHWEST BALLET
PNB's Choreographers' Showcase 2010
326,875 views

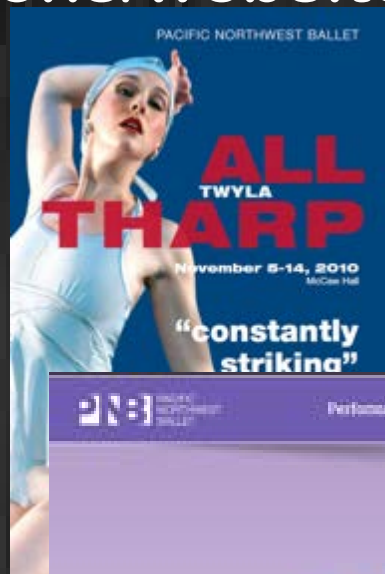
“What happens in the studio in a very honest way. It doesn't look edited or manufactured. It's actually what happens.”



**Multiple access points
to get to know PNB**

- Teen Night
- \$10 Rehearsal
Previews

Made promotions/website more inviting



PACIFIC NORTHWEST BALLET

WHAT'S NEW?
PERFORMANCES
PURCHASE TICKETS
SPECIAL EVENTS
THE COMPANY
DOLLING GIFT SHOP
SUPPORT PNB
PNB SCHOOLS
EDUCATION
OUTREACH
PRESS ROOM
CONTACT US

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Site Map

Valentine
February 7-12, 2006
A red hot lineup of PNB Premieres:
• Ancient Arts and Dances (Roughly/Tanner)
• Star Wars/Torvald
• Red Angels (Crosby/Dove)
• New Sinatra Songs (Smith/Thorp)

TICKETS & MORE INFORMATION >>

Pending Performances
• Points of View • Mar. 16-26
• Choreographers' Showcase • Mar. 22
• Meeting Sulfur • Designer Dance
• Community Performance • Mar. 25
• The Sleeping Beauty • Apr. 13-23
• Jewels • June 1-11

PURCHASE TICKETS
SUBSCRIPTIONS
CALENDAR

What's New!
• Renew Your Subscription
• Photo Gallery—PNB's Valentine
• Update Give and End Angels, Feb. 7, 7-30
• Meet Dominique Dumais, Mar. 12, 2 pm
• Ballerage Book, Mar. 22, last performance
• PNB's New Online GiftShop
• PNB In the News

WIN A PAIR OF TICKETS
PNB is a proud member of TakePart.org.
©2009 Pacific Northwest Ballet, Seattle, WA
Photo: Leslie Kausch and Jordan Pacific in Red Angels. Photography by Angela Sterling.

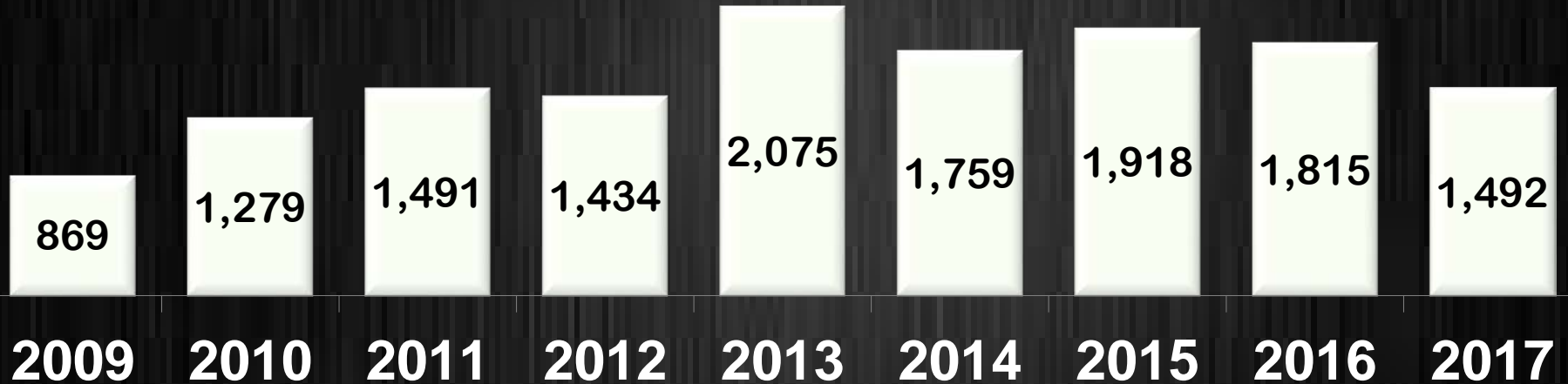
PACIFIC NORTHWEST BALLET

Performances & Tickets Artists PNB School Community & Education Support PNB

A ballerina in a purple tutu performing a dance move. The text "THE NUTCRACKER" is visible at the bottom.

GEORGE BALANCHINE THE NUTCRACKER

Pacific Northwest Ballet Ticket Sales To Teens



- Ticket purchases by “under 25’s” up by 20%
- Sustained participation (more than one performance per season) up 55%



Identify target audience (s)
important to organization



Determine barriers to (deeper) engagement



Research to learn more about audience



Develop tactics to address barriers
(that also reflect values, mission)

Steppenwolf: Single-ticket buyers	The experience (current audience)	STBs want to explore meaning	Content: artists discuss meaning-making
Seattle Opera: <i>Ring</i> devotees	The experience (current audience)	Want to see how operas produced	Content: “behind-the-scenes” tours
Pacific Northwest Ballet: Teens and young adults	Perceptions (disinclined)	Not sure what happens at the ballet, “closed society”	Content: normalize ballet by showing what we do every day



Orchestra X



What's Interesting About This Concert

- This program features Mozart's first symphony, which he wrote at age eight and Haydn's final symphony, written when Haydn was 63.
- Mozart and Haydn became fast friends in Vienna in the 1780s. Although Haydn was 24 years Mozart's senior and his mentor, Haydn's later works—including Symphony No. 104 on this program—were in turn influenced by the young prodigy.
- A California Concerto: Kevin Puts, California Symphony Composer-in-Residence alum (1996-1999), was commissioned by Bay Area philanthropists to write this flute concerto. The Bay Area's Annie Wu performs it here.

The Program

Mozart

Symphony No. 1



Making Concerts Fun

This isn't your grandma's orchestra! We like to do things a little differently...



Free pre-concert talk begins an hour before the show



Phones on and silent allowed



Bring your drinks to your seats



Clap when you like what you hear

**TICKET
SALES
UP
46%**

When I go to an orchestra concert, I look at the programming. I want to know what the repertoire is and that's how I make my decision. *But I'm not this group.*

Aubrey Bergauer, executive director, California Symphony

Segment communications by audience mindset: Content is not one size fits all

- Because you saw *Dido's Lament*, we thought you might appreciate our rehearsal of "Lavender Rain"
 - For those comfortable reading music theory (your long-term audiences):
 - The first notes of "Lavender Rain" form a simple scale, but one that moves as haltingly as someone warily placing one foot in front of the other in pitch darkness. There's a second voice here, trailing the first like a shadow. Then the sound grows, divided as if by a prism into many lines, and the music embarks on a reluctant, ineffably tender descent.
 - Something anyone can hook into, build familiarity and connection:
 - Anna Clyne wrote "Lavender Rain" as she was grieving for her mother. In its somber beauty — somehow both weightless and heavy-hearted — it's part of a long tradition of classical music inspired by loss.

(both passages by Corinna da Fonseca-Wollheim, *New York Times* classical critic)

Now what?



Identify target audience (s) important to organization



Determine barriers to (deeper) engagement



Research to learn more about audience



Develop tactics to address barriers
(that also reflect values, mission)

What audience is important to your organization?

Current: experience
Inclined: knowledge
Disinclined: perceptions

Can be informal survey, or more formal discussions, focus groups

Content that addresses barriers and delivers on the mission

THANK YOU!



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